

Olympic National Park Update

The Quarterly Newsletter of Olympic National Park

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As many of you know, 1998 is a year of noteworthy anniversaries. With our neighbors and a host of partners, we celebrated Olympic National Park's first 60 years with a birthday party and trail dedication on August 10. Other groups related to the park are also marking special anniversaries this year and we offer our congratulations to Olympic Park Associates, formed 50 years ago, the Olympic Park Institute, established 10 years ago and *The Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund*, celebrating its fifth anniversary.

Yet to come is a commemorative event, scheduled for November 14 at the Seattle REI store, to mark the tenth anniversary of the Washington Park Wilderness Act. This Act designated and preserves a total of 1.7 million acres of wilderness within Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic National Parks.

As we celebrate our shared history, it is also vital to consider and plan for the future. The final Lake Crescent Management Plan was released earlier this month. Meanwhile, an initial public meeting was held to gather input to be used in developing a Commercial Services Plan for the park. More information about this plan is included in this newsletter.

As always, we appreciate your input on park issues, plans and activities. Barb Maynes, the park's public information specialist, can be reached at (360) 452-4501, extension 207.

Sincerely,



David K. Morris
Superintendent

Fee Dollars at Work!

User fees at Olympic National Park have funded the following projects.

- At Hoh Lake, wilderness permit fees have funded a series of improvements

and repairs to area trails and campsites. Park staff and volunteers are working this fall to widen sections of the Hoh Lake trail will be widened and improved to allow safe passage for stock animals and provide better erosion control. Sections of rotten

bridge planking will be replaced with longer lasting gravel turnpikes.

Additionally, subalpine vegetation will be restored to areas denuded by heavy use by the planting of over 20,000



native plants, propagated and grown in the Olympic National Park greenhouse.

A new composting privy and food-hanging facility will be installed, as well as a group campsite 1/2 mile below the lake, providing better facilities for groups of 7-12 people.

- The Olympic National Park Visitor Center in Port Angeles will be re-sided this fall by an Everett-based contractor. Originally scheduled for a simple re-painting, close examination of the visitor center revealed water seepage problems related to the tongue and groove siding. This situation has led to repeated problems with blistering and flaking paint; new siding will remedy the problems.
- New concrete vault toilets were installed this summer at East Beach, and Whiskey Bend and the Sol Duc trailhead. By the end of October, additional vault toilets will be in place at Deer Park and the Boulder Creek and Ruby Beach trailheads. A new restroom, with running water and flush toilets will also be installed this October at the Quinault Ranger Station

- Fee money also funded a new roof for the Hoh Visitor Center, which was installed by Sandpiper Roofing of Port Angeles.
- Thanks to an infusion of \$50,000 from the fee demonstration program, the trail crew was able to clear close to 400 miles of park trails this year, a significant increase over recent years.

In particular, crews worked on the Bogachiel trail for approximately two and a half months this summer, removing over 400 fallen trees and replacing a 35-foot long bridge. The Queets River trail was also cleared this year. Neither of these trails had been cleared in the past four to five years.

- The road crew has spent much of the summer and early autumn continuing to improve gravel roads in the Quinault area. Fee money has funded the placement of new culverts on both the North Fork and Graves Creek Roads. This work is in addition to the extensive repairs begun last winter and spring.

Park Offers New Tools and Resources for Teachers

Park educators will unveil several new resources for teachers this fall. A new ecosystem discovery trunk will soon be available. This trunk, designed for K-8th graders, is packed full of hands-on materials, activities and background information about ecosystems and the role

national parks play in protecting them. This trunk will soon be available for teachers to check out for use in the classroom.

On October 16, Port Angeles teachers will have the opportunity to attend one of two park workshops during their in-service day. These workshops will offer ideas for how teachers can use the park and its resources as teaching tools. Park educators will also demonstrate the park's Discovery Trunks and *Olympic Odyssey* CD-ROM.

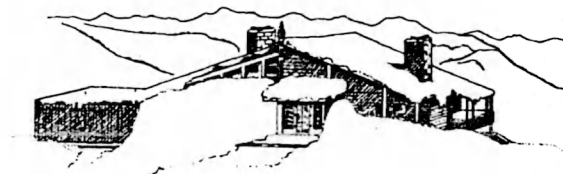
The JASON Foundation for Education, a non-profit educational foundation, has recently developed a curriculum focusing on rainforests, both temperate and tropical. The temperate rainforests of Olympic National Park are a featured element of this curriculum and park education staff will soon be ready to offer workshops in using this international, yet locally oriented curriculum. For more information on this curriculum, teachers or other educators may wish to consult the JASON Project website at <http://www.jasonproject.org> or call Olympic National Park at (360) 452-4501 ext. 234.

Major Renovation Planned for Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center

Architectural drawings are now being developed for a major rehabilitation of the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center. Completed in 1957, the building has long been plagued with a leaky roof and walls, inadequate insulation and difficult access for physically challenged visitors.

The renovation will include installation of a new roof and insulation in the walls and ceiling spaces. Additionally, all exterior windows and doors will be replaced with new weather tight models and repairs will be made to the building's exterior walls. The existing terrace will also be replaced and some additional space for the giftshop and cafeteria.

Funding for this project will come from a variety of sources, including concessionaire's franchise fees, government-appropriated money, and proceeds from park user fees. Construction is planned to begin early in the summer of 1999 and be completed by that autumn. The building is scheduled to remain open throughout this time.



Park Building Improvements

Seasonal employee housing at Heart O'the Hills, the Hoh, and Kalaloch were re-roofed this summer. The park headquarters building in Port Angeles and two employee-housing units at Lake Crescent will also be re-roofed this fall.

Work Begins on Hoh River Trail

Between September 25 and 27, an Army Chinook helicopter flew over 600,000 pounds of gravel to the "Miracle Mile" on

the Hoh River trail. This area, between miles three and four on the trail, was damaged by flooding during the winter of 1993-94 and will be repaired and rebuilt this fall. The gravel will be used to rebuild the trail and create gravel turnpiking to replace old puncheon bridges. Personnel from the Army Reserve's 70th Regional Support Command, based at Fort Lewis, used this operation as a training exercise, donating all helicopter and staff time to the park.

New Commercial Services Plan Under Development

Approximately 20 people took part in a public meeting on September 22 to discuss the park's new Commercial Services Plan. The meeting was designed to allow the public and park staff to explore and identify the scope of issues and services to be addressed in the plan.

The plan will address all types of commercial services and will determine the range and type of services that are necessary and appropriate in the park. The draft plan, with a companion environmental assessment, will be released for public comment within a year.

Park Celebrates 60th Anniversary

The park celebrated its first 60 years of stewardship with a birthday party on August 10 at the Olympic National Park Visitor Center. About 200 people were on hand to help mark the occasion.

The event was planned and organized by the City of Port Angeles Parks and Recreation Department, the North Olympic Peninsula Visitor and Convention Bureau, the Olympic Peninsula Travel Association, and the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce, along with Olympic National Park. Numerous local businesses donated refreshments and supplies for the public event.

Living Forest Trail Open at Olympic National Park Visitor Center

The visitor center's new accessible loop trail, now named the Living Forest Trail, was officially opened and dedicated on August 10th, as part of the park's sixtieth birthday party. A Washington Conservation Corps crew will make further improvements this fall and winter, by constructing a small amphitheater and a



short spur trail to view interesting features. This new trail provides a universally accessible route for school groups, local residents and others to explore the forest immediately adjacent to the visitor center.

Lake Crescent Lodge Improvements

Lake Crescent Lodge has a newly restored sun porch, with modern weather-tight windows but the same historic appearance and ambience.

Workers are currently installing new lighting and new paving on the pathways around the lodge. When complete, this will provide adequate lighting between all of the lodge buildings and the parking lots. All of the trails will be universally accessible and will provide links to the Moments in Time trail.

Lake Crescent Lodge is owned by the National Park Service and operated by National Park Concessions, Inc. (NPCI). Both projects have been funded by the concessionaire's franchise fees and are being jointly managed by NPCI and Olympic National Park.

News from the *Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund*

Two important projects have been funded so far this year by support from *the Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic Fund*. *The Fund* has contributed nearly \$23,000 this year for Olympic projects. \$20,900 funded the rehabilitation of the Camp Pleasant, about six miles uptrail from the Staircase trailhead in the Hood Canal district of the park. An all-volunteer trail crew from the Student Conservation Association repaired area trails,

constructed a new stock camp, relocated a privy, and revegetated campsites at Camp Pleasant. This major contribution from *The Fund* was made possible by a gift from an anonymous donor.

The Fund also awarded \$2,000 for the purchase and installation of new benches and a mist controller for the park greenhouse. Between 25,000 and 40,000 native plants are grown each year in the park greenhouse for use in wilderness restoration projects.

Since its inception in 1994, *The Fund* has supported 16 projects in Olympic National Park with donations totaling nearly \$143,000.

To learn more about *The Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic Fund* and its work with Washington State's national parks, call (206) 621-6565.

Park Visitation

As of the end of August, park visitation for the year has decreased six percent compared to the first eight months of 1997. So far, there have been approximately 3,668,300 visits to the park this year.

Last year's visitation was the highest ever at Olympic National Park, with an estimated 5,023,000 recorded visits. This was a 15 percent increase over the number of visits in 1996.

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