



# Rebuilding Rainier

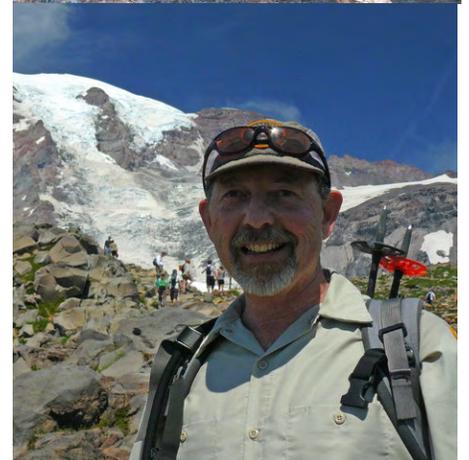
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Mount Rainier National Park

## YOU ARE INVITED TO NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY AT MOUNT RAINIER!

- When:** Saturday, September 29, 2007  
Service projects 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
End of Season Celebration and Dinner 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Where:** Check-in for service projects will be at Longmire, 6 miles east of the Nisqually Entrance. Meet for the End of Season Celebration at Columbia Crest Elementary School (9 miles west of Mount Rainier National Park's Nisqually Entrance; three miles west of Ashford on SR 706).
- Who:** Friends of the Mount Rainier Recovery Program—volunteers, sponsors, staff, media, and anyone who contributed in any way to the recovery effort—are all invited to attend!
- What:** A variety of service projects will cap off a very successful first season for the Mount Rainier Recovery Initiative. Teams of volunteers will work on trail repair, campground restoration, habitat rehab, and other projects throughout the park. In the evening, we will host an informal dinner and celebration, with hamburgers, hot dogs, presentations, and lots of pictures from the summer's work. Come for the service project, or just for the dinner, or sign up for both!
- How:** To confirm your attendance, sign up at [members.thesca.org/site/PageNavigator/rainier\\_event\\_summary](http://members.thesca.org/site/PageNavigator/rainier_event_summary). Click on the calendar link at September 29. You may register for a service project, to attend the dinner, or both. If you do not have Internet access, please call Jill Baum at 360-569-2211 ext. 3414.
- Why:** Following the devastating floods of last November, hundreds of individuals volunteered to help clean up campgrounds and rebuild trails all over the park. Much work remains, but a lot was accomplished, too. More than half of Mount Rainier's trail repairs this summer were completed by volunteers! So far, more than 1,500 volunteers have contributed more than 50,000 hours of time to the park over the past year. Behind the scenes, concerned citizens who weren't able to volunteer in the park wrote letters and contributed financially to the recovery program. Local businesses and community members supported us as well. These efforts have literally rebuilt our park. On National Public Lands Day, we will come together to celebrate these many acts of stewardship, and to thank those who have given their time and effort so we may all enjoy this special place.

The End-of-Season Celebration is hosted by the Northwest Storm Recovery Coalition, including Mount Rainier National Park, the Student Conservation Association, the Washington Trails Association, Washington's National Park Fund, the National Parks Conservation Association, and The Mountaineers. Sponsors so far include REI, Starbucks, HSBC Bank, Mount Rainier Guest Services, International Mountain Guides, Ranger Doug's Enterprises, Nature Valley, Glacier Water Company, and Columbia Crest School.



Top to bottom: Volunteers get busy rerouting a section of the Wonderland Trail above Cougar Rock; Glenn Solomon roves trails at Sunrise; Ruth Graves helps a visitor at the Longmire Museum. Photos by John Chao, Marilyn Darling, and Kevin Bacher.

## COUNTING BEANS

Kevin Bacher, Volunteer Program Manager

It's mid-September, and anyone who has worked in the Federal government knows what that means: The Fiscal Year is about to end. At midnight on October 1, "2008" officially begins. Our budget, theoretically, will be perfectly balanced, with all of the money used responsibly and productively, and those of us who manage government programs will become temporary "bean counters," compiling the statistics that document and justify what we've done with the tax payers' money.

We feel pretty good about that at Mount Rainier. The public's investment in our flood recovery has been substantial. But while the work will continue through next year, we've gotten a remarkable amount done in the past ten months. The Nisqually Road is open. Stevens Canyon Road has been open all summer, though part of it will be closed this fall to com-



The Japan Volunteers-in-Parks Association returned to Mount Rainier for its thirteenth year this summer. Among other projects, the group installed and dedicated a highly efficient and environmentally-friendly "bio toilet" in the Cougar Rock Campground. Members of the group treated their host families to traditional Japanese food, dress, and dance at their farewell barbecue.

plete repairs on Backbone Ridge. Highway 123 should reopen ahead of schedule in the next few weeks.

Volunteers have played major roles—in getting the work done quickly and efficiently, and in contributing personally to the health of their national park. More than half of the trail work completed this summer has been done by volunteers. The Wonderland Trail reopened on August 3rd. Trails and bridges have been brushed, raked, cleared, removed, repaired, rerouted, reconstructed, and installed. Tens of thousands of invasive plants have been pulled. Plugged ditches and culverts have been cleared. Campsites and historic structures have been cleaned, restored, deconstructed, rehabilitated, and rebuilt.

It's dangerous to quote numbers at this point in the process—there's still two weeks of work to go before our work starts counting for "next year," and many of the data won't come in until next month. But I can pass on what we've documented *so far*.

As of today, we have 1,529 volunteers on the books for Fiscal Year 2007. We've documented 56,481 volunteer hours so far. Those numbers are *already* up by 65% and 29% respectively over last year's totals, and will continue to rise.

Who's to thank? You, of course. Sure, our partnerships with the Student Conservation Association and Washington Trails Association account for a lot of those hours, but their crew leaders would be pretty lonely without those of you who came out, had a great experience in the park, and made it happen. And while we're counting beans, our faithful returning volunteers make up a huge chunk of those numbers, too—924 of them last year.

*There's still time to contribute.* There's still room in a few more projects before the end of the year, including lots of exciting activities on National Public Lands Day. And if you haven't had time to participate, we'll still be here next



year, and there'll still be work to be done. Flood recovery will continue, and the day-to-day work of stewardship will be important even when we've entrusted these special places to our children and grandchildren.

Maybe that's the best reason to "count beans." Beans are seeds, and when seeds are planted, watered well, and treated with care, they grow and multiply and continue to nourish us... for generations to come.

### COMING UP

Most of our crew leaders will wrap up their summer assignments and head for home by the end of the month. A few long-term projects continue through the winter—visit the [volunteer pages on our park website](#) for a complete list. Meanwhile, here are some of your last opportunities this season to join one-day projects at Mount Rainier:

- September 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, and 25: Wonderland Trail Reroute in Stevens Canyon
- September 29: National Public Lands Day and End of Season Celebration! Projects in development include trail reconstruction, campground cleanup and historic restoration, viewpoint maintenance, and habitat restoration.