



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rainier National
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Mount Rainier National Park News Release

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Volunteer Flood Recovery Efforts Continue at Mount Rainier

Mount Rainier National Park has had a tremendous response from local volunteers, who have spent the first part of summer helping to repair trails and clean up campgrounds in the wake of last November's storms. "There's still a lot to be done," said Kevin Bacher, the park's Volunteer Program Manager.

"A lot of the work close to the road has already been completed," said Bacher, "And Highway 123 is closed completely, so the repair work underway there is hard to see. But if you take a short walk on almost any trail, you can see what we're up against." Major trail work is continuing on the Wonderland Trail east of Longmire, in Stevens Canyon, and both east and south of Carbon River. The Glacier Basin and Eastside Trails remain heavily damaged. Volunteers have contributed substantially to the repairs, and many opportunities remain for helping out.

An estimated 2,000 people called or e-mailed the park to offer their help over the winter, and more calls come in every day. As of July 16, more than 700 had already contributed their time. "And it's still early in the season," said Bacher. "Last year we had 924 volunteers through the end of September. We'll end up with many more than that this year. There's still lots of time for people to sign up."

The Student Conservation Association (SCA), a national volunteer organization, is helping with volunteer flood recovery efforts by recruiting and leading groups of public volunteers on projects throughout the park. The work includes trail repair, of course, but also habitat restoration, "meadow roving," and a project to restore the historic Longmire Campground for use by volunteer groups in the future. The campground project is suitable for families, so "bring your kids and come help," said Jill Baum, Program Director for SCA's Mount Rainier Recovery Initiative. Baum heads a team of 14 Corps members who lead volunteer projects and live in the Longmire Campground for the summer. They are part of more than 80 people serving in the park this summer through SCA.

Mount Rainier National Park recruited SCA to help with the flood recovery effort because of their long experience working with volunteers, said Bacher. SCA is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its first partnership, with Olympic National Park, this summer. In addition to recruiting volunteers, they're also

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leading major fundraising and public outreach efforts. “With the help of SCA, we have a real opportunity to expand our volunteer program in a way that gives more and more people a chance to participate in the park in a very personal way,” said Bacher. “Our volunteers say that volunteering helps them to appreciate the park more than they ever did before.”

The Washington Trails Association (WTA) has been very active at Mount Rainier this summer as well, thanks to a grant from Recreational Equipment, Inc., based in Seattle. So far this summer, more than 200 people have volunteered in the park on projects led by WTA.

To learn more about Mount Rainier’s volunteer program, including current short and long-term volunteer opportunities, copies of the program’s newsletter, a blog, and links to the SCA and WTA project calendars, visit www.nps.gov/mora and click on “Volunteer at Mount Rainier.” To learn more about SCA, including a full calendar of work projects and other ways you can help, visit www.theSCA.org/Mt_Rainier_Recovery.

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