



Olympic Update

The Quarterly Newsletter of Olympic National Park

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A Message From the Superintendent

With winter arriving and over seven feet of snow at Hurricane Ridge, we are looking forward to another busy season at Olympic National Park. Construction workers at the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center are hard at work to complete the building renovations. Details about this and other park projects appear later in

this newsletter.

We'd like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a happy holiday season and a safe and peaceful new year. We hope that the coming year will bring you many occasions to visit and enjoy your Olympic National Park.

As ever, we are interested in hearing from you. Barb Maynes, the park public information officer can be reached at 360/452-0317.

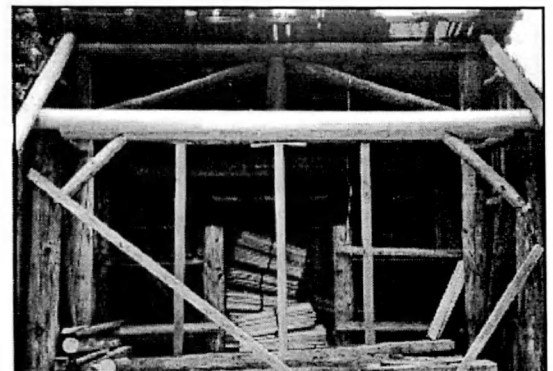
David Morris
Superintendent

Park Fees Fund Bear-Proof Trash Cans and Other Improvements

Despite this year's dip in park visitation, proceeds from the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program returned over \$1.5 million to support park projects.

By next summer, there will be 40 new bear-resistant trash cans in the park, thanks to \$30,000 in proceeds from the fee demonstration program. The cans will be placed at front country visitor use areas and trailheads around the park, including Hurricane Ridge, Sol Duc and the Hoh. Interactions between humans and black bears in the park have increased in recent years and both park staff and visitors are making additional efforts to keep human food and trash away from wild animals.

The Deer Park area received considerable attention over the summer. Two new accessible vault privy toilets were installed at the campground and both shelters at Deer Park have been stabilized for the winter. One shelter has been completely repaired; additional work to the other shelter and the Deer Park ranger station will be completed next spring.



New beams and support structure at Deer Park Ranger Station

More landscaping improvements will be made to the headquarters area this winter. \$7,500 in fee money will be used to contract with the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC).

The WCC crew will clear excess downed wood from the woods around the park administration building and will also remove non-native plants such as trailing blackberry and English holly. This

work is part of the large-scale headquarters area landscape restoration begun this spring. \$75,000 in fee demonstration program proceeds is funding this multi-year project.

Wilderness restoration projects resumed this fall at the Potholes, Hoh Lake, Dose Forks and Lillian River. Twelve volunteers from the group *Wilderness Volunteers* worked for a week at the Potholes,

planting over 8,000 native plants and helping to restore social trails and denuded ground in that area.



Park Hosts Distinguished Visitors

Olympic National Park hosted two distinguished groups this summer. In July, member of the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee spent nearly three days at Olympic, as part of their five-day tour of the Northwest. The committee members, who included local Congressman Norm Dicks, toured Hurricane Ridge, the Elwha Dam and walked to Sol Duc Falls. Key points of discussion included the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program, Elwha River restoration and the ongoing need

for more complete and in-depth natural resource information.

In September, Port Angeles and Olympic National Park were the sites for a board meeting of the National Park Foundation, the official non-profit partner of the National Park Service. In addition to the Foundation's board, board Chairman Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt attended, as did National Park Service Director Robert Stanton. Established by Congress in 1967, the Foundation is charged with developing financial support for the national parks and in the past five years, has donated over \$42 million to America's national park areas.

Winter Arrives at Hurricane Ridge

With four feet of snow at Hurricane Ridge, winter seems to be settling in. Preparations for the busy winter season are underway, even as construction continues on the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center.

Construction crews are now focused on interior renovations to the visitor center. While most of the upstairs has been completed, extensive remodeling is still in progress on the lower level. Throughout the winter, the restrooms on the lower level will

be open to the public, but the rest of the lower level will remain closed for construction. Beginning December 18, ski rentals and hot drinks will be provided on the upper level, however food service will not be available this winter.



The downhill ski area will open on Sunday, December 19. Park ranger-educators offer guided snowshoe walks at 2 p.m. on Friday through Sunday, beginning on December 17.

The Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center has been undergoing a major renovation this year. This project, totaling \$1.4 million, is being funded through concessionaire's franchise fees, government-appropriated money, and park user fees. Built in 1952, the visitor center had long been plagued with leaks and poor access through the building.

Weather Dampens Visitation

With last winter's heavy snowfall and three-month Hurricane Ridge closure, combined with the summer's cool and rainy weather, Olympic's overall visitation through October declined 9 percent compared to the first ten months of 1998. As of October 30, there had been approximately 3.9 million visits to the park.

Perspectives Series to Begin in December

To help brighten the long days of winter, the park's resource education staff is planning a free monthly speaker series. Once a month from December through March, area residents and visitors will have the opportunity to hear local experts talk about their perspectives on Olympic National Park, as well as other national parks around the globe. Tim McNulty, author of the award-winning book *Olympic National Park: A Natural History* will open

the series by exploring the rich biological diversity of Olympic National Park and the larger ecosystem of which it is a part.

The *Perspectives* programs will be offered free of charge on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Olympic National Park Visitor Center. A reception will follow each presentation.



Elwha Interim Management Plan Under Development



In February 2000, the Federal government will acquire the approximately 1,000 acres surrounding the Elwha dam and Lake Aldwell, as well as the Glines Canyon dam, along with its hydroelectric plant and 160 acres within Olympic National Park.

The Glines Canyon property is located within Olympic National Park and will be permanently added to the park and managed by the National Park Service.

However, Lake Aldwell and the land associated with Elwha dam are located outside the park boundaries; a

long-term managing agency for this land has not been selected yet. The National Park Service will serve as interim land manager and is currently developing an interim management plan, with the goal of generally maintaining the current level and type of public use and access.

A letter explaining the interim planning process and asking for public input on the process was mailed to over 1,200 individuals and groups in early October. About 60 comments were received from interested groups and individuals.

The Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act (the Elwha Act) of 1992 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams and to fully restore the river's ecosystem and native anadromous fisheries. In accordance with the Elwha Act, the purchase price of the two dams is set at \$29.5 million. Other terms of the purchase have been under negotiation between the National Park Service and the dams' owners and operators, the Fort James Paper Company, and Daishowa America since last January.

Pack Basket Dated at 2,900 Years Before Present



Left near Obstruction Point nearly 3,000 years ago, a woven cedar basket confirms that Native Americans have used and traveled through the Olympic Mountains for centuries. Found by a park visitor in 1993, the basket was recently radiocarbon dated by a lab in Florida and was found to be about 2,900 years old.

Often referred to as a “burden basket”, the Obstruction Point basket was held in place with a “tump line” around a person’s head and was used to pack fish, plants or other materials. It is similar to others found in coastal archeological sites in Washington and British Columbia. Comparable baskets were also used in historic times.

The spoken history of the Olympic Peninsula’s indigenous people tells of centuries of mountain use. Tribal members have used the mountains for hunting and plant gathering, and as a travel route to other groups and areas.

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