
THE WILD CASCADES

THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CASCADES CONSERVATION COUNCIL SUMMER / FALL-WINTER 1998



The Enchantments—*MARY LOU KRAUSE PHOTO*

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The Wild Cascades

Journal of the North Cascades Conservation Council

EDITOR: Betty Manning

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The Wild Cascades Editor
North Cascades Conservation Council
University Station
Seattle, WA 98145-1980

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

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

MEMBERSHIP

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

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Founded in 1957
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

THIS 2-IN-1 DOUBLE ISSUE OF *THE WILD CASCADES* MARKS:

- (1) Year 42 of the NCCC
- (2) Year 31 of the North Cascades National Park Complex
- (3) Years (how many IS it?) of striving to protect the Stehekin Valley

The President's Report

Summer / Fall-Winter, 1998

If you have been reading the local papers lately, you would surely have noticed that the latest rage is reporting federal/private "land exchanges". I believe that it is, in fact, time to let this controversial issue out into the open. For years, there has been seemingly little interest in the subject except by government agencies and a few local groups concerned with land use issues. The big news has always come from either small direct purchases of private land by the government, set-aside legislation, or transfer of land to the public sector with the help of private expediting groups.

Recently, the *Seattle Times* has run a series of articles on the subject of federal land trades with private parties. These articles have covered areas around the country and more to the point, here in our Pacific Northwest. Environmentally-oriented organizations have been forced to examine these "deals" and decide if they are in the public interest, at least from their point of view. The NCCC is no exception. The Board of Directors has spent much time and effort reviewing each situation. In the case of the Weyerhaeuser exchange the Board felt that enough recreational land along I-90 could be added to the public domain to make it worth the sacrifice of old growth Forest Service timber which would quite likely be logged and roaded in the future anyway. Similar rationale was used for the Plum Creek Timber Exchange which was designed to enlarge the Alpine Lakes Wilderness and provide wildlife corridors east of the Cascade Crest. Board members assisted with the negotiations and field surveys from the onset. In the North Cascades National Park, we were unsuccessful resisting the Horseshoe Basin Exchange. We are actively pursuing alternatives to the Loggers Point Exchange. Other Forest Service Land Exchanges now in the preliminary stage are being monitored.

Any activist conservationist group worth its salt wants to maximize the amount of public land preserved for the future. Many tactics have been used in the past to preserve land. The diversity of groups and honest differences of opinion are certainly one of our strong points. Unfortunately, the land exchange option has caused serious divisiveness between conservation groups. A prohibition of all land exchanges has been suggested by some.

Why not be against any exchange that involves transferring prime land from public to private ownership? I would be surprised if even one of our members felt good about losing any old-growth forests or other sensitive public land. Nevertheless, given the politics and realities of life in our time, some gut wrenching choices must be made. Unless you have been involved with stopping a timber sale in Federal Court, you would have trouble understanding how difficult the process can be and how much individual work and effort are involved in killing just one sale - and there are dozens of federal, state and private sales going on at any one time. Relative to the obvious need, Congress has appropriated little money for land acquisition lately and the mega-millions required do not inspire optimism.

So is everything hopeless? Of course not. Mt. Rainier, the Alpine Lakes Wilderness and Mt. St. Helens Volcanic Monument are the result of past land exchanges. While not perfect, we can at least consider these national treasures better than what the captains of industry had planned for the whole state. A carefully scrutinized exchange can be in the public interest. Sometimes it may appear that the public gets the short end of the deal and that can certainly happen without public oversight. Some of the factors involved in an exchange are not always reported in the media or they are subject to an honest disagreement of values.

I do not want to sound like an apologist for all land exchanges but in some cases they make sense. In many cases they do not. As we continually hear, every situation needs to be examined on its own merits. In the meantime, we also need to mount a more vigorous campaign to put these remaining critical areas back into public ownership. More money needs to be appropriated by Congress. The root of the problem stems back to the give-aways of public land years ago. These major mistakes need to be addressed by a comprehensive public discussion of who the land really belongs to in the long term.

Marc Bardsley

THE STEHEKIN SCANDAL

Era I: 1968

The lower Stehekin Valley (below High Bridge) had been — in the original legislation — placed in the North Cascades National Park. However, in a late-breaking development, it went into a Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. However, it was very clear in the “legislative intent” and in the minds of the National Park Service (Superintendent Contor), that the device was to placate hunters, and that the recreation area was “a park with hunting allowed.”

Era II: 1984-1988

The promoters of the Stehekin Myth who had come to the fore and had combined with political forces outside the Valley, and upward-mobile people in the Park Service with their eyes trained on getting the Power in Washington City, had formed a cabal whose exploitive philosophy may be summarized, “Stehekin is not in the park, so we can do there whatever makes us feel good.”

Era III: May 13, 1992

After lengthy study and legal pondering, the National Park Service issued “A Discussion of Laws Affecting the Administration of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.” To summarize, the document affirmed what the NCCC had been saying all along, and what the NPS had said in 1968, that the recreation area is “a park with hunting allowed.”

Era IV: 1999

Again a cabal has been formed of the exploiters (Stifter and the NPS upward-mobiles, Superintendent Paleck et.al.), and the political forces outside the Valley (Senator Slade Gorton) — and to them it is as if 1992 never happened. “Stehekin is not in the park. . . .”

NCCC'S POSITION ON LOGGERS POINT

William F. Paleck, Supt.
North Cascades National Park Service
Complex
2105 Highway 20
Sedro Woolley, Washington 98284

March 1, 1999

Dear Supt. Paleck:

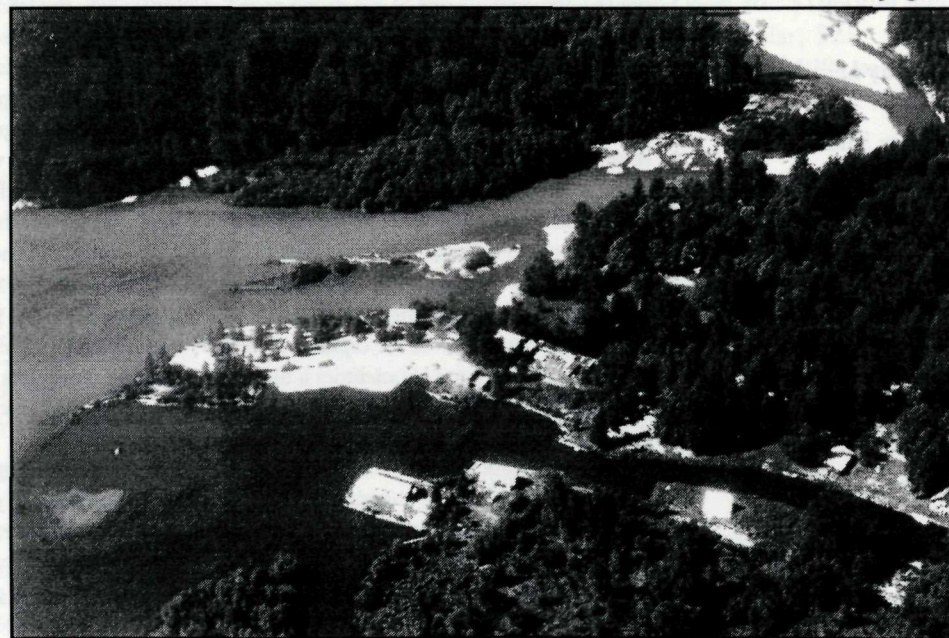
This is the official response of North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) to the Environmental Assessment concerning Acquisition of Private Land and Interest in Private Land in the Vicinity of Logger's Point, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.

At its Board of Directors Meeting, February 28, 1999, NCCC reaffirms its position that the NPS should acquire the full Logger's Point property by fee-simple acquisition to block development of the condominium cabin development and construction of a

residence on Logger's Point. This is the only defensible option, despite the fact that it is not one of the options being considered in the EA. Despite the NPS determination that the development as proposed is “incompatible with the purposes” of Park Service Management, the NPS is not proposing to condemn the property.

Further, NCCC is extremely disappointed that the National Park Service has proceeded with this land exchange and cash buyout giving full value to the permits granted to Stifter by Chelan County and ignoring the well known fact that NCCC has challenged the validity of the permits on Shorelines Management Act and State Environmental Policy Act grounds. NCCC provided a copy of this challenge to the National Park Service and has discussed this matter numerous times with National Park Service officials. [This appeal is hereby referenced as part of

NCCC continued on page 6



*Privatization of land where the Stehekin River meets Lake Chelan
— photo by Grant McConnell*

ATTENTION:

National Park Service and
Senators:

*HEAR THE DOMINANT VOICES
OF STEHEKIN*

● “Stehekin Alert” is a group of residents, Stehekin property owners, and other concerned individuals. In the summer of 1998 it gathered 725 signatures on a petition opposing development on Loggers Point. In October 1998 it mailed an alert which elicited more than 200 letters to Superintendent Paleck.

● Ann McConnell, daughter of Grant and Jane, lives in Stehekin at present, comments on the EA.

● Sandy Walker and his wife, Ellen, are landowners, and live part-time, the year around, in the house beside the Stehekin River her parents, the Webbs, built as the campaign for a national park was only just beginning. Excerpts from his letters state his views.

● The concluding excerpt is by Jim McConnell, son of Grant and Jane, and a landowner who built his cabin by the river before the park was obtained.

Editor's Note: The following are excerpts from the mailing of October 20, 1998, prior to issuance of the EA.

STEHEKIN ALERT

Box 3093
Stehekin, WA 98852

Dear Friends,

. . . . As you know, the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area is threatened by the development of Loggers Point near Stehekin by William Stifter and his wife. . . It now looks like the land trade proposal may be a sweetheart deal for the Stifters. . . In exchange for 21.5 acres of steep and rocky hillside, Mr.

ANN McCONNELL REVIEWS EA

Excerpts from a memo by Ann K. McConnell to Superintendent William Paleck on National Park Service Loggers Point Environmental Assessment, North Cascades National Park Complex.

February 8, 1999

Conclusion: NPS' Selection of “Alternative B” (regarding the Loggers Point property and related lands in a proposed land exchange) requires an EIS; Further, the selection of “Alternative A” (the ‘do nothing’ alternative — or indeed of “Alternative C” — is much to be preferred, and the EA presented in no way supports “Alternative B”.

The Selection of “Alternative B” requires an EIS. “Alternative B” contains several distinct provisions...

The first of the various provisions involved is the one that supposedly justifies all the others—namely that the hillside development proposed by the present owners would be thereby avoided the conclusion that such hillside development now represents any kind of concrete threat to the LCNRA is completely erroneous. For the very centerpiece of the EA is the well-justified formal legal ruling that any such development would be categorically incompatible with NPS' congressionally

Stifter could obtain as much as 32 acres of prime, beautifully treed, easily buildable public lands. . . as well as a substantial (and as yet unknown) amount of taxpayers' dollars. We must not pay an unacceptable price in public moneys and land because Mr. Stifter threatens to develop Loggers Point if he does not get what he wants. . . .

We continue to be concerned at the public loss represented by the proposed construction of a single-family residence on Loggers Point itself, which will obscure a magnificent view on a strategically situated lakeshore parcel that could constitute an excellent site for public visitation and interpretation. . . .

mandated purpose. Since such “incompatibility” is legally the predicate for condemnation, there is no realistic possibility that any developer or investor in possession of his or her senses (now or in the future) would risk significant resources in the willful despoliation of Loggers' Bluff... The EA as written makes no mention of the other previous cloud on Loggers' Bluff's once-threatened development, namely the North Cascades Conservation Council's suit under the Shoreline Management Act; indeed, the EA makes no serious attempt to realistically evaluate the extent of the current reality of such threat at all. With or without the landswap deal proposed by “Alternative B”, the hillside development proposal is a dead letter. The next aspect of the proposed deal concerns the surrender for trade of the four “Keller/Bakery” area tracts. . . Seven buildings are proposed to be allowed on them. The EA is dismissive of the impact of such change on wildlife. As to the fourth “Bakery/Keller” area parcel, the number of potential buildings is left quite conveniently vague. . . . While it is hard to imagine any developer expending the money for the sorts of projects alluded to (a library, a museum) the very mention of what seem like attenuated possibilities suggests that the NPS knows something about future contingencies that is simply not apparent to the general reader of the EA. . . there is at least the appearance of official impropriety. The Bakery/Keller area surrender also raises the larger question of the desirability of a “village” pattern of development proceeding at a second site (after the Landing) in the Stehekin Valley. Do we really need a new “town” in the Stehekin Valley, precipitated by hasty PS decision-making? The third feature of the deal proposed in NPS' “Alternative B” concerns the transfer into private hands of the Rainbow Flats parcel. The issues here are different from those with respect to any other area of the Valley and legally most serious. The first of these concerns the fact that the Rainbow area is in a largely undeveloped part of the Valley, at the approximate juncture of the two most sought out areas by visitors, namely Rainbow Falls and the Orchard. It is plainly visible from the Riverside Trail, the

McConnell continued on page 7

NCCC'S POSITION ON LOGGERS POINT Continued from page 4

the public record of this decision]. The NCCC delayed its appeal of the permits before the Shorelines Hearings Board in order to allow the land exchange option to be explored with the express understanding that it would be considered in any negotiations. In its response to the Scoping Document for this proposed exchange (Letter NCCC to Paleck November 6, 1998), NCCC specifically notified the NPS that it ignored this key fact. Appraised values for the Stifter property based on permit values considerably overstate the value should the NCCC challenge of the permits prevail. Had NCCC expected that the NPS would disregard these facts in its negotiations, NCCC would have continued with its appeal. Should the NPS continue to ignore these facts, NCCC may be compelled to continue this action. The NPS own determination of incompatibility of the proposed development is ample evidence that NCCC concerns about issuance of these permits is justified.

NCCC cannot accept any of the alternatives analyzed by the NPS in the Environmental Assessment (EA). NCCC demands that the full environmental impacts of the preferred alternative be disclosed and analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act requirements. The current Environmental Assessment inadequately addresses the environmental impacts.

Alt. A. No Action. Clearly this is unacceptable because it would allow incompatible development on the site. The public would not be able to gain access to either the proposed Valley trail or to the Logger's Point proper. Logger's Point is a de facto site as well as a potential site for visitor enjoyment of the lake and vistas as well as a much needed area for NPS interpretation in the roadside corridor. The NPS must

acquire the full site.

Alt. B. Acquire interest in the Logger's Point property through exchange of land in the Little Boulder/Boulder Creek area and up valley from Rainbow Creek, development restrictions and other compensation (NPS Preferred Alternative). NCCC cannot support this alternative because it merely substitutes development in other areas for development on the steep mountainside portion of the Logger's Point property. It permits the critical lakeshore property to be developed. The full environmental impacts of the alternative full build-out scenarios are not addressed.

Some of the highlights of what the NPS has agreed with Stifter are:

— Building at least (or at most in the NPS terms) 6 residences with at least 8 outbuildings (one of these could be a 4000 sq.ft. community building (or church, or clinic or any number of other unspecified purposes) scattered around the valley.

— Providing 0.5 acre to put a septic drainfield beside the Stehekin Valley road across from the Logger's Point lakeshore property. Remarkably, the NPS reports that this would be cleared of trees — and this is right on the road! The rest of the construction and clearing of land would have to be buffered by setbacks, etc.

— Stifter's 25 acres of mountainside land is appraised at \$1,250,000 (he purchased the whole site — approx. 40 acres in 1991 for \$150,000) according to the NPS because of the "permit value" of the development. The lands proposed for exchange are worth only 30-40% of that value because the NPS places conditions on the use of the land. The difference in value would have to be made up of a cash payment to the Stifters. This seems like a deal very favorable to Stifter and unfavorable to the American public. There appear to be many unstated "deals" about what will happen to the properties should the exchange be promulgated.

NCCC finds this very hard to evaluate because the details are proprietary and we can only wait to see what happens. The costs of this arrangement in terms of continued NPS monitoring of the terms of the agreement are very large and these costs are not estimated.

The environmental trade-offs are also very difficult to analyze. It is not clear how to evaluate the loss of one type of habitat against another. The NPS provides an assessment of the Logger's Point property as having 71% high resource values according to its (Geographic Information System (GIS) but it does not show the same analysis for the other lands in discussion. How do they rank? According to the qualitative discussion the habitats of the proposed exchange lands are rare in the context of the Stehekin Valley and even more rare if one considers the lack of similar lowland habitats in the Northeastern Cascades. If clearing and grazing is to be permitted on one of the exchange parcels, how will stock numbers and waste be controlled so as not to contaminate water bodies? How will wastes from the various buildout scenarios for each parcel be handled?

NCCC has commented unsuccessfully in the development of the Land Protection Plan 1988, that none of these lands should be used for exchange because they are not of lesser value than other parcels. [NCCC incorporates by reference its comments on the LCNRA Land Protection Plan.] This argument is ignored by the NPS in its contention that these lands were identified for exchange in that process. None of the development proposed above would occur on these sites if the NPS does not "surplus" them as it proposes to do. What results is dispersed development on a scale comparable to the proposed development at Logger's Point. Where is the benefit to the public? There is no question in the minds of NCCC members and their progeny about the intent of those who purchased some of these properties for

NCCC continued on page 8

Company Creek Trail, the Boulder Loop Trail, and other places tourists and hikers typically go to get a perspective on wildness. The other serious problem with the turning over of the Rainbow tract concerns its particular legal and indeed spiritual history. The NPS now seems largely ignorant or unconcerned with this, though it relates to the terms and conditions of the creation of the North Cascades National Park Complex itself. As virtually everyone who was involved in the 15-year struggle for the creation of the Park well knows, the Rainbow tract was part of a larger piece of property which was purchased by a consortium of conservationists for the express purpose of assuring its preservation. My own parents were among this group. . . I well remember discussions among my parents and their friends of the importance of leaving a legacy to their "children and their children's children" of a world with wild things left undespoiled in it. Lowell White was entirely acquainted with the Webb/McConnell/Avery group's intentions and expectations regarding the land; I know this as a matter of personal recollection because I was present at a meal with him and Oliver Webb in a Wenatchee steak house at which the matter was discussed, shortly before the NPS acquisition went through. There is thus no justification for the facile argument that the Rainbow Tract is imminently "tradable land" because it was in private hands (and therefore is "subject to development") at the time of the creation of the Park. Now an attempt has been perpetrated to distort the history of the Rainbow property < and even, perhaps inadvertently, to cast a shadow on my parents' and their friends' preservationist bona fides. . . . (That) the Rainbow property was deeded to the NPS under an explicit understanding that it would be protected in perpetuity is of particular importance to the entire American conservation community. . . the likelihood that the NPS will be the beneficiary of future bequests or preservationist transfers will become greatly reduced if not actually remote. This is an effect with nationwide significance. It should likewise be noted that the possibility of a lawsuit in relation to the Rainbow Tract has already been raised by persons in a position to bring one. . . the undeniable consequence of the "Alternate B" deal as proposed would be that the NPS would effectively finance the building of two more relatively obtrusive and admittedly "undesirable" structures. . . on a maximally visible stretch of the Lakeshore. This is the most visually disruptive location of construction anywhere in the LCNRA. .

.Original Park policy with respect to Lakeshore development was clear and uncompromising that the upper Lake Chelan shoreline was a national treasure which was to be preserved at all cost. Now NPS is proposing to cut a sweetheart deal that actively implicates it in the despoiling of that very treasure. Finally, a word or two needs to be said about the purely financial aspects of the deal. Governing legislation (as well as the NPS' own published policy with respect to the LCNRA) specifically requires that any proposed land exchange be subject to the condition that lands exchanged be of equal or presumably similar value. . . First of all, there is the problem that the Loggers' Bluff current assessment (\$1.08 million) is based on a presumption that this was eminently developable land; indeed, its valuation skyrocketed when permits were obtained from Chelan County. . . But the situation as it now stands has entirely changed. In effect, the NPS' belated ruling that hillside development would be incompatible with congressionally mandated purposes amounts to an explicit federal finding that such development would constitute a national public nuisance, and there is, of course, no right to engage in such. There is also the matter that the assessment of the Loggers' Bluff land was made by an assessor of the owner's own choosing. for the deal to escape the appearance of something like official corruption, the assessments must all be reperformed by a single, transparently impartial assessor, and reviewed by the NPS reviewer and its legal staff for legitimacy under the law. . . . The plain outrageousness of NPS' casual preparedness to lose so much in exchange for so little, . . . staggers the imagination. But that it would consider doing so on the basis of so little analysis of the true implications of the deal it has proposed is in some ways even more worrisome. My considered conclusion from all that has been stated

above is that any carrying forward of action in accord with "Alternative B" as outlined in the EA would be reckless and indefensible. . . these considerations overwhelmingly support the immediate need for an EIS, which would, presumably, much more carefully and supportably evaluate the likely consequences of such a momentous decision and its alternatives, taking into account the true legal, historical, and environmental implications. Further Comments on the EA's handling of the disfavored Alternatives "A" and "C". The need for condemnation strikes me as farfetched, but "Alternative C", which purports to consider this, treats the matter in what seems to me a dangerously inaccurate and overly fearful way. The suggestion that an Act of Congress would be required before condemnation proceedings could be instituted is more preposterous and insupportable still. Congress has already made its intent and purposes manifest with respect to the administration of the North Cascades National Park Complex: that is, that it is supposed to be administered in a way that is compatible with the purpose mentioned in covering the creation of the Park and LCNRC. Failure to act to prevent incompatible uses within the North Cascades National Park Complex would simply amount to defiance of congressional intent.

(Editor's Afternote: The NPS has subsequently to the writing of this memo moved to shift its ground. However, Ms. McConnell's analysis is presented as written because the fact that the NPS would even have considered the actions described is in itself an indictment. The minds that can entertain such thoughts, much less commit them to a formal written statement, are cause for alarm.)

NEWS UPDATE FROM STEHEKIN APRIL 16, 1999

Rumor has it that the new EA (which should be out by the time you get this check the Internet [NCNatlPark]) will completely exempt Rainbow and also excise the Cragg Courtney-friendly 'pasturage' provision from the Keller/Bakery area proposals. . . . This is not the time to stop pushing: tell everyone you can to respond to the new EA. Apparently the fact NPS got 104 responses to the original one really made a difference. Also, we need to continue to insist that an EIS is really what's required.

NCCC'S POSITION ON

LOGGERS POINT Continued from page 6

resale to the NPS that their intent and the clear intent of the NPS was to purchase these lands for preservation. The NPS is violating that trust with its proposed exchange.

NCCC notes that the previously identified parcel upriver has been eliminated from the exchange. It is NCCC position that this parcel should never have been considered in the first place because of ESA and cultural history purposes. Instead, the NPS has substituted a parcel of land near Rainbow Falls and the historic Buckner Orchard. Much of this parcel of land is identified in the GIS as being riparian and in the flood zone. Major housing and "craft" facilities are proposed to be built on this site. It is not clear if commercial activities would be allowed. Alternative C. Acquire only the upland portion of the Logger's Point property.

This would represent a better scenario than either Alt. A or Alt. B because it would not sacrifice other public lands in the Stehekin Valley to development. Payment would be fee simple. While this does not purchase the whole property, which is NCCC's position, it would preclude development on part of the site. The NPS states Stifers are unwilling to consider this alternative and NCCC has confirmed this fact. Thus, it is off the negotiating table despite the fact it would result in far less environmental impact than either of the two other alternatives.

Conclusion:

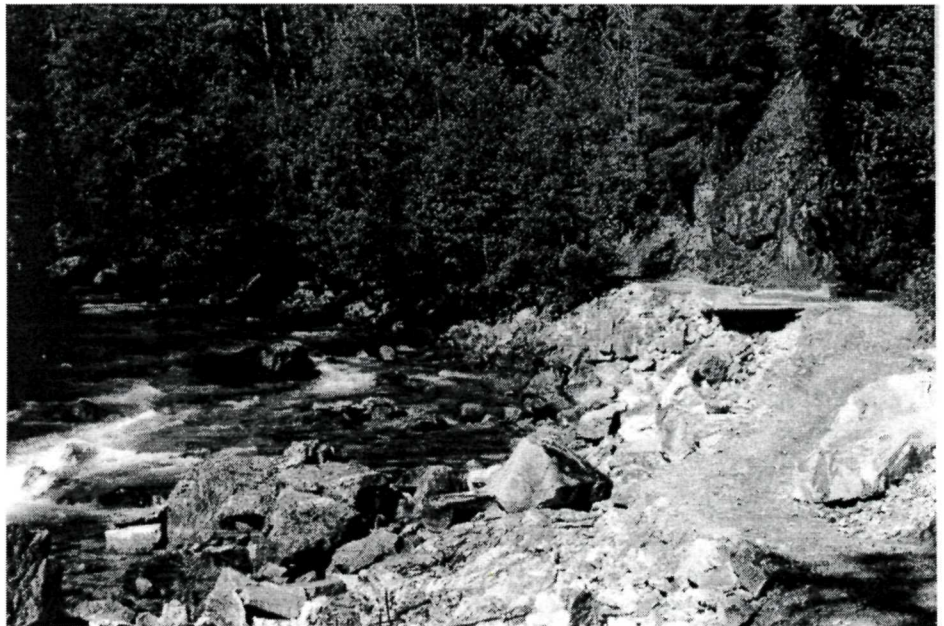
The NPS knows what the right decision is but does not act on it because of the recalcitrance of the property owners to accept the public interest in their property. Instead, the NPS and the American public are being forced to accept two environmental "pink elephants", i.e., Stifter's residence on Logger's Point, and the excessive development of 20.3 acres of presently public land. The Stifers have the opportunity to become "environ-

mental heroes" if they agree to sell the property in whole to the NPS at a fair market appraised value that considers the validity or, lack thereof, of the Chelan Co. permits. NCCC is prepared to pursue its challenge of those permits if it is forced to do so by the NPS complete disregard of the extant, but stayed, appeal

That is the bottom line. NCCC knows it, the NPS knows it but the Stifers do not. The American public visiting Lake Chelan NRA will soon be asking why their interests were not considered.

Sincerely,

David Fluharty, on behalf of NCCC



*View of trail through what used to be Stehekin road at Carwash Falls
— photo by Sandy Walker*

Manning Muses...

In the course of preparing a revised edition of a trails guide to the North Cascades National Park area, co-author Manning asked co-author Spring to request from the National Park Service a precise official statement of policy on the upper Stehekin road. February 10, 1999, the following information was supplied by Timothy R. Manns:

"The river channels in this area of the Stehekin Valley are prone to movement and change. Each year, the NPS evaluates the inundated stretch of road. When conditions return that allow reconstruction, the road will be rebuilt to its previous condition as defined in

the *General Management Plan for Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, 1995*."

Co-author Manning quoted this in the revised text, along with a statement of his personal view of the matter.

However, Manning could not help but muse. The road inundation in question is *not in* the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area but in the North Cascades National Park, the boundary between them being High Bridge. From this misspeaking, what inferences might be drawn about misstinking of the National Park Service? One muses. Ponders. Muses some more.

Sandy Walker Comments...

Editor's Note: Sandy Walker, Stehekin landowner, addressed his comments on the Environmental Assessment issue regarding the problem of Loggers Point and alternatives offered by the NPS. Here are excerpts from his letter to Superintendent Paleck.

January 30, 1999:

The alternatives considered but rejected without full explanation contain many realistic and good solutions to this unhappy circumstance. In most cases the NPS has chosen not to pursue them because the Stiffters have said they would not accept them. This raises the issue of what a "willing seller" is, something the NPS has not defined to my knowledge. I think that either they are or are not willing sellers. If they are willing sellers, then they have to be willing to sell at a fair price. They cannot be "willing sellers" only if they get the terms that they demand. The LPP is inadequate in this regard. The rejected alternatives clearly demonstrate the political agenda of the Stiffters and show that they are not interested in a real, fair, and environmentally sound solution. The NPS cannot and should not be a party to the various agendas of property owners. It must stay true to its originating purposes as expressed in the organic act and other defining legislation. . . . I believe you should order an environmental impact statement before proceeding and urge you to do so. . .

"the best solution is to purchase the



Stiffters' property fee simple. I am informed that money is available for emergency use of this kind, and after your declaration of incompatibility, we have an emergency from the Stiffters' threat to develop. . . . If a willing seller purchase cannot be accomplished, then it is incumbent upon the NPS to exercise its right of eminent domain."

s/ Sandy Walker

STEHEKIN BATTLE CRY

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!
Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall!

—from "The Last Word,"
Matthew Arnold

NCCC Board Member Jim McConnell's Position...

Editor's Note: James A. McConnell, son of Grant and Jane, born while they were year-around residents of Stehekin, is an homeowner there. He is an NCCC board member.

Here are excerpts from his letter to Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Complex, on the subject of the Environmental Assessment.

February 28, 1999

I was extremely disappointed with the Environmental Assessment. It is, quite simply, inadequate on its face. . . . root questions of Park Service professionalism

would loom large if the Assessment serves as foundation of action. . . . The Rainbow Creek Area is in an identified One-Hundred Year Flood Plain which includes riparian habitat and is thereby not eligible for trade under the National Park Service's own standards.

The National Park Service did its job and acquitted itself well in declaring the proposed Loggers' Point hillside develop-

ment incompatible with the purposes of the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. It does not logically or legally follow that the Park Service must therefore give away public lands and resources to assure private development at another location. Urban Planning does not appear in the Charter granting the National Park Service stewardship of the North Cascades National Park Complex. The Park Service's sound judgment of the incompatibility of development on the Loggers' Point hillside should not be undermined by the inexplicably faulty logic of giving

away unrelated public lands to promote private development elsewhere.

. . . I am the owner of the private land adjacent to the Rainbow Creek Area listed for exchange. . . The land you propose for exchange is the Park Service's only because environmentalists in the 1960's made it available for the Park. That the park now intends to give it away for private development is an egregious breach of faith.

I would further like to offer you a proposal regarding my home in the Rainbow Creek Area. Assuming the Park Service and I can agree on an acceptable price, I offer you my land for Park Service acquisition, providing you give assurance that my land and the land now proposed for swapping for private development is restored to and left in a wild state in perpetuity.

s/ James A. McConnell

REMEMBER THE DAY: OCTOBER 2, 1968

Following are pages 75 and 76 of *Conservation And Conflict: The U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service in the North Cascades, 1892 -1992*, preliminary edition published in June 1992 by the North Cascades Conservation Council.

The book has been offered for a public edition to The Mountaineers Books and Sierra Club Books, but though endorsed by Grant McConnell and Dave Brower, has been rejected. Why?

*There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.*
— Hamlet, Prince of Denmark,
as quoted by W. Shakespeare

(Wayne Aspinall had) “never had seen anything like it before.” Muscling through the crowd that jammed the lobby of the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, he complained, “I don’t know who these people are.” Despite the number of requests to testify, his staff had provided a far too small hearing room, and though committee member Mo Udall hunted up a second room to let the hearing be held in two sections simultaneously, it still was necessary to draw lots for the right to speak.

Conservationists were as alarmed as Aspinall by the number of requests to testify. The Rev. Riley Johnson, promoted to a pulpit in Yakima, and become president of the timber industry’s forest group, Outdoors Unlimited, had vowed that this was “his hearing” where he would bury the birdwatchers. As it happened, God called him to other vineyards that day. However, his hired gun, attorney Bill Lenihan, smugly promised to flood the hearing with skiers supporting the Forest Service, which had promised a string of yoyo resorts from one edge of the Cascades to the other. (A quarter-century later none of these has been built and the one and only proposal feebly alive and deserving to be put finally out of its misery is on lands that never had been or have been proposed for the

park.) The Lenihan threat was directly responsible for the intimidating turnout. He earned his pay by delivering a legion of yoyos to bulk out the thin forces of multiple-users, but Pat Goldworthy and his lieutenants responded with an extraordinary exertion that overwhelmed him; the final score had Goldworthy and his lieutenants beating Lenihan by more than 3 to 1. The Aspinall strategy of reserving insufficient space also backfired. Though many folks couldn’t squeeze into the hearing rooms and had to stand in the halls, shoulder to shoulder and belly to belly, the density of sweating humanity in itself awed the Congressmen.

Commissioners of four counties of the North Cascades — Okanogan, Whatcom, Chelan, and Skagit — opposed the park, as did the councils of thirteen cities and the port commissioners of Bellingham and Skagit County. Lloyd Meeds, who represented most of these jurisdictions in Congress, asked the president of Multiple Use for the North Cascades if he by any chance had a financial interest in a mine in the area; the president conceded he did; Meeds, smiling, excused him from further questioning.

A momentous exchange took place between Congressman Udall and Dan Evans. The governor had

presented his plan and was being lengthily questioned.

Mr. Udall: This last is a tough question I would ask you. . . . When the House calls the roll I have to vote “Yes” or “No.” If it comes down to a question of the Senate-passed bill, a national park of that size, or no national park at all, how do you advise me to vote?

Governor Evans: If I were in your place and had a vote, I would vote “Yes.”

Mr. Udall: I thank you, Governor. Udall thereby saved Dan Evans from himself, rescued his reputation as a good ‘ol Camp Parsons Boy Scout and Bull Mooser friend of the land, because at day’s end when park loyalists emerged from the bad air of sardine-packed rooms to fresh air of the streets they were unforgettably gladdened to see newspaper headlines, “EVANS FOR PARK.” His mugwimping was forgotten, his myopia excused. History remembered the splendid headline.

1968: The Finish Line

Aspinall had arrived in Seattle as a lion roaring “Never!” He left as a lamb bleating “I’m going to do my darndest to get a bill out of our committee before it adjourns in August.” However, once beyond reach of a lynch mob he began issuing pronouncements. These were aimed not at the very ruly

Seattle mob, but at Jackson. The two high lords of the American earth manned their citadels, one commanding the Senate, the other the House, and cannonaded threats. Aspinall was holding hostage two of Jackson's darlings, parks in the North Cascades and the Redwoods. Jackson had bound and gagged Aspinall's sweetie, the Central Arizona Project intended to fruit his sagebrush plains. The marcher earls rumbled warnings about daggers held to sweet white throats.

It was all bluff, of course, pure show biz staged by two of the hugest egos of the Congress. However, trembling conservationists didn't know that for sure, didn't know but what these Congressmen critters might run amok, go berserk, and bathe Washington City in blood for the sheer Elizabethan drama of it.

Rumor followed rumor the spring and summer of 1968. The bill was moving. The bill was dead. Aspinall bit his thumb at Jackson. Jackson slapped the pommel of his rapier.

Then Aspinall got his bill released by Jackson and thereupon released Jackson's bills and on September 16 the House voted "Yea". On September 19 the Senate passed the House's amended bill and sent it along to the White House.

In *The Mountaineer Grant* McConnell summarized the years to the Park:

First perception: the Park was inevitable. Nobody who has ever seen the area, or even who has seen just a few pictures of it could believe otherwise. . . .

Second perception: The Park was an impossibility. This was Forest Service domain, and that Service never surrenders. It has the most massive political system in the United States, and the most determined leadership. It has the loggers, the grazers, the miners, the local officialdoms, the "sportsmen" — men who count among the petty and

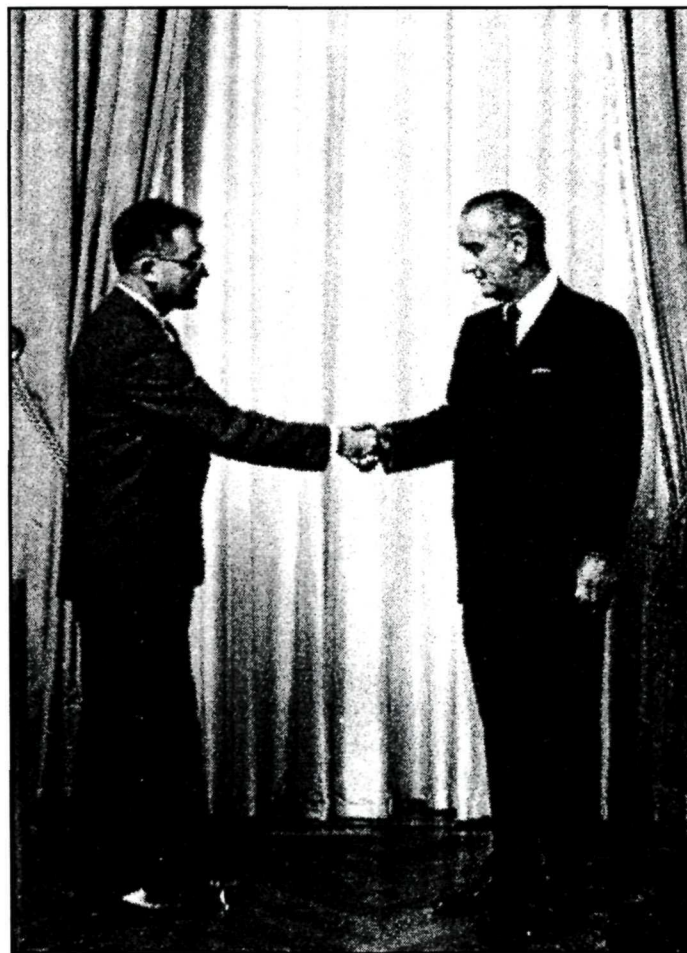
the big elites of America — all lined up to echo the official line. In July and September, 1968, there were the Grangers, the cattlemen, the miners, the county commissioners of all the counties involved, the mayors of Chelan, Brewster, Pateros and all the other places known only to locals, and their congressmen, behind the Forest Service and against the Park. And Boise Cascade, Georgia Pacific, the big mill owners, the corporations and the little mills too. And always, paid by public money, the propagandists of the fully alerted, fully politicized Forest Service constantly at work. You can't win; we're too strong, too big. . . .

Which? Either or neither, who knew? The Park won — perhaps because there was something categorical in its necessity; not to have won would have been defeat in an absolute sense; not to have won would have been the failure of a moral order. But it was all so tenuous, so much a matter of chance, hanging so on those few of the things that were tried that worked. Who would be on hand? Who would come through with those last few dollars, that last bit of energy? And at the very last stage it was in the hands of the gods and Wayne Aspinall. Would he settle for anything less than the Columbia River water dumped into the Colorado, something that Scoop Jackson could

never give? And would there be time before the 90th Congress adjourned? It was a cliffhanger right down to the last. But. . .

October 2, 1968. The East Room, the White House. Band playing as you walk in from the Pennsylvania Avenue portico. Military aides in dress uniforms complete down to the white gloves. Buzzing and smiles of Congressmen and Senators. "Ladies and Gentlemen, the President of the United States." A stooped tired man with an almost apologetic smile. This was one of the few good things that had happened. A glance upward from the prepared speech and a nod to the Congressmen, "Why don't you fellows tell folks about this, and not some of those other things they are talking about?"

And then President Johnson sat down and signed the bill.



President Lyndon Johnson congratulates Patrick Goldsworthy —1968

—The following is from a hasty note received by *The Wild*

Cascades in late February, 1999.

"I understand that John Reynolds, Regional Director of the Park Service, has been contacted. He was unaware of the details of the Loggers' Point matter (!) and says he is pessimistic that anything but a trade can be done, that it is a political problem with Slade Gorton, that only massive public outcry and p media publicity can change thing. . ."

Editor's Note: Remember John Reynolds? He was North Cascades National Park Complex superintendent, 1984-1988. It was in his tenure that the conclusion that "The Park Service administration in the Valley had reached the point of collapse," that caused formation the summer of 1987 of the Stehekin Emergency Committee, composed of Grant McConnell, Dave Brower, and associates. Reynolds "caught the night train out of town," but it was the mess he made that brought the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund into action. In April o 1991 was won "a great victory for the people of the United States" when a Consent Decree from federal district court settled the lawsuit brought by the North Cascades Conservation Council. A great victory it was, yet not the final victory sought. In 1992 there came to the superintendency William Paleck, and to many of us it feel like *deja vu* all over again. . . .

A CURMUDGEON FOR THE AGES

Righteous Pilgrim: The Life and Times of Harold L. Ickes, 1974-1952.

by T. R. Watkins, Henry Holt, New York, 1990.

*Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!*

("The French revolution, as it appeared to
enthusiasts at its commencement")

— William Wordsworth

Myself, I wouldn't go that far about 1933 America, being then only just barely sentient, though uneasily half-aware of my folks' desperate scramble. The bliss has been in looking back and giving thanks for the privilege of having shared the earth and times of The Great Curmudgeon.

The far right and far left have spent two-thirds of a century reviling the New Deal, the one for conducting a revolution, the other for preventing a revolution. We huddled masses of the middle knew only that hope had been revived and that with the help of the Big Government of Washington City we were not at the mercy of Big Business. Has there ever been (in peacetime) a comparable period of national idealism? The Ike years were a snooze in the warm sun on the golf course. The Ronnie years were a binge at a Las Vegas casino — and lucky for him that he never will be aware what's happening when the Bent Noses come around to collect — not from his flatulent adulators, but from us.

Ten presidents we've had since Franklin D. Roosevelt; the very best of them (ironically, history seems likely to judge that to have been Nixon!) stands no taller than his knees. Secretaries of the Interior? They've run the gamut from pretty darn good (Udall) to verminous (Watt). Together, their accomplishments amount to an hour or so of Ickes.

Nothing new about that evaluation. I've long heard effusive praise for the Watkins book and known it belonged on my shelf beside Ickes' autobiography. The sole comment I would add to the reviews is to recommend that the book be purchased, not borrowed. The 1010 pages are too many, too full, to be done justice even with several library renewals. Moreover, the details of the era — where Ickes came from, his progress through the Bull Moose effort, the evolution of the Republican and Democratic parties in the first half of this century — are too rich to be properly digested at a single feasting. The volume must thus remain on your shelf as an indispensable reference.

Candidly, I've yet to make the purchase (for the likes of me, the Great Depression that ended in the New Deal is now recurring, thanks to the free-market kleptocracy). However, I couldn't return the volume to the library before copying Chapters 35 (starting on page 453), "Cries in the Wilderness," and 36 (starting on page 473), "The Dust Cloud That Voted," and 40 (starting on page 549), "Keeper of the Jewels." These cut too close to home to be let out of the house.

— Harvey Manning

Grazing in the Pasayten

Its Impact on the Land and People

Mark Glyde, Field Researcher,
with assistance from Kevin Herrick

[Part Three of a three-part NCCC field study funded by the Mountaineers Foundation in 1995]

EDITOR'S NOTE: The wilderness character of the Pasayten is compromised by grazing. This article, Part One of three parts, is a result of the North Cascades Conservation Council's effort to analyze and draw attention to the problem. This investigation was funded by a generous grant from The Mountaineers Foundation. The NCCC thanks The Mountaineers Foundation for its support.

Part I covered USFS management history of the Pasayten and hiker letters documenting Pasayten hiking and grazing encounters. (Winter Issue, 1997, *The Wild Cascades*.)

Part II covered impact on wildlife and vegetation and letters covering Pasayten experiences. (Spring Issue, 1998, *The Wild Cascades*)

Part III covers watershed values - impacts- costs; more Pasayten letters.

Watershed Values:

Watershed values encompass a large set of issues that together make up the fabric of the landscape and wilderness experience of the Pasayten. Without entering into an integrated ecological investigation of the Pasayten's watersheds, NCCC has investigated topics of primary concern to hikers and backpackers.

Water Quality

Nothing can replace a good water source on a hike. Evidence of cow and sheep feces and urine can hardly be escaped in many prime areas in the Pasayten. Though NCCC has not been able to complete a water quality analysis, we have on file complaints about sheep fouling backcountry water supplies. Just by walking around allotment areas one is struck by how few areas there are where there are not sheep or cattle droppings. While backcountry users accept a degree of risk in consuming surface water, they should not be forced to accept a water supply from water courses that are so heavily saturated with feces.

Riparian Areas

Riparian areas support a number of habitat niches and provide important services such as water purification and erosion control. Cows and sheep are drawn to riparian areas. The Forest Service recognizes that there are issues that need to be addressed. Livestock are attracted to riparian areas for forage, water and shade. Concentrated livestock use can result in a decrease in the amounts and diversity of riparian vegetation that is important to wildlife. Removal of vegetation, increased soil compaction and reduction in streambank stability can reduce the value of fish habitat and the riparian ecosystem.

Wetlands

The Horseshoe Basin stands out for its wetland qualities, which account for the lush growth of the meadows. Wetlands are important from the standpoint of water purification, habitat qualities and water retention properties. Wetlands slow the rate of downstream water release following heavy storms and snowmelt, thus providing a natural form of flood control. The moist aspect of the basin inhibits tree growth and together with wildfire is responsible for maintaining the existence of the meadows. The large number of sheep in the Horseshoe Basin is likely leading to gradual soil compaction. The resulting increase in water run-off and reduced water-retention capacity will change the character of the basin. The meadows may become drier and more suited to tree and shrub growth and begin to recede. Increasing overland water run-off will increase the sediment and nutrient (from livestock feces) levels in the Chewuck River, altering its upstream habitat values and characteristics and compromising downstream water quality, potentially affecting salmon and other fish species present in the lower Chewuck River. The Horseshoe Basin and Rimmel allotments together drain into all of the major tributaries that empty into the wilderness stretch of the Chewuck River.

Pasayten continued on page 14

Outstanding Questions:

Is grazing and its associated effects increasing the nutrient and sediment load in the river, affecting water quality? Are the biannual cattle drives up the 510 Trail along the Chewuck River and the 504 Trail along Andrews Creek degrading stream habitat and water quality? What are the fecal coliform counts in high recreation use areas? How do coliform counts in areas in or near grazing areas differ from those areas unaffected by grazing?

Chewuck Wild and Scenic River Designation — How It Ties into Grazing

The Chewuck River was identified as a potential Wild and Scenic River in the *Nationwide Rivers Inventory* (NR) published by the National Park Service in 1982. NCCC has examined the ramifications of Wild and Scenic designation partly because designation could result in a significant change in management of the Rimmel Grazing Allotment. Perhaps more importantly, it is through this potential development that the Forest Service has examined the wildlife, scenic, fish, and recreation values of the Chewuck River and surrounding habitat, which includes both units of the Rimmel Allotment and the Horseshoe Basin Allotment which together make up the lion's share of the grazing in the Pasayten.

The ONFP FEIS Appendix G-15 states:

The outstandingly remarkable values (of the Chewuck) are scenic, wildlife, fish and recreation. . . The existence of the Rimmel and Horseshoe Allotments seriously jeopardizes all of these values.

Segments 1 and 2 from Tungsten Creek to Thirtymile Campground and from Thirtymile Campground to the Wilderness Boundary have potential Wild Classification pending Congressional action on river designation. Designation would specifically protect a 1/4-mile corridor on each bank of the river. The biannual cattle drive up the 510 Trail which runs adjacent to the designated river segment is in conflict with this potential designation. The 510 Trail comes very close to the river in several places and the cattle likely drink from the river, and seek out the cooler air among its banks during the run up to the Bob Creek Unit of the Rimmel allotment and in so doing are compromising the Wild nature of the river segment. It should be noted that limited livestock production is considered essentially primitive and does not preclude Wild designation (ONFP FEIS Appendix G-1). It should also be noted that in its discussion of livestock grazing as it relates to Wild and Scenic designation for the Chewuck River (Appendix G-20) the ONFP specifically states that the designation would not affect grazing activities of the Long Swamp Unit of the Toats-Coulee Cattle Allotment which runs within 1/4- to 1/2-mile of the river in Segment 3 which is outside the wilderness boundary. It makes no mention of the proximity of the Coleman Ridge Unit of the Rimmel Allotment to Section 1 and 2 of the river. While the allotment boundary itself does not come within 1/4 mile of the river, the 510 Trail cattle driveway appears to come within this area for a 2-3-mile stretch.

Costs

NCCC did not complete a cost analysis of grazing in the Pasayten. In a 1994 letter, an Okanogan resident provided NCCC with the numbers provided to him by Keith Rowland of the Okanogan National Forest supervisor's office.

- Horseshoe Basin: 1,200 sheep (ewes plus lambs). Grazing normally July 15-September 15. Fee: approximately \$0.40/sheep/mo.
- Harts Pass Area (grazed every other year): 1,200 sheep (ewes plus lambs). Grazing normally July 11-September 20. Fee: approximately \$0.40/sheep/mo.
- Rimmel Mt.- Coleman Ridge: 160 cows (160 mother cows plus calves). Grazing normally July 19-September 30. Fee: approximately \$1.98/cow/mo.
- The Forest Service does not or only weakly disputes findings that the fees paid fail to cover the cost to administer the grazing system, to rehabilitate damaged areas, for range monitoring, or for road, bridge, and trail improvements.
- NCCC points out that hikers do not pay fees, but they are also not engaged in a business.
A thorough study should be made to address costs in more detail.

Conclusion:

Congress typically leaves room for implementing agencies to set specific policies for the areas under their control. The Wilderness and North Cascades Act spring from this mold. Supervisor Sam Gehr implicitly admits this in his above referenced letter to Dick Brooks: "Today managing livestock in Wilderness is more challenging because of the additudinal (sic) shifts occurring in our

society. The Forest Service does coordinate livestock grazing with other resources such as recreation and rare plants to reduce the conflict between resources.” Though the Forest Service’s management of the Pasayten is not as balanced as Supervisor Gehr might suggest, he does show that the public’s expressed desire can and will affect grazing policy. There is no reason for hikers to turn away from this opportunity.

Final Considerations

The Pasayten does need a constituency and that constituency does need a strategy. In developing a strategy, it may be useful to take a close look at the public’s perception of grazing and how grazing conflicts are being handled in other parts of the United States, and in other agencies of the government (such as the BLM). Another indication of new directions in grazing issue has been brought together in the book, *Beyond the Rangeland Conflict*. Dan Dagget, a veteran Sierra Club grassroots activist, wrote this collection of stories of places where people have come together to deal with grazing conflicts. In some places there are now more cows, in others far fewer than there once were. These new directions may not lead to the best path for the Pasayten, but they should be considered as recreationists decide what to do to protect the Pasayten.

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Sources

Much of the information used in the Watershed Values and Vegetation sections was gathered with the invaluable assistance of botanist Dr. A. B. Adams who is currently conducting trend transect surveys of native plants in Horseshoe Basin and beginning to measure waterflow of the major streams in the basin. Information was also culled and gleaned from correspondence with the courteous staff of the Okanogan National Forest. Since the focus of the Mountaineer-funded activities was on the field and Forest Service, little time was consumed delving into grazing literature. However the following three publications were among those referred to in the course of this project. Dagget, Dan. 1995. *Beyond the Rangeland Conflict — Towards a West that Works*. Flagstaff: The Grand Canyon Trust. Friedman, Mitch and Paul Linholt, editors. 1993. *Cascadia Wild, Protecting an International Ecosystem*. Greater Ecosystem Alliance (now Northwest Ecosystem Alliance). Manning, Harvey. 1992. *Conservation and Conflict: The U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service in the North Cascades 1892-1992*. Seattle: North Cascades Conservation Council (limited printing).

LETTERS FROM THE PASAYTEN

August 31, 1995

Having had a few days to reflect on my trip to the Horseshoe Basin area of the Pasayten Wilderness and compare the area to other backcountry and alpine places I have been in the past dozen years, I am truly in awe of the unique beauty and value of the Horseshoe Basin. The glacier carved round green peaks are home to an amazing variety of plants. Particularly striking are the many drainages and tiny wetlands exploding with diverse plant life. The central part of the Basin visible from several miles of trail is truly striking to look at. Its rainbow of vegetative colors glow in the morning sun. The views from the ridges and peaks of the Basin reveal a huge expanse of wilderness, undoubtedly rare and valuable habitat. The unique values of this area are easily recognizable to the wilderness enthusiast: clean and bountiful sources of water, wildlife habitat, unique vegetation and the opportunity for a true wilderness experience.

I find myself equally in awe of the incredible intrusion allowed in this place in the form of sheep. The cute, seemingly innocuous creatures are having a profound effect on the wilderness and the wilderness visitor. I couldn’t seem to escape the massive quantities of sheep crap. It was all around our campsite, on the trail, in the streams and meadows. I even found it lurking underneath my coffee cup one morning. The difference between the untrammelled areas and the meadow and wetland areas where the sheep had been was striking.

The plants that had managed to survive had been trampled and nibbled down to stubs and the diversity of plant life was noticeably lower to this amateur, particularly the flowering plants. Many of the streambanks we crossed on our hike had been destroyed. They looked like they had been stampeded by angry elephants. Probably the most striking effect of the sheep was the noise. The bleating of the sheep could be heard from far away, particularly in the valley where we encountered them. I would guess that a person could hear the sheep from at least one to two miles away down the valley. I can only imagine how far away they could be heard by the local wildlife and what effect the intrusion was having on their behavior, if indeed they stayed in the near vicinity at all.

The overall effect of the presence of sheep on my trip was huge. I feel that any wilderness experience while the sheep are still grazed in the Horseshoe Basin will be significantly compromised. The grazing of any livestock in wilderness areas flies directly in the face of the reasons why wilderness areas were established in the first place — to preserve the WILD character of at least some parts of our public lands. The sheep simply do not belong in the Pasayten Wilderness.

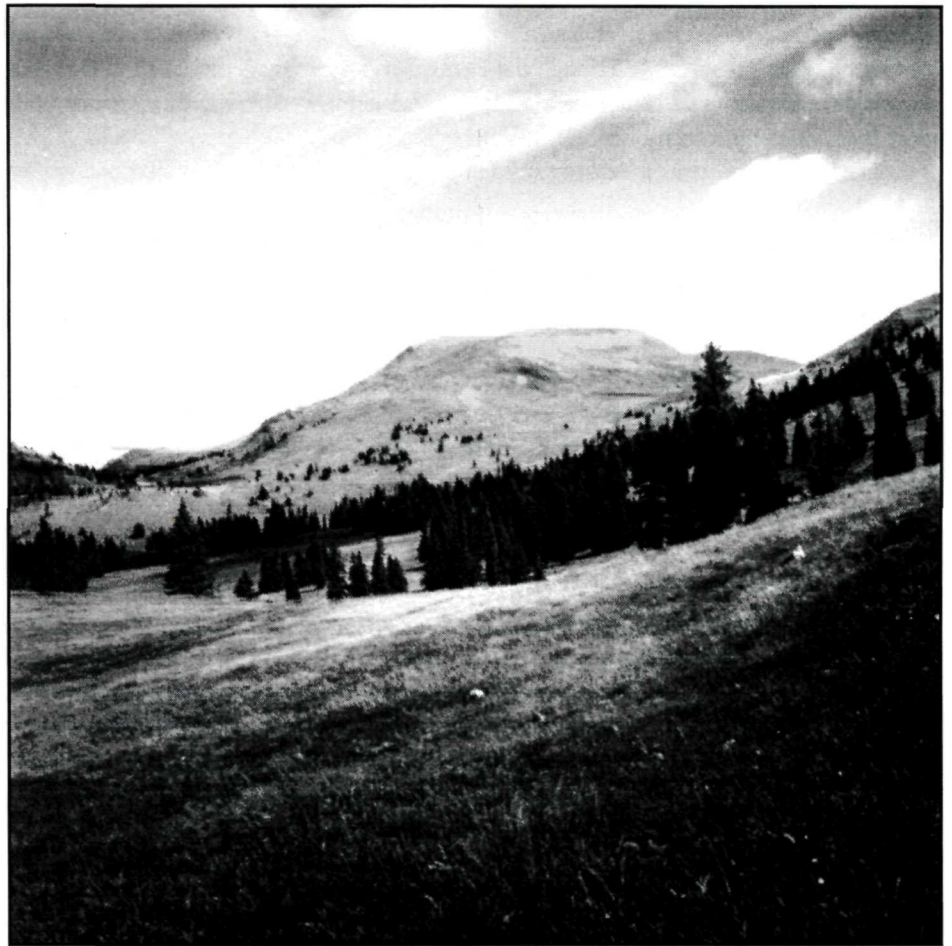
Mark Glyde,
Field Researcher,
GITP Study, 1995

Comments by Hiker Merri Martz

I spent a weekend backpacking in the Horseshoe Basin area of the Pasayten Wilderness from August 25-27, 1995. It could not be called a "wilderness" experience in any sense of the word. A large number of sheep are grazed in this fragile alpine area with a number of detrimental effects. It was especially noticeable in comparison to the meadows, which were not subject to grazing that we walked through on our way to Horseshoe Basin.

The Horseshoe Basin area is very beautiful and appears to be an extremely important headwater area for Horseshoe Creek and many other creeks. One of the prime benefits of headwater meadows/wetlands/lakes, is to provide a constant source of ground water to creeks during low rainfall months. This important function happens because the organic material built up over many hundreds of years holds a tremendous amount of water from the rain/snow season that can be released slowly. Unfortunately, the significant amount of sheep grazing which occurs in the area is having a noticeable effect on this very important function. Small creeklets are trampled and muddy; the water is not soaked into the organic matter in many small drainages during the summer anymore and flows quickly downstream prior to the dry season.

The vegetation is also noticeably different in the Horseshoe Basin in the grazed areas versus the non-grazed areas, there were dozens of species of flowers and tall grasses in full bloom. One of our lunch spots was a particularly beautiful small meadow with terrific biotic diversity for an alpine area. This spot was also almost entirely surrounded by trees and brush that obviously



The Pasayten — photo by Harvey Manning

helped keep the nearby sheep out. However in grazed areas, I found hardly any flowers except dandelion-type invasive species. The grass was cropped close to the ground and there appeared to be less than ten species present. The ground was heavily trampled and the organic material was compacted and stirred up. Wetter areas were mudholes.

As for my own experience, the stench of manure was ever-present. I felt like I was camping in a cattle yard. The bleating of sheep permeated the air, so I could not hear bird songs or other wildlife sounds. I actually did not see any other wildlife, as they were probably driven from the area by the sheep presence, or possibly illegal hunting to protect the sheep. In other similar alpine locations, I have seen numerous elk and deer as well as smaller mammals such as beaver, marmots, martin and small rodents. None of these were obviously present. I would have expected this to be good bear or wild habitat, but with all the trampling of vegetation and lack of native wildlife, these species were not present either. Birds were also quite scarce. I can't recall seeing any birds.

I cannot believe that allowing sheep grazing in such a location can provide significant economic returns to justify the amount of habitat destruction that is occurring. Wilderness areas should actually be capable of supporting their native vegetation and wildlife rather than being used as pasture land with the above detrimental impacts.

—Merri Martz

Going to the Pasayten Wilderness this summer?

While you travel the trails:

- Notice the condition of the land.
- Document sheep and cattle damage with your camera.
- Document befouled streams, campsites (again with your camera).
- Keep a journal of record.

Only by consciously documenting land management problems will we have evidence to produce change.

Bleating on the Wind in the Pasayten

JOURNAL NOTES OF KEVIN HERRICK

The first meadow full of flowers is always a welcome sight on the first day of a backpacking trip. Our group of four shed the packs a few miles up the trail in the Pasayten Wilderness to take a few pictures. Though it was late in August, a number of paintbrush and columbine still displayed their reds and purples in subdued late season tones.

By the end of the day, we hoofed our way into Horseshoe Basin. In comparison to the steep-sided and narrow valley bottoms we call basins in the Olympics and Cascades, Horseshoe Basin is open and expansive. Surrounded by accessible peaks with names like Baldy and Arnold, the basin embraces gurgling creeks, tundra wetlands, and broad meadows separated by stands of forest.

Early the next morning I awoke, threw on my puffy pile wind protection and headed up the nearest hill. Halfway up, as I crossed from morning shadow to warming sun, I noticed that something was amiss underfoot. Poop. Everywhere. Animal droppings are quite normal; in fact I have often been thankful for the fresh warning of bear ahead. But what first appeared to be sign of ungulate serengeti turned out to be sign of sheep, a lot of them.

All the way up to my morning peak and all the way down, sheep droppings littered the ground. I looked for the more familiar sign of deer. The natives were outnumbered. Deer scored only four piles to the hundreds belonging to sheep.

Later in the day I and my three companions basked in the sun a few miles from camp debating why we hadn't seen many flowers. Lateness of the season? Elevation? And just what did those sheep eat to produce so many piles of poop?

In the midst of our debate, our ears picked up the sound of bleating above us. We scrambled to our feet, clambered up a slope and broke out onto a high bench where the discovery of a flattened fence and a thin clearcut line through the forest informed us that we were standing on the US/Canada border. And coming right at us, from the north no less, was a long line of loud and round sheep.

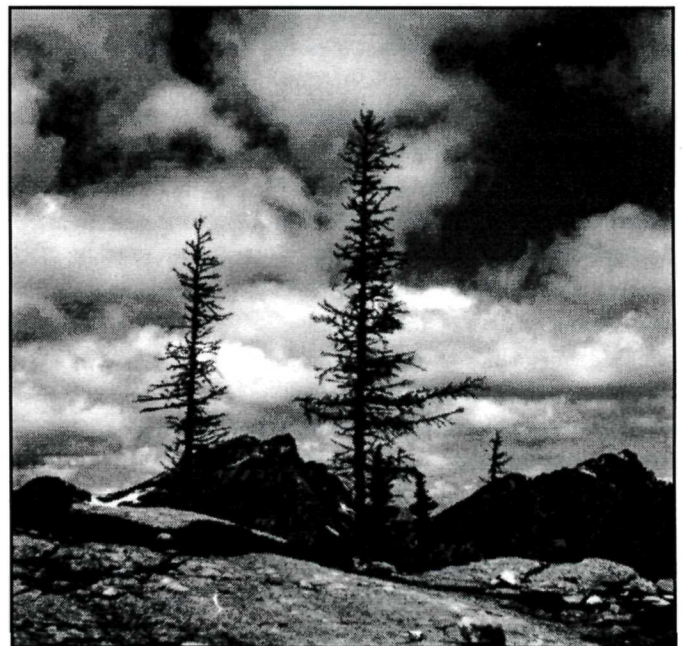
We watched quit a few of them immigrate until we grew bored and set off looking for a place where the sheep weren't and had not been. We were surprised to find that they had spent very little time in the lower portions of the basin this year. Nonetheless, our trail talk often turned to why sheep are allowed to graze in such a sensitive area, where the flowers had gone, and whether deer and other wildlife were losing out to the numerous and noisy woolly interlopers.

On one hand, the 1968 Congressional Act that designated the Pasayten Wilderness allowed grazing to continue in the area. On the other hand, the Forest Service is not required to allow so much grazing, and they have never taken a scientifically defensible look at grazing's impact on the area.

In the course of our basin wandering, we ran into a biologist who was doing field research and baseline studies on the basin's plant ecology. Like most astute scientists, he was not willing to give us any direct answers until his research is complete, however, it was clear that the basin holds numbers of beautiful native plants that are known to not coexist well with the eat-it-to-the-roots grazing habits of sheep. He also pointed out that the Forest Service's fire suppression policies had probably removed a powerful ecological force from the Pasayten.

An insistent bleating nearby interrupted my thoughts over dinner. The sounds of mobile lamb chops on the evening breeze reminded me that some people see land only in terms of potential financial profits. Forest Service employees are not immune to the land for profit argument. Their mandate includes charges to make public lands available for private use, including making money. But their mandate also includes the charge to conserve the wildlife and scenery.

In terms of sweeping views, the Pasayten scenery is grand and wondrous. But when sitting in the meadows, the absence of flowers found elsewhere in the region makes one wonder whether something isn't amiss here. A place that should be full of wildlife seems to be full of sheep. Maybe we weren't looking closely enough. And maybe on this and other trips to the Pasayten I have been unlucky. But just maybe the problem is that the Forest Service only hears from the people who like sheep and not enough from those who like wildlife.



The Pasayten — photo by Harvey Manning

Where the North Cascades Touch the Sea: Protecting Blanchard Mountain

BY RANDY WALCOTT AND KEN WILCOX

Blanchard Mountain is a local name for a “towering” 2,400-foot peak in the southern Chuckanut Range in northwestern Skagit County, adjacent to Larrabee State Park. By North Cascades’ standards, a couple of thousand feet isn’t exactly “towering,” but for a little mountain that rises abruptly from the sea (at Samish Bay, six miles south of Bellingham), it ain’t no small potato either.

Also known as Elephant Mountain and Oyster Dome, Blanchard is at the heart of a 4,000-acre tract of state trust land managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR). While many large clearcuts, old and new, scar the lower slopes of the mountain, as much as half of the area has not been logged since the 1920s, when railroad logging hauled away an incredible bounty of giant fir, cedar, and hemlock. Today, much of the maturing second-growth forest forms a core of virtually roadless wildlands containing Lily and Lizard Lakes, Oyster Creek, countless ponds and wetlands, the spectacular 300-foot cliffs of Oyster Dome, world-class views of islands and coast, and seventeen miles of maintained trails. Yet, DNR says the trees are “over-ripe,” and it plans to increase logging in the area, beginning with a new clearcut near Lizard Lake in 1999. (A Sierra Club appeal of this cut was recently dismissed.)

To some, Blanchard may not be pristine wilderness, but so close to an urban population it, is as good as it gets. And with most of a century already invested in its recovery from 1920s logging, some areas are beginning to develop the structure and complexity of an older forest. Because the area was not replanted, it has reforested naturally with much greater age and species diversity than might be found in a more typical Douglas-fir plantation. To harvest it all again now would be a tragic loss to our own and future generations.

There are many compelling reasons to preserve Blanchard Mountain: ecological, aesthetic, and recreational. To begin, the

area should not be conceptualized as an isolated fragment of timberland. On the contrary, it should be considered within a much larger context, i.e., the entire North Cascade ecosystem. An aerial view of Blanchard (or a quick glance at a relief map of Washington) identifies it as the westernmost point of the Northern Cascade Range, the only place where the North Cascades touch the sea. It is the first stepping stone of a major corridor of forested foothills extending from Samish Bay across the Lake Whatcom watershed, into the Nooksack River basin, and beyond to Mt. Baker. This aerial view is not only provocative but conveys an obvious significance of Blanchard Mountain as an integral component within the greater North Cascades ecosystem.

Rising 2,400 feet above Samish Bay, the mountain cradles Lily and Lizard Lakes, five creek systems, a variety of fresh water ponds and wetlands, sandstone and metamorphic cliffs, talus caves, several thousand acres of second-growth forest, and a small stand of old-growth Douglas fir, with some trees exceeding eight feet in diameter. As the central topographic feature of the Samish watershed, the mountain provides clean water to the communities of Alger, Bow, Edison, Blanchard and Colony Mountain. From the rich marine ecosystem of Samish Bay, Blanchard rises to 1,400 feet within a half mile of shore, a dramatic lift that forms the western margin of the corridor leading to the North Cascades. Few natural areas of such unique quality occur in the populous Puget Sound Basin. Where else can one view three snow-covered mountain ranges and the sun setting over dozens of lush, green islands—all from a single vantage point?

The area is also known for its sensitive fish and wildlife populations, including a host of neotropical birds, peregrine falcons, bald eagles, red-legged frogs, and Townsend’s long-eared bats, among others. Four out of five of the mountain’s creeks support native salmon and trout. Samish

Bay sustains a healthy shellfish industry at the mouth of Oyster Creek which depends on clean fresh water. Only through stringent protection and preservation will this area and the entire North Cascade corridor be able to retain its ecological integrity and biotic diversity.

Almost the entire span of Blanchard Mountain is public land managed by DNR. Most is in a trust called “Forest Board Transfer” which provides a financial return to Skagit County. Because it manages approximately 54 percent of the western portion of the Samish watershed, the policies of the DNR will significantly impact the health of the watershed. At present, the DNR’s management philosophy for Blanchard Mountain is “to integrate recreational use, wildlife use and other values with a working forest.”

The Chuckanut Preservation Alliance and the Mount Baker Group of the Sierra Club are seeking to change the status of these lands and have proposed that the area be redesignated as a Natural Resource Conservation Area through the Trust Land Transfer Program, and perhaps incorporated into adjacent *Larrabee State Park*. *These costs will be offset by economic, environmental and quality-of-life benefits through the protection of water quality, wildlife, salmon, and outstanding scenic and recreational opportunities.*

Northwest Washington’s booming population and extraordinary development pressures place the value of both wilderness and urban wildlands areas at a premium. In order to maintain the quality of life we enjoy, protection of areas such as Blanchard becomes even more critical. If we do not act to protect it, we will lose more than wild areas, recreation and tourism: we will forsake our responsibilities as stewards. We must act now to protect Blanchard Mountain.

For more information, call Randy Walcott at (360) 647-2807, or write the Chuckanut Preservation Alliance, P. O. Box 1722, Bellingham, WA 98227.

In Defense of Cougars

KEN WILCOX

Legislators have opted to make an end-run around the voters by weakening the rules on bear-baiting and hound-hunting of cougars. We might expect this kind of thing from House Co-Chair, Kelli Linville, one of our state's more wildlife-friendly senators and representatives to follow suit. Surprisingly, a majority of State Senate and House members have supported safety and threats to livestock.

In 1996, when voters overwhelmingly passed Initiative 655 (by a two-to-one margin), these concerns were already on the table. Virtually nothing has changed. Cougars and bears are no more of a threat today than they were then. The cougar population may have risen slightly, but there is no evidence that this is anything more than a usual blip in the natural population. It is widely known that cougars are highly territorial and that they will self-regulate their numbers if the habitat becomes overcrowded.

Supposedly, the number of "complaints" are up, but that's because anyone can now call anything a cougar and report it. Deer, otter, skunks, racoons and house pets are frequently mistaken for cougars by careless observers. Reliance on unverified complaints as a basis for wildlife management is not only fuel for hysteria, it's an embarrassment to good science.

So what's the problem? Are we all just a little frightened by these magnificent wild cats? If so, that's a healthy thing. These animals do deserve some respect. Yet the actual risk to humans is almost nil.

In Washington, over the past seventy-five years, cougars can take credit for only five attacks on humans, just one of them fatal. Most of those attacks have occurred since 1990, in a time of rapid population growth, contribute to more frequent cougar encounters. Nevertheless, the chance of being attacked are still far worse than the odds of winning the Washington Lotto jackpot-and that's seven million- to-one.

Instead of following the sorry lead of

Congress, our state legislators could have shown a little faith in the voters and made some attempt to put things in perspective. For instance, in 1997, one person died from a cougar attack nationwide. Some threat. The same year, five people were killed by falling television sets. Lightning, one of nature's premier killers, takes out nearly a hundred of us annually. In fact, we stand a much greater chance of being killed by man's best friend, Dog, than by bears, cougars, and all other native wildlife combined—and I don't hear any of our legislators clamoring for the eradication of dogs.

By contrast, our most fearsome predators, humans, kill hundreds of us every year. In 1996, 331 people were killed in alcohol-related traffic accident in Washington. Close to 250 were murdered outright, often by family members or supposed friends. Statewide, a thousand died from illnesses related to second-hand smoke. And all our legislators can point to is roughly one cougar incident in our state every other year. They call that justification for reinstating cruel hunting practices.

What about the riskier "problem" cougar or bear? The present law already allows us to capture, relocate, or kill a threatening animal, should that be necessary. In 1997, forty-seven cougars were destroyed for exactly that reason. Nearly as many black bears were also put down. The Department of Fish and Wildlife already has the authority to manage the hunt to aid in controlling the cougar population if and where it's needed. There is no need to weaken the law. There is no need to destroy our wildlife out of irrational fear.

In twenty-odd years of tramping about Washington's North Cascades, including several thousand miles of trail hiking and off-trail bush-bashing, I count myself among the lucky few ever to see cougars in the wild. I can claim a grand sum of two sightings, both along quiet back roads in the foothills.

The first, in the spring of 1981 near

Darrington, was barely a glimpse of fleeting fur and tail bounding across the two-lane highway into the forest-unmistakable even at a hundred yards. The second sighting, in the summer of 1996, occurred in the upper watershed of the South Fork Nooksack River, at much closer range. The cat froze like a stillness in the wind, then slipped into the forest. It was enough to take your breath away.

I cringe to think that our legislators can advocate sending radio-collared dogs after an innocent cougar, to confuse it and chase it up a tree, where anyone could kill it with a pot shot. Even the revered Zane Gray, a hunter with a heart as big as his brain, would consider it a cruel way to kill. This is not anti-hunting sentiment, this is anti-cruelty sentiment.

Before we knew better, we came very close to eliminating cougars from the lower forty-eight states. Fortunately, we've learned enough environmental civility over the last generation or two to give these creatures a fighting chance to restore and sustain their populations. Despite the rhetoric against them, cougars don't eat people. Sure, we can fear them, but we have the capacity to manage that fear out of pure respect for the animal, as well as an understanding of the risks involved.

We should celebrate the fact that cougars have found a way to survive the human intrusion on the landscape-and our historic attempts to eliminate them. If only our lynx, wolves, grizzlies, owls, and salmon could be so fortunate.

Ken Wilcox is a Bellingham resident and author of an upcoming book on the politics of protecting endangered species in America.

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TAKE BACK OUR TRAILS FOR FEET!

Motorcycles Roar Across National Forests

Club Launches Campaign To Protect Wild Areas From Machines

BY MARK LAWLER, CASCADE CHAPTER, SIERRA CLUB, NATIONAL FORESTS COMMITTEE CHAIR

In 1971 the Washington Legislature began a little-known program that has ballooned into a huge slush fund for motorcycle riders to take over vast areas of public lands and displace traditional users—hikers and horse riders. Since 1971 \$35 million has been spent on motorized recreational projects on National Forests and other public lands, but only \$4 million for non-motorized projects. This “NOVA” (Non-Highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activity) program uses a small portion of state gasoline taxes to fund these projects. Funds are allocated to the U.S. Forest Service and other agencies by a committee that is completely dominated by motorized interests. Even though Washington hikers outnumber off-road vehicle owners more than 32 to 1, hikers have only a single vote on the project review committee. Recognizing the bias in the review process, the Forest Service submits mostly motorcycle trail projects and has largely given up on submitting non-motorized projects.

What do these projects look like? NOVA can pay for everything from new trailhead parking lots to picnic areas, campgrounds, nature trails, and trails deep in the wilderness. However, the vast majority of funds are spent to “upgrade” hiking trails to benefit motorcycles. This is done by installing large concrete blocks on switchbacks and in muddy areas, widening and straightening the trails, building brand-new motorcycle trails into currently pristine roadless areas, and building motorcycle-friendly campgrounds at trailheads. A new federal fund established by the National Recreation Trails Fund Act is bringing even more dollars to the state to spend for more awful projects.

Hundreds of thousands of acres of the Wenatchee, Gifford Pinchot, and Okanogan National Forests have become dominated by motorcycle use because of the trail “improvements” paid by the state NOVA program. These motorized areas are often shunned by

hikers and horse riders who don’t want to deal with the noise, dust, smoke, mud, danger, and the rutted trails that can be impossible to walk on. Places like the Mad River country near Entiat, Manastash Ridge southeast of Snoqualmie Pass, parts of the Teanaway Mountains, and Blue Lake south of Packwood used to be popular hiking destinations but have been taken over by hordes of snarling motorcycles.

Washington’s rapidly growing hiking population must crowd into the ever-smaller non-motorized areas and Wilderness areas, adding to impacts to those areas and their trails. Wildlife species that need seclusion from human disturbance suffer from motorcycles in wild areas. Motorcycles often run rampant across meadows, lakeshores, and other fragile areas. Sierra Club and allied groups have challenged several motorcycle projects that would harm wildlife and the environment, but for every project we stop, many more get

At a time when the public regards preservation of our wild areas as a high priority, recreation and conservation groups (are working) to turn the state’s trail funding system upside-down and fund mostly non-motorized trail projects—to reflect the overwhelming numbers of muscle-powered trail users.

To make this happen, we need your help. Please send a postcard, letter, or e-mail to

your State House and Senate members in Olympia.

- Ask them to support legislation to reform the state NOVA program that funds trails and recreation facilities on our public lands.

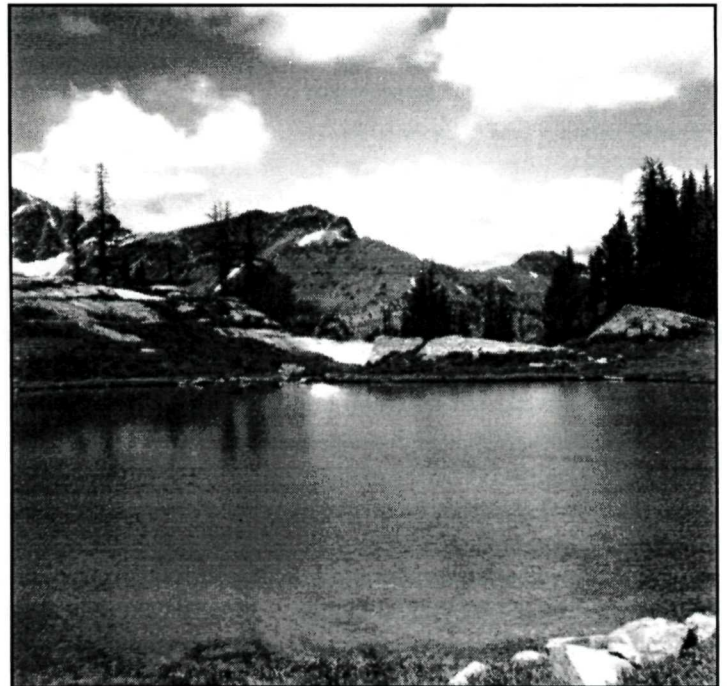
- State funding programs currently encourage motorized vehicles in our wild areas on public lands.

- Funding should instead be proportional to the overwhelming number of non-motorized trail users, who outnumber motorized trail users 32 to 1.

Motorized users have had a great ride for 27 years, at the expense of wilderness and the other people who use and cherish our public lands.

It’s time to reclaim our backcountry for the huge majority of us who don’t ride a machine on the trails. To get involved with our efforts to reform this program and protect our trails and wildlands, please contact:

**Mark Lawler at 206 632-1550/
mark.lawler@sierraclub.org**



Tarn — photo by Harvey Manning

LETTERS

December 29, 19989
North Cascades Conservation
Council
P.O. Box j95980
University Station
Seattle, WA 98145-1980

Dear Editor Manning:

I am writing to comment on Marc Bardsley's The President's Report, Winter 1997-1998, The Wild Cascades. I disagree with Marc's evaluation of the use of power tools in Wilderness Areas for trail maintenance, bridge construction and "amenities" improvement.

Marc cites the above machine assisted activities as being "non-conforming uses in Legislated Wilderness Areas". The use of power tools in legislated wilderness has been a subjective decision since the Wilderness Act. The use of power tools in wilderness is not clearly defined in the Act and Regional Foresters have, at their discretion, the ability to apply or waive the power tools ban.

In the case of our own North Cascades National Park, some 90% of which is Legislated Wilderness, all trail maintenance is accomplished using power tools. How can this be! And, since this is so, how can NCCC point finger at the maintenance practices in the Glacier Peak or Alpine Lakes Wilderness areas knowing what is going on in our own beloved, omnipotent N.C.N.P.?

The premise appears to be "build or maintain the trails and they will

come." Abandoning or inefficiently maintaining trails to achieve a reduction in "wilderness use" is counter productive. We've lost too many trails this century. First to road and dam building and now to abandonment. Well constructed, historically significant trail have been damaged due to maintenance neglect coupled with continued use. the result is ad hoc re-routes, cut switchbacks, and plugged drainage creating braided multiple trail scars and erosion.

A classic example is the situation with the Downey Creek and Bachelor Creek trails in the Glacier Peak Wilderness. both Downey and Bachelor have not seen maintenance in years. Bachelor has been consciously abandoned by the Forest Service to preserve the "wilderness" character of the Dome Peak area, while Downey's neglect is apparently due to budgetary constraints. However, each year more and more people travel to the Ptarmigan Traverse with the vast majority traveling North to South starting at the meticulously maintained Cascade Pass trail in N.C.N.P. I wonder how many know what awaits them at the end of their journey?

The upper Bachelor grade is still intact and can be followed. The brushy mid-section is an overgrown mess. The lower third, which 25 years ago was a lovely grade switchbacking through beautiful old growth, now consists of a steep eroded chute alongside the raging creek. Within the first three miles of

the Downey trail below the Bachelor Creek junction we encountered over 100 blowdowns, including several huge cedars. Crews have surveyed the challenge but I wonder if anyone will contract to hand clear them, and at what cost? This form of hand logging is essentially a lost art. If the trail is to be cleared why not get a competent powered crew in and get it done. Hand trail maintenance costs are approximately double those of power assisted rates. This is the epitome of "political correctness" in the wilderness and I think it is stupid.

We lost the Granite Creek and Early Winters Creek trails to that "golly darn" highway (although most of these trails actually still "exist"!) The Skagit trail taken out by "golly darn" series of lakes. The list of recently abandoned trails is even longer. The wonderfully scenic Monument Creek trail (Pistol Pass - Pasayten Wilderness) has not seen maintenance for many years. Devore and Company Creek trails (Stehekin - Glacier Peak Wilderness) abandoned. We need to keep the trails we have and they should be maintained as efficiently as possible.

In twenty-five years of hiking and climbing in the Cascades and Olympics, I can count on a single hand the number of times I have encountered a trail crew in the back country. And when I do, I bow down and kiss their chain saws.

Don Goodman

NCCC President Marc Bardsley Replies

January 29, 1999

I am grateful for Don Goodman taking issue with my editorial regarding trail maintenance

and mechanized solutions to problems in legislated wilderness areas. This issue is a sticky one and just about everyone has an opinion.

First of all, Don and I agree on quite a few points; use of power tools in wilderness is discretionary and loss of trails from roads, logging, impoundments, and

motorized vehicles is unacceptable. We both apparently feel the need to keep most of our existing trails- both in and out of Wilderness areas. Furthermore, there is a need to construct new and improved trails in selected non-wilderness areas and to reopen many of the old trails which have been abandoned. I personally know dozens of abandoned climbers', miner's, and fire trails which access areas with little potential for overuse. Can we all get together someday and brush a few out?

Having said this, I would also like to reiterate my opinion that there are certain areas which may be better off with limited access. The Ptarmigan Traverse would seem an ideal locale for a debate on the merits of hardened campsites, trail amenities, and camping permits. I would expect that rebuilding the Bachelor Creek trail would eventually lead to campsite rationing similar to The Enchantments or Mt Rainier and a perceptible loss of wilderness character to the Traverse itself. This may happen anyway, given the ease of access from Cascade Pass. I think in this case, the USFS is doing a favor for those who relish the remote aspects of this area. As you say, "if you build it, they will come". But that is not to say that this criteria of discouraging use should apply everywhere.

There are definitely areas of legislated Wilderness which should retain their existing trail systems and can no doubt do so without major compromises to their wilderness character. In these locations, I wholeheartedly support excellent trail maintenance.

It may be true that hand maintenance is somewhat more expensive, I don't have the data, but sincerely

hope that it is not a "lost art form". You have to wonder how the thousands of miles of trails were built before the advent of the chain saw. The country was certainly not as wealthy as it is today.

I am personally willing to devote additional tax dollars and personal time as an investment in something I love as much as wilderness. We all know

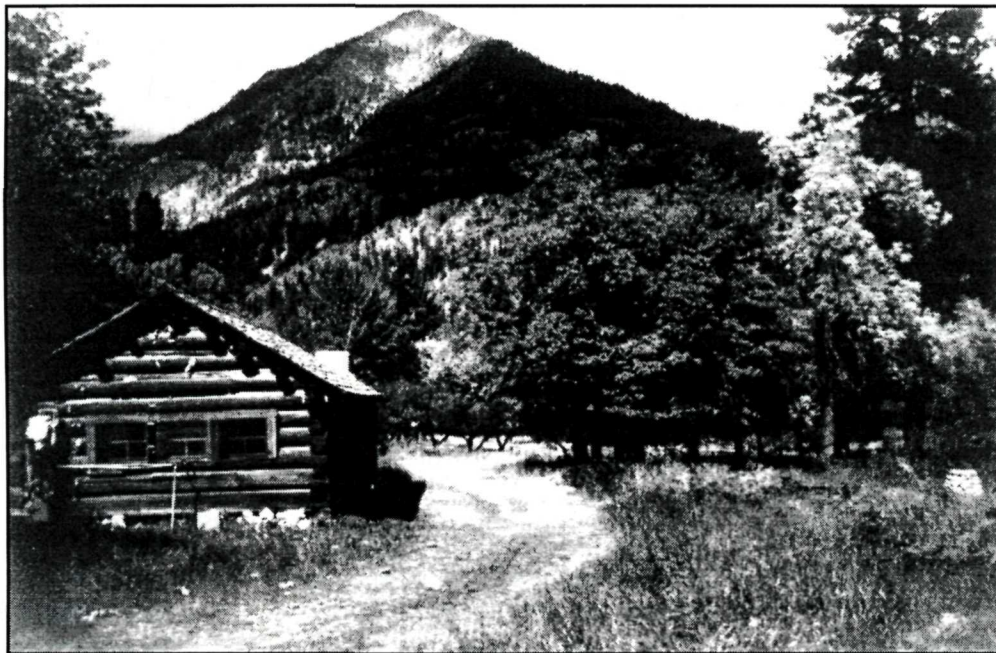
there are many people who would not mind working in the back country for the summer at a reasonable wage.

I again want to thank Don for sharing his viewpoint. I want to say that we need to demand that govern-

ment agencies, including the NPS, examine each case of mechanized Wilderness activity.

Allowing some areas to remain primitive is a legitimate and worthwhile option. The "old-fashioned way" of construction and maintenance should not be rejected automatically. A serious assessment must be made to determine whether the proposed mechanized activity is truly worthwhile in light of declining available wilderness experiences - or is it merely administrative convenience?

Marc Bardsley
President, North Cascades Conservation Council



Orchard — photo by Harvey Manning

VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED

If you are interested in publication work,
the editor of *The Wild Cascades* would love to talk with you.
Graphic design and layout skills would be helpful.
Computer word processing is a must.

Please call Betty Manning (425-746-1017)
or email: pmanning@sttl.uswest.net.

Membership Application

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

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

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The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC), formed in 1957, works through legislative, legal and public channels to protect the lands, waters, plants and wildlife of the North Cascades ecosystem. Non-tax-deductible, it is supported by dues and donations. A 501(c)4 organization.
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CONSTRUCTION ON THE LAKESHORE TRAIL!

The Chelan Lakeshore Trail is on everybody's short list of the gratest walks in the nation. One would think, therefore, that the National Park Service, caretaker of the final stretch of the trail into Stehekin, would do its bounden duty there, if anywhere. However, on that final stretch, at Hazard Creek, a step and a half from Stehekin Landing, is a tract of private property.

Despite continuing efforts by the North Cascades Conservation Council to get the properties purchased — efforts intensified these last 10 years — the National Park Service never has got its act together. Even after the owner had a subdivision approved by Chelan County, the NPS failed to take the matter seriously. The NCCC tried to pull together private foundation support for purchase (\$400,000 or so probably would have done it) but no go.

Construction has begun. It may total three large structures — right on the Lakeshore Trail. So, what becomes of the trail?

Will the National Park Service have the guts to assert adverse possession of the right-of-way that comes with nearly 150 years of public use?

And what sort of treatment will the land receive at private hands? And public walkers?

When Superintendent Paleck moves on to wherever, will he proudly cite this episode on his resume?

THE WILD CASCADES

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