



On the horizon

For a century, stewards of North Cascades have strived to welcome people to protect and manage our public lands. Although over time boundaries have changed the goal of stewardship remains. North Cascades National Park Service Complex and the U.S. Forest Service aim to provide everyone with a great wilderness experience and to encourage visitors to connect with nature.

The Ross Lake National Recreation Area (NRA) General Management Plan started in 2005. The Park Service involved the community to identify issues, concerns and alternatives for future management actions. A Draft General Management Plan, which will incorporate environmental impact assessments and public comment, will be released in spring 2009.

The Stehekin River Corridor Implementation Plan began in 2007 to address changing flood patterns in the Stehekin Valley. Other park-wide planning efforts include wilderness management, fire management, a long-range interpretive plan and National Park Service Centennial initiatives.

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest has been participating in a Recreation Facility Analysis designed to help forests align their developed recreation sites with the unique characteristics of the area, projected recreation demand, visitor expectations, and revenue.

During 2008, the outcome will be documented in a proposed 5-year program designed to: provide recreation opportunities best suited for the national forest; operate and maintain recreation sites to meet national quality standards; and eliminate or reduce recreation site deferred maintenance.

North Cascades National Park and the U.S. Forest Service are reducing their carbon footprints. Now a member of the Climate Friendly Parks Program, North Cascades has established onsite energy and water conservation practices and is incorporating sustainable design and renewable energy sources. Both agencies are involved in green purchasing initiatives and conservation efforts.



Roger Christophersen measures glacial depth.

North Cascades National Park is preparing for the National Park Service Centennial celebration in 2016. This year, the park is moving forward with three projects to engage the public in park research and stewardship.

Junior Ranger Program:
An opportunity for families visiting the park to mix recreation with education. Junior Ranger booklets have fun activities, encouraging participants to visit multiple sites within the park.

Welcoming a Diverse Community:
Local communities are comprised of a variety of ethnic and cultural groups. In a focused outreach effort, the park and forest service are helping people learn that national parks and forest lands are places for family fun, learning and recreation.

Understanding High Elevation Climate Conditions:
The North Cascades are home to glaciers, snowfields and subalpine and alpine flora and fauna. These resources are affected by climate change. A high elevation climate station near Silver Glacier will allow scientists to monitor changing weather patterns and offer insight into the broader effects of global climate change. See page 13 for an in-depth look at the ongoing study.

Celebrate Anniversaries “The North Cascades are Calling”

North Cascades National Park and the Ross Lake and Lake Chelan NRAs are celebrating their 40th anniversary this summer with a variety of public activities and volunteer opportunities.

Within a decade, on November 10, 1978, Congress designated 158 and one-half miles of the Skagit River and its tributaries—the Sauk, Suitttle and Cascade Rivers—as the Skagit Wild & Scenic River System.

Congress established North Cascades National Park Service Complex on Oct. 2, 1968, but the North Cascades and upper Skagit River attracted tourist decades prior. In the 1920s and 1930s thousands of people journeyed from Rockport to Newhalem by train to enjoy the mountains and to visit the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project.

Today visitors use the North Cascades Scenic Highway to access national park and forest service lands.

The U.S. Forest Service celebrates its centennial in 2008, recognizing the division of the Washington reserve into two sections, from Canada south to the Skagit River, named the Washington Forest; and from the Skagit River to the Green River, establishing the Snoqualmie National Forest.

In 1924, the Washington Forest was renamed Mt. Baker National Forest. Thirty years ago, in 1978 the Mt. Baker and Snoqualmie forests merged.

Also in 2008, the park and forest service will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

During the development of the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the inclusion of the Skagit River watershed reflects on its extraordinary nature. These clean waters provide a healthy home to all five species of pacific salmon, two species of trout and nearly three hundred species of wildlife including black-tailed deer, bald eagle, black bear and osprey.

Volunteer

For westside projects contact Michael Brondi at: (360) 854-7275

For eastside projects contact Vicki Gempko at: (360) 854-7365 ext. 17

For river stewards projects: Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group at: (360) 336-0172 or www.skagitfisheries.org

The Skagit Land Trust at: (360) 428-7878 or www.skagitlandtrust.org

For 40 years, the Skagit has epitomized the spirit of collaboration envisioned by the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act through an emphasis on partnerships and education as the principal river management tools. The Skagit's wild and scenic designation facilitated the creation of vital relationships with the public and offered unprecedented opportunities to discuss resource stewardship.

As part of the celebration, the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest plans to acknowledge partners for their exceptional contributions to river conservation. Recently, Blue Sky Outfitters, of Marblemount, was recognized for their sponsorship of the third annual Skagit River Cleanup.

On March 15-16 more than 40 volunteers removed approximately 1.8 tons of debris from the Upper Skagit River between Copper Creek and Faber's Ferry boat launches. The recovered refuse ranged from an office copy machine, the frame of an early model Ford, metal roofing, a hide-a-bed frame to a bathroom sink.

The 2008 anniversaries remind us to keep an eye on the horizon and plan to continue connecting people to nature and increasing everyone's understanding of the North Cascades ecosystem.

Join the National Park and U.S. Forest Service in becoming stewards of your park by volunteering time to various programs. Volunteering can help you have fun while caring for your public lands. For a list of volunteer opportunities see page 14.



GO FISHING

Fishing in Washington, including in National Parks and Forests, requires a valid Washington state fishing license. The Skagit River, one of Washington's major watersheds, is home to seven species of anadromous fish (five types of salmon and two types of trout) and freshwater trout and char.

Diablo and Gorge Lakes have been stocked with rainbow and cutthroat trout. Ross Lake offers quality sport fishing opening annually on July 1. Lake Chelan has fresh water cod, trout and kokanee, a land-locked species of salmon. The Stehekin River offers rainbow and cutthroat trout. Comply with special regulations listed in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Sport Fishing Regulations, available wherever licenses are sold, and online at: wdfw.wa.gov

HORSEBACK RIDING

Stock animals are welcome on trails maintained to stock standards. Trail rules and seasons of use vary and special rules apply in wilderness areas.

- » Stock parties are limited to 12 (people + animals) on trails.
- » Grazing is permitted in the national forest without a permit. But all stock must use weed-free or processed feed while on National Forest lands in Wilderness Areas and at Wilderness trailheads.
- » Grazing with a permit is allowed in the Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas. This can be obtained with your backcountry permit.
- » Grazing is prohibited in the national park; pack in processed food pellets.

TRAVELING WITH YOUR DOG

Dogs are not permitted on trails or in cross-country areas within the national park. Leashed dogs are allowed in Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas, along the Pacific Crest Trail and along roads in the national park.

Dogs are allowed in the National Forest but must be leashed in developed recreation areas. For safety reasons, dogs are not allowed on Table Mountain Trail 681 in the Heather Meadows Area.

FLOAT THE RIVER

River floating is an excellent adventure worth planning. Experienced boaters run the Skagit, Nooksack and Stehekin Rivers. Ask for a list of local outfitters at any ranger station.

PADDLE YOUR CANOE, KAYAK

Kayaking, canoeing and motor boating are other options. No personal watercraft (jet skis, etc.) are allowed in North Cascades National Park Service Complex. Boat and paddling rentals are available at Baker Lake, Ross Lake and Lake Chelan. Ramps are located at Baker Lake, Gorge Lake, Diablo Lake, Lake Chelan and the north end of Ross Lake at Hozomeen.

HIKING TRAILS & CLIMBING PEAKS

Hundreds of miles of trails lead into the North Cascades. Storm damage may affect your trip, so check trail conditions before you leave. Most long hikes and climbs enter designated Wilderness areas where special restrictions may apply. Climbers should choose experienced partners or licensed guides and fill out Voluntary Climbing Registers at the station nearest your climb. Ask for a Wilderness Trip Planner and Climbing Notes or a list of outfitter guides. Visit the Park and Forest Web sites for current recreation reports and climbing information.

NORTH CASCADES CYCLE

Many people tour across the North Cascades by bicycle. Always travel single file on the right side of the road, use reflectors and wear bright clothing. Ask for the bulletin *Cycling the North Cascades Highway* at any ranger station. Mountain biking is not permitted on park complex trails or on most westside forest trails. However, riding is allowed on roads and on designated trails. Canyon Ridge Trail (off Canyon Creek Road, FS Road 31) and forest roads offer challenging mountain biking.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Children between the ages of 5 and 12 are invited to become Junior Rangers. Stop by a visitor center to pickup a Junior Ranger booklet and complete the program requirements.

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Enjoy a day of adventure with the Family Fun Pack. These free-to-borrow backpacks include:

- field guides
- books
- games
- an activity journal
- binoculars
- magnifying glass

Ask for a Family Fun Pack at the Golden West or the North Cascades National Park Visitor Center and start exploring today!

HOMeward BOUND

Introduce children to Homeward Bound and get them excited about an upcoming trip to the park. In this interactive online game, step into a ranger's shoes and learn about important environmental issues while completing challenges. Children can design a river habitat for salmon species, identify birds of prey and forest carnivores, explore the park's history through archeology and much more! Begin the adventure today at: www.nps.gov/archive/noca/journey/home.htm

Also a great teaching tool for the classroom!



Left: Visitors fish off the dock at Diablo Lake in Ross Lake NRA

Middle: Visitors walk across a hanging bridge at Maple Creek



Above: Campers enjoy a sunny weekend at Goodell Creek campground