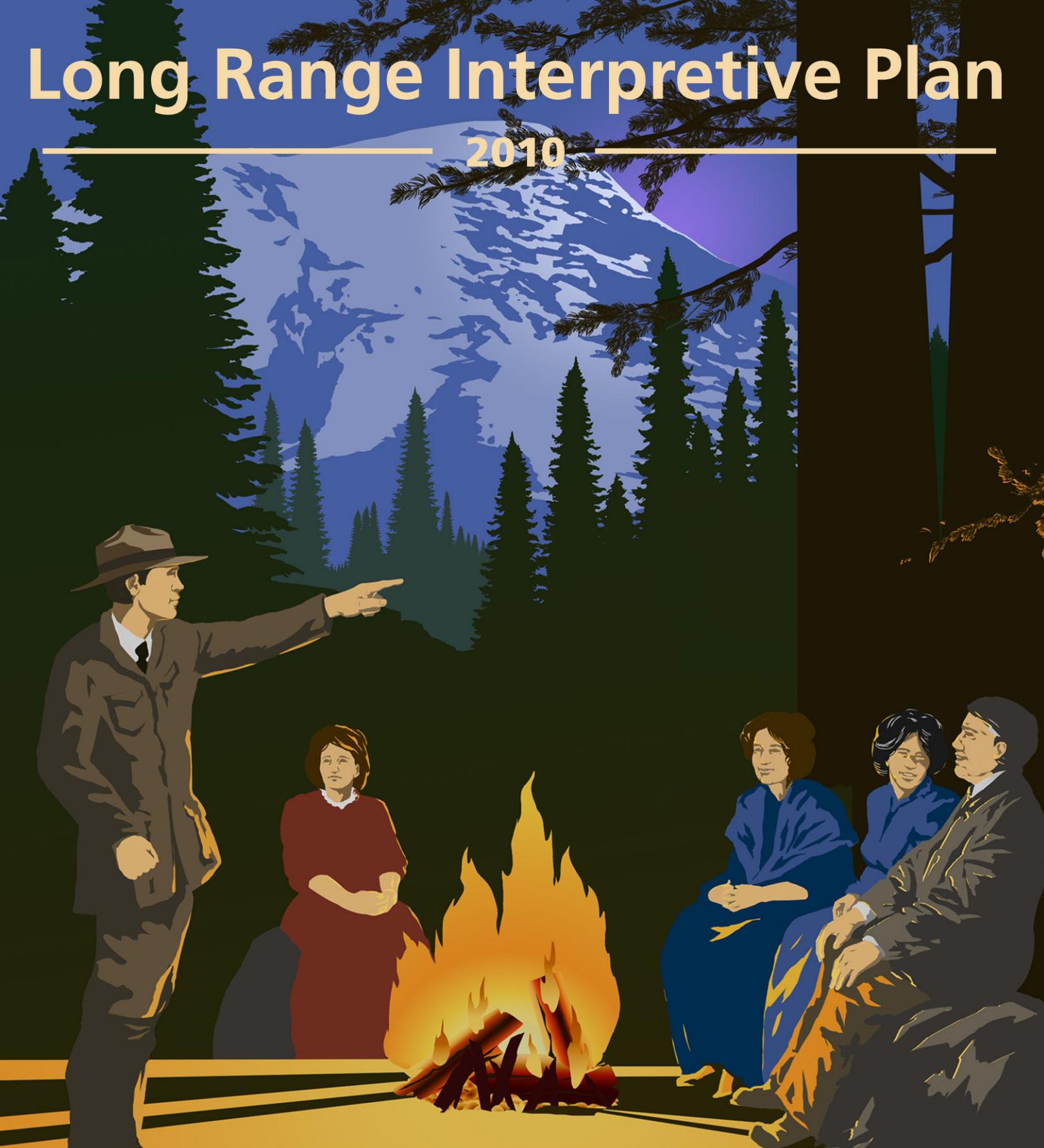


Long Range Interpretive Plan

2010



MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK

U.S. DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR • NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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MORA LRIP, August 2009 with implementation beginning in 2010
Prepared for the National Park Service by Ron Thomson, Compass

Part 1

The Foundation



Mount Rainier by Albert Bierstadt

Introduction

The Long Range Interpretive Plan

A Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) normally provides a five-year vision for a park's interpretive program. The Mount Rainier staff chose as their planning target the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016. In order to provide time for preparing a subsequent plan, this LRIP will run through 2017.

To complete an LRIP, a facilitator skilled in interpretive planning works with park staff, partners, and consultants to prepare a plan that is consistent with other current planning documents.

Part 1 of the LRIP establishes a foundation on which an effective interpretive program can be constructed. It identifies themes, audiences, desired audience experiences, issues, and management goals that interpretation should be designed to address. It offers a brief history of planning relevant to interpretation and a summary of existing interpretive media.

Part 2 recommends a mix of programs and facilities that will achieve the interpretive goals and mission described in Part 1. It includes implementation charts that assign responsibilities and offer a schedule for progress.

When appropriate, Appendices provide more detailed discussions of specific topics.

The completed LRIP forms a critical part of the more inclusive Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP). The CIP includes three parts: 1) Long Range Interpretive Plan; 2) Annual Interpretive Plan, an annual implementation plan for interpretive services; and 3) Interpretive Database, a compilation of plans and other documents to facilitate planning.

The Planning Process

The process used to produce an LRIP proceeds step-by-step with a series of workshops that build on the results of previous discussions.

Since this plan also builds on an earlier LRIP, the first workshop reviewed the elements contained in Part 1: The Foundation, and proceeded to develop actions for targeted areas identified during a preliminary scoping trip.

A final workshop decided who will take the lead in accomplishing each action item and when it will become a priority for action.

The Park in 2009

This section describes visitor experiences and conditions in 2009 and provides a baseline for the plan's proposed actions.

Pre-arrival

The primary tool for distributing pre-arrival information is the park website at www.nps.gov/mora. The website provides pre-trip planning information on:

- Driving directions

- Maps

- Weather

- Road conditions

- Trail conditions

- Operating hours and seasons

- Entrance fees and passes

- Campgrounds, including fees and reservations

- Wilderness camping reservations and fees

- Climbing reservations and fees

- Outdoor activities including climbing, hiking, snowshoeing, and sledding

- Nearby attractions

- Safety

- Food and lodging

- Pets

- Accessibility

- Information for teachers on how to plan a field trip, fees and policies, field trip safety and equipment, curriculum materials, and professional development opportunities for teachers

In 2008 the park website received 4,452,169 hits.

The park responds to a large volume of information requests, referring people to the park website for answers to most questions. Site bulletins or other maps and brochures are mailed on a case-by-case basis.

Many governmental and private entities throughout the region distribute information about the park and this literature reaches regional, national, and international audiences. Although park staff have little control over these publications, they do review materials for accuracy when asked. The park receives many requests for brochures from visitor centers, libraries, chambers of commerce, etc. The policy is to send up to 50 official park maps per request and refer those requesting site bulletins and other information to the website.

An information kiosk with park-produced orientation exhibits is located in Ashford at Whittaker's Bunkhouse. There are two kiosks in Elbe, one by Scale Shack Burgers and one at the information center at the train station. The park occasionally provides publications and bulletin board signs for these kiosks.

There are currently three Traveler Information System radio stations serving the Nisqually Corridor, one between Elbe and Ashford, another as you approach the entrance station, and a third above Narada Falls.

Approaches

There are six entrances to Mount Rainier National Park. The majority of visitors come through the Nisqually Entrance in the southwest corner of the park. During the peak season and on sunny winter weekends, rangers at the entrance station

cannot answer many questions. Instead, visitors receive the official park map and the Tahoma newspaper. The first place to stop for information is at the orientation wayside at Kautz Creek, followed by Longmire.

Visitors approaching Mount Rainier on Highway 410 have two opportunities to obtain information, including the official park map and the Tahoma newspaper, before entering the park. The United States Forest Service (USFS) office in Enumclaw contains a Discover Your Northwest sales outlet, information desk, and limited exhibits. The small Silver Creek Information Station, operated cooperatively by the NPS and the USFS, is staffed during the summer season and provides orientation information. Some park information also is provided at the USFS building along Highway 410 West from Naches. These facilities do not address park interpretive themes. Enumclaw will be the site of a new visitor center, jointly operated by the NPS, USFS, and Enumclaw Chamber of Commerce. This facility is scheduled to open in 2010 with the NPS providing one employee to operate the information desk. The USFS office in Randle distributes the official park map and the park newspaper year-round. A small information center in Packwood distributes the same publications during the summer season.

Longmire

Visitors to Longmire may explore museum exhibits, obtain wilderness information and permits, take self-guided walks, and participate in a variety of formal interpretive programs during the summer season.

The Longmire Museum is the only visitor center staffed daily on a year-round basis. It contains exhibits on the park's geology, history, and wildlife as well as an information desk and Discover Your Northwest sales area. The exhibits are in keeping with the historic character of the site and retain their 1930s appearance. The exhibits do not adequately interpret the area's cultural significance, historic architecture, or the national historic landmark district designation. They are scheduled for replacement after the Sunrise and Ohanapecosh visitor center exhibits have been replaced and funding becomes available.

There are additional elements of the interpretive experience at Longmire which strive to convey the historic significance of the area. The Transportation Exhibit in the historic gas station describes the evolution of the roads leading to the park. A self-guided walking tour of Longmire guides people past the most significant historic structures where wayside exhibits introduce visitors to the Rustic style buildings and their history. Waysides along the Trail of the Shadows focus on the history and ecology of the Longmire area, and will be replaced once funding becomes available.

During the 2009 summer season rangers led the following interpretive programs:

History Comes Alive, 30-minute program during which a historic character conveys the rich personal history of the park. Saturday 3:30 p.m.

Junior Ranger Program, 45 minutes of fun and educational activities for kids. 6:30 p.m. daily.

Evening Program, 45-minute program exploring some aspect of the park's natural and/or human history. 9:00 p.m. daily (8:30 after August 1).

In addition, park staff presented a special event, “Shadows of the Past.” This living history event featured a ranger-led walk by lantern light on the Trail of the Shadows during which visitors encountered various historic characters tied to the establishment and early history of the park: James Longmire, John Muir, Faye Fuller, etc.

The Wilderness Information Center (WIC) is open May-October and contains an information desk, displays on Leave No Trace ethics, and a large relief map of the park. It is staffed by the Division of Visitor and Resource Protection.

Paradise

Paradise is the park’s most popular destination and draws people summer and winter to enjoy the subalpine scenery. The Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center (JVC) essentially serves as the park’s main visitor center. The fall of 2008 brought the culmination of many years of work with the grand opening of the new Jackson Visitor Center and the demolition of the old one.

The new visitor center features new exhibits on the Paradise area’s plant and animal life, geologic features, and human history. The visitor center showcases a new park film and contains food service, an information desk, and a shop for books and gifts. The cooperating association and concessioner share retail space in this shop rather than operating separate stores as they did in the old visitor center. The facility is open throughout the year, but only on weekends and holidays from Columbus Day through early May.

Winter visitors come to snowshoe, cross-country ski, and slide in the maintained snow play area. The JVC functions primarily as a large warming hut and place to get food. Many winter visitors are local and do not view the exhibits or watch the film. Snowshoe walks take place three times a day on weekends and holidays from the Christmas holiday through early April.

Once the snow melts, the meadows at Paradise are spectacular and the wildflower display is one of the key summer attractions. Paradise also offers excellent views of the mountain and glaciers, and is a primary location for hiking and starting summit attempts. Studies have shown uniformed rangers to be the most effective means of keeping people on trails, and Paradise staff and volunteers rove to help protect meadows, discourage wildlife feeding, and provide information to visitors.

A variety of formal interpretive programs were offered at Paradise in the summer of 2009:

Meadow Meander, one-hour walk about how life adapts to challenging mountain conditions. 10:30 a.m. daily.

Junior Ranger Program, one hour of fun and educational activities for kids. 1:00 p.m. daily.

Paradise Glacier View Walk, 90-minute walk exploring how the opposing forces of fire and ice shape Mount Rainier. 2:00 p.m. daily.

Climate Change at Mount Rainier, 30-minute PowerPoint or video presentation about global climate change and how it might affect Mount Rainier. 3:00 p.m. daily.

Evening Stroll, 30-minute walk exploring the natural and human history of Paradise. 5:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Evening Program at Paradise Inn, 45-minute program exploring some aspect of the park's natural and human history. 9:00 p.m. daily.

Trailhead exhibits at the five major entries to the meadows orient visitors to the trails and provide safety and resource protection information. A handful of waysides located throughout the meadows provide information on climbing safety, subalpine meadows, glaciers and geology, extreme snowfall, and meadow restoration. Waysides on the historic district and buildings and Paradise area orientation waysides are scheduled for installation in 2009. The State Historic Preservation Office required a wayside interpreting the old Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center. It will be installed upon completion of the lower parking lot rehabilitation.

Ohanapecosh

The Ohanapecosh Visitor Center is a Mission 66 building that maintains an adequate and comfortable interior. Visitors cannot see the mountain from this facility, but it is an excellent place to experience the forest environment. The exhibits address Native American use of the area and old-growth forest ecology. A large relief model of the park serves an important orientation function. The displays are quite old and outdated and are scheduled for replacement after the Sunrise exhibits have been replaced and funding becomes available. In addition, the visitor center contains a staffed information desk and Discover Your Northwest sales outlet. The visitor center is open daily from May-October.

A variety of formal interpretive programs are offered at Ohanapecosh during the summer months. In 2009 these included the following:

Junior Ranger Program, one hour of fun and educational activities for kids. 10:00 a.m. daily.

Evening Program, 45-minute program exploring some aspect of the park's natural and human history. 9:00 p.m. daily (8:30 after August 1).

A few wayside exhibits along the Hot Springs Trail introduce the history and geology of the area. Waysides on old-growth forest ecology lead visitors along the Grove of the Patriarchs Trail. The Hot Springs Trail brochure, no longer in use, and the Grove of the Patriarchs waysides will be replaced by new waysides when funding becomes available.

Sunrise & White River

The highest elevation interpretive facility in the park, the Sunrise Visitor Center, is open from late June or early July through mid-September. The site offers excellent views of climbers as they make their way up the mountain, as well as opportunities to learn about geologic processes and subalpine ecology. The Sunrise meadows are a scenic attraction, providing opportunities to relate the meadows' importance to American Indian tribes of the region. Like Paradise, Sunrise is a popular place for hiking.

The exhibits in the Sunrise Visitor Center are quite old and outdated, and there is no audiovisual room. The building is closed and without heat or other climate

controls for much of the year. An exhibit plan was developed in 2003. In 2009 the park received funding through the American Recovery and Rehabilitation Act to fabricate and install new exhibits in 2009-2010.

The historic White River Patrol Cabin, located in the White River Campground, contains exhibits that describe the park's patrol cabin and trails network.

There are a variety of formal interpretive programs in this area during the summer months. Evening programs are offered at the White River Campground, which has no audiovisual capabilities. Formal interpretive programs in 2009 included the following:

Sunrise Afternoon Walks, 30-minute walk about the natural and cultural history of the Sunrise area. 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. daily.

Junior Ranger Program, one hour of fun and educational activities for kids. 10:00 a.m. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Evening Program, 45-minute traditional campfire talk. 8:00 p.m. daily (7:30 p.m. after August 1).

Trailhead exhibits at the two locations orient visitors to the trails and provide safety and resource protection information. A Sunrise area orientation wayside provides information on services and facilities. The waysides located throughout the area provide information on climbing, subalpine meadows, glaciers and geology, historic architecture, and meadow preservation.

Carbon River & Mowich Lake

The Carbon River area suffered catastrophic flooding in 2006 and, as of the writing of this LRIP, the post-flood plan for this area is still undecided. The park is developing an Environmental Assessment exploring a range of options from full closure of the road to keeping it open as far as Chenuis Falls. What is certain is that Ipsut Creek Campground, where interpreters once presented evening programs, will no longer be a drive-in campground. There are currently no staffed interpretive facilities in the northwest corner of the park, nor any formal interpretive programs. Rangers from the Division of Visitor and Resource Protection provide information at the Carbon River Ranger Station when it is open.

The Rain Forest Loop Trail, with wayside exhibits along the route, provides an opportunity for a short, self-guided hike near the Carbon River entrance.

Publications

The park maintains an array of free publications. These materials provide essential orientation and safety information and strive to increase understanding of significant park resources. The most popular publications include:

Official Park Map

Tahoma News: Park newspaper produced four times per year. Includes facility and program information, safety tips, and other information

Wilderness Trip Planner: Information for planning an overnight trip in the backcountry, including Leave No Trace principles

Junior Ranger Booklet: Children can earn badges and a certificate by completing a series of activities designed to help them learn about the park

Area trail maps for Ohanapecosh, Sunrise, Paradise, Longmire, and Carbon River

Winter Recreation Map: Details ski/snowshoe routes and other winter recreation at Paradise

Subalpine Wildflowers: Photographs of most common flowers in the subalpine meadows

Wayside Exhibits

There are wayside exhibits throughout the park that interpret significant features along the road. In addition, there are trailhead panels at all major hiking trails that provide route and safety information. Some popular front country trails have wayside exhibits to explain important resources (Trail of the Shadows, Grove of the Patriarchs, Box Canyon, Paradise trails)

The park completed a comprehensive wayside plan in 2001, and has since designed, fabricated, and installed most of these waysides in a series of phases.

The majority of the waysides included in the plan have been fabricated, but many have not been installed. The maintenance division has agreed to install these waysides in 2009 and possibly 2010 instead of contracting installation. Some of the waysides included in the plan are no longer necessary, while Development Concept Plans for areas such as Mowich Lake, Tipsoo Lake, and Longmire have identified additional waysides that are not included in the plan.

Many wayside exhibits must be removed each winter and reinstalled each summer to prevent damage from deep snow. The workload associated with this seasonal installation has been a challenge, and staff are still searching for a viable and sustainable solution to get the work done effectively and efficiently.

Education Facilities & Program

Education Center

The Education Center is located at Tahoma Woods, 10 miles outside the Nisqually Entrance. Completed in 2006, it provides orientation and lunch facilities protected from the weather for schools visiting on field trips. It also provides a place to present introductory activities, experiments, audiovisual programs, other types of presentations, and teacher workshops. Inside are two classrooms, an office, storage, a small galley kitchen (for staff and teacher workshops), and restrooms. Outside, there are benches on both the front and back covered porches for orientations as well as picnic tables and outdoor activity space.

Curriculum-based Program

The curriculum-based education program at Mount Rainier strives to provide quality educational materials and experiences related to the resources of Mount Rainier National Park and the National Park Service for students and teachers,

whether or not they actually visit the park. The curriculum-based education program at Mount Rainier National Park includes the following components:

I: Ranger-conducted Education Programs

Education programs are offered at the Education Center, in the Nisqually-Paradise Corridor, and in gateway community schools. Programs include guided hikes, talks, inquiry-based experiments, PowerPoint presentations, snowshoe walks, and demonstrations. Standard program topics include:

National Park Service: Mission and overview of the National Park System, NPS history, NPS careers

Winter Ecology: Plant and animal adaptations

Geology: Mount Rainier as a Cascade volcano, glaciers, history

Park History: Early exploration, settlement, protection of the park, Longmire National Historic Landmark District, and early national park planning and park Rustic style architecture

Life Zones Ecology: Focus on a single zone or an overview of several zones and plant & animal adaptations in each zone

Leave No Trace: Minimum-impact skills

II: Service Learning

There are opportunities for students, either individually or as part of a school group, to learn from and work with park staff as part of a service learning project. These projects are a great way for students to meet their community service graduation requirements, acquire skills, practice stewardship, and learn first-hand about park resources and the importance of protecting and restoring them.

III: Professional Development Opportunities for Educators

Teacher Workshops

The park provides a variety of workshops to prepare teachers to use Mount Rainier as a topic of instruction. These interdisciplinary workshops combine instruction, activities, field sessions, curriculum development and review. Free Washington State Clock Hours are available to participating teachers through partnership with the Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction. A graduate level academic credit option also is available through partnership with The Heritage Institute/Antioch University Seattle.

Teacher-Ranger-Teacher Program

The Teacher-Ranger-Teacher (TRT) Program, piloted in 2008, allows teachers to work in the park in support of the education and interpretation programs during the summer months as park rangers. The teachers commit to share their experiences with their students, incorporating lessons about national parks into their classroom instruction, and wearing the NPS uniform to school during National Park Week.

IV: Curriculum Materials

“Where the River Begins” is an interdisciplinary curriculum focusing on the Nisqually River Watershed. Written for upper elementary to middle school students, the guide includes pre- and post-visit activities and field trip activities that provide overviews of glaciers, glacial rivers, life zones, national parks, and some park history.

“Living with a Volcano in Your Backyard” is an interdisciplinary curriculum for middle school students about the processes, products, benefits, and hazards associated with living in the shadow of Mount Rainier. It was created in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey Cascades Volcano Observatory. The park conducts a teacher workshop in collaboration with USGS each summer to train teachers on the use of this product.

There are several other curriculum projects in development. They will be addressed in Part 2 of this plan.

V: The Sister Mountain Curriculum Project

Mount Rainier National Park and The Mountain Institute received a grant from the US-Japan Foundation in 2008 to initiate this three-year project. The project objectives are:

To develop a curriculum using these two iconic mountains as the lenses through which to facilitate cross-cultural studies between American and Japanese students; the curriculum will focus on such topics as mountain cultures, geology, ecology, geography, history, art, and environmental issues, including the effects of climate change on each mountain

To build on the Sister Mountain relationship between Mount Rainier and Mount Fuji.

To develop and host two initial international Teacher Exchange Workshops for American and Japanese teachers, one at Mount Rainier National Park and one in the Mount Fuji region

To develop partnerships that will enable the Teacher Exchange Workshop Program to become sustainable prior to exhausting the initial grant funding

There will be teacher workshops in 2009 and 2010 in support of this project:

Sister Mountain Curriculum Review Workshop

The park education staff will pilot test draft lessons and activities with teachers, who will then try the activities with their students and provide valuable feedback prior to finalizing the materials.

Mount Rainier-Mount Fuji Sister Mountain International Workshop

Teachers from Japan and Washington State will visit Mount Rainier to learn about the park and project, test lesson plans, and develop teaching partnerships. Teachers from both countries will use these materials to connect their students and provide feedback from pilot testing the draft lesson plans.

VI: Internship Opportunities for College Students

The park education program hosts college students completing internships to gain hands-on experience working with students and developing teaching materials.

Outreach Program

The outreach program strives to reach outside the park and target underserved audiences who may not have the opportunity to visit Mount Rainier. Efforts in this arena have been hampered by a lack of reliable funding, with one seasonal position dedicated to this task each summer.

The outreach ranger represents the park at regional fairs, parades, or other gatherings and conducts special programs both on and off-site for groups like Camp Arnold, EarthCorps, or others.

In 2008 the park added an Urban Outreach Coordinator to the staff. Stationed in Seattle, this employee is building partnerships with Seattle Parks and Recreation and other groups in an effort to develop a family camping program. The Camping Adventure with My Parents program brings families from Seattle to Mount Rainier for a weekend camping experience during which participants learn camping skills, experience nature, and learn about the park. In 2009, 22 families (75 people) participated in the program. .

Purpose & Significance

Mount Rainier National Park is located west of the crest of the Cascade Range, approximately 65 miles southeast of the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area and 65 miles west of Yakima. Mount Rainier, at an elevation of 14,410 feet, towers 2,000 feet above the surrounding Cascade summits and dominates the Puget Sound skyline.

Legislation

Legislation passed by Congress on March 2, 1899, established Mount Rainier National Park as a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and placed it under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior. Congress gave the secretary authority to:

“Make and publish . . . rules and regulations . . . [to] provide for the preservation from injury or spoliation of all timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders . . . and their retention in their natural condition.”

“Grant parcels of ground [for] the erection of buildings for the accommodation of visitors.”

“Provide against the wanton destruction of the fish and game found within the park.”

Mount Rainier National Park also is administered under the provisions of the National Park Service’s Organic Act of 1916 which specifies that units of the national park system are managed “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein” and “to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

The Redwoods Act of 1978 amended the Organic Act to state that the management of national park units shall not “be exercised in derogation of the values and purposes for which these areas have been established, except as may have been or shall be directly and specifically provided by Congress.”

In addition, the Wilderness Act, signed into law on September 3, 1964, now applies to roughly 97% of the park. The act defines wilderness as:

“. . . an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

Subsequent acts have revised and extended park boundaries and included a headquarters site near Ashford, Washington. Most of the park’s buildings and roads have been designated a national historic landmark district.

Park Purpose

The purpose of Mount Rainier National Park is suggested by the above legislation. Specifically, the park will be managed to:

Protect and preserve its natural and cultural resources, processes, and values, while recognizing their increasing importance in the region, the nation, and the world.

Provide opportunities for visitors to experience and understand the park environment without impairing its resources.

Maintain wilderness values and provide for wilderness experiences.

Park Significance

The resources of Mount Rainier National Park are nationally significant for the following reasons:

At a height of 14,410 feet, Mount Rainier is the highest volcanic peak in the contiguous United States. It reaches into the upper atmosphere to disturb great tides of eastward moving Pacific maritime air, resulting in spectacular cloud formations, prodigious amounts of rain, and record-setting snowfalls.

As a part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, Mount Rainier is an outstanding example of Cascade volcanism and has the largest alpine glacial system in the contiguous United States.

Mount Rainier's eruptions and mudflows continue to shape the area and are a continuing threat to park visitors, employees, and surrounding lowland communities.

Because of its great elevational range and the extensive glacial systems, Mount Rainier offers outstanding opportunities to study how biological communities respond to climatic change. The park is both laboratory and classroom that can be used to study and learn about natural and cultural resources.

The park contains outstanding examples of diverse vegetation communities, ranging from old-growth forest to subalpine meadows and ancient alpine heather.

The park is a remnant of the once widespread primeval Cascade ecosystem and provides habitat for many species representative of the region's flora and fauna.

"It is likely that Mount Rainier National Park is more famous - taken the world over - for its remarkable fields of wild flowers than for any other one feature."

Floyd W. Schmoe, 1st full time naturalist at Mount Rainier National Park

As urban and rural development expand, the park increases in importance as a

large island of protected open space where ecosystem processes dominate.

The park's comprehensive national historic landmark district—a cultural landscape district including buildings, roads, the Wonderland Trail, and other landscape structures—is the most significant and complete example of NPS planning policies and park development of the first half of the 20th century.

The developed areas of Mount Rainier contain some of the nation's best examples of intact complexes of “NPS Rustic” style architecture of the 1920s and 1930s.

Over 97% of the land comprising Mount Rainier National Park was designated the Mount Rainier Wilderness in 1998. Wilderness designation provides the highest level of resource protection for some of the most pristine and least manipulated wild lands in the United States.

Called by some American Indian groups “the place where rivers begin,” Mount Rainier's watersheds nourish plant and animal communities in the park, extend to the valleys below, and are an important source of water for the Puget Sound region.

For many generations, several American Indian tribes have utilized the resources of Mount Rainier for physical, emotional, and spiritual sustenance. These ties continue to be significant.

Mount Rainier, visible throughout the region, is a continuing source of inspiration. This quality contributed to the establishment of the national park in 1899. The mountain is a prominent icon that shapes the physical environment and human experience in the Pacific Northwest.

The park offers recreational and educational opportunities in a wide range of scenic settings, including wildflower meadows, glaciers, and forests, all in a relatively compact area that is easily accessible to a large urban population.

Mount Rainier's terrain and weather conditions offer world-class climbing opportunities that have tested the skills of climbers for more than a century.

Primary Themes

All parks have a variety of stories to tell. Primary themes, however, are closely linked to a park's national significance. They merge the park's tangible and intangible resources into statements that express meaning and relevance to contemporary audiences (see the significance statements above for the most evident tangible resources and Appendix 1 for a workshop-generated list of intangibles).

When interpretation focuses on these primary themes, audiences better understand why the park is a national treasure included in the National Park System.

Mount Rainier's Themes

"Of all the fire mountains which, like beacons, once blazed along the Pacific Coast, Mount Rainier is the noblest."

John Muir

Mount Rainier is the obvious and undeniable center of the park's story. Whether focused on superlatives of size, beauty, and iconic impact, or on the details of wildflower blossoms, delicate snowflakes, tiny animals, or ancient arrow points, interpretation begins with stories of the mountain.

At the outset, before parsing Mount Rainier's stories, it is important to acknowledge the primacy of the mountain itself:

Whether visible or shrouded in clouds, Mount Rainier is there, a powerful natural and spiritual force influencing natural processes as well as all forms of life on and below its snow-covered summit.

Of course, as the park's significance statements demonstrate, the story of the mountain is multi-faceted, rich with detail yet connected and interrelated. Surely any audience can find something of interest in one of the following topics, themes, and subthemes:

PHYSICAL PROCESSES

Mount Rainier is created by volcanism and transformed by water and ice in dynamic processes that may impact individual organisms or whole ecosystems.

Subthemes:

Mount Rainier is an active volcano that shapes the landscape and influences processes both within and beyond the park boundary. Mount Rainier is a product of past and continuing volcanic forces. The mountain's constructive and destructive forces pose significant hazards to human and natural communities and cultural resources in and around the park.

Water is one of the primary forces of change at Mount Rainier. The abundance of surface water and loose rock debris makes Mount Rainier an ideal setting for the initiation of lahars and debris flows. Numerous large floods and debris flows have occurred on the slopes of Mount Rainier throughout its history. Hydrological disturbances are a perpetual force of change to Mount Rainier's ecosystems.

Mount Rainier distinguishes itself from other Cascade volcanoes by its immense size and extensive glacial system. Mount Rainier's glaciers are dynamic forces of change to the mountain's form and appearance. The unique attributes of glacier-fed rivers produce distinctive landscapes and ecosystems. Glaciers are continuous sources of water for downstream communities and ecosystems. Changes in glacier size can demonstrate dramatic and discernible responses to significant climate variations.

Mount Rainier influences the climate of landscapes and ecosystems within and beyond the park boundary. Mount Rainier is an impediment to eastbound weather systems, and forces moisture to rise, cool, and fall as precipitation. Mount Rainier's presence increases precipitation in some localities and blocks it in others, causing distinctive microclimates and ecosystems. Long-term climate change can cause continual transformation of Mount Rainier's structure, glaciers, rivers, and other ecosystem components.

ECOSYSTEMS

Mount Rainier creates and supports a diverse ecosystem that ranges from snowfields and glaciers to alpine tundra and low elevation forest.

Subthemes:

Although vulnerable to human-caused damage, the plants and animals in alpine and subalpine communities are well adapted to meet the challenges posed by harsh environmental conditions.

Mount Rainier's old-growth forests support a rich diversity of flora and fauna, comprising one of the densest biomasses on Earth. The prime stands of old-growth forests on Mount Rainier's lower slopes are a valuable remnant of those once occupying much of the Pacific Northwest.

National parks in the Pacific Northwest have become islands, as external influences threaten their natural qualities. Threats such as atmospheric pollution, global climate change, and the spread of non-native plant species know no boundaries, and directly affect park values.

HUMAN CULTURES

There is a long and varied history of human interaction with the mountain. Mount Rainier has always shaped the lives and character of the area's human inhabitants.

Subthemes:

American Indians camped on the mountain's slopes to hunt and gather plant resources. Modern tribal members have a living connection with the mountain,

characterized by respect and a lively interest in the continued use and preservation of its resources.

As Euro-American explorers, pioneers, and settlers moved into the surrounding region, many were drawn by the beauty, challenges, and opportunities the mountain afforded. Concern for the mountain's future ultimately led to the establishment of Mount Rainier as a national park.

"Three buildings at Longmire--the administration building, the community building and the service station--are a classic group of rustic structures that contributed substantially to the evolution of rustic design in the National Park Service . . . These buildings at Longmire are among the most successful experiments in the development of that rustic design ethic while possessing great architectural integrity."

"Architecture in the Parks," NPS

Mount Rainier has offered, and continues to offer, a multitude of recreational opportunities from the earliest climbing and camping to modern hiking and sightseeing. The mountain has been a Mecca for recreational climbing since early times, and still attracts thousands of climbers each year.

STEWARDSHIP

The mountain inspires stewardship. People have contributed to the protection of its natural and cultural resources in a variety of ways, from advocating for its legal protection to volunteerism.

Subthemes:

Mount Rainier's natural and cultural resources have been protected through an array of legislation over time. The diverse designations demonstrate the importance of both government and individual actions in resource stewardship.

Mount Rainier's pristine wilderness has ecological, social, scientific, educational, recreational, and cultural value. That value increases exponentially as areas outside the park are developed and open space is lost. By law, Mount Rainier wilderness is managed to retain its primeval character for people to examine their relationship to the world. The park's management of natural resources over the past century mirrors American society's changing understanding and appreciation of wilderness values. Mount Rainier wilderness is a source of inspiration, providing boundless opportunities for exploration, solitude, contemplation, and physical and mental challenge. The survival of the park's wilderness depends on individual and societal commitment to the idea of wilderness, a stewardship ethic, and appropriate visitor behavior in wilderness areas.

Using local materials and designs to harmonize with the natural setting, some of Mount Rainier National Park's architecture exemplifies the best of the Rustic style. Park buildings, along with roads, trails, and bridges, now comprise a national historic landmark district, which represents the best of early national park planning

Preservation and study of Mount Rainier's ecosystems lead to public understanding of natural forces affecting the Pacific Northwest, the nation, and the world. Mount Rainier, with its mantle of glaciers, subalpine meadows, and alpine communities is an ideal laboratory to study the effects of climate change. The mountain can serve as an icon to impart an understanding of the dimensions of this issue and inspire people to take action to address it.

Volunteering in the park strengthens the public's understanding of and support for the National Park Service mission.

Audiences

In order to design the most effective interpretive programming and employ the best interpretive techniques, it is critical to identify intended audiences, both existing audiences who actively use site interpretive programs AND potential audiences that well-planned interpretation might encourage.

The term audience is used purposefully in this document. In the 21st century, all parks communicate with both on-site visitors and others who have not or cannot visit a park's sites. Increasingly, for example, the Internet is a source of both information and interpretation. While many who use their computer as a gateway to a site or region will eventually visit, that is not universally true. In addition, for reasons of time and budget, outreach and school programs might be conducted off-site. News and magazine articles as well as television and radio programs reach millions who fall outside the technical definition of "visitor." In addition, any park near an urban area has a significant number of neighbors who live within the region and should be the recipients of interpretive information and programming.

"Individuals understand places differently depending on how they have experienced them, and this experience in turn is shaped by their social characteristics such as age, gender, race, class, and physical condition."

David Glassberg in *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*

Results of Surveys

The following statements are excerpted from various visitor surveys and studies, including a 2000 visitor survey.

It should be noted that most visitor studies were conducted during specific, limited time frames, often during the peak tourist season. Readers of these studies (including the statements below) are cautioned about extrapolating the results as "universal truths" regarding visitor use during other time periods.

Although visitors come from all over the world, approximately 64% live in Washington State.

Local residents from the counties of King, Lewis, Pierce, and Yakima make up 44% of the total visitation.

Visitors are highly educated: 32% had bachelor's degrees; 26% had graduate degrees, and another 27% had some college.

Age ranges included 78% between 2 and 50, 13% between 51 and 60, and 11% 60 years or older.

Family groups make up about 56% of park visitors. About 30% of the groups include children.

69% of park visitors visit for the day, and about 66% stay less than seven

hours.

The most visited park locations were Paradise (62%) and Sunrise (27%).

Common visitor activities included day hiking (73%), viewing wildflowers (65%), driving to view scenery (63%), photography (56%), and visiting visitor centers (53%).

Most visitors (90%) spoke English as their primary language; 10% spoke other languages.

Most visitors (70%) were visiting Mount Rainier National Park for the first time in the past 12 months. Over one-half of the visitors (52%) visited more than once during the past two to five years.

Focus of Interpretation, 2010-2017

While Mount Rainier welcomes every audience group, workshop participants felt that several audiences would benefit from, and be attracted by, interpretive programming focused on their needs. Those targeted groups include:

Education groups, including teachers and students in middle and high school as well as college/university and adult learners.

Mount Rainier National Park Education Program Vision Statement

Through its education program, Mount Rainier National Park will become a premier educational resource, outdoor classroom and learning laboratory for educators and students of the greater Puget Sound region and beyond. This will, ultimately, result in greater understanding and protection of natural and cultural resources both inside and outside the boundaries of national parks.

Families.

Residents in gateway communities bordering the park.

Urban, underrepresented, and non-traditional park audiences.

Those audiences who use technology to explore the park or plan a visit.

Repeat visitors to the park and those who stay for longer periods of time.

Older audiences or those with physical challenges. Those interested in walking rather than doing more strenuous hikes and climbs.

Audiences that speak a language other than English, particularly Spanish and perhaps others determined by additional investigation.

Concession employees, volunteers, interpretive partners, and tour group leaders.

Opinion leaders, i.e., those who influence the attitudes of and information received by others: local officials, media, tourist industry employees, other agency employees, etc.

“In designing public programs to elicit the memories attached to local places, we must ensure that the multiple voices of the community be represented.”

David Glassberg in *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*

Accessibility and Audiences

The NPS is committed to developing a comprehensive strategy to provide people with disabilities equal access to all programs, activities, services, and facilities. As part of that effort, Harpers Ferry Center developed “Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media” and made them and other resources available via their website (www.nps.gov/hfc/accessibility/index.htm).

As the park revises or rehabilitates existing interpretive programming or develops new media, staff must consult these guidelines.

Audience Experiences

While interpretive themes focus on what audiences will learn as a result of interpretive programs and media, this section explores what audiences will do. What types of activities will reinforce site significance? How might the design of interpretive programs and media invite audience involvement and, as a result, reinforce certain key elements of the park's stories?

John Falk and Lynn Dierking, in *The Museum Experience*, argue that visitors are strongly influenced by the physical aspects of museums, including architecture, ambience, smell, sound, and the "feel of the place."

As the LRIP completed in 2000 indicated, the park has two broad goals for audience experiences—to provide opportunities for visitors to:

1. Have a safe and satisfying visit
2. Make connections between park resources and their meanings

In order to meet those experience goals, participants in the 2009 LRIP workshop proposed that interpretive programming will . . .

Begin orientation as early in the trip planning process as possible, and begin to shape audience expectations during initial contact. The park website is an important way of establishing pre-visit contact and must be constantly updated and improved.

Explain clearly defined visiting and use options for special circumstances (cloudy days, heavy visitation, winter weather, etc.)

Convey information to help visitors understand and mitigate potential hazards associated with visitor activities.

"The mountain has wicked weather. On the way to Muir, we encountered extreme heat, then endured a huge thunderstorm with lightning during the night but then it cleared up just long enough for us to reach the summit. On the way down to Paradise, we had a snowstorm, then hail and finally a downpour. All in all, a fantastic trip and would do it all again!"

Submitted to Summitpost.org by icypeak, August 23, 2008

Encourage audiences to use all their senses by stressing hands-on discovery, observation, and safe and appropriate exploration that reconnects people with the park's natural and historic environments and allows them to see and do something new and different. Empower audiences to learn on their own. Help all audiences overcome fears and anxieties related to the park's natural environment, thereby expanding their range of experiences.

Remind audiences that the Mount Rainier experience is about both the large

and the small, the grandly sublime and the delicately detailed, the panorama and close-up, the far and the near. Help all audiences to experience the mountain, even if they are in a moving vehicle or when clouds obscure the summit.

“The view we enjoyed from the summit could hardly be surpassed in sublimity and grandeur; but one feels far from home so high in the sky, so much so that one is inclined to guess that, apart from the acquisition of knowledge and the exhilaration of climbing, more pleasure is to be found at the foot of mountains than on their frozen tops.”

John Muir

Acknowledge that some audiences, particularly families and organized groups, see a park visit as a form of social interaction and empower those audiences to shape their visit in appropriate ways.

Similarly, recognize that others look for solitude and places for quiet contemplation.

Present park themes in ways that not only respect multiple points of view but also encourage audiences to consider perspectives outside their own. Acknowledge differences in learning styles and help audiences assimilate interpretive themes through a variety of media.

Include opportunities to interact with trained and knowledgeable staff and volunteers in a variety of traditional (information desks, ranger programs, evening campfires, roving) and innovative settings (online, in urban areas, etc.).

Offer opportunities to extend an in-park visit or enrich online interaction with follow-up materials and additional park-related resources, including interpretive sales items.

Several audience experiences identified in the 2000 LRIP remain relevant, specifically programming that will . . .

Explain that Mount Rainier is a national park and contains a federal wilderness area and a national historic landmark district which make it different from other outdoor recreation areas. Acting on this knowledge, visitors can make appropriate recreational choices.

Place Mount Rainier National Park within a regional ecosystem context and a national system of parks.

Encourage audiences to develop and act upon a sense of stewardship, before, during, and after visiting, and become involved in the public processes of park planning and participate with a high degree of personal knowledge.

Although geologists, poets, and climbers may each look at Mount Rainier through a different lens, they sometimes see the same thing.



SKETCH MAP OF MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK.
Trails are shown by dotted line.

An Octopus
of ice. Deceptively reserved and flat,
it lies "in grandeur and in mass"
beneath a sea of shifting snow-dunes;
dots of cyclamen-red and maroon on its clearly defined
pseudo-podia
made of glass that will bend—a much needed invention—
comprising twenty-eight ice-fields from fifty to five hundred
feet thick,
of unimagined delicacy.

Marianne Moore's poem about Mount Rainier, and other things

Issues & Initiatives

In order to develop the most effective interpretive programs and media, park staff must address issues that are closely linked to providing desired audience experiences.

During the initial scoping trip for this LRIP, several issues related to both personal and non-personal programming surfaced. They included . . .

- Development of a practical plan for the park's educational programs, including the use of the Education Center, relations with Columbia Crest Elementary School, the Sister Mountain Curriculum project, curriculum materials for teachers, and educator training.

- Evaluation of the need to devote additional interpretive effort to interpretation of the park's human history, including the need to tell the park's stories from multiple points of view and encourage civic engagement from a variety of perspectives.

- Expansion of the nature and scope of interpretive outreach to the region's urban centers, gateway communities and along the scenic corridors that provide access to the park, with special emphasis on non-traditional or underrepresented audiences.

- Use of the full potential of the park's website and other appropriate technologies for interpretation and orientation.

- Delineation of the park's response to national and regional areas of focus, specifically Children in Nature; global climate change; Centennial Initiative goals; and Interpretation and Education Renaissance goals.

- Preparation of post-flood plans for interpretation in the Carbon River area.

Workshop discussions identified other issues specifically related to existing personal services and interpretive media. They included . . .

- Publicity and promotion of personal services programs.

- Low attendance at programs focused on history topics and cultural resources.

- The impact of logistics associated with programming, program location, and program times.

- The desired future mix of short and long, formal and informal interpretation.

- The purpose and use of the park newspaper and other publications (official park map, site bulletins, and printed trail guides).

- Priorities for projects already "in the works."

Communication of scientific knowledge to the park's many audiences.

NPS Initiatives

In addition to local issues, the National Park Service has announced several servicewide initiatives that individual parks should support.

The Future of America's National Parks: Summary of Park Centennial Strategies (see Appendix 3 for a list of goals)

"National Park Service leaders . . . will review and update their centennial strategies each year in support of a second century of preservation, conservation, and enjoyment."

The Future of America's National Parks

Interpretation and Education Program Business Plan

Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan (see Appendix 4 for areas of focus)

Children in Nature (see Appendix 5 for goals)

The North Coast Cascades Science Learning Network, of which Mount Rainier is a part, strives to widely share knowledge about park resources to enhance the public's ability to learn from, and to enjoy, its national parks. The Learning Network encourages research in the parks and envisions coordinated interpretation and education programs to transfer information about park resources to interpreters and the public at large, through outreach to schools, web site development, and other means.

Interpretation and Education Strategic Plan 2016, Pacific West Region (see Appendix 6 for goals)

In each case, these initiatives contain goals that often mesh with local objectives. As calls for NPS projects are announced, this LRIP provides fertile ground for innovative initiative ideas.

Management Goals

Since interpretation can play a positive role in the day-to-day management of parks, it is helpful to review parkwide goals and identify those areas where interpretation can be part of the solution.

The Division of Interpretation and Education can support management objectives by addressing the following issues:

Wildlife Feeding

Feeding wildlife is a pervasive problem in the park's developed areas, poses a threat to individual animals, and may upset the ecological balance of certain populations, such as songbirds. It also poses a risk to the person doing the feeding. The park has undertaken a coordinated campaign to address the problem, with an emphasis on visitor education.

Meadow Preservation

Subalpine meadows draw millions of visitors during the brief summer months, and are vulnerable to damage by off-trail hikers. Visitor education—through roving contacts, publications, and formal interpretive programs—is an important part of the strategy to protect the meadows.

Geohazards

All visitors to Mount Rainier are exposed to potential danger from rockslides, avalanche, flooding, debris flows, or lahars. It is critical that they understand these risks and know what to do if caught by one of these events.

Safety

Visitors may be unaware of the risks associated with activities such as hiking, climbing, snow play, sledding, winter backcountry travel, mountain driving, and so on. One primary function of interpretive programs and media is to inform visitors about these hazards and help them mitigate risk.

Climate Change

Mount Rainier National Park has identified climate change as an area of emphasis as the National Park Service Centennial approaches. The park envisions a three-pronged approach to the issue. Research will reveal and document the impact of climate change on park ecosystems. The park will develop sustainable operations that are carbon neutral. Mount Rainier National Park will use the iconic status of the mountain and its glaciers as a backdrop for educating visitors about this compelling environmental issue.

Part 2

Taking Action



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Introduction

Part 2 of the LRIP describes the actions that park staff and partners will take to build on The Foundation, described in Part 1, during the period 2010-2017.

This plan is intended to be a dynamic document that responds to changing conditions. Staff will revisit the plan on a regular basis and make adjustments, remove accomplished tasks, and target new projects for action.

Each action item included in Part 2 is bulleted in the plan narrative and listed in implementation charts near the end of this document. Next to each action included in the charts is the name of the responsible person(s) and the fiscal year or years when progress is expected.

Many of the bulleted items are dependent on funding not in hand. Those actions will be noted in the implementation charts. Other actions can be completed only if additional staffing becomes available—they also will be indicated on the charts.

Staff also can and should take advantage of new opportunities as they arise. No plan can foresee every eventuality. This LRIP provides a framework for considering interpretive proposals as they emerge. Part 1 can function as a yardstick against which new ideas are measured. The plan provides priorities that can help move interpretive programming in a consistent direction despite changing times and the emergence of new ideas.

Organization of Part 2

The Division of Interpretation and Education developed a 10-Year Strategic Plan in 1999. The plan's strategic goals have been used effectively as a tool for work planning. They form the foundation of the Annual Interpretive Plan and individual work plans of division staff. Part 2 adopts the strategic plan goals as the structure around which actions are organized. Integration of the Long Range Interpretive Plan and Division Strategic Plan will enhance the usefulness of the Long Range Interpretive Plan as a tool for planning and accomplishing work.

Part 2 reflects the priorities identified by park staff and stakeholders during the 2009 planning workshops. Specifically, this part of the plan focuses on actions related to the park's desire to:

Evaluate and, as appropriate, redirect personal services into programs that address all primary themes including science communication and history. All of the park's primary themes merit attention, and park staff have developed a strong cadre of interpretive programs to explore most of these important stories. Park audiences, however, often overlook the park's rich human history (see the Human Cultures theme in Part 1). Visitor understanding of the park's cultural heritage could be enhanced with the addition of interpretive media or programs connected to the park's period of historical significance. There could be several ways to enhance interpretation at the National Park Inn at Longmire in collaboration with Guest Services, Inc. In addition, interpretive staff propose

to add new programs for interpreting historic places and events as well as American Indian tribal interactions with the mountain.

Evaluate and, as appropriate, improve certain interpretive media, particularly the use of emerging technologies.

Develop a clear direction for educational programming, broadly defined to include children and adults, and to project future use of the park's education center.

Further define and enhance relationships with the park's gateway communities, underrepresented groups, and urban audiences.

Goal 1. Visitors will understand, appreciate, and actively care for the resources of Mount Rainier National Park.

Objective 1a: Provide informal interpretation that both orients visitors and provides them with interpretive opportunities.

Objective 1c: Provide formal interpretive programs that enable visitors to form connections to the meanings of park resources.

The park is interested in developing a mix of formal and informal personal services that will appeal to targeted audiences (see Part 1) and be delivered by a broadened cadre of staff, volunteers, partners, and stakeholders.

Specifically, staff will:

- Sustain a variety of formal, ranger-led programs (see *The Park in 2009*).
- Develop tools and techniques that can be used in informal settings where staff go to visitors (instead of programs structured to have visitors come to a program at a scheduled time and location).
- Experiment with times and places for this new mix of formal and informal programming, and make adjustments designed to increase overall success in reaching targeted audiences, communicating themes, and offering desired audience experiences.
- Collect and analyze data on program attendance and logistics and adjust programs according to results.
- Develop and implement a strategy to evaluate interpretive effectiveness and program content.
- Conduct a workshop on program assessment.

- Develop and implement more structured citizen science activities that can be conducted in the field with visitor assistance. This might include roving assignments supplemented with science stations where visitors learn to use basic equipment via simple field experiments and data collection.
- Continue to recruit guest speakers for Speaker Series evening programs. Develop and conduct activities by guest speakers—scientists, subject matter experts, partner organizations, etc.
- Invite scientists to participate in or lead selected walks and talks.
- Develop a system of portable signs that can be used to alert visitors to field activities.
- Put at least some of the National Park Inn’s staff in period clothing.
- Develop and present additional living history or costumed programs. These programs, conducted by park staff or specially recruited volunteers, might begin on the porch of the National Park Inn when visitors are likely to be present (morning or evening) or at other carefully chosen locations.
- Develop a cadre of volunteers to assist with living history and celebration of historic events.
- Create a “calendar” of historic events, activities, and people that will capture audience attention, and then build additional special events or programs around them. Also, identify interpretive techniques that will have audience appeal—perhaps activities similar to those enjoyed historically.
- Prepare news articles or news releases that call attention to scheduled special events or programs focused on history.
- Develop a strategy to sustain dialogue with local tribes about interpreting tribal associations with the mountain and encouraging Indians to tell their own stories.
- Integrate Indian history and culture, particularly related to the mountain, into the broader Mount Rainier story.
- Invite members of local tribes to participate in the annual Speaker Series and to offer cultural demonstrations inside the park and/or at special events offsite.
- Work with Human Resources to hire tribal members to work as interpreters.
- Inform shuttle drivers about the availability of free online classes in informal interpretation.
- Provide step-on fee interpretation for commercial tour operators.

- Should additional funding allow, provide interpreters on shuttle buses.

The Carbon River Road suffered catastrophic flood damage in 2006, and as of the writing of this plan, the future of this area is still undecided. The Environmental Assessment identifies maintaining the road as a hike/bike trail as the preferred alternative. The formal interpretive programs once offered at Ipsut Creek Campground no longer will be possible. With the loss of car access to Carbon River, visitor use at Mowich Lake may increase. Most staffing will focus on roving and point interpretation, in collaboration with the Division of Visitor and Resource Protection, linked to existing and emerging patterns of visitor use. With that reality in mind, staff will:

- Provide informal interpretation in areas of high visitor use. Explore the use of volunteers who live in the general vicinity of Carbon River.
- Plan and present a series of well-publicized special programs linked to flooding and climate change, perhaps a guided bike ride or day hike. Implementation is linked to road repair.

Objective 1b: Develop and maintain interpretive media that orient visitors and convey the significance and meaning of park resources.

In an internationally significant park the size of Mount Rainier, interpretive media like publications, exhibits, signs, and audiovisual programs are critical to reaching diverse, on- and off-site audiences in sustainable, cost-effective ways.

Publications

- Re-evaluate the purpose and contents of both the official park map and the Tahoma newspaper, to reduce redundancy and increase interpretive content.

Workshop participants suggested that the newspaper retain orientation features—particularly program and activity schedules that help visitors choose visiting options—but reduce overlap with the official park map in other contents. The proposed re-evaluation should weigh the amount of newspaper space dedicated to interpretation, management messages, and safety, and engage the Management Team in discussions of future content.

- Consider which features currently in the newspaper or other publications might be distributed via the Internet. For example, provide pre-trip and orientation site bulletins for download on the website to limit the need for printing in-park and to reduce their impact on the environment. (see Electronics below for additional actions).
- Update and add publications as needs are identified (for example, global climate change or activities for cloudy/rainy days).

- As needed, provide additional materials in languages other than English. Consider Hindi, Arabic, and Hebrew. Ensure that qualified translators prepare new language publications.
- Evaluate both the content of and need for existing printed trail booklets. The Carbon River Rainforest Nature Trail and Ohanapecosh Hot Springs Trail waysides have replaced or will replace the trail booklets previously used. Consider using electronic media in addition to or instead of printed materials. Determine a strategy to deliver either printed or electronic materials on high use trails.
- Work with the concessioner to evaluate park information provided at lodging check-in, in rooms, lounges, and restaurants,
- Develop interpretive products for bus passengers that influence audience expectations/behavior and share park significance and themes (see Electronics above).
- Develop a packet of additional park information and a strategy for distribution to both shuttle and commercial bus operators.

Website

Increasingly, every park's website is a source of orientation, information, and interpretation for a range of audiences. Website contents can influence expectations about the park and influence on-site visitor behavior. For all of these reasons, the website merits specific attention. Staff will:

- Complete Phase II of the Content Management System redesign.
- Track developments in social networking (Web 2.0) and be responsive to changes in policy. Social networking is a tool that could facilitate interaction with a variety of interpretive audiences and delivery of orientation and other content.
- Complete sections of the park's website that are currently underused or need extensive work (For Kids, Science and Nature, etc.)
- Add appropriate new media and downloadable podcasts and vidcasts.
- Develop interactive e-classroom programs based on park themes, educator needs, and the Education Center vision (see Education below). E-classrooms will be hosted on partner sites and not on nps.gov unless existing website restrictions are lifted.
- Develop an online Junior Ranger program.
- Create online image galleries that will provide readily available, representative park images for each primary theme.

Electronics

- Participate in park discussions related to development of an Intelligent Transportation Plan, and maintain park media to reflect the plan's direction.
- Continue to explore the use of emerging technologies that could help with interpretation, orientation, and wayfinding—mp3 players, portable GPS units, WIFI hotspots/pull-offs along approach corridors and in gateway communities, etc. (Although cell phones currently do not work in the park, cell phone service should be monitored and used when appropriate and practical.)
- Develop auto, audio tours that can be used by park visitors as they drive through the park to enhance understanding of park themes and resources. Development includes strategies to prepare and distribute these tours as well as to determine the most promising and cost effective technology.
- Create an audio program for use on park shuttle buses and offer the same program to commercial bus companies. This program will use riding time to introduce park themes, help visitors make the best use of their time in the park, and encourage them to look more carefully at park resources.
- In cooperation with the USGS, support an update of “Perilous Beauty” audiovisual program with staff time and funding.
- Develop a video teaser that encourages audiences to see historic locations. This program could be offered in a variety of settings—online, at park inns, in visitor centers, on local access TV, for mp3 players, etc.

Exterior Media

- Plan, design, and install exhibits for the Grove of the Patriarchs, Trail of the Shadows, and the Ohanapecosh Hot Springs Trail.
- Consider new waysides for a Children's Nature Trail at Paradise.
- Redesign and replace permanent bulletin board information.
- Develop a mobile kiosk that can be used as needed and stored or moved to another location when demand is low.
- Enter and track interpretive media assets in FMSS (facility maintenance software system).
- Add interpretation on the porch of the National Park Inn—perhaps modest interpretive panels, photo albums, or booklets of Longmire history. These products would discuss the setting and encourage walking exploration of Longmire.

- Support the implementation of the Longmire Development Concept Plan including a site sign for Longmire that might encourage travelers intent on visiting Paradise to stop and explore Longmire. Suggested wording for the sign is “Welcome to Historic Longmire.”
- Design and install a temporary trailhead panel at the Carbon River Road closure.
- Compare existing interpretive media to the guidelines adopted by the NPS. (See Harpers Ferry Center’s “Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media”) and develop a strategy to correct deficiencies.
- Evaluate wayside accessibility and correct any deficiencies.

Interior Exhibits

The following list prioritizes replacement of exhibits as funding becomes available.

1. Fabricate and install exhibits for Sunrise Visitor Center in 2009 and 2010.
 2. Plan, design, fabricate, and install exhibits for Ohanapecosh Visitor Center.
 3. Plan, design, fabricate, and install exhibits for Longmire Museum.
- Participate in planning for Thompson Ranch.
 - Incorporate Audio Described Tours or newer technology into all new visitor center exhibit designs as appropriate to each location.

Goal 2. Educators and students will understand the park’s ecosystems and human history, resulting in enhanced resource stewardship.

The park offers a variety of educational programs and materials. Some programs require staff involvement while others consist of materials that can be used by teachers either in the classroom or in the park.

Staff have developed relationships with a wide variety of fellow educators from local schools to the Seattle region to Sister Mountain partners in Japan.

While the park is fully committed to providing programming to educators and students, evaluation and adjustment always must be part of program administration and design. How can limited resources be used best, particularly in the current environment of increased field trip transportation costs, decreased funding for field trips, and increased time spent on standardized testing preparation?

Program Assumptions

The park’s vision for the education program is anchored in several assumptions:

Programming needs to align with current standards of learning AND mesh with the park's primary themes. As with all sound partnerships, collaboration must produce positive benefits for all parties.

Activities that immerse students in the park's resources are essential—an educational visit to the park will not substitute a classroom in the Education Center for a school classroom. Immersion in the park's resources will be viewed as a capstone experience to in-class instruction. Field visits will be fully integrated into park trips and become the culminating event, the necessary topping that completes the educational sundae.

Leaders for park educational programs must be fully prepared park staff, trained volunteers, or teachers fully oriented to the park's stories and materials.

All formal lessons must include materials to prepare for a park visit.

All formal lessons must include post-visit evaluation materials.

Students served will be broadly defined and include, in addition to traditional elementary school classes, middle and high school students, college students, and adult learners with the ultimate focus on creating opportunities for rich, lifelong learning experiences.

Education staff, via pedagogical expertise and program design, will play an important role in supporting and advancing park-wide efforts to involve audiences in science activities and data collection.

Because of the active relationship that the park has with the Volcanic Hazards Work Group and the Sister Mountain Project, staff will continue cooperative efforts on volcano education including resource sharing and program planning.

Because of proximity and past history, Columbia Crest Elementary School will have a special relationship to the park.

Once targeted "in progress" curriculum development projects are completed, any new initiatives will be based on Part 1 of this plan coupled with objective evaluation and input from educators.

With these assumptions in mind, staff will:

Complete Projects Underway

In order to preserve the effort invested in several projects, staff will:

- Assess the need for projects currently in development: are they the highest priority topics as related to park themes and curriculum content at various grade levels? If so, complete them. If not, develop a comprehensive, prioritized framework for education programs that identifies the most appropriate topics at each grade level as well as existing and needed support materials.

- Continue to create and maintain a record of who uses the park for education programs, what they have done in the past, and what they request for the future. Analyze the data gathered to identify ways to improve programming.
- Develop additional assessment tools to gather on-going feedback from educators on the effectiveness of education programs.
- Focus options for on-site school visits. Involve educators in the decision-making, but decide what will and will not be offered on a sustainable basis. Avoid custom-made lessons for limited audiences. Broadly communicate what options are available and provide workshops or instruction on how to make the most of available materials and resources.
- Rebuild the special relationship with Columbia Crest Elementary School based on a sustainable model determined during renewed dialogue between park staff and local educators. Possibilities to be discussed include joint special events, ranger visits to the classroom, visits to the park for every class/student, service learning projects, creating online student/teacher ambassadors (trained students or teachers who can answer questions from other students/teachers considering a visit to the park), and others.
- Based on evaluation of the Sister Mountain Project, develop a plan to sustain international teacher exchange workshops and the partnership with the Fujisan Club and Japanese educators.

Share Program Information

- Develop and sustain the capability to distribute prepared educational materials via several channels—online, by CD, at education conferences and events, in written form—stressing those methods that are most cost effective. Share information about available materials and programs via a continually updated “catalog.” Explore the options for cross-posting with the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction as well as continuing to post on the park website and various education list serves.
- Annually project the park’s capability to send staff into the classroom and determine the geographical scope of educational outreach. Develop a plan to communicate the park’s capabilities to target audiences through a variety of media recommended by the educators themselves (what channels of communication do they use most?).
- Cultivate and expand personal contacts within the educational communities served or targeted.

Implementing Resource Education Campus

- Implement the Development Concept Plan for the area including and adjacent to the Education Center, i.e., an Education Campus that integrates the Education Center with existing facilities like the greenhouse and air quality and weather stations plus new elements like an outdoor teaching shelter and trails.

- Explore and implement ways to integrate field science into educational programs—bring students into contact with park scientists and their activities.
- Consult educational “clients” on program direction, then expand educational opportunities for older learners—colleges/universities, high schools, technical/vocational schools, and other adult learners. Explore links to the Science Learning Network, Elderhostel, citizen scientists, the proposed Mount Rainier Institute, etc. Develop programs that use Mount Rainier as a global climate change case study.
- Develop internship opportunities throughout park operations in partnership with 1) colleges/universities, 2) high schools, and 3) vocational/technical education programs.
- Recruit and train high school students to assist with interpretive and education programs (the Junior Ranger program, for example).
- Look for partners (nearby schools?) who can help the park develop and sustain distance learning opportunities, such as video conferencing and electronic field trips.
- Assist with planning for a Mount Rainier Institute (a partnership program that will use local facilities and resources for residential resource education, seminars, conferences, etc.)
- Develop a virtual field trip to the park. Identify different audiences, technologies, and content appropriate for virtual field trip experiences.
- Expand integration of living history characters, developed for other interpretive programs, into the education program.
- Integrate tribal history and culture into educational programs, particularly via methods that invite tribal representatives to tell their own stories.
- Help plan and participate in a multi-agency traveling teacher workshop to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Mt. St. Helen’s 1980 eruption.
- Prepare and submit requests for funding and support.

Goal 3. Diverse communities, organizations, and key park partners will understand the NPS mission and the significance of the park and its resources.

Outreach to Gateway Communities

While workshop participants agreed on the need to extend orientation and interpretation outside park boundaries, it was harder to reach consensus on

activities that traditionally fall under the purview of a park's information officer. Given current staffing and staff responsibilities, the actions that follow focus on areas that are interpretive in nature. Staff will:

- Participate in planning for corridor welcome centers.
- Continue to participate in local events based on assessment of the audience type, numbers reached, cost, and management issues that need to be addressed locally.
- Annually, probably in April or May, visit gateway communities on the north, west, and southeast borders of the park, updating the communities on park operations, projects, and issues.
- Provide outreach programs, using volunteers, to gateway civic groups and other organizations. Initially, respond to requests for programs and, if volunteers are successful, become proactive.
- Continue to use a "flipbook" strategy for addressing management issues, i.e., prepare a loose-leaf binder or CD that describes and illustrates management issues within the park. Distribute the flipbook widely in local communities.

Underrepresented Urban Residents

The park is committed to creating and testing an urban outreach program for underrepresented urban audiences in the region. If successful, the program could expand to include additional urban areas in the greater Puget Sound area. Whether the program continues or expands, however, is dependent on locating reliable sources of on-going funding, perhaps in collaboration with other parks in the NCCN.

During the life of this LRIP, staff will:

- In partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation and new partners, expand the camping program, "Camping Adventure with My Parents" (CAMP).
- Create tools to evaluate outreach program success. Adjust the program as needed.
- Expand and sustain relationships with organizations in the Seattle area that are interested in a city/park connection, including a partnership with the YMCA for a camping program. Develop truly collaborative efforts that will help sustain programming in the future.
- Explore displays in airports, public transit, ferries, interstate welcome centers, etc. that invite visitation and support and help shape expectations about the park. Enlist a partner who can help with funding. Link these displays to the NPS Centennial.

- Participate in special events (fairs, festivals, parades, etc.). The extent of participation will be determined based on annual staffing, collaboration with other parks in the network, and targeted audiences.
- Prepare and submit grant requests for funding and support.

Goal 4. Division of Interpretation and Education activities meet the highest professional standards of our profession.

Objective 4c: Employees engage in professional development opportunities to maximize job performance and professional growth.

Identification of interpretive priorities invariably leads to a need for new training and skills development. In addition to action items already captured in the narrative, training and development will enable staff to gain proficiency in:

- Accessibility requirements and techniques to accommodate audiences with special needs.
- Development and implementation of effective tools to assess and evaluate interpretive effectiveness.
- Development and production of interpretive products using emerging technologies.
- Demonstrating leadership as supervisors and program managers.
- Developing new skills in their field of expertise, especially for specialist positions.
- Serving as interpretive coaches and interpretive program certifiers.
- Identifying funding opportunities and writing effective grants requests.

Objective 4d: Incorporate park, regional, and national initiatives into division programs as appropriate.

The park is a source of considerable scientific knowledge collected by a variety of research projects, historical and contemporary. Along with the broader scientific community, the park recognizes that this knowledge is most useful when shared, incorporated into the common culture, and used as a catalyst for stewardship initiatives. Interpretation can play a role in science information dissemination with actions that:

- Distribute existing NCCN (North Coast and Cascades Network) resource briefs.

- Collaborate in the development of additional briefs (global climate change impacts, glacier research, endangered species status, etc.).
- Collaborate with natural and cultural resource staff to integrate research into interpretive programs.
- Create hands-on science opportunities for visitors (see Personal Services above).
- Continue to invite park scientists and outside experts to participate in the park's Speaker Series. (see Personal Services above)
- Provide opportunities for staff to "shadow" park scientists and science field crews.
- Plan and coordinate a brown bag lunch series where scientists present their research to park staff.
- Sponsor a "science day" once a year as a forum for staff to share science program accomplishments.
- Plan and conduct a one-day field seminar on climate change for the public. If successful, perhaps expand to other topics.
- Develop a Junior Ranger program around hands-on field science (see also Education below).
- Plan and implement a calendar of events marking Volcano Awareness Month (May).

Actions Related to Staffing

The implementation charts identify those tasks that require additional staffing, either from new positions or reassignment of duties. Several actions need specific mention. Staff will seek to:

- Convert the Urban Outreach and Education Specialist term positions to permanent positions—this will require advocacy and a successful funding strategy.
- Earmark a position for website maintenance and oversight, perhaps in cooperation with other network parks. This position also might be assigned Information Officer duties for the park (see next action item).
- Continue to advocate for creation of an Information Officer position for the park to reduce the workload associated with this collateral duty on division staff.
- Work closely with Human Resources staff and Tribal Liaison to explore ways to recruit and hire park interpreters from local tribes.

- Develop and implement a staffing plan to help operate a new corridor visitor center at Enumclaw, if that continues to be a management goal.
- Create a position with resource interpretation liaison responsibilities.
- Increase core funding for seasonal interpretive positions. This would allow expanded programs on science, human culture/living history, and informal interpretation.

Actions Related to Research/Collections

As the narrative above clearly indicates, the park intends to integrate on-going scientific inquiry into interpretive programming. Actions include strategies to increase communication among scholars working in the field and with park collections, interpretive staff, and park audiences. This will be particularly the case with any work related to global climate change.

The many references in the narrative to evaluation also demonstrate the park's commitment to nurturing a culture of assessment. The intent is to develop assessment tools, use them on a regular basis, and actively use data collected to refine and improve interpretive programming and facilities.

Goal 1: Visitors will understand, appreciate, and actively care for the resources of Mount Rainier National Park.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Who?</i>	<i>FY10</i>	<i>FY11</i>	<i>FY12</i>	<i>FY13</i>	<i>FY14-17</i>	<i>FY15-17</i>
Objective 1a: Provide informal interpretation that both orients visitors and provides them with interpretive opportunities.							
Develop tools and techniques for informal interpretation	District Interpreters	ongoing					
Experiment with times and places for mix of formal and informal programming	District Interpreters	ongoing					
Discuss enhancing interpretation at National Park Inn	Chief	Implementation is up to concessioner					
Collaborate with Visitor and Resource Protection on staffing plan for the Carbon/Mowich area	Chief	x					
Objective 1b: Develop and maintain interpretive media that orient visitors and convey the significance and meaning of park resources.							
PUBLICATIONS							
Update and revise park publications	Media Specialist	On-going					
Provide non-English park publications	Media Specialist	On-going					
Reevaluate the purpose and contents of the Tahoma and official park map	Media Specialist				x		
Evaluate the content and need for printed trail guides	Media Specialist	x					
Discuss info. packet park's inn rooms.	Chief	x					
Identify messages/media that best shape expectations for bus passengers	Media Specialist						x
WEBSITE							
Track developments in Web 2.0	Media Specialist	On-going					
Complete Phase II CMS redesign	Media Specialist	x					
Develop content to fill website sections	Web Mgr	On-going					
Add more media to website	Web Mgr	On-going					
Develop interactive e-classroom programs	Need Staff						
Develop virtual field trips	Need Staff						
Develop online Children's Program	Web Mgr			x	x		
Create online image galleries	Web Mgr	On-going					

<i>Action</i>	<i>Who?</i>	<i>FY10</i>	<i>FY11</i>	<i>FY12</i>	<i>FY13</i>	<i>FY14-17</i>	<i>FY15-17</i>
Objective 1b: Develop and maintain interpretive media that orient visitors and convey the significance and meaning of park resources. (cont.)							
ELECTRONICS							
Explore use of emerging technologies	Media Specialist	On-going					
Develop auto audio tour	Media Specialist	x					
Develop a podcast, vidcast that encourages visits to historic park locations	Media Specialist		x				
Create audio for shuttle and commercial buses	Media Specialist				x		
Participate in Intelligent Transportation planning	Chief & Media Specialist	Plan	Plan	Plan	Impl.		
Work with USGS to update "Perilous Beauty"		USGS lead					
EXTERIOR MEDIA							
Enter Interpretive Media into FMSS	Media Specialist	On-going					
Redesign, replace permanent bulletin board info.	Media Specialist	x					
Develop and install temporary wayside for Carbon River.	Media Specialist	x					
Support site sign for Longmire	Media Specialist	x					
Plan, design, and install East Side Nature Trail and Trail of the Shadows waysides	Media Specialist			X		X	
Consider new waysides for Children's Nature Trail	Media Specialist					x	
Develop mobile kiosk (<i>No longer a valid action item</i>)	Media Specialist	Plan				Impl	
Explore displays for mass transit, etc.	Media Specialist					x	
INTERIOR EXHIBITS							
Incorporate Audio Described Tours or other technology in new visitor center exhibits	Media Specialist	On-going					
Participate in Thompson Ranch planning	Chief	As needed					
Participate in planning for corridor welcome centers	Chief & Media Specialist	As needed					
Coordinate fabrication/installation for Sunrise VC	Media Specialist	x	x				
Compare interpretive media with NPS guidelines and begin correcting deficiencies	Media Specialist	On-going					

<i>Action</i>	<i>Who?</i>	<i>FY10</i>	<i>FY11</i>	<i>FY12</i>	<i>FY13</i>	<i>FY14-17</i>	<i>FY15-17</i>
Objective 1b: Develop and maintain interpretive media that orient visitors and convey the significance and meaning of park resources. (cont.)							
Evaluate wayside accessibility, find funding, correct deficiencies	Media Specialist				Eval	Seek Funding/ correct deficiencies	
Plan, design, fabricate exhibits for Ohanapecosh VC	Media Specialist	Funding dependent					
Plan, design, fabricate exhibits for Longmire Museum	Media Specialist	No funding anticipated during the life of this plan					
Objective 1c: Provide formal interpretive programs that enable visitors to form connections to the meanings of park resources.							
Sustain formal, ranger-led programs	District Interpreters	On-going					
Collect and analyze data on program attendance/logistics and adjust as needed	District Interpreters	On-going					
Continue Speaker Series	District Interpreters	On-going					
Invite scientists to present walks/talks	District Interpreters	On-going					
Promote special events	District Interpreters	On-going					
Develop and present additional living history	District Interpreters	On-going					
Provide visitor service training for shuttle drivers	West Interp.	x					
Develop and implement a strategy to evaluate interpretive effectiveness	Chief	Dev.	Imple.	ongoing			
Create calendar of historic events and plan new programs to coincide	District Interpreters	Calendar	New events				
Develop and integrate citizen science into interpretive programs	District Interpreters		Begin	Continue			
Develop portable signs to alert visitors to field interpretation	Media Specialist		x				
Develop and integrate guest speakers into interpretive programs	VIP/Outreach Coordinator			Begin	Continue		
Explore step-on interpretation for a fee	Chief				x		

<i>Action</i>	<i>Who?</i>	<i>FY10</i>	<i>FY11</i>	<i>FY12</i>	<i>FY13</i>	<i>FY14-17</i>	<i>FY15-17</i>
Objective 1c: Provide formal interpretive programs that enable visitors to form connections to the meanings of park resources. (cont.)							
Develop park info. packet for commercial bus companies	VIP/Outreach Coord.				x		
Provide interpreter on shuttle	Need staff						
Plan and present special programs on flood and climate change in Carbon River area. (depends on road opening)	West Interp.						

Goal 2. Educators and students will understand the park’s ecosystems and human history, resulting in enhanced stewardship.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Who?</i>	<i>FY10</i>	<i>FY11</i>	<i>FY12</i>	<i>FY13</i>	<i>FY14</i>	<i>FY15-17</i>
Objective 2a: Develop and maintain effective relationships with education partners to expand the reach of the education program.							
Plan Mount Rainier Institute	Supt & Chief	On-going					
Design and implement a sustainable program offer with Columbia Crest	Ed. Prog. Manager	On-going					
Offer internships	Ed. Prog. Manager	Colleges	High school	Vo Tech			
Help plan and participate in 30 th anniversary of Mount St. Helens eruption.	Ed. Prog. Manager	x					
Collaborate on Mt. Fuji teacher exchange workshops and complete Sister Mountain Curriculum	Ed. Prog. Manager	x	x				
Develop and implement plan to ensure sustainability of Sister Mountain Project exchange workshops	Ed. Prog. Manager	Develop plan	Implement Plan				
Refine plan to communicate with teachers	Ed. Prog. Manager	Create	Circulate and keep up-to-date				
Look for distance learning partners	Ed. Prog. Manager	x					
Explore teleconferencing opportunities	Ed. Prog. Manager	x					
Plan calendar of events for Volcano Awareness Month	Chief	Annually					

<i>Action</i>	<i>Who?</i>	<i>FY10</i>	<i>FY11</i>	<i>FY12</i>	<i>FY13</i>	<i>FY14</i>	<i>FY15-17</i>
Objective 2b: Develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum-based education program.							
Maintain and analyze data on ed. program participation including assessment	Ed. Prog. Manager	On-going					
Assess existing framework for products under development and revise as needed	Ed. Prog. Manager	x					
Focus options for on-site visits, avoid custom programs	Ed. Prog. Manager		x				
Include high school students in providing programs	Ed. Prog. Manager		x				
Integrate more living history into education programs	Ed. Prog. Manager		x				
Integrate more tribal history into education programs	Ed. Prog. Manager			x			
Objective 2c: Operate an onsite Education Center serving school groups, park staff, and other adult learners.							
Integrate field science into educational programs	Ed. Prog. Manager				x		
Develop strategy to expand to older learners	Ed. Prog. Manager						x
Create design for Education Campus outdoor teaching shelter	Ed. Prog. Manager						x
Develop education trails for Education Campus	Ed. Prog. Manager						x

Goal 3. Diverse Communities, organizations, and key partners will understand the NPS mission and the significance of the park and its resources.

Action	Who?	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15-17
Objective 3a: Develop and sustain an Outreach Program that provides underrepresented groups with meaningful connections to park resources, values, and experiences.							
Locate and write grants	VIP/Outreach Coord.	On-going					
Expand Camping Adventure with My Parents (CAMP) Program	VIP/Outreach Coord.	x					
Create evaluation tools	VIP/Outreach Coord.	x					
Develop YMCA boys camp	Need staff						
Objective 3b: Enhance park neighbor and partner understanding of the NPS mission, park operations, and current management issues.							
Organize annual meetings in gateway communities	VIP/Outreach Coord.	On-going					
Provide programs to civic organizations	VIP/Outreach Coord.	On-going					
Participate in planning for corridor welcome centers	Chief & Media Specialist	On-going					
Participate in local special events	VIP/Outreach Coord.	On-going					
Distribute management issues to communities	Need staff						
Objective 3c: Develop and sustain a Volunteer-in-Parks program that builds community support and involvement while accomplishing important work in the park.							
Develop cadre of volunteers for living history	VIP/Outreach		x				

Goal 4. Division of Interpretation and Education activities meet the highest professional standards of our profession.

Objective 4a: Integrate the Interpretive Development Program professional standards into training, coaching, performance appraisal, assessment and hiring.							
Objective 4b: Develop and implement a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan. Ensure work priorities are mission driven and support park Centennial Goals.							
Objective 4c: Employees engage in professional development opportunities to maximize job performance and professional growth.							
Objective 4d: Incorporate park, regional, and national initiatives into division programs as appropriate.							
Integrate additional Indian history and culture into interpretation	District Interpreters	On-going					
Invite tribal members to participate in Speaker Series	VIP/Outreach Coord.	On-going					
Work with Human Resources to hire tribal members	Chief	On-going					
Distribute existing resource briefs	District Interpreters	On-going					
Include subject matter experts in training and programs	District Interpreters	On-going					
Provide “shadow” opportunities	Chief & District Interpreters	On-going					
Discuss interpretation with tribes	Chief	x					
Plan, conduct field seminar on climate change	VIP/Outreach Coord.		x				
Develop and integrate citizen science into interpretive programs	District Interpreters		Begin	On-going			
Develop hands-on field science Junior Ranger program	District Interpreters				x		
Involve field trips in hands-on science	Ed. Prog. Manager				x		
Plan, facilitate brown bag lunch talks	Need staff						
Conduct “science day” forum	Need staff						
Collaborate to develop more resource briefs	Need staff						

Participants

Mount Rainier National Park Staff:

Roger Andrascik, Acting Deputy Superintendent
Kevin Bacher, Volunteer Program Manager
Fawn Bauer, Education Specialist
Bryan Bowden, Community Planner
Greg Burtchard, Cultural Resource Specialist
Brad Carlquist, Urban Outreach Coordinator
Greg Carstens, Volunteer Meadow Rover
Tami Degrosky, Chief of Maintenance
Anne Doherty-Stephan, Education Program Manager
Barry Fraissinet, Interpretive Division Secretary
Jim Hinote, Interpretive Park Ranger
Curt Jacquot, West District Lead Interpreter
Randy King, Acting Superintendent
Marne McArdle, Interpretive Park Ranger
Julia Pinnix, East District Lead Interpreter
Steve Redman, Interpretive Park Ranger
Mason Reid, Wildlife Ecologist
Chris Roundtree, Interpretive Park Ranger
Barbara Samora, Biologist
Tony Schneider, Volunteer Meadow Rover
Jennifer Stegmann, Student Conservation Association Education Intern
Lee Taylor, Chief of Interpretation and Education
Lou Whiteaker, Plant Ecologist
Patti Wold, Interpretive Media Specialist
Mary Wysong, Concessions Manager

Partners

Karen Andrascik, Teacher, Eatonville Elementary School
Don Borst, Teacher, Sequoyah Middle School
Dean Butterworth, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Olympic National Park
Carolyn Driedger, Hydrologist, Outreach Coordinator, US Geological Survey Cascades
Volcano Observatory
David Lindau, Associate Director, Discover Your Northwest
Sherry Paul, Mount Rainier National Park Branch Manager, Discover Your Northwest

Appendix 1

Intangibles

During the process of developing interpretive themes, workshop participants brainstormed a list of “intangibles”—processes, ideas, relationships, concepts, and values—that suggest more universal stories that resonate with a wide spectrum of audiences.

Workshop participants used this list to develop primary theme statements.

Intangibles Associated with the Park

Inspiration, fascination

Power, grandeur

Dynamism, adaptation, regeneration

Harmony, sanctuary, escape, solitude

Danger, fear, adversity

Mysterious, unknown, surprise

Discovery, education

Uniqueness

Triumph

Pride, heritage, legacy

Romance, passion

Sacred

Appendix 2

Criteria Used to Suggest Priorities

Workshop participants considered the following criteria in suggesting priorities:

Cost, including staff time

Impact, i.e., numbers of audience members served

Impact, i.e., contribution to interpretive mission

Safety or legal concerns

Opportunity at hand—staff capabilities, partner willingness to help, materials
and resources readily available, etc.

National or local initiatives, political considerations

Park management goals

Appendix 3

Centennial Strategy Goals

Anticipating the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service (2016), the Secretary of the Interior prepared a report, *The Future of America's National Parks*, and in 2006 presented it to President George W. Bush. That report contained the following goals:

Stewardship

The National Park Service leads America and the world in preserving and restoring treasured resources.

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy.

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Set the standard of excellence in urban park landscape design and maintenance.

Assure that no compelling chapter in American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Serve as the pre-eminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Environmental Leadership

The National Park Service demonstrates environmental leadership to the nation.

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Recreational Experience

National parks are superior destinations where visitors have fun, explore nature and history, find inspiration, and improve health and wellness.

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation

network accessible to all Americans.

Establish “volun-tourism” excursions to national park for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children’s lives.

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Education

The National Park Service fosters exceptional learning opportunities that connect people to parks.

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Promote life-long learning to connect through park experiences.

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Professional Excellence

The National Park Service demonstrates management excellence worthy of the treasures entrusted to our care.

Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

All planning processes, including preparation of LRIPs, should consider these goals and, as appropriate, help park managers reach servicewide objectives.

Appendix 4

Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan

Now (2006) is the time to take action, laying the groundwork for an Interpretation and Education Renaissance as we approach the centennial milestone of the National Park Service. This Action Plan recommends a renewed focus and change in the following five areas of Interpretation and Education:

Engage People to Make Enduring Connections to America's Special Places

In order to connect all Americans to the recreational, educational, and inspirational power of national parks, we must equip interpreters and educators with the knowledge, skills, and approaches necessary for community and civic engagement for the whole of America. This must include ethnic, socioeconomic, and disabled groups that have, for a variety of reasons, not been well connected to national parks in the past. Programs must be created in collaboration with communities and partners rather than for them.

Use New Technologies

Technology offers new and tremendous opportunities—not to replace national park experiences, but to make intangible meanings available in ways never before imagined. To remain relevant to today's visitor, the NPS must be a leader in the use of technology applied to informal learning.

Embrace Interpretation and Education Partners

As many as 70,000 volunteers, concessioners, and other partners provide interpretive services. The NPS ranger must increasingly facilitate partners in the attainment of excellence.

Develop and Implement Professional Standards

In the last decade, the NPS has begun to develop professional standards, but their use has been inconsistent. Now is the time to apply these standards to all who deliver interpretation and education services.

Create a Culture of Evaluation

We have very little scientifically valid information about the direct outcomes and impact of interpretation and education programs. Evaluation must become an integral part of program design and delivery to ensure ongoing program improvement, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Appendix 5

Children in Nature

Goal

Children in Nature is a joint initiative of the National Association of State Park Directors and National Park Service. The primary goal of the programs is “to see this nation's children and their families again fully participating in outdoor recreation activities and rediscovering their natural and cultural heritage.”

Plan of Action

The National Association of State Park Directors and the National Park Service Leadership Council agreed to work collectively on the following plan of action.

Focus on individual initiatives to increase the public's awareness and value of connecting children and nature toward a goal of improving the knowledge of our nation's natural resources and the health and welfare of the present and future generation of young Americans.

Join together in a continuing dialogue to discuss common issues and implement solutions to create a seamless system of services.

Share information and knowledge on developing and expanding natural resource education and recreation opportunities for children and their families.

Engage other federal, state, local, tribal and non-government partners in shared technology and interactive programs and problem solving activities to achieve mutually agreed upon goals to connect children and nature.

Promote a national campaign to recognize the importance of connecting children and families to nature.

Appendix 6

Interpretation and Education Strategic Plan 2016

Pacific West Region

Strategic Goals

Oceans: Engage visitors, partners and communities to become active ocean stewards.

Climate Change: Immediately engage all people to daily transform their impact on the planet to reduce their carbon footprint and become more climate-friendly.

Engaging Youth: Release the power of the parks to invigorate youth to embrace the heritage of our country and health of the planet through a revitalization of citizenship and science.

Bold & Positive Leadership: Embrace the Interpretation and Education Renaissance through bold positive leadership to stimulate strategic changes in how we do business.

Centennial: Demonstrate exemplary environmental leadership and provide experiential opportunities that empower diverse communities to care for America's Treasures beyond 2016.