

MRNPA**NEWS****FROM THE SUMMIT**

One of the major issues we have faced this year regarding the Park has been the proposal to rebuild Highway 410, known as Mather Parkway. The original proposals would have allowed the removal of many large trees as well as significantly widened much of the roadbed. This would have greatly changed the character of the road within Mt. Rainier National Park.

Many of you took the time to write the Park about your concerns. It appeared most of the support for the proposal came from highway engineers, and little, if any, support came from the public as a whole. Because of the massive work needed to meet the proposed new road standards and the lack of support for such action to be taken within the Park, new alternatives are now being considered. Efforts are now being undertaken to determine if the road can be rebuilt on the current road cut. This is the alternative we preferred in the beginning. Thank you for your support and letters. The outcry against the expansion of the roadway at the expense of the Park played a great role in the outcome.

MRNPA board members will continue to work with the Park Service to assure there is minimal impact.

Again I would like to invite those who wish to take a more active role in working to preserve the Park to contact me. We always want additional people to contribute to our efforts. We are now in the process of developing a slate of candidates for next year's Board of Directors. Here is an opportunity to help make a lasting difference for Mt. Rainier National Park.

Pat Smith

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CHENUIS CREEK UPDATE

The Draft Enviromental Impact Statement on the proposed Chenuis Creek/Cayada Mountain timber sale has been published. The deadline for comments is February 25.

The alternative preferred by the Forest Service, developed after fairly extensive public input, is Alternative E. It is certainly not the most destructive alternative. But Alternative E would remove 20% of the remaining old growth from the Chenuis Creek valley. This alternative also proposes blasting pools in the bedrock bottom of Chenuis Creek, supposedly to enhance the fishery.

MRNPA has commented on the DEIS, taking issue with the choice of Alternative E, and arguing that Alternative A (no action) would be the logical choice considering the unique qualities and valuable wildlife habitat of the Chenuis Creek Valley. We also suggest that the roadless areas on either side of Chenuis Creek be designated a Wild and Scenic River.

We will let you know when the Final Environmental Impact Statement is issued. The public will have a chance to comment on it. Chenuis Creek may be an important watershed in more ways than one: can we or can we not prevent the logging of the last of the ancient forests? Rumor has it that several citizens' organizations are willing to go to court to prevent logging in the Chenuis Creek Valley.

Sally Soest



northern flying squirrel

ANNUAL MEETING DATE SET

MRNPA Annual Meeting Date has been scheduled for May 9th. Plan to attend on that date. Place and program will be announced.

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ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE ON THE CHENUIS

Another approach to the saving of Chenuis Creek is to nominate it for Wild and Scenic River status. Apparently it was overlooked in 1990 when the Carbon River was nominated and rejected. Of the seven possible criteria, Chenuis Creek meets at least five, though only one is required.

Some of the Chenuis unique characteristics are geologic: it is set in a hanging valley, not sculpted by glaciers as are other creeks in the area. It is bedded in relatively flat, plated, intrusive, igneous rocks, which are rare in both the Park and the region. (Fisheries specialists in the

Forest Service want to blast holes in these rocks so gravel will collect in them for spawning fish.

Other distinctions include the fact that the creek heads in the Park, runs outside it for 3 1/2 miles, then back into the Park, the only one to do this.

The creek drains an area of extremely high precipitation (Up to 200 inches per year), which is more than usually subject to siltation when its topsoil is disturbed.

An economic paradox about Forest Service plans for the Chenuis cut lies in the fact that the Forest Service has estimated present net value of the planned cuts of 'other resource benefits' at \$132,083. Yet if they would spend \$60,000 to build a Chenuis trail, which will encourage 500 more recreation visitor days a year at \$19.33 apiece, for an annual income of \$9,665, in 30 years the area will have brought in \$289,950, more than double the present net value of the existing stand of ancient trees planned for cutting.

From a letter by John Thompson

FOREST SERVICE POINT OF VIEW CONTRASTED WITH ENVIRONMENTALIST'S POSITION

Doug MacWilliams, supervisor of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, is proposing the harvest of 176 acres of old-growth forest on Cayada Mountain near Chenuis Creek. He expects a public outcry, since 400 members of the public commented in the late 1980's on saving the Chenuis Creek area. His dilemma is that Congress

wants 64 million board feet of timber cut in 1991 from his forest. Habitat conservation areas already set aside for the spotted owl, however, are forcing MacWilliams to go into disputed areas. The proposed sale would yield 4.2 million board feet.

"We're going to be hard pressed to meet our targets," admits MacWilliams. Industry observers cite rumors that the national forest is having so much difficulty finding harvestable trees that it may actually sell only 20 million board feet this year-compared to nearly 300 million board feet in the mid-1980's and 220 million board feet last year. "Once these people get buffers of trees around existing parks, they want to add buffers to their buffers", MacWilliams predicts.

"I think the Forest Service is making a good attempt to go very light in there," said Jim Armstrong, director of a timber industry group. Two thirds of the area would be helicopter-logged, eliminating the need for new logging roads. The amount to be harvested is only about a third what the Forest Service originally planned. After logging, the primary road in the area would be closed. This is the kind of new forestry that environmentalists advocate, he said, which mimics nature and leaves behind more wildlife.

But Martin Rand, an environmentalist who has lived in the White River area of the forest being debated, says the area north of Mt. Rainier may have already absorbed as much logging as it can take.



pacific jumping mouse

The 126,732 acre White River District already has 30,000 acres of clear cuts, Rand estimated. Another 65,000 acres have been set aside into two wilderness areas. The remaining forest is fragmented: the Audubon Society calculates just 20,600 acres are left in blocks larger than 300 acres, and most of the remnants border the park or wildernesses.

The Chenuis-Cayada area is a remnant from earlier political compromise, MacWilliams explained. Rep. Rod Chandler did not want the Clearwater Wilderness created in 1984, while Rep. Norm Dicks did. The pair compromised, putting 14,255 acres into the wilderness and leaving about 10,000 roadless acres outside it, including the lobe of land north of Mt. Rainier.

Last year, areas set aside for the spotted owl sharply reduced the amount of remaining forest the agency could choose to harvest. But Congress set a goal for the Forest Service to harvest about 33 percent more trees in 1991 than the agency estimated it could cut on a sustainable basis. The agency knows the proposed timber sale will be disputed. Comments on the draft EIS can be submitted until Feb. 25 to: Supervisor, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, 21905 64th Ave. West, Mountlake Terrace, 98043. The EIS is scheduled to become final in May and the timber to be sold in September.

from an article in The Seattle Times dated Jan. 14th by Bill Dietrich



pine marten

BOARD MINUTES OF FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING

Call for Nominations for Board.

We need you! We are about to lose several members. In addition to the expiration of several members' terms of office, at least two of our hardest workers are threatening to move out of the area this year. Their shoes will be exceedingly hard to fill.

Any MRNPA member is eligible to be nominated to the Board of Directors. All you need is an abiding interest in Mt. Rainier National Park and a desire to help. There are currently fifteen positions. Members meet every other month for dinner to discuss issues and items of interest to the Park. The overall goal of MRNPA is to "Preserve and Protect" the Park.



Roger Garrett has volunteered to chair this year's Nominating Committee. He welcomes any and all nominations. Contact him at 503-620-2533.

Membership.

The Board discussed the question of what to do about members whose dues have not been paid in quite a while. We voted to send delinquent members a reminder letter, and to consider the results of that letter before taking further action.

Chenuis Creek Timber Sale.

This was the conservation issue that occupied the most discussion during the meeting. We formulated comments on the Forest Service's Draft Environmental Impact Statement, emphasizing the document's disregard for the unique

qualitites of Chenuis Creek, the need to protect old growth forest habitat, and the advisability of considering Wild and Scenic Rivers and Wilderness proposals for the area.

Trail Work Parties.

Bob Aegerter reported that we are committed to three work parties in 1991. The dates are given elsewhere in this issue.

"Dalles Discovery Trail".

The Forest Service is proposing this project for a 5-acre, old-growth tract of National Forest north of the Park. It would involve building a "barrier-free" trail for handicapped access. The Forest Service is seeking funding support.

Roger Garrett and Sally Soest

IRA SPRING REMEMBERS

During my teen age years I lived for hiking and photography. I thought school work was a bore, and I wasn't coordinated enough for athletics. Bob's and my interest in photography was born with the free box Brownie Kodak gave each of us in 1930 at 12 years of age. I took mine to Scout camp and was lucky enough to get a couple of good pictures of Upper Lena Lake. At least I thought they were good, and my friends said they were good, so I was on my way.

In 1937 when I graduated from high school, I got a summer job as a janitor-porter at Paradise Inn, Mt. Rainier National Park. I held the job for two summers and considered it an ideal job. I worked eight hours, hiked and

took pictures for twelve hours, and slept when the weather was bad.

My first shift on my first day was from 4 pm to 8 am, so I had all day free. Before breakfast I started exploring. I knew I wasn't supposed to go too far, so I stopped short of Camp Muir and visited the watchman at the lookout on 9500 ft. Anvil Rock. With my Brownie I got some interesting pictures of snow cornices near the lookout and was back at Paradise for lunch. The next morning I ran over to Pinnacle Peak and gasped at the spectacular view. This looked like it was going to be a great summer.

That evening there was an employees' meeting, and the hotel manager listed the rules. No boys in the girls' dorm (That didn't worry me); Be on time for meals or go hungry (Hey, no problem!). Then came the hiking rule. We were not to go more than one mile in any direction, and could not go out on the glacier. What a blow!

I was disappointed but found there was still plenty of hiking and exploring I could do. I was enchanted with the flowers. When I first arrived, the meadows around the Inn were still white with snow. A week later there were just a few patches left, and the ground was white with avalanche lilies. In another week the meadows turned blue with lupine, and by mid-summer the meadows were a riot of colors. However, I was especially fascinated with the avalanche lilies, because they pushed their way up through the edges of late snow, obviously in a hurry to bloom.



vagrant shrew

My dorm room had a great view of Mount Rainier. I literally could take pictures from my bed, which I did when the sun was low and the light showed every snow contour. I won a \$5.00 prize with that picture in a snapshot contest. With the money I earned my first summer at Mt. Rainier, I bought a second-hand 3 1/4" by 4 1/4" view camera, so I could take close-up pictures of flowers.

In the summer of 1941 I returned to Mt. Rainier as manager of the photo shop at Paradise Inn. There were three working photographers who would take turns taking pictures and working in the darkroom. We would accompany the twice-daily, guided foot trips to the Ice Caves, and at the same time get pictures of tourists on the horse trips. Using a 5 x 7-inch view camera and a heavy tripod, we would first shoot the start of the horse trip, then wait a few minutes and photograph the foot trip. We followed the hikers, took several group pictures at scenic places, then made a quick side trip for more pictures of the horse party at Panorama Point, and hurried on to the Ice Caves for a last picture of the hikers. We quickly folded up the camera and tripod, and literally ran back to the Photo Shop, developed the film, and made 8 x 10 prints, which would be on display when the horse and foot parties staggered in an hour later.

This was long before the days of Polaroid cameras, so the tourists were impressed with our speed. The assistants took orders on the spot, and the pictures were mailed out a day or two later. It was hard work

with long hours, but fun. When I got home at the end of the summer, I was so exhausted that I slept for 36 hours. Mother was ready to call the doctor when I finally stirred.

from a collection of family stories by Ira Spring

PARADISE TRAIL WORK COMPLETED

For several years MRNPA members have been volunteering to work on trail reconstruction at Mount Rainier National Park. In the Paradise area, we have worked on trails at Glacier Vista, Dead Horse Creek, Pebble Creek, Panorama Point, and the Golden Gate area. The work consists of edging trails with rock, installing waterbars, and spreading gravel surfacing. All of the work has been done under the supervision of the Park Service's trail construction foreman. This work has been a part of the Park's administrative plan to reduce visitor impact in the Paradise area by clearly defining the most frequently traveled trails.

The goal established in this plan has been achieved through joint effort of the Park Service and MRNPA. We can take pride in having had a part in the effort to reduce visitor impact.

With the completion of the Skyline Trail loop, we will have another opportunity in the Paradise area. Fourth Crossing is the name given to the car bridge over the Paradise River on the one-way road leaving Paradise. When this road is used for overflow parking,



marbled murrelet

visitors create their own "social trails" to get to the Skyline Trail System, especially if they are coming from or going to the Ice Caves area. Beginning in 1991, the Park Service plans to construct a single maintainable trail and close the others with revegetation.

You will have the following opportunities to participate in this effort:

Saturday, May 18th at Carbon River Area, clearing the trail for summer use.

Saturday, August 17th at Paradise to work on construction of the Fourth Crossing trail.

Saturday, September 14th at Paradise to work on construction of the Fourth Crossing trail.

Please join us. Call or write Bob Aegerter, (206) 527-4492 at 9230 41st Avenue N.E., Seattle, WA 98115-3802 for more information or to indicate your interest.

Bob Aegerter

1990'S UNUSUAL ALPINE FLOWERING SEASON

By August 20, everyone who had visited Paradise and its environs was raving about the unusually lush flowering of the mountain meadows this year. Lupine was particularly gorgeous in the Mazama Ridge/Reflection Lakes/Pinnacle Peak area.

At Paradise, Cascade aster bloomed early on stalks shorter than usual, with more than the

customary number of flowerheads in bloom at once. At the same time mountain daisy, which ought to have gone to seed, still formed patches of pink. With other patches of lupine just in full bloom, accented with a few arrowhead sennecio, the mountain gardens were exceptionally varied and pretty.

What happened? I did not hear what temporary summer Park naturalists were saying. Unfortunately, the Park is not adequately-enough staffed to study intriguing questions like this one, which are probably related to weather, and about which they can do nothing. However, here is my hypothesis:

Weather in June was cold and wet, adding to the snowpack at Paradise, instead of providing enough warmth for snow to begin to melt. Flowers such as lupine and daisy were delayed. The remainder of our summer was warmer and sunnier than usual. Late summer flowers such as the aster, which presumably requires a longer growing season, received a boost from the combination of high soil moisture from the late snowmelt, and the ample sunshine. Because these flowers bloomed at the same time instead of separately, they impressed us more. If the snow had melted earlier, soils would have become drier, and hot sunny weather in midsummer could have been a detriment, rather than a factor contributing to an increased number of flowers per plant.

On the other side of the mountain, people who hiked up Burroughs Mountain in late August when fellfield flowers



Townsend chipr

are usually at their peak, found them all gone to seed. Here where precipitation is less, the cloudless midsummer sun and warmth had rushed the vegetation.

Mary Fries

RAINIER'S ENDEMICS

Wandering round about the mountain, one's eye can't help being struck by the wildflowers -- either by the overwhelming color of a large stand of a single species, or by the unbelievable beauty of a single plant. Eventually comes the notion that with all the different kinds of habitat, there must be some plants that can be found nowhere else on earth but Mount Rainier.

Further consideration leads to the conclusion that endemic species would most likely be found in the subalpine and alpine areas, since the lower elevations are much like the surrounding hills--or were until the intrusion of the axe and saw. It would also appear that the island-like isolation of these higher elevations would be just the place for nature to evolve species found there and nowhere else. Because of the tough growing conditions: short season; extreme temperatures; thin and unstable soils; harsh light; and drying winds; and the isolation of one peak from another, it is easy to think of the subalpine and alpine areas of the mountain as an evolutionary laboratory. Sure enough, Mount Rainier has its own plant species found nowhere else on earth.

I know of only three Mount Rainier endemics: *Tauschia stricklandii*, *Pedicularis rainierensis*, and *Castilleja cryptantha*. The *tauschia*, a member of the parsley family, is the only one of the three that is not parasitic on other plants. Like the other two, it is found in meadows and moist slopes between 5000 and 6500 feet. It is a small plant with tiny yellow flowers arranged in umbrels. If you should pinch off a leaf and crush it in your hand, you would detect a slightly tangy fragrance reminiscent of parsley.

Unlike the *tauschia*, the *pedicularis* has a common name, Rainier lousewort. In overall plant characteristics it is similar to elephant's head, but its flowers are yellowish-white to yellow and lack the elephant's trunk. It too is partially parasitic and is listed on the Washington Natural Heritage Program of sensitive plants.

The *castilleja* is one of the many Indian paintbrushes found in the mountain's meadows. Its color is a purple-magenta; as recently as 1984 the Rainier Indian paintbrush was listed as threatened. Like the *pedicularis*, it is a parasitic member of the figwort family.

Why only three endemic species? My own guess would be that because it usually takes a long time for observable characteristics to evolve, the mountain's volcanic history has not allowed many evolutionary attempts to succeed. But I would also guess that somewhere on that mountain are plant species not yet found by anyone who would recognize them as



deer mouse

previously undescribed plants,
and that if there are not, the
mountain is currently
developing some new ones.

Van Perdue

DID YOU KNOW

that the largest Western Red
Cedar in the state, with a
circumference of 19'9", a
height of 234', and a spread of
35' is found in Mt. Rainier
National Park, along the
Ohanepecosh River and State
Highway 123?



pileated woodpecker



☐	W	WILDERNESS	☐	A	AIR QUALITY
☐	WI	BOUNDARY STUDIES	☐	WI	WATER ISSUES
☐	WT	ADJACENT LAND MGMT	☐	WT	WILDLIFE
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