CONTESTED TERRAIN:
North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Washington
An Administrative History

By
David Louter

1998
National Park Service
Seattle, Washington

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INTRODUCTION

Washington's North Cascades rank as some of the country's wildest, most rugged, and beautiful mountains outside of Alaska. Their breathtaking scenery inspired the name the "American Alps," a description often used for other ranges in the United States, but one, their admirers stressed, the northern Cascades deserved without question. More importantly, perhaps, the North Cascades were considered "true wilderness." In the middle of the twentieth century, they were known mostly to mountaineers, and before that by a relative handful of explorers, miners, loggers, settlers, dam builders, and, of course, the Skagit peoples. The range's deep, glaciated valleys and jumble of precipitous, glacier-clad peaks formed a nearly impenetrable barrier to human progress. When it was officially opened in 1972, State Highway 20 was the first and only east-west road to cross the formidable country north of Stevens Pass. To this day, the isolated community of Stehekin, at the head of the fjord-like Lake Chelan, cannot be reached by road. By accident of geography, wilderness enthusiasts claimed, the North Cascades had escaped the forces that had shaped modern America.

In the aftermath of World War II, however, change did come and threatened to alter forever this magnificent country with clear cuts, mining operations, and motorized recreation. On October 2, 1968, after a lengthy and controversial struggle, Congress protected around 700,000 acres of this range, some of the nation's finest alpine wilderness, as North Cascades National Park. The political forces that led to the creation of the park can be seen in the park's physical form. It is a "park complex," composed of a national park (505,000 acres) made up of northern and southern units, and two national recreation areas. Ross Lake National Recreation Area (117,000 acres) is wedged between the park's northern and southern units. Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (62,000 acres) abuts the park's southern boundary. While there are specific differences in how these areas are managed, the park complex as a whole has the purpose of providing the American public a wealth of scenic, scientific, historic, and recreational opportunities in a wilderness environment.

The significance of North Cascades relates in large part to its mountainous geography. When the Cascade Range reaches northern Washington, its stately ridges transform into a bewildering array of uplifted and folded peaks. The mountain building process here was extremely complex, forming a series of seemingly unending peaks and troughs of deep, steep-sided valleys. These deep valleys, many of them carved out by glaciers, give the surrounding mountains an immensely dramatic relief, making them appear higher than they really are. Though not many peaks are above 9,000 feet, they rise above valley floors that are mostly under an elevation of 2,000 feet. The relief is so much greater than the higher peaks of the Sierra or Rockies, noted mountaineer Hermann Ulrichs, that it gives the North Cascades "a decidedly grander appearance."[1] The peaks of the Picket Range, with such ominous-sounding names as Challenger, Fury, and Terror, attest to this observation. Other striking topographic features of the northern Cascades are the volcanic cones of Mount Baker and Glacier Peak, more recent additions to the range, towering above it to the north and south respectively. Unlike Mount Rainier National Park, then, North Cascades National Park gains

[1]
much of its significance not from a single volcano but rather from a "sea of peaks." It is this crown of jagged ridges, spires, and pinnacles that epitomizes the wilderness character of North Cascades.

The park owes its rugged topography and extreme relief to the glaciers and rivers that have deeply incised and shaped the North Cascades. More than three hundred glaciers, many of them small, remain active at the heads of valleys and make up the greatest concentration of glaciers in a national park outside of Alaska. The power of their erosive forces carved out such broad, U-shaped valleys as those of the Stehekin River and Little and Big Beaver and Thunder creeks, and created distinctive features such as hanging valleys with their cascading waterfalls. The park's two major watersheds, the Skagit and Stehekin rivers, are fed by the meltwater of glaciers and snow, rainfall, and the innumerable streams and creeks draining the mountains. The Skagit is the largest watershed in Puget Sound. This physical reality highlights the fact that the North Cascades form a striking boundary between climates; the west slope receives heavy -- and generally warm -- precipitation from the Pacific (from 84 to over 100 inches) while the east slope lies in a rain shadow (receiving about 30 inches a year).

Water, in all its various forms, is another of the park's popular and significant resources -- from the rivers and lakes clouded with glacier flour to the clear, alpine lakes and ponds (more than 200) in the park's high country. Four large bodies of water lie within the park's boundaries. Gorge, Diablo, and Ross lakes are reservoirs formed by dams on the Skagit River, and are located in Ross Lake National Recreation Area. Lake Chelan is a natural lake that extends for fifty-five miles through a narrow, glacier carved valley, rimmed by high peaks in the north that give way to lower and drier mountains in the south near Chelan. In the late 1920s, however, a hydroelectric dam at the foot of the lake raised the lake's level by twenty-one feet.

The wild country of the North Cascades is also biologically diverse. The park's two distinct climatic zones -- a wet and temperate western slope and a drier and colder eastern slope -- support a variety of flora. On the west side of the range, heavy stands of Douglas fir, western red cedar, and western hemlock dominate the lowland forest. At higher elevations, pacific silver fir, mountain hemlock, Alaska yellow cedar, and subalpine fir are the most common species. On the eastern side of the range, grand fir, Douglas fir, aspen, and ponderosa pine are the dominant trees in the forests at the lower elevations, while whitebark pine and subalpine larch are the most common at the higher elevations. On either side of the mountains, a wide variety of plants and vegetation, from ferns to flowering heather, can be found. More important, perhaps from a popular perspective, are the subalpine meadows or "mountain parks" that open up past the tree line. For many visitors, they are the high country's most characteristic feature.

The park's biological diversity extends to fish and wildlife, too. Native and introduced species of fish live in the park's lakes and rivers. Among the native fish are bull trout, cutthroat trout, and burbot; and among the introduced fish are rainbow and brook trout, and kokanee and Chinook salmon. The park's variety of habitats supports nearly 340 species of wildlife. Sightings of deer, black bear, mountain goats, and various small mammals and birds are common, whereas encounters with mountain lions, coyotes, bobcats, grizzly bears, and wolves tend to be far less common.

Together these features -- mountains, glaciers, rivers, lakes, flora, fish, and fauna -- compose North Cascades National Park's principal natural resources. They are also the source for the popular perception of the park's quality as a "true wilderness" in a modern age and within such close proximity to the Puget Sound's metropolitan corridor. This focus on the park's wilderness resources has tended to obscure the human story of the range's past. The park's cultural resources are diverse. The prehistory of the North Cascades, for example, reveals that
perhaps within the last 5,000 years native people used the resources of the range on a seasonal and permanent basis. Similarly, studies suggest that the historic tribes of northwestern Washington, such as the Upper Skagit, Chiliwack, Lower Thompson, and Chelan, also exploited mountain resources traveling through the range's valleys and passes. In this respect, the North Cascades were thus not the unknown, impervious mountain range many whites of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries believed.

Evidence of Anglo American interaction with this rough landscape can be seen in the historic structures and sites that speak to early exploration, mining, homesteading, tourism, federal land management, and hydroelectric power development. Most of the activities associated with these structures were arduous undertakings. The range's extreme topography confined them to the major river valleys; they were transient in nature, and most left only reminders of their passing in silent mining operations and aging log cabins. However, some pursuits left a more permanent mark on the region, such as the Stehekin community at the head of Lake Chelan and the dams erected by Seattle City Light on the Skagit River. The wilderness of the North Cascades has not been an island in the stream of history, experiencing the occasional floods of interest. Here history has been, like the mountains, more a question of scale and perspective than magnitude.

***

This administrative history has several purposes: to provide a summary of the park's thirty year development, to present a synthesis of the many issues that have concerned park managers from 1968 to the present, and to offer an analysis of North Cascades and its place within the history of the national park system and how the politics of its establishment and its wilderness mission distinguish it from other national parks. This history is organized both chronologically and topically. The report is divided into three parts corresponding to three distinct eras in the park complex's history. In some cases, as with the discussion of the High Ross Dam controversy, this approach has been modified to provide better coverage of a topic. Within these sections, chapters address such recurring topics as administration, development, research and resource management, concessions management, hydropower issues, wilderness management, and land protection. The first part addresses the establishment of North Cascades as a national park; the park movement spanned more than seventy years, and the compromises necessary to preserve North Cascades bear significantly upon the park's management.

The second and third parts reflect distinct eras of planning, and are divided into the park's first ten years and next twenty years. These sections essentially provide the context for the birth and growth of a relatively young national park and provide readers with a thematic framework with which to think of the park's management history. The park complex's first decade of administration can be characterized by the Park Service's attempts to carry out the legislative mandates of the North Cascades Act, develop the new park's management on a strong foundation of research, advance a strong commitment to wilderness preservation, and contend with the often contradictory aspects of traditional park management. The last twenty years of management can be characterized by the Park Service's attempts to come to terms with the park's past as well as its future. On the one hand, the agency addressed long-standing management problems in its attempts to resolve hydropower issues and disputes over land acquisition and resource use in Stehekin. And on the other, the agency demonstrated its desire to place wilderness foremost in present and future management decisions with the creation of a wilderness district. At the same time, it sought ways to improve visitor services, for example, with the construction of a visitor center. This situation revealed one of the central themes of the park's management. Most visitors never strayed far from their cars, and the agency needed a facility to educate the public about the wilderness few would see.
An administrative history cannot be written without the support of many people, ranging from park staff to librarians. I have many people to thank, and at the risk of overlooking some, I will attempt to mention them all. First, thanks go to Gretchen Luxenberg and Stephanie Toothman who started this project a number of years ago. In the late 1980s, Stephanie and Gretchen began the research for this project. Their efforts were part of a larger cultural resource initiative directed at parks in the Northwest; they were also part of the planning effort undertaken by Superintendent John Reynolds in nearly every facet of management for North Cascades. Stephanie and Gretchen, then the regional and research historians, respectively, in the National Park Service's Pacific Northwest Regional Office [2] in Seattle, Washington, completed most of the archival research. However, funding problems and time constraints caused the project to be shelved. Meanwhile, Gretchen, who had produced several important studies on North Cascades, including the park's historic resource study, completed the park's archives project. The project created a discrete collection of documentary materials pertinent to the park's administration. In the process, she added still more material to the bulging files on the park's administrative history in the Seattle office. Fortunately, funding became available to complete the project beginning in 1995. And it was around that time that Stephanie and Gretchen passed the responsibility to me. I had already perused the North Cascades files while looking for a topic for my dissertation and gladly accepted the task. After some minor interruptions during the Park Service's reorganization in 1996, I was able to complete the study.

The project would not have been completed without the assistance of park staff, those who still work for the park and those who have moved on. I would like to thank all of the former superintendents who gave me their insights about the park -- Roger Contor, Lowell White, and John Reynolds. In addition to giving me his own insights, the current superintendent, Bill Paleck, read every word of the report, a feat few accomplish. Park staffers answered my questions with a measure of humor and professionalism. I owe special debts to Bruce Freet, chief of the park's resource management program, for helping to keep the project alive, and to Dan Allen, resource management specialist, for answering my questions about nearly every aspect of the program. As one of the "senior" members of the park's staff, Dan may have had this privilege forced upon him. Other members of the park's staff, Gerry Cook, Jesse Kennedy, Bob Mierendorf, Leigh Smith, Reed Glesne, Phil Campbell, Bob Kuntz, and Tim Manns, among others, were all helpful. I am equally indebted to Jon Jarvis, the park's first chief of resource management, and Bob Wasem, the park's first biologist, who reviewed the document and helped me make the report stronger and more accurate. Likewise, Barry Mackintosh, the Park Service's bureau historian, gave the document his usual close reading and insightful comments. Frank Norris, Park Service historian in Anchorage, Alaska, and Doug Dodd, a PhD candidate in history at the University of California at Santa Barbara, also gave sections of the document a close reading and made the text more fluid. I am also indebted to the librarians in our Seattle office and especially at the manuscripts division at the University of Washington, where much of this research was accomplished. I would like to express my appreciation as well to the staff of the cultural resources division who have supported me over the years. Finally, I extend my gratitude to my wife, Rebekah, and my daughter, Arendje, who have gone car camping with me in the park. I will always have fond memories of my eighteen-month-old daughter sleeping quietly in our tent at Newhalem Creek Campground on her first camping trip. While many have helped me with this project, I am ultimately responsible for its content.

In closing, there should be some mention of my approach to the research and writing of this study. The nature of doing "recent" history has changed markedly over the years. The advent
of electronic mail, for example, has greatly reduced the amount of written material available
to historians. For this reason, I have relied on conversations and interviews with current and
former park staff as well as published reports to fill in the gaps in the historical narrative.
Nevertheless, the narrative trajectory collapses the closer one moves to the present, and I
tried to compensate for this by organizing the park’s history into eras. All of this is not to say
that there are no good documentary source materials relating to North Cascades. The history
of the park’s establishment and its early management have drawn extensively on the
collections of Henry M. Jackson, Warren G. Magnuson, Lloyd Meeds, the North Cascades
Conservation Council, and other politicians and environmental groups who have figured
prominently in the fight for and management of the national park. There remains, I believe,
more to be done with the environmental movement and the preservation of landscapes like
North Cascades. The Kennedy-Johnson era was a fruitful one for environmental legislation,
and parks such as North Cascades were part of the growing concern for wilderness
preservation expressed by the postwar generation.

Furthermore, North Cascades is a relatively young park compared to the other Washington
parks of Rainier and Olympic, but its issues are as complex as the bureaucratic name "Park
Service Complex" implies. And it was not long before I realized what Stephanie and
Gretchen faced when they started the project. There are really three separate parks, often with
their own separate issues, under one administration. While they all shared the common bond
of legislation and geography, the park and two recreation areas could have had their own
separate histories. And at times, it felt as though I was writing three different studies. This is
especially true for Lake Chelan NRA. I have often thought that if North Cascades were a
ship, it would list toward Stehekin at the head of Lake Chelan. The volume of documents
generated over its management alone supports this statement and warrants a history focused
on events in Stehekin, particularly regarding land policies and resource consumption. But
Stehekin is not alone in generating controversy. Ross Lake NRA has seen its own share of
high profile issues surrounding the hydroelectric power facilities owned by Seattle City Light.
Here, too, a separate study would document in greater detail the relationship between the
Park Service and City Light than I have been able to in this report. North Cascades National
Park proper could also have its own management history written, especially about the
evolution of wilderness management in such a dramatic yet fragile setting. My approach,
however, was to write about the park complex as it is administered by the National Park
Service. I have attempted to place its management issues within the larger context of the park
complex. It is as a "complex," not as a park or recreation areas, that North Cascades has been
administered.
A WILDERNESS PARK

One of the most important themes in the history of the northern Cascades has been their preservation and management as a national park. Like a statue hidden within a block of stone, some have suggested, the North Cascades have been a national park waiting to be created. But the park's establishment required more than an artist's imagination and the region's spectacular scenery to succeed. From the time the first park proposals appeared in the 1890s to when a park was finally established in 1968, the North Cascades have been contested terrain. That contest has centered on how the range should be managed. Preservationists wanted the federal government to protect this mountain wilderness as a national park to preserve its scenic and scientific values for future generations. Their opponents, on the other hand, wanted the federal government to manage these mountains under more utilitarian principles in order to realize the full economic potential of their forests, minerals, and rivers. While this conflict represents a familiar theme in America's conservation history, it nevertheless helps to explain why the struggle for a park lasted for more than seventy years.

The history of the park's establishment evolved through three periods. The first was the Progressive era, from the 1890s to the 1920s, when the idea for a national park emerged during the conservation movement and was defeated as the rift between utilitarian and preservation interests grew. The next phase was the Depression and New Deal era when the National Park Service submitted the first formal proposal for a national park in the North Cascades only to see it crushed by well-organized opposition during the height of controversy revolving around the establishment of Olympic National Park (1938). The final stage of the park's establishment history came in the aftermath of World War II and the rise of modern environmentalism. This era, charged with political activism and a groundswell of public support for wilderness preservation, saw the creation of North Cascades National Park -- but only after considerable compromise among a diverse group of interests, in particular the long-standing rivalry between the Park Service and United States Forest Service. Attesting to the controversy surrounding the park's establishment, Congress ultimately created the park "complex" composed of a national park, divided into northern and southern units, and two national recreation areas. The park's existence, in the end, attests to the value Americans invested in wilderness as well as the political realities involved in its preservation.
Chapter 1:

CONTESTED TERRAIN: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK

At the turn of the century, the North Cascades were an undiscovered country for most Americans. While the range's wild, alpine grandeur inspired explorers and tourists, often with no small measure of terror, its steep terrain and severe climate limited their access and thus few voices called for its preservation. Material progress, the hallmark of nineteenth-century America, was the order of the day. Yet the range's stingy environment prevented developments in overland travel, whether in the establishment of trails, wagon roads, or railroad routes. It also restricted commercial ventures. Although the range's western drainages were densely forested, its steep-sided valleys proved difficult to log, and transporting timber out of the remote range down its narrow canyons and swift rivers was equally difficult and costly. Similarly, the climate and terrain precluded extensive agriculture and limited ranching opportunities. The most promising economic ventures were in mining, especially with the excitement surrounding the Klondike strikes in the late 1890s when prospectors flooded the range's major drainages in search of precious metals. Yet, while mining was active in the various districts on the Skagit, Cascade, and Stehekin rivers, it never turned into a large-scale enterprise. The range's desired storehouse of minerals never adequately offset costs for, and problems with, transportation, access, short working seasons, inclement weather, and a lack of capital. Although large companies took over the operations with the greatest potential, these, too, eventually subsided at the turn of the century when prices dropped and capital evaporated. [1]

Around this same time, homesteaders gradually moved into the range's major watersheds, following the miners. Small settlements, such as Marblemount on the Skagit and Stehekin at the head of Lake Chelan, grew as supply centers for the mines in the mountainous interior. Homesteaders managed to make a meager living, raising crops and livestock for a local market. They often supplemented their income by packing in mining supplies, by offering their cabins as hostleries, by trapping, and by working outside of the mountains part of the year. Nevertheless, this hard life took its toll; only a relative handful of homesteaders proved up on their claims. Thus much of the land in the North Cascades remained in the public domain by the turn of the century. [2]

Some settlers and entrepreneurs, however, envisioned that the economic future of the region lay not in timber, agriculture, livestock, or mining but in tourism. They did not advocate just any brand of tasteless entertainment, but tourism based on a close and somewhat comfortable encounter with nature. By the turn of the century, some had seized the opportunity to provide more elaborate accommodations for lodging, such as the elegant Field Hotel at the head of Lake Chelan, to cater to the tourists and travelers who at first shared space with, and later outnumbered, miners making their way to this impressive mountain district. The period's upper-class tourists were drawn to the spectacular scenery of mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, and waterfalls; they also wanted to experience the region's renowned fishing and hunting, and climb and explore its peaks, alpine meadows, and valleys by foot or horseback. [3]
presence here also represented a growing interest in outdoor recreation and mirrored a national "back to nature" movement at the turn of the century when more Americans, faced with a new, urban-industrial society, sought relief for the body and soul in closer contact with wild lands. [4]

Of all the areas in the North Cascades, the Stehekin River Valley at the head of Lake Chelan achieved the greatest popularity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In part, relatively easy access contributed to its popularity. In the 1880s and 1890s, tourists could reach Stehekin by a "civilized" route, which included a train to Wenatchee, a steamboat up the Columbia River to Chelan Falls, a stage up to the town of Chelan, and finally a day-long excursion aboard a comfortable steamer up the fifty-five mile Lake Chelan. More important, the valley offered tourists the sublime and picturesque scenery they so valued. A mysterious and secluded world awaited them at the head of the lake where perpendicular peaks, capped in snow and ice, rose from the shore to heights just under 9,000 feet, towering some 7,000 feet above the level of the lake. Here was scenery, they thought, greater than Switzerland's. [5]

Not surprisingly, early proposals for a national park in the North Cascades focused primarily on the Lake Chelan country. This impressive fjord-like lake and backdrop of high, glacier-chiseled mountains inspired local residents and tourists with its scenic grandeur. This alone, they suggested, warranted turning the northern section of the lake and surrounding high country into a national park similar to Yellowstone, the nation's premier scenic wonder and symbol of the national park idea. At the same time, park advocates believed a park was necessary to curb the "encroachments of civilization...already marring the beauties of nature," and the wanton destruction of "the immense game preserves," namely the cherished populations of elk, deer, and mountain goats. They attributed these problems to increased settlement and visiting trophy hunters staying at several lake hotels. A national park, then, would meet the needs of protection and tourism, and save for the nation a superb example of mountain scenery of "a more varied, beautiful and artistic nature" than is found elsewhere in the "picturesque Northwest." [6]

These were the issues at stake in 1892 when a group of central Washington citizens issued the first proposal to establish a national park for Lake Chelan. Commercial interests in the region, however, did not share the group's opinion. Local boosters represented by Chelan land developer L.H. Woodin, for example, railed against the notion of a national park. Echoing traditional western sentiments, Woodin argued that a park would restrict unfairly an individual's right to use land for his own commercial gain. Woodin's opinions reflected the idea that the public domain was an American birthright -- the right to an abundant supply of free or cheap land. And since most of Lake Chelan and adjacent country was still in the public domain, it represented a resource hinterland for present and future growth. Ironically, he asserted that both the lake country's scenery and natural resources were imperative for future growth because both attracted settlers. Chelan townspeople, therefore, wanted the lake "for business and pleasure." Let the laws of the young Washington State protect the wildlife; neither scenery nor wildlife merited restriction from unfettered use. Thus, Woodin emphatically urged readers to "answer decisively, No!" to the park petition. [7]

The park petition died, lacking support in face of material arguments, but this early exchange would be repeated often whenever the park idea was raised for the northern Cascades. At the heart of the dispute was the schism between preservation and conservation which emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the 1890s, it was clear that national expansion, with its combined faith in individualism, the market economy, and natural abundance, had depleted large tracts of the nation's "inexhaustible" natural resources. Rising up in response, the conservation movement espoused Progressive era beliefs in efficiency and scientific management of resources as articulated by Theodore Roosevelt's administration and
the nation's first scientifically trained forester, Gifford Pinchot. Pinchot, who helped found the U.S. Forest Service in 1905, preached the doctrine of wise use of resources through federal management. His agency came to embody not only this principle but also promoted the concept of managed use as the most effective cure for eliminating wasteful grazing or logging practices, for example, and ensuring that natural resources on all public lands would produce the maximum amount of crops or services for generations to come. But conservation was complex. While Roosevelt and Pinchot found answers to resource problems in the Progressive era's faith in science and regulated use, others, like the naturalist John Muir, supported conservation in order to preserve the last tracts of unmodified nature as America transformed into a more urban-industrial society; wilderness would act as a balm for the ills of modern civilization. [8]

In the North Cascades, as elsewhere in the country, the complexity of the conservation movement seemed naturally to lead to a disagreement over what the proper course was to pursue, for conservation meant different things to different people. The fragile fusion of conservation and preservation interests exploded with the proposal to dam Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park, an episode that symbolized the strength of utilitarian arguments, with their pragmatic and rational emphasis on conservation as a form of wise development. As Pinchot liked to say, "Wilderness is waste," dismissing aesthetic notions of conservation held by Muir as "sentimental." Muir's views, after all, reflected the period's antimodern strain of thought; they were romantic, expressed a longing for the passing frontier that, in turn, fostered an appreciation of the nation's remaining wilderness and led to the protection of some of its most wondrous regions. To Muir, nature offered spiritual renewal; it was the embodiment of the divine spirit, harmonious, and a source of inspiration. It should be revered, not subdued by the new industrial age's machinery and lust for progress. [9]

The idea of a national park in Washington's northern Cascades confronted this division between utilitarian and preservation interests, but the lines between the two were not so clearly drawn. Advocates of a Lake Chelan national park, as well as many scenic preservationists, shared some of Muir's convictions. Like Muir, they promoted parks as places that would benefit national health in a modern society. Moreover, by saving "one of the most picturesque spots in America," they were arguing that national parks were a source of national pride. The national park idea, as historian Alfred Runte asserts, was born out of "cultural nationalism," the concern that nineteenth-century Americans felt for their country's lack of cultural attainments when compared with those of Europe. In their minds, the ageless wonders of the American West -- its time-hewn canyons, ancient trees, and towering mountains -- surpassed the Old World's masterpieces of art and architecture. Preserving monumental scenery for cultural ends proved to be a convincing reason for creating national parks, as exemplified by the first parks, Yellowstone (1872) and Yosemite (1890). That these areas were economically worthless also contributed to their protection. But unlike Muir, many park supporters did not see preservation as an end in itself, for they also strongly believed that saving places like Lake Chelan as a national park would promote economic growth. In this respect, the economic argument helped scenic preservationists justify parks and ensure their protection, especially with loss of Hetch Hetchy, by meeting the utilitarian arguments of their opponents. In the years after Hetch Hetchy, they successfully championed parks as economic engines for tourism, as well as places for physical and spiritual well-being. Parks, in short, were for people. [10]

Although this justification for parks worked well for the next half-century, the idea of a park in the northern Cascades was nurtured slowly throughout the late 1890s and early 1900s. News of the range's scenic wonders spread through regional newspapers and national magazines with reports about mountaineers, geologists, and adventuresome tourists trekking through the Stehekin country and surrounding mountains, all of whom extolled the range's "primeval grandeur." In 1899, for example, William G. Steel, who championed the cause of
Crater Lake National Park, described the Portland Mazamas' climb up Mount Sahale in euphoric prose that bordered on a religious experience: "Each moment we were more and more enraptured of the scene; each moment more helpless to express the deep emotion in our hearts." [11]

With this burst of enthusiasm, another national park proposal surfaced when Canadian-born artist Julian E. Itter proposed that the Lake Chelan country be set aside as a national park in 1906. In January of that year, Itter displayed his paintings of the Lake Chelan country's enchanting natural beauty before a Seattle audience and received wide acclaim. Itter's popularity, in part, demonstrated that an appreciation of wilderness had developed in urban settings. Seattle residents, especially its business leaders and members of the Mountaineers, the city's climbing club, understood the value of natural wonders to the local economy, urban identity, and recreation with the popularity of the recently established Mount Rainier National Park (1899). Buoyed by the reception of his paintings, Itter may have been motivated to propose a national park for Lake Chelan and surrounding mountains some two months later. Striking a familiar theme, the artist promoted a park, similar in size to the 1892 proposal, as a scenic wonder certain to draw tourists to the region, just as Yosemite had done for California. More important, visitors would find that this magnificent country rivaled both Yosemite and Yellowstone in scenic grandeur. [12]

Itter's idea received support from the Mazamas, the Seattle, Spokane, and Wenatchee chambers of commerce, the Chelan Commercial Club, and the "See America First" league, but his whirlwind campaign soon withered when Chelan residents protested the park proposal as an outside threat to the local mining industry — "the chief source of future wealth for the Chelan country." Ironically, no large-scale mining operations existed, yet park opponents argued persuasively that given the choice between a park and the mining industry they would choose the latter which, once developed, would produce "almost unbounded wealth." [13]

Desperate, perhaps, to appease commercial interests, Itter suggested that the proposed park could accommodate mining, and that a park might even further the development of mining operations by attracting wealthy tourists who would invest in their holdings. When he made this statement, Itter may have been thinking of the mining clause in Mount Rainier's establishing legislation, or he simply believed, as many did at the turn of the century, that the main purpose of a park was the protection of its primary wonders rather than its larger natural values. Nevertheless, Washington's congressional delegation did not believe that such a balance of mining and scenic preservation could be achieved, that ultimately a park would prohibit mining, and that purchasing mining claims would be too costly. Moreover, a parsimonious Congress was averse to creating parks because it did not want to fund their operations; Mount Rainier's meager budgets attested to this. Instead, Congress treated new park propositions as ploys to boost the local tourist economy at the expense of the federal government. Anticipating these problems, the state's congressional representatives sided with Chelan's vocal mining interests and did not introduce legislation. [14]

Though it failed, the 1906 proposal advanced several important elements of the park idea in the northern Cascades. First, for the most part, local interests resisted establishing a national park because they envisioned that the future of their community hinged on the development of the region's natural resources. They placed more faith in a potential mine to produce "unbounded wealth" than they did a national park. Second, Itter's willingness to allow mining and Congress' attitude toward parks pointed up that national parks suffered from the lack of a clear purpose. Until the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, no standards for national parks existed and few people had a clear concept of what a national park was: spa or nature preserve? Even though Yellowstone and Yosemite set the stage for scenic preservation, by the turn of the century the perception that a national park would boost a local economy contributed to the creation of some decidedly inferior parks and thus to Congress'
resistance to their establishment. [15]

Third, an important measure of protection had come to the range in recent years. Empowered by one of the most significant pieces of legislation in conservation history, the Forest Reserve Act of 1891, President Grover Cleveland established the Washington Forest Reserve on February 22, 1897, covering some three and a half million acres. Reaching nearly 150 million acres by the early twentieth century, the forest reserves withdrew unclaimed timberlands from the public domain in the American West to protect them from indiscriminate logging practices and for watershed protection. The Washington Forest Reserve embraced both slopes of the North Cascades, including land west of Mount Baker, from the Canadian border south to Lake Chelan, and extended federal control over most of the land which today comprises North Cascades National Park. [16]

While the forest reserve withdrawal assured that the northern Cascades would remain in public ownership, the reserves were poorly funded by Congress and thus poorly managed by the General Land Office within the Department of the Interior. In 1905, Gifford Pinchot successfully campaigned to have the forest reserves transferred to the newly created Forest Service within the Department of Agriculture. Under Pinchot's leadership, the Forest Service fashioned policies of multiple use and sustained yield, which, as noted above, emphasized programs of forest use for present and future production through scientific management. Pinchot demonstrated this commitment two years later when he changed the name of the reserves to national forests to remove any doubt that forests were for use. Reflecting this change, the Chelan and Washington national forests, whose common boundary was the summit of the North Cascades, were carved out of parts of the former Washington Forest Reserve in 1908. Although the Forest Service's management role was mostly custodial, it developed policies to regulate and promote grazing, timber, water-power projects, mining, and recreational developments. All of these, following Pinchot's principles, were to take into account the needs of local industries first. Thus when it came to creating a national park, scenic preservationists would have to contend with opponents from local communities and commercial interests who had found a strong ally in the Forest Service and the tenets of forest management. [17]

The presence of the Forest Service in the northern Cascades, however, did not diminish enthusiasm for establishing a national park out of some or all of this panorama of craggy peaks during the first two decades of this century. By this time, scenic preservation had evolved into a national movement. Influenced by the nation's rapid transformation from a rural to urban-based society, Americans appreciated nature for recreation and self-affirmation. With a tinge of romance, Americans envisioned rural life and the outdoors as an escape from the grimy, crowded, and noisy existence of city life. In addition, marketing scenery proved lucrative to the local tourist economy and was thus an element in defense of protecting scenic wonders, such as national parks. In the years surrounding World War I, the "See America First" movement typified the popularity of scenic preservation. It convinced many Americans with new-found leisure time to seek out the scenic grandeur of the American West, particularly its national parks, by rail and later, with the onset of the automobile revolution, by car. [18]

In the main, preservationists hoped that another park in Washington's Cascade Range would enhance the state's status as a "scenic summer playground" for both residents and tourists. The Spokane Chamber of Commerce, for example, took the lead in promoting Lake Chelan for national park status in 1916, proclaiming that "Another great national park in Washington will simply kindle additional interest in the hearts of Americans to visit the northwest during the summer time and will be a great aid in the entertainment of our rapidly growing army of tourist travelers." Already many national parks had been opened to automobiles, and the designation of the Parks-to-Parks Highway promised to entice more easterners to visit the
Northwest. Once developed for tourists, a Lake Chelan national park would be "one of the greatest assets in this state," like Mount Rainier National Park, "to lure travelers to the great American Alps." [19]

The qualifications of the northern Cascades for a national park seemed indisputable. Novelist and national park advocate Mary Roberts Rinehart endorsed the range's park qualities after visiting the Lake Chelan-Glacier Peak country in 1916. "It is superb," she declared, and should be a national park, for there is "no other word for it." [20] Rinehart and other scenic preservationists, however, would be disappointed. No legislation was introduced for a park in the Lake Chelan-Glacier Peak country. In addition, numerous bills were introduced to create a national park around the Mount Baker area between 1916 and 1921, but they failed to secure congressional approval. [21]

It was with a small amount of irony that these park petitions and bills faltered, for the most part, because the National Park Service opposed them. With its creation in 1916, the Park Service set out to administer the system of national parks by bringing order to their chaotic management, setting standards to keep inferior parks out of the system, and strengthening their preservation through national publicity and the development of park roads and tourist accommodations to attract visitors and ensure the parks' political support. The agency's energetic leader, Stephen T. Mather, masterminded this practical mix of business and preservation in order to assure a conservative Congress that his bureau was worth funding; it also enabled him to overcome the opposition of the Forest Service to aesthetic conservation of any kind and the establishment of the Park Service itself.

Standards played an important part in Mather's decision not to pursue a park in Washington's northern Cascades. From the beginning Mather's small bureau was inundated with numerous proposals for new parks, many of them of poor quality, and he had created park standards so that only "areas large enough, primitive enough, and/or unique enough to be national in interest" were added to the system and thereby keeping alive the original national park idea. Based on these new guidelines, Lake Chelan was "just not good enough." On the other hand, the proposed Mount Baker national park, which included Mount Shuksan, was not suitable primarily because its signature features -- a volcanic cone, rugged mountain crest, and immense glacier systems -- too closely resembled "the features of Mount Rainier National Park, which represents the noblest example of this type of scenery." [22]

The fifth national park and Washington's first, Mount Rainier set a precedent for national parks in the Pacific Northwest. In this respect, all new park proposals in the Cascades competed with Mount Rainier's scenic grandeur and its ranking as the range's highest peak. The mountain, hovering above the skyline of the Puget Sound, symbolized the monumentalism at the heart of the national park idea. For this reason, the Park Service was not inclined to consider proposals for solitary peaks in the northern Cascades, such as Mount Baker or Glacier Peak, for fear that the addition of more peaks would diminish the significance of Mount Rainier -- an argument which maverick conservationist Willard Van Name called "indefensible nonsense" concocted by Mather to dodge demands for additional parks. [23] Mount Rainier also established a precedent for the commercial advantages associated with a national park. The nationally renowned peak was coveted by both Seattle and Tacoma as a drawing card for a lucrative tourist business. Bellingham residents, for example, envisioned for Mount Baker a kind of tourist paradise similar to Mount Rainier that only a national park and Park Service management could bring. [24]

There were political reasons as well. The notion of a park in the northern Cascades was opposed by the Forest Service. Since most new parks came from areas of exceptional scenery on national forests, the Park Service grew at the expense of the Forest Service, causing frequent disputes between the bureaus. There conflicts flowed naturally from differing
conservation philosophies, the Forest Service representing the principles of utilitarian conservation, the Park Service the principles of scenic preservation. As Mather's biographer keenly noted, "unpleasantness was hard to avoid." Although in time the Park Service would become more aggressive and acquisitive, Mather wanted to maintain friendly relations with the older and more politically powerful Forest Service in his agency's early years. Accordingly, he suspended any investigations of Mount Baker in 1919, honoring an agreement between his agency and the Forest Service to study jointly new park areas which were on national forest lands. [25]

In the Pacific Northwest, Forest Service officials anticipated that some of the most magnificent natural wonders in the northern Cascades, such as the Mount Baker, Lake Chelan, and Glacier Peak regions, would eventually be converted into national parks. They therefore moved to defend the agency's territory. One common argument the agency employed was that park propositions were merely a change in name rather than management. In Mount Baker's case, the Forest Service noted that the proposed park legislation allowed for continued utilitarian management, such as mineral leases, railroad rights of way, water power and irrigation developments, and timber sales. Although some of these uses were eliminated in subsequent bills, the agency interpreted the major thrust of the park proposal as an effort to capitalize on a national park's attraction to tourists and to take advantage of federal appropriations for road construction to open the mountain up to auto tourists. The Forest Service claimed that it could just as easily provide improvements to public campgrounds and implement a road building program as the Park Service. (The Washington National Forest supervisor had in fact presented his own park proposal for the Mount Baker area in 1913.) And thus "the public needs for recreation and pleasure will be quite as well served on the Washington National Forest as they would be on the Baker National Park, and the results could perhaps be obtained much more quickly." [26]

Although somewhat misleading, given the Forest Service's commitment to the commercial management of natural resources, this statement related to another method used to resist the transfer of forest lands to Park Service jurisdiction: recreation. By the 1920s, the park bureau had built a national reputation as the federal agency best-suited to manage areas of exceptional scenery, as well as historic and archaeological features. In the process, it had gained a powerful political constituency, primarily from an urban-based population, because it marketed national parks as wilderness playgrounds at a time when outdoor recreation was experiencing rapid growth. The Forest Service found ways to battle the aggressiveness of its rival agency by claiming its niche in wilderness preservation, something the tourist and development oriented Park Service seemed to overlook. Influenced by the wilderness ideas and advocacy of Aldo Leopold, Arthur Carhart, and Robert Marshall, the Forest Service displayed a budding awareness of aesthetic values in the 1920s with the concept of primitive areas, a classification which set aside forest lands to be managed for their wilderness values. The agency also began to plan more for outdoor recreation which included camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, as well as leasing land for summer homes, hotels, and stores. [27]

By the early 1930s, the Forest Service had prepared recreation plans for all the forests in the northern Cascades, and its new emphasis succeeded in quieting calls for parks when they appeared during this period. In 1926, for example, the service deflected three park proposals. First, when yet another proposal appeared for a Lake Chelan national park, Chelan residents were quick to stress that the Forest Service was providing good protection for the region's scenic beauties, and under these circumstances, they preferred its management to the Park Service's. Second, by that year the Forest Service had accommodated earlier interest in a Mount Baker national park by designating the Mount Baker Park Division, a recreation area of 74,859 acres surrounding the second highest peak in Washington. In addition, the bureau also helped to finance the construction of a road and leased the site for a private lodge at Heather Meadows. And third, when Wenatchee citizens pressed for a national park for
Glacier Peak in 1926, they soon changed their proposal in favor of a recreation area managed by the Forest Service. In this way, all interests would be served; Glacier Peak's scenic grandeur would be protected, attract tourists, and keep its natural resources available for commercial development. [28] In 1931, the Forest Service recommended the establishment of the Glacier Peak-Cascade Recreation Area, 233,600 acres which would encompass the peak mostly above timberline. [29] The bureau also extended more permanent protection for wilderness as part of its recreation program. That same year it established the Whatcom Primitive Area (172,800 acres) in the extreme northern portion of the North Cascades east of Mount Baker. In 1935, the service enlarged the area to 801,000 acres; the expanded area, renamed the North Cascades Primitive Area, straddled the spine of the North Cascades -- some of the range's most rugged terrain -- along the Canadian border. [30]

While the Forest Service may have incorporated recreation into its multiple-use doctrine, it wore the preservation mantle reluctantly. Passed in 1929, the regulation creating primitive areas, Regulation L-20, cast doubt on the agency's commitment to wilderness, for it continued to allow road construction, grazing, and logging. The Forest Service, it seemed, was more concerned with wilderness preservation as a way to appease preservationists and fend off Park Service land grabs than as a standard management practice. [31] This became especially clear during the depression of the 1930s, when the New Deal conservation programs placed the Park Service in a position to study a park in the North Cascades for the first time.

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Soon after the federal government's reorganization in 1933, the National Park Service began to expand at an unprecedented rate; the park system more than doubled in size with the transfer of national monuments, battlefields, historic sites, and cemeteries from other federal agencies. The agency also assumed a lead role in administering the emergency relief programs, which in turn significantly increased its funding and its number of employees. Moreover, the bureau headed up national recreational planning, primarily because of its expertise and experience in park planning and because the Park, Parkway and Recreation-Area Act of 1936 placed the agency in the lead role. [32]

It was largely through its expanded role in recreation that the Park Service turned its attention to the Pacific Northwest and the northern Cascades. At the request of the National Resources Board, the Park Service submitted a report on "Recreation Use of Land in the United States," which was published in 1934 as part of the board's report on land planning. In its report, the agency listed several proposed park areas. One was a park along the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington. [33] Three years later, Park Service Director Arno B. Cammerer appointed a five-member study team to follow up on this proposal. Led by Major Owen A. Tomlinson, superintendent of Mount Rainier National Park, the team investigated the entire Cascade Range in Washington, and in a November 1937 report recommended that a national park be established encompassing the length of the range, primarily its rugged, ice-capped peaks, the tentative boundaries covering some 5,000 square miles. [34]

The committee believed that the range, with its chain of five volcanic peaks, St. Helens, Adams, Rainier, Glacier Peak, and Baker, along with its intervening precipitous and glacier-clad mountains, was "unquestionably of national park caliber." It was a bold vision for a national park. The high Cascades (or "Ice Peaks" as it came to be known) would be a kind of "super park," the report's authors asserted, that "will outrank in its scenic, recreational, and wildlife values, any existing national park and any other possibility for such a park within the United States. Establishment of this area as one superb park is an inspiring project to fire the imagination," they concluded, "worthy of the Nation's efforts." [35]

The park proposal ignited controversy almost immediately. Timber and mining interests, the
Washington State Planning Council, local communities, and chambers of commerce from around the state clamored loudly against the proposal because they believed that the park would lock up the range's resources and unfairly limit their economic well-being, a particularly harsh reality during the depression. Other factors fueled their outrage, such as the park's immense size, the current battle to create Olympic National Park, and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes' recent attempts to transfer the Forest Service to his jurisdiction in a remodeled Department of the Interior known as the Department of Conservation. Ickes' involvement, moreover, cast a shadow of conspiracy over the study; it was just another play by the power-hungry and combative Interior Secretary to subject Washington citizens to a kind of federal land-management dictatorship. The Forest Service objected to the proposal by defending its multiple-use management policies for the range, and characterizing the plan as another land grab by its rival agency. Ironically, conservation groups such as the Wilderness Society and the National Parks Association criticized the proposal, too. They asserted that the Park Service's expansion in the 1930s limited its ability to protect wilderness areas and clouded its vision as to whether an area met the highest possible national park standards. However scenic, they maintained, the entire range certainly did not meet national park criteria with its pockets of developments and stretches of ordinary scenery.

Even though there were few park supporters, led by the Northwest Conservation League, the Park Service officials seemed optimistic that their proposal would appeal to a broad spectrum of the American public. They suggested that a national park of such a grand scale could accommodate wilderness preservation, traditional park management for scenic preservation and developments, and even some commercial uses such as mining, which was the most promising but relatively unproven industry in the range. Moreover, Tomlinson and the other committee members thought that the conversion of the range into a park would be easy to achieve since their agency was best suited to manage the nation's premier scenic wonders. With the exception of Mount Rainier National Park, the Forest Service managed all of the land in the proposed park, covering five national forests. Creation of the park would only require a transfer from one agency to the other, rather than an expensive purchase of private lands.

The Forest Service, however, did not share the same opinion. Historically opposed to national parks and smarting from the Olympic National Park battle, the agency and its local and industrial allies fought the Ice Peaks proposal. The bureau relied on tactics that had worked in the past, namely using recreation and wilderness studies or classifications for sections of the range under park study to defeat or at least delay the park proposal.

The main proponent of wilderness for the range was Robert Marshall. As early as 1935, the liberal forester and wilderness advocate had identified the northern Cascades as one of the country's three "great western wildernesses" on national forest land and recommended that the range from Stevens Pass north to the border of the North Cascades Primitive Area be set aside as wilderness, an area of 794,440 acres. No part of the United States, he claimed, was "so well adapted for a wilderness," for this was some of the most rugged, roadless, and beautiful country he had seen. At the time, Marshall worked in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and while a study report was submitted in 1936, the Forest Service never acted on the measure. Marshall, who had become head of the bureau's division of recreation and lands in 1937, seized upon the creation of Olympic National Park in 1938 to renew efforts to gain wilderness classification for the North Cascades. He suggested to Regional Forester C.J. Buck that establishing the Glacier Peak wilderness would prevent the region from being turned into a national park, implying that this had been their agency's critical error on the peninsula. More important, Marshall believed that if the northern Cascades were handed over to the Park Service it would destroy the range's wild character by extending roads "into its heart." Marshall gained some success in 1938 when the Secretary of Agriculture officially approved of the Glacier Peak Recreation Area, comprising 275,200 acres, and in 1939 when
Chief Forester Ferdinand A. Silcox, Marshall's superior and friend, reopened the Glacier Peak wilderness for study, temporarily removing it from commercial use. [37]

Marshall's plan, ironically, backfired. The regional forester worried that converting the range to wilderness status would not protect it from park status but only justify its reclassification as a national park. A tireless Marshall tried to persuade local foresters to create the Glacier Peak wilderness as a way to keep it from the Park Service, but to no avail. In September 1939, he conducted what would be his last high country trip through the Glacier Peak region, hoping to resolve this thorny issue, but he had to cut the trip short because of health reasons and died two months later of heart failure. [38] In one of his last letters, he acknowledged the difficult situation created by the furor over the Ice Peaks park study and agreed to delay final wilderness classification, but he stressed that in order for the Forest Service to keep the North Cascades "it seems to me our position would be greatly strengthened if we could show the recreationists that...[we] are... planning to preserve the very values which the Park Service people claim they are especially equipped to preserve." [39]

Meanwhile, the leaders of the Forest Service and Park Service attempted to reconcile their differences after years of jousting and fighting over proposed national parks and park extensions by forming a joint Forest Service-Park Service committee to address these issues. [40] In the spirit of cooperation, the two bureau leaders appointed an interagency committee to study the high Cascades national park. But after their first meeting in the summer of 1939, the group dissolved, as Assistant Chief Forester Leon Kneipp observed, over a "conflict in philosophy and aspirations," but agreed to conduct separate studies, produce separate reports, and cooperate with the Washington State Planning Council. [41]

The council had begun its own study of the Cascade Range in the spring of 1939. In September, the council, under the leadership of Ben Kizer, appointed a seven-member advisory committee to determine, among other things, the feasibility of establishing a high Cascades national park. So as not to prejudice the council's findings, both the Park Service and Forest Service agreed to withhold their reports until the council had reached its own conclusions. But prejudice seemed to be a foregone conclusion. In the fight over Olympic National Park, for example, the planning council had organized the opposition to the park, representing the interests of timber companies, chambers of commerce, and the Forest Service. Although the planning council was ineffective in the park's final legislation, it spoke with a more powerful voice across the Puget Sound, where it conducted seven public hearings on either side of the range. Public response, especially in the state's newspapers, was overwhelmingly against the proposal, since it would drive a wedge between an east-west flow of commerce, halt timber harvests, grazing, and any future mining developments, still considered the most important potential industry in the Cascades. The statement by representatives of north central Washington civic organizations -- that a new national park would be created only over their "dead bodies" -- typified the sentiment of park opponents. [42]

In the spring of 1940, the study teams issued their reports, ending months of apparent secrecy and intensity surrounding the future of the Cascades, and, needless to say, there were few surprises. The Park Service stood by its original recommendation, stressing that the high Cascades deserved to be a national park under its jurisdiction "to insure their greatest productive use on a non-consumptive basis." Stating that, with qualifications, some prospecting and mining would be allowed, the report also tried to soothe park opponents outraged over the proposed park's restrictions on natural resource developments. On the other hand, the Forest Service, as it had in the past, argued that the entire range was not park caliber, and that it could manage the range more democratically, providing commercial and recreational uses of the Cascades that would satisfy the majority. Finally, the Washington State Planning Council recommended that the Forest Service continue to manage the range
under multiple-use principles, and strongly advised against the establishment of a new national park in the Cascade Mountains. [43]

The planning council's report, though only a recommendation to the governor, did not defeat the park by itself, but it did demonstrate that Washington residents were decidedly against a new park, and without wide public support, the Park Service could not expect congressional support for the park proposal. One of the main reasons the park proposal could not expect support, as the planning council stressed, was that a Cascades park would preclude resource development. The Columbia River hydroelectric projects, such as the nearly completed Grand Coulee Dam, would supply energy through electrical distribution networks to tap into the range's "great storehouse of raw materials." New Deal conservation was characterized by a holistic view of natural resources and society in which comprehensive planning integrated the needs of society with wise stewardship of the environment. However, preserving natural resources in a national park seemed antithetical to the broader benefits of multiple-purpose dams, for they would provide cheap electricity and regional development by reclaiming desert lands for farming, providing flood control, and thus aiding a disadvantaged population during the environmental and economic disasters of the 1930s. [44]

Although preservation also had its place in the broader scheme of conservation in the New Deal, the National Park Service was not very successful in conveying this message for the Cascades. In part, the hard feelings generated over the establishment and subsequent expansion of Olympic National Park in the late 1930s only served to solidify opposition to a new park in the Cascades. Furthermore, the Olympic situation pointed toward Harold Ickes, who had been instrumental in that park's creation. Silent on the Ice Peaks proposal, Ickes denied any knowledge of it prior to the release of the study committee reports. Nevertheless, critics of the proposed park suspected Ickes was directing the Ice Peaks study, scheming behind closed doors to gain control of the Forest Service. Indeed, Ickes wanted the northern Cascades under Park Service management, perhaps as a consolation prize since it was becoming clear his new department would not be created. In August 1940, he abandoned the park idea for the range after the Cascades study met so much resistance, and directed Park Service officials to draw up plans for a national recreation area that would encompass a similar area, permitting hunting, fishing, prospecting and mining, and water conservation projects. Only in this way, he concluded, would the scenic resources of the high Cascades be liberated from Forest Service management, which "does not recognize the importance of one resource more than another." [45]

In the end, the curmudgeonly secretary of the interior proved to be a liability to the proposed Ice Peaks park. Goaded by Miller Freeman, editor of the Mining World and planning council member, Ickes openly criticized the planning council's study as having a Forest Service bias. In an August 1940 letter to Freeman's journal, he charged that the council had suppressed material on the park proposal (in particular Ickes' concessions to mining), fomented opposition to the study at its public meetings, and expanded its study to include resources in five national forests, giving the public the impression that the park would be much larger than proposed. The exchange eventually drew the response of President Roosevelt who defended his administration's conservation record and Ickes himself. Nevertheless, park critics did not trust Ickes. A year later, while in the Pacific Northwest, Ickes pledged that he would not seek to establish another park in Washington, yet he still maintained that he would like to see recreation areas created, presumably in the Cascades. Individuals like Freeman interpreted this as a thinly veiled attempt to accomplish an earlier agenda, to transfer management of the northern Cascades from the Forest Service to the Park Service. In this political climate, neither a national park nor a recreation area managed by the Park Service would find any public support. [46] With the nation's entrance into World War II, the Ice Peaks proposal faded from sight, an orphan of the New Deal.
By 1941 the Ice Peaks proposal had been roundly defeated. Moreover, with Marshall dead and Silcox following shortly thereafter, two strong wilderness advocates within the Forest Service were gone. In their absence, the agency relaxed the wilderness classification for the North Cascades, noting that the North Cascades Primitive Area provided enough wilderness and that the area Marshall proposed as wilderness never had been approved officially. In addition, the regional forester pointed out that the northern section of Marshall's study area contained the potential for mining operations near Cascade Pass and the possibility of a cross-mountain highway in this vicinity. He thus returned this part of the range to regular multiple-use management. In 1946, instead of creating a wilderness area, the bureau set aside a more modest area of 325,000 acres, the Glacier Peak Limited Area, which granted the region wilderness-type protection but delayed permanent classification until later. [47]

At midcentury, despite its lack of formal wilderness classification, the North Cascades were still one of the most unknown and virtually undeveloped sections of a nation undergoing rapid population and economic growth after World War II. This growth seemed destined to consume the last expanses of American wilderness for material gain. Thus when wilderness preservationists gathered forces in the postwar era, they perceived in Washington's northern Cascades one of the country's "most untouched primeval regions," a sanctuary from the complicated life of modern society, "one of the country's last and perhaps its greatest." [48] Although these words echoed those of Bob Marshall, they were spoken with a greater intensity, a greater sense of urgency, and by larger numbers of concerned Americans.

As the historian Samuel P. Hays has suggested, World War II and its aftermath gave rise to a new generation of Americans who valued the natural world as an amenity of life rather than a commodity for the marketplace. In their minds, preserving the North Cascades as an unaltered wilderness was more important than any kind of natural resource development. Vast social changes in the postwar era underpinned this evolution of popular attitudes towards nature. Rising standards of living, increasing income levels, and growing numbers of Americans attaining higher levels of education helped foster these new environmental values; they were the foundation for the postwar environmental movement and the source of conflicts with the more traditional conservation values that stressed the efficient use of resources. As more middle-class Americans worried less about daily living needs, they expressed a greater concern about their quality of life, which was increasingly linked to the pursuit of the natural world beyond crowded and polluted cities. Their new attitudes were a driving force in why they sought the enjoyment of life's "amenities," according to Hays, in vacations to the nation's forests, parks, and wilderness areas. Yearning to experience natural beauty and escape urban spaces strengthened their support for wildlife protection and wilderness preservation. [49]

The best example of this new concern arose out of the national debates over the future of the nation's remaining wilderness areas, the most significant conservation victory coming in 1956 when conservationists won a hard-fought battle to defeat the Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument, what historian Roderick Nash has called the American wilderness movement's "finest hour to that date." The Echo Park victory signaled the emergence of a new era in the nation's environmental history, for it not only justified the importance of preserving national parks and wilderness but also marked the growing public support and political clout needed to ensure the preservation of the nation's wild lands. The Echo Park controversy brought together nearly eighty organizations into a national movement and gave national exposure to those groups most closely associated with parks and wilderness, namely the National Parks Association, the Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club. Afterwards, the Wilderness Society revived the campaign for a national wilderness system, and the Sierra Club achieved a new public image as a hard-hitting, uncompromising national conservation
In the years after World War II, the northern Cascades seemed far removed from the pressures affecting the nation's wild lands, the congestion of its cities, and the explosion of highway construction and car ownership. An estimated fifty-two million automobiles were on the road in the middle of the decade, many of them packing the nation's parks, but the range appeared unaffected; it epitomized the geography of wilderness. It seemed to raise an impenetrable shield to progress, turning back numerous road projects since the turn of the century, leaving the heart of the range a wild country so primitive and vast that it seemed forever new and waiting to be explored. Indeed, even the Beat Generation's most potent symbol of car culture, Jack Kerouac, reached the end of the road here in the summer of 1956, when he came to work as a fire lookout on Desolation Peak.

More compelling proof could be found in the community of Stehekin. In the second half of the twentieth century, no road reached it (though a unimproved road ran the length of the valley). Stehekin was much as it had been in the late nineteenth century. Some thirty year-round residents inhabited the lower ten miles of the Stehekin River Valley and lived mostly subsistence lifestyles, hunting, gardening, and bartering. Here in an age of sweeping change a fragment of the frontier persisted in mythical proportions — a remote, preindustrial world, isolated from progress. As one admirer noted romantically, nature seemed in control here, and for this reason Stehekin remained beyond the modern highway, automobiles, and thus "the currents of American life racing past the mountain barriers around it."

In the 1950s, however, the Forest Service shattered this illusion when it began to reevaluate national forests, including the North Cascades, to meet the demands of the postwar housing boom and the pressures of a rising population. For the first time, the range seemed vulnerable as the agency considered a variety of uses for the region, including timber harvests, mining, construction of a cross-mountain highway over Cascade Pass, as well as wilderness classification for the Glacier Peak Limited Area. In the postwar planning for the greatest production and wisest use of the nation's limited supply of natural resources, the Forest Service would ultimately decide how much of the North Cascades would be thrown open to development and how much would remain as wilderness. This new turn of events forced conservationists to consider how best to protect the northern Cascades as one of the nation's finest alpine wildernesses — national forest or national park?

At first the Forest Service seemed to be the logical choice for preserving the wilderness of the North Cascades. It had managed the region since early in the century, after all. Foresters like Bob Marshall had pioneered its wilderness philosophy, and Marshall himself had proposed a vast wilderness for the range. Yet there were reasons to question the bureau's commitment to wilderness management in the 1950s. To conservationists, the Forest Service's multiple-use policy, though it implied managing forests for a balance of timber, range, water, wildlife, recreation, and other resources, seemed to favor timber harvests over wilderness preservation. Under the leadership of Chief Forester Richard McArdle and during a Republican administration, the bureau prepared to meet society's demands for wood by adopting a more aggressive management style. This involved cooperating with private industry, "upping the cut" on national forests to operate the agency in the black, building logging roads for timber access, and conducting a timber resources review to assess the future of the nation's timber supply, which, it concluded, could only be maintained through intensive management.

David Brower and the Sierra Club worked hard to have the agency guarantee wilderness protection in its management plans, but a series of confrontations, highlighted by the reduction of Oregon's Three Sisters Primitive Area for logging, led them to conclude that the Forest Service could not be trusted to protect wilderness permanently. Even under the "U regulations," which provided stricter wilderness protection, wilderness was still an
administrative measure and often viewed as a temporary classification employed until an area was ready to log. In 1955, during the clash over the Three Sisters, McArdle informed Brower that wilderness constituted only one kind of recreational use. It was restrictive and enjoyed by a relatively small number of people, and to make wilderness a permanent classification would not be in the interests of society's current needs. Therefore, in the spirit of multiple use, the service would designate as wilderness only those areas that had the slightest commercial values and where wilderness represented "the highest form of public use." This policy, as conservationists witnessed, informed the agency's decision to redraw the boundaries around the Three Sisters Primitive Area to exclude lands for timber harvests, leaving just the high country of rocks and ice as wilderness. [54]

In 1956, the Forest Service unveiled similar plans for Glacier Peak in Washington's North Cascades. Especially alarming were proposals to open timber sales in the Stehekin Valley and the Agnes Creek drainage and to build a road down Bridge Creek to the Stehekin Valley once a cross-mountain highway was constructed. Alerted to the crisis, Pacific Northwest conservation groups, such as the Mountaineers and Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, joined forces with the Sierra Club (which had opened its first chapter in the region in 1954) to lobby the Forest Service to expand its Glacier Peak wilderness study to include all of Bob Marshall's original proposal. In this way they sought to prevent the destruction of this pristine country and ensure "the preservation of the maximum wilderness area." [55]

Conservation groups favored diplomacy initially because they feared that a confrontation with the bureau might compromise the progress of the recently introduced national wilderness bill. They also believed that Marshall's legacy was strong; it held out a glimmer of hope that the Forest Service might honor his memory in its wilderness study. The Wilderness Society, for example, kept Marshall's interest in the North Cascades alive after World War II by featuring the region in its house organ, The Living Wilderness, reminding readers that the fate of this magnificent country was still undecided but pressured by a modern society. As early as 1949, the society urged the Forest Service to reopen the study of the Glacier Peak wilderness, outlined by Marshall. Though the service deferred reclassifying the area, conservationists, such as the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, continued to petition the bureau for a similar study in the mid-1950s. In 1956, Seattle's Mountaineers even submitted its own study and recommendations to the bureau requesting that the Forest Service consider Marshall's "far-reaching wisdom" in the boundaries he chose for its wilderness evaluation. [56]

The Mountaineers' proposal emphasized Marshall's ideal of wilderness. In a mechanized society with a swelling population, it was important to set aside a region that was unscarred by logging and "unencumbered by roads" so Americans could "gain the pioneer feeling of isolation and adventure so necessary for retention of sanity in our day and age." The boundaries embraced all of the Glacier Peak country's magnificent beauty -- from its lowland forests to its rugged alpine peaks -- and extended protection to those areas the Forest Service had earlier excluded for resource developments. Although the primary reason for contesting the Forest Service's plans was to protect the virgin forests in the river valleys approaching the high country of the North Cascades, mining was especially troubling. The bureau could not legally prevent it in wilderness and typically drew wilderness boundaries to avoid conflicts with future mining developments. Nevertheless, Philip Zalesky, author of the Mountaineers' report on Glacier Peak, concluded that the wilderness boundary should include all of Marshall's original acreage "regardless of any previous conjectures made concerning ore bodies." Wilderness values "should be allowed to stand on their own merit." [57]

Marshall's memory and his conception of the North Cascades as a true wilderness, however, were not enough to persuade Forest Service officials to expand their study. Regional Forester J. Herbert Stone, not known for his love of wilderness, decided to evaluate only the existing limited area -- because mining, timber, and highway construction had been the main reasons
for reducing Marshall's recommendation in the first place. The agency's preliminary report, issued on February 7, 1957, confirmed what conservationists had come to expect from the Forest Service. As Grant McConnell wrote, for all its friendly talk about "non-market values," the Forest Service was still the Forest Service and was "mainly concerned about the maximization of cellulose." The Glacier Peak wilderness report recommended an area of 434,000 acres. While larger than the limited area, it excluded the Stehekin-Cascade Pass region from wilderness and at the same time called for roads up many of the range's forested river valleys for logging and roadside recreation, all of which demonstrated that, just as in the Three Sisters study, the agency valued the forests of the North Cascades more for the market than for wilderness recreation. \[58\]

Fresh from its victory at Dinosaur, the Sierra Club mounted a similar, yet smaller, campaign to force the Forest Service to reconsider its position, using the most effective tool in the embryonic wilderness movement -- publicity -- to raise the issue to a national level. Like Dinosaur's fantastically-shaped canyons, the North Cascades were an unknown wilderness jewel certain to be lost before Americans even knew what they had. Through pamphlets, illustrated articles in the Sierra Club Bulletin, and high country trips, the Sierra Club sent this message to the nation. The Wilderness Society, among other groups, also gave the issue coverage and even held its 1957 annual meeting below Glacier Peak, as the society's leader, Howard Zahniser noted, "to deliberate on the future of wilderness." Brower, who had captivated the public with dramatic images and descriptions of wilderness during the Dinosaur fight, built on this theme in his film, "Wilderness Alps of Stehekin." Released in 1958, the short color film featured children hiking through the high country in pillars of sunlight with "America the Beautiful" playing in the background. Similar to Brower's film about Dinosaur, "Wilderness Alps of Stehekin" became quite popular, was shown widely by local conservation groups, and circulated to public officials and members of Congress. In addition, the Glacier Peak cause received national coverage when stories appeared in Sunset Magazine and the New York Times, when Ansel Adams photographed the northern Cascades for a display in New York, and when U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas drew attention to it through his own wilderness travels and writings. \[59\]

All of these works conveyed the message that the fate of the range's incredible scenery and unspoiled wilderness hung in the balance of the Forest Service's short-sighted plans. The issues at stake in the North Cascades were the same as those facing the country's remaining wild lands in postwar America. Their future was now, and the Sierra Club, based on an intensive study of the region by David Simons, asserted that the bureau should consider the range in the interest of the nation rather than local saw mills. Only by using qualitative rather than quantitative values, however, could the Forest Service serve the national interest and preserve the range's highest values -- its scenic and wilderness qualities. And this could only happen, as activists like Grant McConnell argued, if the Forest Service reformed the rather outmoded policy of multiple use to reflect these values. Otherwise wilderness lovers could not expect to see the northern Cascades preserved. \[60\]

In 1959, McConnell's prediction seemed to come true. That year the Forest Service released a revised proposal for the Glacier Peak wilderness of 422,925 acres, a reduction of approximately 11,000 acres from its first plan. This revised plan called for even deeper indentations into the "wilderness core" in order to extend roads farther up the valleys of the Suiattle and Chiwawa rivers and Railroad Creek. The new boundaries incised the wilderness area from the west and east, giving it the appearance of a starfish, easily severed at its center by roads. Regional Forester Stone explained that these new boundaries were in "harmony with the multiple-use concept of national forest management." When constructed the roads would provide greater access to the wilderness area, markedly increase roadside recreation in the valleys leading to the wilderness, and allow access to patented mining claims. \[61\]
Stone's plan sent a clear message to members of the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Mountaineers, and the recently formed North Cascades Conservation Council: the agency had lost its way in its dedication to wilderness preservation. "Where are the blazes with which Bob Marshall marked the trail toward wilderness?" asked David Brower after the plan was released. How was the trail "so obviously, so tragically lost as to permit the present Glacier Peak proposal ever to emerge from the agency he served so well?" [62] In the fall of 1959, the Forest Service held two public hearings on the plan in Wenatchee and Bellingham. Over one hundred people testified, and greater than half favored the Mountaineers' proposal. The Mountaineers spoke for many wilderness activists when they called the plan and its new excisions "a mockery" of the idea of wilderness conceived by more wilderness-minded foresters like Marshall. Although the testimony and protests of conservationists had no effect on the regional forester's final decision, a flood of nearly one thousands letters protesting the plan reached Secretary of Agriculture Ezra T. Benson, which evidently influenced his decision. Before officially approving the area on September 6, 1960, he added Agnes Creek and the Suiattle River corridor to the final wilderness boundaries, bringing the total to 458,505 acres, and directed that the Cascade Pass-Stehekin River country should be managed, primarily, for scenic recreation. [63]

This final concession did little to assuage conservationists. Quite to the contrary, it cemented their decision to propose a national park for the North Cascades. In this way they could preserve all of the range proposed by Marshall for wilderness. Wilderness advocates had debated the park idea since the beginning of the Glacier Peak study but chose to wait for the Forest Service's decision. On the one hand, the idea of preserving the range as a national park, while not new, illustrated the extent to which wilderness activists had grown disenchanted with the Forest Service's wilderness policies in the late 1950s. A park seemed to offer the most practical alternative to saving the wilderness of the North Cascades. Under the Forest Service, wilderness received only administrative protection and therefore the agency was not accountable to Congress and the American people. National parks, however, represented the nation's premier form of scenic preservation; parks were legally bound to protect wilderness, for the most part, by their enabling legislation and the Park Service's Organic Act. On the other hand, the park choice raised the question of whether the Park Service could preserve the range as true wilderness. Or would the agency, as Bob Marshall had predicted, drive "roads into its heart."

It was this last point conservation groups grappled with before backing the park proposal. Preservationists had reason to be hopeful that the North Cascades would become the nation's "greatest wilderness parkland." As the historian Mark Harvey suggests, the Dinosaur victory "resoundingly reaffirmed" the sanctity of the national park system -- strengthening the Park Service's unimpaired doctrine of 1916 -- and firmly associated the protection of national parks with wilderness preservation in the public mind. But they also had reason to be cautious. The irony of victory was that while wilderness defenders strengthened parks to outside threats, the real threats to parks were coming from within during the postwar travel boom. Public appreciation and support of parks came with a price. It was the old dilemma of preservation and use but in proportions far greater than during the Park Service's publicity campaigns of the 1920s. In 1946, nearly twenty-three million tourists visited the national park system, up nearly 40 percent from before the war. By the mid-1950s, that figure had almost doubled, with close to 100 percent of park visitors entering the parks in automobiles. To make matters worse, the parks were not prepared to handle such a deluge of tourists. The parks faced a crisis; the war years had left them underfunded and understaffed, and their facilities rundown. In 1956, the Park Service answered the crisis with Mission 66, a ten-year, billion dollar development program to bring park facilities up to standards. [64]

The major emphasis of the program, preservationists observed, was to improve the parks for the motoring masses rather than to uphold the high standard of wilderness purity. Mission 66,
for example, expanded the carrying capacity of national parks to handle an estimated eighty million automobile tourists by the agency's fiftieth anniversary (1966) by adding more overnight accommodations, building visitor centers, and constructing park roads. David Brower and other Sierra Club leaders denounced the program, championed by Park Service Director Conrad Wirth, as antithetical to wilderness preservation in national parks because it emphasized too much development. They cited highly controversial highway projects, such as the Tioga Pass Road in Yosemite, as examples of the program's insensitivity to wilderness protection.

While Wirth defended such projects as well planned and necessary for better access and safety, he also tried to disarm his critics through a promotional campaign that portrayed Mission 66 as "a wilderness preservation program," stressing that "clearly" national parks were meant to "preserve wilderness values" and that the program's developments would provide a form of wilderness protection by relieving the pressures inflicted on park resources by the flood of auto tourists and simultaneously increasing public use as a means to justify preservation. Wirth's promotion, however, rang of the Park Service's old formula for success, and convinced few conservationists that Mission 66 would advance park preservation. [65]

Curiously, at the same time Brower and other wilderness activists were criticizing the Park Service's redevelopment program and the threat it posed to wilderness, they were also pushing for a national park to protect the wilderness of the northern Cascades. By the time the final Forest Service plan appeared for Glacier Peak, however, preservationists had come to terms with the paradoxes associated with national park management, and were in general agreement that a national park for the North Cascades represented the best way to protect the range as a wilderness sanctuary. [66]

Perhaps one of the most important exchanges about the park decision took place between Grant McConnell and David Brower in 1958. While it was true that the Park Service had its problems of tourists hordes and overdevelopment, McConnell noted, it could provide the kind of permanent protection for the region which the Forest Service could not. Without concern for commercial resource use, the Park Service could protect the range's forests, prevent mining (especially with the Kennecott Mining Company's interests on Miners Ridge near Glacier Peak), and design roads and developments that were sensitive to scenic preservation rather than focused on clearcuts. McConnell also knew that a national park could embrace Stehekin and the valley road omitted from Forest Service plans. Finally, because of campaigns like the one that saved Dinosaur, the general public would be more mobilized to support a national park for the range; parks were more widely understood and cherished than Forest Service wilderness areas. Thus, McConnell concluded, given the Forest Service's Glacier Peak proposal, a "National park for the Northern Cascades is the only genuine and possible solution to the area's problems." [67]

Brower agreed. Contradicting his earlier criticism of the Park Service's Mission 66 program, he stated that "this wrath comes from an honest difference of opinion between groups of people working for the same goal -- preservation of national parks and their primary asset of wilderness." True, Brower acknowledged, the Mission 66 program "is a construction program," but, echoing Conrad Wirth, "the NPS constructs to preserve -- just as the National Gallery had to be constructed to preserve." Moreover, the Park Service could protect the area proposed for wilderness by Marshall (and the Mountaineers) just as it had in Kings Canyon, and unlike the Forest Service make the declaration last. "We have the tremendous advantage, working with the Park Service, of knowing that all of us seek the same ends -- sustenance for the national soul, not the local mill." [68]

By early 1959, the National Parks Association, Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, the Sierra Club, North Cascades Conservation Council, the Mountaineers, and the Cascadians
had endorsed a national park for the North Cascades, generally, and requested that the Forest Service suspend its study and invite the Park Service to study the range for its national park caliber. [69] Bolstering its case, the Sierra Club introduced David Simons' study of the North Cascades entitled "The Need for Scenic Resource Conservation in the Northern Cascades of Washington." Simons argued for a national park of some 1.3 million acres, expanding Marshall's original boundaries to include the lowland forests on the west and east sides of the range, most of Lake Chelan, the Cascade Pass-Stehken River country, and Harts Pass. The Forest Service, however, refused conservationists' requests stating that it was fully qualified to assess all of the range's values. [70]

The Forest Service's refusal spoke to its long-standing jurisdictional rivalry with the Park Service over the status of the nation's pristine lands. More specifically, the study proposal reopened old wounds dating back to the Ice Peaks study of the late 1930s, which would make any concessions on the part of the Forest Service slim. For their part conservationists believed they were on solid ground with their park proposal and quoted repeatedly from the 1937 report that a national park in the northern Cascades "would outrank in its scenic, recreational, and wildlife values, any existing national park and any other possibility for such a park within the United States." Park advocates used this observation as irrefutable evidence of the range's park caliber. Ironically, they were trying to protect the wilderness Bob Marshall had wanted to save using the same Park Service study he had opposed. Only now, it seemed, Marshall's agency had abandoned his ideals and it was left to the Park Service and the creation of a national park to realize his vision.

As the Dinosaur campaign had proven, a national park symbolized the nation's wilderness heritage and the public's growing involvement in its preservation. Thus conservationists banked on a national park's widespread popular appeal to bring about the park study. But the park study issue dragged on for several years and evolved into one of the most hotly debated and politicized topics of the burgeoning environmental movement of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The poor relations between the Forest Service and Park Service continued to characterize the issue. In March 1959, Washington Congressman Thomas Pelly intervened on behalf of conservation groups and asked the Park Service to conduct a study of the range, only to be told by Director Conrad Wirth that his agency could not embark on such a project without the Forest Service's permission, according to legal statute. Both Chief Forester Richard McArdle and Agriculture Secretary Benson ignored the Park Service and secretary of the interior's requests for a joint study, and it was half a year later before McArdle replied to Pelly denying his request. McArdle stated, in a rather lengthy letter, that his bureau's fifty-year management history served as enough reason for his rejection, as did the 1936 Recreation Area Study Act which, essentially, exempted Forest Service lands from investigations by the Park Service without the former agency's permission. For his part, Wirth bridled at McArdle's snub and his public comments against a park in the North Cascades. He informed the interior secretary that he had sought assistance in good faith but "had not had the courtesy of a reply." [71]

At this point, the park struggle entered the political arena and moved beyond the control of the Forest Service. Expressing great disappointment in the Forest Service's decision, Congressman Pelly continued to press the study issue, and with the assistance of the Interior Department and leaders of the North Cascades park campaign introduced legislation in the next two sessions of Congress to initiate a Park Service study of the range. Although Pelly's legislation died, it served notice that there was growing grassroots support across the nation for a national park study in the North Cascades. In 1961 the North Cascades Conservation Council presented Pelly a petition containing nearly 22,000 signatures from almost every state in the union in favor of a park study. [72] That same year, Washington's senators, Warren G. Magnuson and Henry M. Jackson, prevailed on Orville L. Freeman, the new...
Secretary of Agriculture in John F. Kennedy's administration, to develop a forest management plan for the area north of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, among other disputed regions in their state. [73]

To this end, Freeman imposed a moratorium on logging in the region on June 7, 1961, until the Forest Service had conducted a long-range management plan. But this only brought temporary relief. In March 1962, when the Forest Service released its high mountain management policy for Washington's Cascade Mountains, it confirmed conservationists' belief that the bureau's intent was logging not scenic preservation. The plan proposed to create landscape management areas in which limited commercial logging would continue in the approach valleys and high country of the North Cascades, provided that clear cuts (or "patch cuts") were designed in such a way that panoramic scenery appeared unimpaired from roads and trails. But after examining the plan closely, conservationists criticized the Forest Service for placing too much emphasis on timber harvests and failing to protect some of the most impressive views of the range. Leaders in the park campaign believed that if they were to have any chance at preserving the North Cascades as a national park, they would have to prevent the Forest Service from ruining the range's spectacular scenery beforehand. In June, Pelly once more asked Freeman to impose a moratorium on logging -- this time below four thousand feet in twenty key valleys and to suspend any long-term development projects in the region -- until a national park study could be completed. But now, with the high mountain policy in hand, the secretary denied the request, noting that half of the area's on Pelly's list would not be developed for the next five years, but the remaining areas would. [74]

In the early 1960s, the Forest Service's resistance to the park study ran counter to the urgency expressed by increasing numbers of Americans demanding the preservation of more wild lands and a clean environment. Groups such as the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, and Audubon Society were aggressively pursuing preservation, gaining in membership, and becoming a formidable political influence. In 1958, Congress had created the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission to study the recreational needs of the nation, and many of the recommendations in its 1962 report would form the basis for the establishment of new recreation areas, national seashores and parks throughout the decade. Ecology also emerged as a household word, and the health of humans and their relationship to the natural world came into sharper and sometimes shocking focus. Published in 1962, Rachel Carson's Silent Spring set the tone for modern environmentalism by pointing out the potential human health hazards associated with pesticide use and the necessity of environmental protection. The following year, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall raised the level of national consciousness about environmental stewardship with the publication of The Quiet Crisis, which traced the history of the American conservation movement and set a program for the future. As Kennedy's Interior Secretary, Udall had embarked on one of the most ambitious conservation programs of the postwar era, dedicated, with Kennedy's blessing, to wilderness preservation and expansion of the national park system. [75]

In 1963, the North Cascades study moved to center stage in the Kennedy administration's conservation program when two of its priority items, the wilderness bill and the land and water conservation fund, were delayed in Congress. Looking for public support of a conservation program that seemed stalled, Kennedy was able to announce in February that both Freeman and Udall had achieved a "milestone in conservation progress." The previous month, the two secretaries had agreed to settle many long-standing jurisdictional disputes between the Forest Service and Park Service, what was informally called the "Treaty of the Potomac." One of the key components featured in this "new era of cooperation" was a joint study by the two departments to determine whether the North Cascades merited national park status. Shortly thereafter, the five-member study team, composed of two representatives of the Department of Agriculture and three of the Department of the Interior, embarked on an
In their letter to Edward C. Crafts, chairman of the study team, the secretaries related that the study team's mission was to investigate all federal lands in Washington's North Cascade Mountains from Washington Pass north to the Canadian border "to determine the management and administration of those lands that will best serve the public interest." While they recognized they had handed Crafts "a complex, difficult, and controversial assignment," they were anxious that the study team arrive at recommendations that were "soundly based and in the interest of the people of the area, the State of Washington, the region, and the United States." It was a rather daunting task. Consider the six major issues the study team outlined:

1. Should there be a new national park?

2. How much wilderness is enough?

3. How best to provide for the more conventional types of recreation desired by the great mass of people?

4. How to reconcile national and local interests when the two appear to conflict?

5. How to utilize and manage the timber resources in harmony with other multiple uses of the area?

6. The extent to which scenic roads should be an essential ingredient in making the North Cascades available to large numbers of people.

Consider also the public interest in the outcome of the study. Park and wilderness advocates wanted the maximum amount of the North Cascades preserved, whereas traditional resource industries such as timber and mining supported continued multiple-use management under the Forest Service as the optimum way to secure their economic growth. Likewise, outdoor recreation groups such as hunters, skiers, boaters, fishermen, and off-road vehicle users wanted their interests ensured as well in the final outcome; and similarly, Seattle City Light worried that wilderness or park classifications would interfere with its existing and future projects on the Skagit River. Local communities dependent on the timber economy also worried about their futures and how they would support services such as public schools. And finally, Washington State had a large stake in the investigation, with concerns ranging from fish and wildlife management to highway construction. The team held public hearings in Seattle, Wenatchee, and Mount Vernon in October 1963 to introduce the study. By the time the hearing record was closed on November 15, nearly 2,600 people had given oral or written statements; an overwhelming majority favored establishing a national park in the North Cascades. The turnout and written statements foreshadowed future hearings as the park moved toward completion.

An important contribution to the record and the argument for a national park was the submission of the North Cascades Conservation Council's Prospectus for a North Cascades National Park. The council by now had become the lead group heading up the park campaign and the Prospectus presented a solid case for establishing a park for the first time. Edited by Michael McCloskey, a lawyer, Northwest conservation representative for the Sierra Club, and consultant to the North Cascades Conservation Council, the document reflected McCloskey's belief that conservationists needed a clear policy statement if they were to court public opinion for the park cause. The 120-page document detailed the national park quality of the range, the inadequacies of Forest Service management, the advantages of Park Service management, the economic benefits a park would bring through tourism, and draft legislation for a park that would encompass an area similar to the one identified by David Simons in the...
late 1950s. The park would set aside some 1.3 million acres from roughly the Skagit River south to Stevens Pass, including all of the highly scenic areas left unprotected in Forest Service management plans, as well as the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area. Moreover, the park legislation, written by McCloskey, set down guidelines for minimizing conflicts with existing commodity uses, such as the well-established sport hunting industry located on the eastern side of the range. For this reason the legislation offered a large park and a "Chelan Mountain Recreation Area," of some 270,000 acres, where hunting would be permitted. The draft bill was also very specific about how the Secretary of the Interior could acquire private land, manage the park, compensate local counties suffering temporary economic hardships from reduced timber sales, and provide local residents employment opportunities in the park's management. [79]

The document represented a significant advance in conservation crusades because it provided not only a policy statement but a blueprint for action on the part of elected and agency officials. By the end of 1964, the Prospectus had won the endorsement of all conservation groups involved in the North Cascades campaign. However, it would take more to join the two feuding bureaus in a united vision for the future of the North Cascades. The North Cascades Study Team may have constituted a major advance in land-use planning and was a major achievement in park movement, but the wide-ranging study had at its center the park question and ultimately this proved to be its most divisive issue. [80]

As the team's recommendations suggest, the park issue continued to reflect the jurisdictional dispute between two powerful federal agencies. Intensely loyal to their agencies, the team members found no common ground on the park proposal. The Forest Service recommended retaining the region north of Cascade Pass under its jurisdiction and voted against creating a new national park in the region. Instead of a park, it proposed managing the area under current management policies with more emphasis on recreation. It advanced its recent plan to designate this much-disputed section as the Eldorado Peaks High Country of 537,000 acres, a more formal plan based on its high mountain policy and the Secretary of Agriculture's 1960 directive for the creation of the Glacier Peak Wilderness. The bureau reaffirmed its commitment to manage this country, cherished by wilderness preservationists, primarily for its scenic values but also "to open it up and develop it for the use and enjoyment of the large numbers of people who desire other kinds of outdoor recreation and those unable to engage in wilderness travel." In addition, it proposed some small additions to the northern section of the Glacier Peak Wilderness of some 20,000 acres, the creation of the North Cascades Wilderness Area, 813,000 acres, from the former primitive area by the same name, and continued maintenance of the Mount Baker Recreation Area. [81]

On the other hand, the Park Service recommended the establishment of two new national parks -- one centered around Mount Baker and the Picket Range west of Ross Lake and from the Skagit River north to the Canadian border, and the other centered around Glacier Peak. It also proposed creating its own recreation area -- the Eldorado-Lake Chelan National Recreation Area -- encompassing the Eldorado Peaks country, the upper third of Lake Chelan, and the region extending southeastward to the southern end of the Glacier Peak Wilderness. The agency also recommended reclassifying the portion of the North Cascades Primitive Area east of Ross Lake as the Okanogan Wilderness (managed by the Forest Service). In addition, the agency's proposal envisioned extending protection to some of the highly scenic areas surrounding these new areas; developing a scenic road system in the North Cascades, which included a road down the eastern shore of Ross Lake to connect to Highway 20 when it was finished; and using some new forms of transportation, such as tramways, funiculars, and helicopters as well as the development of appropriate facilities, to enable more tourists to visit the new parkland and see its incredible beauty.

The study team's chairman wrote the compromise proposal. Ed Crafts, the director of the
recently created Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in the Department of the Interior, had been a career employee with the Forest Service for nearly thirty years, ten as assistant chief. He knew well the contentious relations between the Forest Service and Park Service, yet Udall and Freeman had agreed on his appointment based on his experience with both of their departments. Moreover, while Crafts recognized that the question of a national park in the North Cascades was "undoubtedly the most controversial" issue the study team addressed, he believed that it deserved a resolution.

Thus in drafting the final report, he proposed creating a park that both sides might accept. Totaling 698,000 acres, the new park would extend south from the Canadian border to several miles below the head of Lake Chelan, including Mount Shuksan, Ross and Diablo lakes (as well as the associated Seattle City Light operations), the Picket Range, the Eldorado Peaks country, and the Stehekin Valley. In Crafts' opinion, the North Cascades deserved national park status without question, for the range possessed "superlative mountain features" that would make it "one of the most outstanding units" in the park system. But physical and scenic characteristics were among a "great many factors" contributing to the park recommendation. First, there was the statutory protection a park would provide for the range. Second, there was "the need for making the area available to significant numbers of people" by developing the area for "mass recreation use" and providing "adequate access" by "road, trail, water, and air." Third, a park would cause minimal adverse impact on resources such as timber. Fourth, a park's stature would bring economic benefits to the region through tourism. And finally, there was the relationship of the park proposal to the other recommendations. That is, there was more at stake than creating or not creating a park; the study team made twenty-one recommendations for future management of the range, all of which represented an interrelated whole. Among these were the establishment of new wilderness areas (along the range and bordering the proposed park), the enlargement of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, and the continued multiple-use management of existing forests under Forest Service management, as well as the expansion of Mount Rainier National Park.

Nevertheless, Crafts noted that this recommendation was "not unanimous among the team." Team members revealed their criticism of the park proposal in their comments on the report's final draft in the latter part of 1965. National Park Service Director George Hartzog, Jr., for example, responded in an agreeable tone, assenting to the inclusion of the Eldorado Peaks country in the national park and the continued Forest Service management of Glacier Peak as wilderness under the stricter provisions of the recently passed Wilderness Act of 1964. But he strongly disagreed with Crafts' exclusion of Mount Baker, stating it had long been recognized as having national park caliber; it was necessary for completing the geological story of the range and important for developing visitor use facilities. Excluding Mount Baker also eliminated the Nooksack River Valley, a corridor essential for visitor and administrative developments and access to the western half of the park. [82]

Clearly, representatives of the Department of Agriculture objected to the park plan the most. George Selke, for example, considered the park proposal "the height of folly." It did not adequately assess the economic implications of the management changes. Selke disliked the report's conclusion that tourism could somehow replace resource development. More important, he resented the report's implication that a change of status, from forest to park, automatically increased the value of the land and for that matter accorded it greater protection. "The area has been preserved," Selke reminded Crafts, "largely because it was designated as National Forest land and was administered by the Forest Service for over sixty years." In addition, he stated that the park proposal would unfairly preclude hunting, remove the Picket Range from wilderness management, and create a large national park that Americans could only use seasonally, in the high country's short summers. [83]

Moreover, because the report recommended a national park, the Forest Service and the
Secretary of Agriculture pressured Crafts and Udall to delay final publication of the report. Late in 1965, Freeman wrote to Udall that "the draft I saw struck me as intended to promote a national park. I do not agree that this is the best course in the resource interest of the Nation. This is why we should talk about it before we wind up in open opposition." [84] Freeman's letter allowed Agriculture's two team members, Selke and Forest Service Deputy Chief Arthur W. Greeley, enough time to submit another statement to clarify the Department of Agriculture's position. Once again, the Forest Service stated its opposition to a national park: "We believe strongly that it is neither necessary nor desirable," Selke and Greeley wrote, to have another national park in the North Cascades. "We think national emphasis can be given to the recreation and scenic values of this area without establishing a duplicating organization and administrative unit." Therefore, as an alternative, they recommended the establishment of a North Cascades National Recreation Area, essentially replacing the Eldorado Peaks High Country, with the addition of Ross Lake, covering 537,000 acres. On either side of Ross Lake, they also proposed to establish a Picket Range Wilderness and a Pasayten Wilderness. The new recreation area, they noted, would solve numerous land-use issues for the present and future generations, much in the same way a national park would, except on a much broader scale. As a national recreation area, the North Cascades would receive "congressional recognition and a national name" without a management change. [85]

In response, Crafts wrote a strongly worded letter to Udall warning him to "stand firm" on the report and "not to join with Freeman in his efforts to misrepresent, undermine, and torpedo the North Cascades report." In the previous year, the Forest Service had broken the team's agreement that the agencies involved would not attempt to influence public opinion on the study area until the report was released; the Forest Service had conducted a statewide publicity campaign about its long-range recreational planning for the Eldorado Peaks country, especially once Highway 20 was completed. Furthermore, the study chairman stated, the Department of Agriculture's statements were "inaccurate, slanted, misleading, and put the main emphasis on a Recreation Area" which did not even appear in the report until "the last minute Selke-Greeley letter." If Udall did not support the study report, Crafts threatened to resign, for the secretary would undermine the bureau's influence and destroy any hope for a national park. [86]

Udall held his ground and on January 6, 1966, the study report was released to the public. Afterwards, conservationists expressed a cautious optimism about the park plan but openly criticized what they saw as the proposal's inadequacies and the Park Service's development plans for this wilderness sanctuary. They were disappointed, for example, that the study report recommended a smaller park than the 1963 North Cascades Conservation Council's proposal and the Park Service's recommendation in the study report. The compromise proposal's most glaring omission was the Glacier Peak Wilderness -- "the most superb section" of the range, deserving both park and wilderness protection since it still faced mining development by Kennecott. They also questioned the "wretched precedent" of including hydroelectric projects in national parks and the uniformly bad innovations of tramways and helicopters, as well as traditional roads, to open up the park's high country. The former provisions especially, they contended, were poorly conceived concessions to win the support of the local tourist industry -- and "entirely contrary to the whole idea of parks as natural preserves." One keen observer who supported the park plan in principle suggested that in light of these provisions the agency needed to review the meaning of the national park concept by rereading Thoreau, Muir, and Mather and "get back on the beam." [87]

The concept of what a national park should be, wilderness preserve or natural area modified for public enjoyment, pervaded the arguments presented by conservation organizations as the park campaign proceeded over the next several years. The North Cascades Conservation Council, for example, wondered seriously about the Park Service's commitment to wilderness preservation considering Hartzog's proposal to install trams and other facilities but more
specifically the use of helicopters in the Picket Range to promote "mass wilderness visitation." Council president Patrick Goldsworthy called these plans "a grave tactical error" certain to rob the park plan of support among many conservationists and enlarge its opposition. Goldsworthy's comments typified the general consensus among conservationists who supported a park but also favored "wilderness just as strongly." William O. Douglas, in fact, advocated protecting the Picket Range as a wilderness area in a national forest using the 1964 Wilderness Act to keep it roadless and remote. Thus, the wild range would receive better protection and not be subjected to the current over-crowded conditions plaguing the national parks. [88]

With the hard-fought battle for the Wilderness Act won, preservationists finally had the legal support to protect wilderness lands inviolate. Perhaps the Forest Service instead of the Park Service was better prepared to meet this objective. Doubts about the Park Service's cool treatment of the Wilderness Act lingered in the minds of preservationists; the wording of the act itself implied misgivings about the agency's wilderness commitment. Echoing the Park Service's Organic Act, the Wilderness Act stated that wilderness areas were to be managed "for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use as wilderness." Here the unimpaired doctrine specifically meant preserving wilderness conditions rather than ensuring the public's enjoyment. [89] The reality, of course, was that a national park could provide the best and most immediate protection for the wilderness of the North Cascades. There were no guarantees with the Forest Service. The Wilderness Act stipulated that federal agencies had ten years to complete their wilderness reviews and allowed mining to continue for twenty years, during which time some of the valued lowland forests in the northern Cascades could disappear and the Glacier Peak country could be scarred forever with an open pit mine.

In the latter 1960s, the battle for the North Cascades became a national issue, thanks largely to public interest in environmental protection, grassroots politics, and a well-orchestrated publicity campaign. A significant contribution to the latter was the Sierra Club's publication in 1965 of The Wild Cascades: Forgotten Parkland, an Exhibit Format book which was part of the influential series launched by the club in 1960 with This Is the American Earth. Filled with inspiring photographs, prose, and poems that related the story of this magnificent country and the need for its protection, The Wild Cascades was widely distributed to members of Congress and daily newspapers across the country, the timing of its release coming on the eve of the study report's release and a possible park bill. At stake in the North Cascades, as Paul Brooks would write later in The Atlantic Monthly, was the opportunity to save the "last unopened corner of our country" and create "the most beautiful wilderness park in our entire national park system." Of all the recent conservation battles, which included the establishment of Canyonlands National Park, passage of the Wilderness Act, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, the one for the North Cascades presented the greatest and most important challenge. Here Americans faced the ultimate questions: "What future do we want for this remnant of wild America, and to whom shall we entrust it?" [90]

The fate of the North Cascades, as with conservation issues across the nation, lay in confrontation between conservation philosophies and power politics. And though park supporters could expect better results given the political strength of conservation organizations and the mood of the public, they needed someone to guide the political process. While some of Washington's congressional delegation had voiced their support for a park study and their opposition to a national park, none had yet expressed their support for creating a park, avoiding a volatile and perhaps politically damaging issue. Who would step forward? In the mid-1960s, as he looked out across the magnificent view of the northern Cascades and Olympic Mountains from atop Glacier Peak, even poet and nature philosopher Gary Snyder wondered: "you mean there's a senator for all of this?" That senator was Washington's Henry M. Jackson. [91]
Conservation organizations knew early on in the park campaign that they would need Jackson's support if they were to see a national park established. Jackson wielded considerable political power as chairman of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Although Jackson would later express his love for the North Cascades -- the range's "natural beauty and power to impress the spirit" -- he remained publicly silent on the park question, waiting for public opinion to rise in favor of the park and evidence that a park would not damage his state's economy, particularly the timber and mining industries. Yet he worked for a national park behind the scenes. He used his influence, for example, to maneuver through the interdepartmental bickering between Interior and Agriculture to secure a park proposal from the study team. The report's detailed analysis demonstrated that the proposed park area would not seriously impinge on commercial interests, satisfying one of Jackson's central concerns. To satisfy the other, that public sentiment was in favor of a park, he moved swiftly once the study report was released, recognizing its local and national appeal. He took the unusual step of holding public hearings on the study team's report, bringing his committee to Seattle in February 1966. But the senator was confident in the outcome, for at the same time, he announced that he would introduce legislation, based on the report's proposal, following the two-day hearings. Jackson's assessment of public opinion was on the mark. More than two hundred people attended the hearings, the majority of whom favored a national park. [92]

Even so, it appeared that Jackson might be risking his political career by pressing for a national park. Lined up in opposition were the traditional park opponents -- the state's timber and mining industries, hunters, outdoor recreation groups, such as ski area developers, and local area residents and industry-oriented chambers of commerce, all of whom favored continued Forest Service management. Similarly, Seattle City Light, with some 700,000 customers in the Seattle area, continued to lobby for protection of its interests under the proposed Park Service management. Washington State Governor Daniel J. Evans expressed his doubts about the study's park recommendations, stating that the report did not adequately account for all of the people and groups "who have an interest in the future of the truly unique and unusual North Cascades, one of nature's great natural wonders." Aware of how politically divisive the park issue was, Evans stressed the importance of hunting and fishing, and federal forest funds to the people of his state, as well as the future completion and administration of the North Cross-State Highway. To address these issues and make the state's official recommendation to Congress, Evans created his own study committee. In July 1966, the seventeen-member committee released its report recommending a 1.8 million acre North Cascades National Recreation Area, comprised of a series of recreation areas and wilderness areas managed by the Forest Service, and a small national park (335,000 acres) in the Picket Range. [93]

Jackson, however, displayed not only his political acumen but his statesmanship in dealing with the park issue. He sought and received President Lyndon B. Johnson's endorsement for the park. By securing the administration's approval of the park, Jackson could avoid any political fallout and pursue legislation more effectively. Committed to preserving the nation's natural beauty and protecting the environment, Johnson announced his support for the creation of a national park in the North Cascades during his state of the union address, entitled "Protecting Our Natural Heritage," on January 30, 1967. While Johnson took some political heat off of Jackson, he also ended the bitter struggle between Agriculture and Interior over the park. In late December 1966, Freeman and Udall had presented the case to the president as the only issue left unresolved from the "Treaty of the Potomac." Their departments and respective agencies were hopelessly divided on the subject, the secretaries related. Given the constellation of conflicting interests involving the range, Freeman still maintained that a park was not the best solution. The president, he concluded, faced a decision "Solomon himself could not make...that would satisfy everyone." Udall, on the other
hand, convinced Johnson that creating the park would not only add to the country's precious crown jewels but also "be a monument to the conservation leadership of this Administration." [94]

On March 20, 1967, Henry Jackson, along with Senator Warren Magnuson, introduced the administration's bill as S. 1321. Drafted by the Interior Department, the bill was based on the study team's report. It proposed to establish a two-unit national park of 570,000 acres and a Ross Lake National Recreation Area of 100,000 acres; to assign wilderness status to the portion of the North Cascades Primitive Area east of Ross Lake to be known as the Pasayten Wilderness, under Forest Service management; to add lands along the Whitechuck and Suiattle river valleys to the Glacier Peak Wilderness; and to review the national park for wilderness designation within two years. [95]

This version already reflected several of the compromises necessary to create a national park. First, the legislation provided for a smaller park, divided into northern and southern units. In between these two units, it added Ross Lake National Recreation Area encompassing Ross Lake and the portions of the Skagit River that contained Seattle City Light's operations, namely the Gorge, Diablo, and Ross dams and lakes. In this way, City Light was assured that its existing operations and future plans, which involved raising Ross Lake, would not be jeopardized within a national park. In addition, classifying the lake and its surrounding environs as a recreation area would permit more intense and diversified activities than those normally allowed in a national park. [96]

Second, the legislation eliminated Granite Creek from the park and left it under national forest management. This was the last, unfinished section of Highway 20, and as Secretary Udall noted, his department eliminated the route so that no part of the highway would traverse the national park, only the recreation area, and thus "there would be no question of interference with commercial traffic, and the rights of the State to construct, maintain, operate, and administer" the highway. And third, in addition to other administrative measures regarding general park management and financing, the legislation paid special attention to private landowners, namely Stehekin residents, who found their homes within the boundaries of the proposed park. It noted that they retained rights of use and occupancy for the rest of their lives or for twenty-five years. [97]

Afterwards, the Interior Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation conducted a series of hearings in April and May 1967 in Washington, D.C., and Wenatchee, Mount Vernon, and Seattle, Washington. The hearings, which lasted for five days, epitomized citizen activism. Hundreds of individuals testified and well over a thousand submitted letters and petitions for the record. The hearings consolidated the disparate views expressed by the park's supporters and opponents. Emotions ran high. Harvey Manning, author of The Wild Cascades and member of the North Cascades Conservation Council, for example, apologized to future generations in the year 2000 for not saving enough of the land in the North Cascades that "needed and deserved protection." Conversely, the mayor of Sedro Woolley, William O. Pearson, stated that his community, with its timber-based economy, resented "the interference of the Sierra Club in its attempts to force us to change our mode of living, in its attempts to curtail our economic and recreational activities." [98]

The conservation community, led once again by the Sierra Club, North Cascades Conservation Council, and the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, among others, generally supported S. 1321, but it was only a start towards preserving the wilderness park proposed by the North Cascades Conservation Council in 1963 and the Craft's proposal of 1966. To this end, they recommended eight amendments, most of which dealt with extending protection to highly scenic lands left out of the bill's boundaries; these approach valleys had been the catalyst for the park movement. The revisions called for expanding the park to
include the Granite Creek Valley, the Mount Baker region, the Cascade River Valley above Marble Creek, as well as adjusting the park boundary to include more of Big Beaver Creek. Other recommendations called for adding Sulphur, Buck, and Downey creeks to the Glacier Peak Wilderness, and the Horseshoe Basin area and Lightning Creek to the Pasayten Wilderness. The remaining amendments suggested immediate wilderness classification for most of the park under the terms of the Wilderness Act, rather than abiding by the two-year waiting period as provided in S. 1321, and finding some way to halt the impending plans the Kennecott Copper Company had for construction of an open pit mine in the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

The main intent of these revisions, conservationists maintained, was to ensure that the park preserved as much wilderness as possible. They wanted to include Granite Creek in the park's boundaries, for example, both for its scenic qualities and as a form of wilderness protection. As Brock Evans testified on behalf of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, having a section of highway within the park would provide the "opportunity for visitors from other parts of the country to drive through the park," and at the same time would not put pressure on the Park Service to construct its own roads (for visitor and interpretive services) "into the existing wilderness which is the prime glory of the North Cascades." Specifically, conservationists worried that the agency might build a road down Bridge Creek -- or for that matter any road -- to the Stehekin River Valley, opening this so-called remnant of early America to the world and in the process destroying this valley and its special qualities as a wilderness threshold. Ironically, while the Stehekin country had long been compared to Yosemite in scenic grandeur, preservationists believed that a road to the outside would swamp the valley with automobiles and create the same kind of overcrowded conditions choking Yosemite Valley as well as other parks in the late 1960s. In effect, Stehekin would mirror not the national park ideal but its destruction. Similarly, they advocated immediate wilderness classification because the North Cascades had been thoroughly studied for wilderness and because it would prevent the Park Service from implementing its controversial transportation and development programs.

While conservation groups, with their national following, represented the majority in favor of a national park, the park's opponents commanded perhaps more attention, due to their diversity and the political influence. As one historian has argued, opponents influenced the final shape of the national park more than its supporters. In the months following the hearings, Jackson, along with his aides and Agriculture and Interior officials, modified S. 1321 to satisfy some, but not all, of the issues surrounding the park's legislation. In general, Jackson and Interior Department officials met the traditional anti-park arguments with the traditional argument for a national park: that the lands included within the proposed park's boundaries were economically worthless, and thus their removal from commercial development would have little impact on the state's economy.

The most vivid example of the compromises necessary to establish the park appeared in the committee's amended legislation, which made five main changes. The first, a nod to conservationists, was the addition of the Windy Peak-Horseshoe Basin area, but not Lightning Creek, to the Pasayten Wilderness. The second and third changes involved Seattle City Light and provided for the enlargement of Ross Lake National Recreation Area by adding more of the Skagit River Valley to accommodate the proposed Copper Creek dam and reservoir and transferring the lower Thunder Creek basin from the park to the recreation area. Altogether the size of the recreation area now totaled 105,000 acres. The Senate committee agreed to these changes on one level to resolve any conflicts the city's utility operations would have with the proposed legislation or the park's management.

But on another level, City Light and its superintendent, John M. Nelson, successfully lobbied for these changes based on the lighting department's long and storied history as one of the...
nation's most celebrated city-owned utilities, exemplifying that "public ownership meant low rates and widespread use of electricity." [105] City Light also capitalized on the work of its first superintendent James D. Ross who helped the department achieve its fame by developing popular tours of its facilities, lakes, and company towns at Newhalem and Diablo. A key aspect of these towns was their impressive landscape design, along with waterfalls that were illuminated with colorful light displays. After visiting the Skagit River project, Jackson and other committee members were quite impressed with City Light's recreational developments, and thus they were willing to agree in principle to the changes the utility desired. [106] As Patrick Goldsworthy recalled some fifteen years later, Jackson was a master negotiator and his concession to City Light typified this skill. "Just off the record," Jackson told Goldsworthy, "we just can't go bulldozing ahead and totally ignore" City Light; without "some compromises...we're not going to get the park." And, as Goldsworthy remembered, "he wanted this park." [107]

The fourth significant change to the legislation was the creation of a Lake Chelan National Recreation Area of 62,000 acres. Of all of the amendments, this one was the most complicated and controversial, for it attempted to appease a number of interests -- hunters, fishermen, and private landowners and residents in the Stehekin Valley -- by designating the lower Stehekin River Valley and upper Lake Chelan areas as a national recreation area rather than a national park. Ironically, the Stehekin country had inspired the first national park proposals in the 1890s and, when threatened with logging in the 1950s, sparked the current park movement. But sportsmen's groups formed a formidable lobby, and led by the Washington State Sportsmen's Council and the Washington State Department of Game, they impressed upon the committee members the historical significance of hunting, as well as fishing, in the North Cascades.

A key figure was John A. Biggs, director of the Washington State Department of Game. An outspoken critic of creating another national park in Washington, Biggs was a member of Governor Evans' study committee and played an influential role in developing the state's proposal. Although Biggs spoke of the need for management policies that allowed a wide range of recreational opportunities, namely under Forest Service multiple-use management, his main concern was maintaining his department's jurisdiction over wildlife management in the northern Cascades. [108] In his testimony before the Senate subcommittee, for example, the Game Department director stressed that more than 800,000 people hunted and fished in the state at the present and the creation of a third large national park in the state would have a serious effect by prohibiting hunting altogether and limiting the state's current fisheries management and restocking programs in the range's lakes and rivers. Biggs also argued that, from the perspective of sound wildlife management, a park was a poor decision. Without hunting, the health of the range's wildlife populations, specifically deer and mountain goats, would inevitably "deteriorate without population control." One need only look to the examples of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks to see tragic errors of park policies where "elk by the thousands have been ruthlessly slaughtered by Park Service employees" to reduce populations. But Biggs also stressed the intrinsic values associated with hunting that could not be measured by the numbers of deer (1,000) and mountain goats (40) taken annually by hunters.

Our high mountain deer and mountain goat hunting is the epitome of hunting in our State. It provides the hunter an opportunity to go into the high mountains during that period of the year when they are at their greatest beauty, to camp out and to enjoy this scenic wonderland, while engaging in one of America's most traditional and honored forms of outdoor recreation -- the hunting of big game. [109]

While less dramatic, a park would have similar consequences for sports fishing, given the
range's extensive system of rivers and lakes. Ross and Diablo lakes and the Skagit and Stehekin rivers, he noted, were the most important fishing waters in the proposed park. These waters were heavily used yet without his department's extensive restocking program, fishing would diminish, for they offered "little or no potential for natural restocking." The Stehekin River figured most prominently in the discussion of fisheries management. The Stehekin was "the key to fishing" in Lake Chelan because it was the only tributary which had "the physical characteristics needed to implement modern fisheries management programs," such as fish hatcheries and artificial spawning channels, all of which were currently underway or in the process of construction. "Were the Stehekin River to be included in the park," he concluded, it would interfere with these developments and affect fishing for the entire lake -- far outside the park. [110]

These arguments and the political pressures exerted by Biggs and the hunting organizations prevailed. Jackson sought a compromise with the recreation area designation for the Stehekin country. The Game Department identified the lower Stehekin River Valley at the head of Lake Chelan as one of the most "important hunting areas" in the proposed park; but hunters did not get all they wanted because the other area, the Panther Creek-Fisher Basin area, remained in the park. The Senate subcommittee also approved of another proposal offered by the Game Department -- that state licenses be required for fishing in the recreation areas and the park, and for hunting in the recreation areas. In conjunction with this, the legislation stipulated that the Secretary of the Interior would enter into a cooperative agreement with the Game Department for the management of fish and game in the recreation areas. (This allowed the Game Department to continue its fisheries management program in the Stehekin Valley.) [111]

Stehekin residents, while they represented a less significant political force than hunters, had some of their concerns addressed in the legislation creating the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. Stehekin residents were divided over the national park. Some were happy with Forest Service administration of the valley management, while others favored Forest Service management because they feared that under Park Service management they might lose their property or that the agency would extensively develop the valley for visitor services. Many, however, shared Grant McConnell's views that national park management offered the best hope to prevent large-scale logging -- and thus the destruction of the valley's scenic grandeur -- and the possible construction of a road down Bridge Creek. But it remained to be seen how exactly the Park Service planned to manage the Stehekin community, which by modern standards appeared to be a true picture of pioneer America. The community, however, contained some of the amenities of modern living, such as electricity from a small hydroelectric plant, a school, several resorts, summer homes, ranches, original homesteads, and an unimproved valley road and automobiles, among other things. Park Service Director George Hartzog assured residents that his agency intended to employ the same policy it had used in 1950 with the creation of Grand Teton National Park, which also contained privately-owned land. The essence of this policy was that the Park Service would allow the historic uses of the valley to continue and would not seek to acquire any of the 1,700 acres of land in private ownership "so long as the lands continue to be devoted to present compatible uses now being made of them -- such as for modest homesites, ranches, limited eating establishments, lodges, etc." This policy would also apply to Ross Lake National Recreation Area. [112]

The final important amendment to the legislation charged the secretary of agriculture and the secretary of the interior with developing a plan within two years after the park's creation for coordinating the development of "public use facilities and for administrative purposes." This change was meant to account for the various land management areas in the range -- national park, national recreation areas, and national forest. It recognized that the different land management units of the North Cascades formed a seamless whole. Visitors would approach
the national park and recreation areas through national forest lands, and in other instances enter national forest lands through the park or recreation areas. This aspect of the legislation also grew out of concerns Congress expressed for the expenses related to and incurred by the duplication of services and facilities when national forests and parks bordered one another. [113] In addition, subcommittee members intended this section of the bill to appease vocal outdoor recreationists -- namely the ski management and development associations -- whose opinions were expressed primarily by the umbrella group, "Outdoors Unlimited, Inc.," with a reported membership of 27,000. Among the public-use facilities the legislation listed for identification in a joint study were ski lifts, which, it explicitly stipulated, "should lead to a plan" for their development on the edge of the national park, within the recreation areas, or in adjacent areas of national forest. [114]

The Interior Committee, however, did not adopt all of the proposals suggested during the hearings. Most of these would have been major concessions to conservation organizations. Although it expressed its concern over the impact that Kennecott's proposed open-pit mining operations would have on the "natural, ecological, and scenic values" of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, the committee determined that this specific issue was part of the larger problem related to mining and the national policy governing the management of the national wilderness system; therefore, among other factors, the committee decided that considering this complex issue might "delay unduly congressional action on S. 1321." As for adding more scenic valleys to the park, namely the Cascade River and Granite Creek valleys, the committee decided against these proposals, primarily as a concession to the Forest Service, which planned to manage these scenic approaches to the park under its landscape management policy (the same one that conservation groups protested against early in the park campaign). The committee also made another concession to the Forest Service, allowing it to continue managing Mount Baker as a recreation area under a similar policy. [115]

At the end of October 1967, the Senate Interior Committee reported the legislation with amendments and recommended that it be passed. On November 2, 1967, Senator Jackson introduced the bill to the full Senate, announcing from the floor that it was "with great personal pleasure" that he brought the bill before his colleagues. Praising the North Cascades as one of the most "distinctive and unforgettable" features of the Pacific Northwest, Jackson stated that this bill represented a true compromise.

[It] is not an ordinary or even extraordinary national park bill. It is truly a regional bill. The Committee, in its hearings and investigations, verified the findings of the Study Team that the greatest potential for this relatively untouched region was outdoor recreation. To be sure, many persons differed in specifics as to how this potential should best be managed, but there was widespread agreement that protective administration was needed....I believe the Administration and the Committee have pieced together a complex of management units which will keep this area forever a scenic masterpiece. [116]

By the time the legislation emerged from the Senate, it was virtually in its final form. As if forging this compromise legislation had not been challenge enough, it remained to be seen if any legislation for the new park would be reported out of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, chaired by Colorado Representative Wayne N. Aspinall. A Democrat, Aspinall gained the reputation as the "most obdurate foe" of the Wilderness Act, delaying the measure for years and inserting the clause guaranteeing "all established mining claims and permitting new claims until 1984" as the price of the bill's passage. [117]

The same delays seemed to be in store for the North Cascades bill. These delays, in part, reflected the political nature of the House itself, for the House Interior Committee would consider not one but four bills. One was the Senate passed version of S. 1321. The other three
were introduced by Washington's congressional delegation. The first was H.R. 8970; identical to the original administration bill S. 1321, it was introduced by Democratic Representative Lloyd Meeds. The second bill, introduced by Republican Representative Thomas Pelly, was H.R. 12139, which was identical to the 1963 proposal of North Cascades Conservation Council, calling for a large park and adjacent recreation area. And the third was H.R. 16252, introduced by Republican Representative Catherine May, which proposed essentially the same national recreation area, with a small park, recommended by Governor Evans' study committee. Meeds and Pelly introduced their bills in April and August of 1967, respectively, and May submitted her legislation in March the following year. [118]

On March 8, 1968, President Johnson helped move the legislative process along when he urged the House to create a national park for the North Cascades during his message on conservation, "To Renew a Nation." The following month, on April 19 and 20, Representative Aspinall brought the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation to Seattle, Washington, for hearings on the park legislation. The hearings were grass-roots democracy at its finest. More than eight hundred people requested to testify, comprising the largest park proposal hearing and drawing the people from all walks of life. The Seattle Times captured the drama of the event well: On April 19, shortly before the hearings were scheduled to begin,

   the corridor of the mezzanine floor of the Benjamin Franklin Hotel was jammed. Elected officials and their assistants rubbed elbows with housewives and students, with teachers and lawyers, with biologists and engineers, with mountain climbers and politicians. All were waiting to get into the packed hearing rooms. [119]

Eventually, everyone who wanted to testify or listen was admitted, although subcommittee members grumbled about the duplication of testimony and that the hearing process had ballooned out of proportion. Overwhelmed by the turnout, Aspinall remarked that "he had never seen anything like it." Who were all these people, he wondered. "Are they hippies or part of a Seattle drive to get out into the country?" Aspinall was correct in one sense. Most of the witnesses favored a national park, and the majority of them were from Washington's metropolitan corridor along the Puget Sound. Even though park supporters and opponents offered little that was new in their testimony, Governor Daniel Evans presented what might have been the most crucial statement. After hearing Evans present the official position of the state, Arizona Representative Morris K. Udall challenged him to choose between the national park recommended by the Senate or no park at all. In response, the governor stated he would support the Senate bill. [120]

Afterwards, Representative Aspinall promised to bring a report on the North Cascades bill to the floor of the House before the current session ended and to hold other field hearings in Wenatchee, Washington, and Washington, D.C. But the legislative process stalled. In June, Representative Roy Taylor of North Carolina, chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation, announced that he had given the North Cascades bill "low priority" because he had received so much mail in opposition to it. Similarly, Aspinall indicated that it was unlikely that any action would take place on the bill because there was not enough time left in the session to resolve the controversy surrounding the proposed park. Indeed the Interior Committee's schedule was tight. Including North Cascades, it had four major conservation bills to report on -- Redwood National Park, the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and the Scenic Trails System. [121]

But park proponents had other views on why the subcommittee was holding up the legislation. As Brock Evans, Northwest representative for the FWOC, noted,
Apparently all the talk about the legislation being 'controversial' and 'not enough time' is really just smoke-screen language, for a tug-of-war over Central Arizona legislation now going on between House Interior Chairman Aspinall and Senate Interior Chairman Jackson. The three to one testimony in favor of the North Cascade National Park at the hearings in Seattle (ten to one for individuals) should be adequate evidence that the legislation is not that controversial. [122]

Evans was referring to the Central Arizona Project (CAP), part of the Pacific Southwest Water Plan, which would have diverted water from the Columbia River to that parched and growing part of the country. When the proposal first surfaced in the mid-1960s, Senator Jackson would have no part of the diversion proposal; his state had water to spare but not electricity, most of which came from dams. In 1965, Jackson had quietly attached a rider to the Pacific Southwest Water Plan requiring that Congress approve of the Bureau of Reclamation's feasibility studies first. Jackson's action displayed his annoyance with the Bureau's tactics of forcing its projects on Congress by arousing public enthusiasm for them in advance, but it also had the same effect "as if Jackson had strung a six-hundred-volt electrified fence along the entire south bank of the Columbia River." [123] Thus when the legislation for CAP appeared before the Senate in 1968 containing a provision for studying the diversion of the Columbia, Jackson refused to consider it. In doing so, he controlled the fate of CAP and with it the fate of the North Cascades bill. Aspinall and other congressmen, who were deeply concerned about the fate of this legislation, agreed to a compromise eliminating the diversion study, and the water plan bill began moving again in the Senate. And, at the same time, so did the important conservation matters before the House, including legislation for North Cascades. As an added political advantage, Jackson's committee was also considering legislation for the Blue Ridge Parkway, which extended into Representative Taylor's state and thus its progress was of special interest to him. [124]

In light of the fact that 1968 was an election year, Jackson's negotiations took on more significance. A new administration could delay the North Cascades bill indefinitely. As one conservationist observed, if "we do not get legislation this year the bitterness and controversy will only increase and it will be that much more difficult in the following years." On July 13, 1968, the subcommittee held hearings in Wenatchee, and on July 25 and 26, it convened hearings in Washington, D.C. During the proceedings, Chairman Aspinall informed the subcommittee that it would not report out any legislation unless the three representatives from Washington State could agree on one park bill. A compromise seemed in the making when Representative Thomas Pelly stated that he would support any of the bills. Interior Secretary Udall and Park Service Director Hartzog strongly endorsed Meeds' bill; Hartzog even testified that he would prefer no park to the smaller park proposed by Governor Evans in Catherine May's bill. May stood by her bill until Evans reached her by telephone and restated his earlier statement at the Seattle hearings: he would prefer the Senate's version of the park bill to no park at all. May broke the deadlock when she agreed to support the Senate bill. [125]

In early September 1968, the subcommittee heard its final testimony on the park bill, and on September 9, it reported out H.R. 8970. The House subcommittee had accepted the Senate passed bill, S. 1321, with one amendment restricting land acquisition costs to the $3.5 million estimate of the Interior Department. On September 16, the House passed the bill, and three days later the Senate concurred with the House amendment and passed the North Cascades National Park bill by voice vote, sending it to the White House where President Johnson signed it into law on October 2, 1968. [126] Signed on the same day as the bill creating Redwood National Park, the North Cascades bill ranked high among the accomplishments that earned the 90th Congress the distinction as one of the greatest in conservation history. The new park was hardly perfect from anyone's perspective, yet as one preservationist proclaimed: "Here a new park in matchless wilderness has been borne." [127]
On October 2, 1968, when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the bill establishing North Cascades National Park, he called it "one of the most beautiful regions on God's earth." Washington State's Senator Henry M. Jackson, the park bill's chief architect who was also present at the White House ceremony, believed that the new complex of wilderness park and recreation areas was the pinnacle of the conservation achievements of the 90th Congress. The North Cascades held "limitless" opportunities for everyone who loved the outdoors. This new parkland, he predicted, "will be the nation's showcase of natural beauty." [1]

The White House ceremony was a fitting occasion for looking forward. After more than a decade of intense political struggle and controversy, a national park had become a reality. Henceforth, Americans could rest assured that this alpine wilderness would be protected. But just what shape this new park would take remained to be seen. The park's legislation, with its accompanying congressional hearings and reports, reflected the compromises necessary to bring this new park into existence and thus held the key to what its management future would entail.

Besides identifying the mission of the park and recreation areas, the legislation prescribed the immediate steps for the park's management. Within two years of the park's creation, the Park Service and Forest Service would produce a plan for the recreational management and development of their adjoining lands in the North Cascades, and during the same period, the Park Service would submit wilderness recommendations for the park, in accordance with the Wilderness Act. The park act also defined the relationship the agency would have with many of its new tenants and special interest groups. For example, it allowed the continuation of historic -- or compatible -- uses in the recreation areas and specified the ways in which the government could purchase private lands, through exchange, donation, or purchase. It also guaranteed that anyone who had a legal contract, lease, permit, or license issued by a federal agency at the time of the park's establishment would be allowed to continue that use until its term expired. Among those who benefited from this were individuals or companies who held patented mining claims, resort operators, and hydroelectric operators like Seattle City Light. Additionally, it granted the Federal Power Commission authority and jurisdiction in the recreation areas, removing the possible threat that the Park Service might interfere with the existing and future operations of hydropower projects. The legislation also protected the rights of Washington State, insuring it full control of Highway 20 as it passed through Ross Lake NRA, as well as assigning it a role in the management of fish and wildlife in the park complex. Although these and other aspects of the park's enabling legislation covered a range of topics, they were general and open to a variety of interpretations. Thus questions of congressional intent would never be far from any management decision.

Expectations for the new area's future, while hopeful, were mixed. Park supporters celebrated the establishment of the new park, yet they also believed that the Park Service would have to prove its commitment to wilderness preservation, particularly in light of some of the
development proposals advanced during the congressional hearings. Moreover, for groups like the North Cascades Conservation Council, the park's establishment was a partial victory, and many of its recommendations during the park campaign still needed to be carried out. Legislation for the addition of Mount Baker to the park, for example, appeared in 1969. One of the most important involved the protection of Glacier Peak from mining. John McPhee would capture their struggles in his travels with David Brower, and the book recounting that experience, *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1971), would become a primer in the wilderness movement. Traditional park visitors, those who came by car and wanted to camp, fish, and hike, for example, would have their own expectations, as would recreationists such as boaters, skiers, and hunters. Private landowners and lease holders, despite legislative provisions, also awaited the new Park Service regime with some degree of apprehension. Similarly, park opponents wondered what the new park and administration would bring to the gateway communities so long dependent on, and accustomed to, national forest management.

**3**

Aside from the specific items in the North Cascades Act, one could gain a sense of the parkland's management future in the kind of park area Congress had created. Encompassing some 670,000 acres, the park and recreation areas were conceived of as a park complex. On the one hand, this combination of park and recreation areas would satisfy the diverse interests and conflicts which had characterized the park battle. On the other hand, the concept was of more historic proportions. Few large natural areas became national parks after World War II. By that time, many of the nation's pristine natural wonders had already become parks, and as the bitter fight to create a park in the North Cascades demonstrated, those areas that remained outside of the park system faced great political odds against their conversion into national parks. Moreover, the complex was the first of its kind; one of the central purposes of the two recreation areas abutting North Cascades National Park was to provide accommodations for visitors to the park. In turn, the Park Service would resist pressures to develop visitor facilities in the national park itself. Rather than a traditional park, with roads and lodges and the congestion of automobiles occurring in parks like Yosemite, the agency could manage the new park for its primary purpose of wilderness.

North Cascades National Park's management direction would also reflect the times in which it was created -- a period of rapid expansion and a new environmental awareness in the national park system. North Cascades entered the park system during a period when sixty-nine new areas were added to the system. Only five of these, including North Cascades, were new national parks classified as natural areas. The park system's expansion was the product of Park Service diligence and its long-standing mission to protect and exhibit the best examples of nation's natural and cultural heritage. The system's expansion also benefited from the new public and congressional support for environmental protection and the funding created from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act for the purchase of federal and state parklands.

More importantly, the 1960s marked a turning point for resource management based on ecological principles in the national parks. Mission 66 improvements enabled more visitors to access parks without further damaging their natural environments after years of use. The wilderness movement and outside criticism from groups like the Sierra Club and National Parks Association (today's National Parks and Conservation Association) spurred the Park Service to reevaluate its approach to resource management. Critics like Stanley Cain decried the agency's lack of funding for scientific research and thus the absence of ecological studies to inform its management decisions. As a result, the Park Service and the Department of the Interior began to look seriously at ways to reinvigorate a biological approach to management developed by NPS wildlife biologist George M. Wright and the Wild Life Division in the 1930s. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, who considered environmental degradation
among the country's worst problems, initiated several studies to assess the status of ecological management in the national parks, and in turn reoriented Park Service policy in light of the new values embraced by the environmental movement.

The most influential of these studies was the so-called Leopold Report prepared by the Advisory Board on Wildlife Management in National Parks. Appointed by Udall, the advisory board was chaired by A. Starker Leopold, son of ecologist Aldo Leopold, and made up of leaders in fish and wildlife management with impressive credentials. As a primary goal, the report recommended that "the biotic associations within each park be maintained, or where necessary recreated, as nearly as possible in the condition that prevailed when the area was first visited by the white man." Park managers could, if given the necessary support for ecological research, strive to create "a reasonable illusion of primitive America." In other words, the advisory board recommended essentially maintaining, and when possible restoring, "natural park environments to the greatest extent possible." On May 2, 1963, Secretary Udall formally approved the advisory board's recommendations and directed that they become part of Park Service policy.

Other Park Service policies and federal laws arising in the 1960s also pointed to management of the new park for wilderness preservation. In 1964, Secretary Udall approved of Director Hartzog's new park categories of natural, recreational, and historical areas, so that each area would have its own management concept dedicated to the primary purpose of its establishment. Natural areas, then, were to be "managed for the perpetuation and restoration of their natural values," a statement which Udall reiterated with emphasis in 1969. Udall's statement, incorporated into a 1970 handbook on administrative policies, also underscored the importance of wilderness in park management. Initially, the Park Service considered the Wilderness Act of 1964 a distraction from its own preservation mission and moved reluctantly and slowly to designate wilderness areas within national parks and monuments. By this time, however, the agency had developed its own interpretation of the act, including a land classification scheme using the concept of a "wilderness threshold" or staging area on the periphery of wilderness to introduce visitors to the "mood and temper of the wild country" beyond.

During the park's first decade of existence, park officials worked to implement their management vision of the North Cascades as a wilderness park. Managing a new park -- up to this point protected largely in a wilderness state by the Forest Service -- brought opportunities not possible in other park areas. Here was the chance to begin anew, to plan before developing, and to implement ecological principles from the beginning rather than revising older, more tradition-bound policies which had caused environmental damage in older parks.

This section considers how the administration of North Cascades National Park Service Complex evolved from 1968 to 1978. Chapters look at the business of setting up the park's administration and park planning (carrying out legislative mandates), examine visitor use and development issues, and address park concessions. Other chapters examine wilderness recommendations and backcountry management, resource management, the controversy surrounding Seattle City Light and the High Ross Dam affair, and issues surrounding the management of Stehekin.
Chapter 2:
ADMINISTRATION

The North Cascades Act created a new park complex in October 1968, but the Park Service did not take over management of the region until January 1, 1969. The Park Service agreed to this date with the Forest Service to bring about an orderly transfer of national forest lands, records, and facilities for the new national park. The memorandum of agreement between the agencies, once engaged in a bitter dispute over the proposed park, worked effectively and gave the Park Service time to coordinate interim management of the region with the Forest Service for such things as recreation and firefighting, and set up its own operations. [1]

Two superintendents, Roger J. Contor and Lowell White, would guide the new park area through its first ten years. Roger Contor started as the first superintendent of North Cascades National Park in October 1968. Contor's background in wildlife biology, his experience working in natural area parks, and developing resource management plans and wilderness recommendations helped set the tone and direction for the park's management. Not yet forty years old and a fourteen-year veteran of the Park Service, Contor came to the park complex from Canyonlands National Park in Utah, where he was assistant superintendent. He considered the appointment the high point of his career. Prior to assuming his new job, Contor worked for several months in the Park Service's field office in Seattle, Washington, set up during the last stages of the park's establishment to aid Senator Jackson's legislative staff, conduct field work, and plan and promote the proposed park. His experience here would give him valuable insight into the new area's issues and needs.

Contor and other Park Service officials worked quickly to put the new park's administration into order in the months following establishment. They conceived of the park complex being managed as an interrelated whole with one superintendent and his staff, two districts -- the Skagit and Stehekin -- run by district managers who reported to the superintendent. (The Park Service borrowed this district manager concept from the Forest Service, but it had also been experimented with at Glacier National Park in the 1950s.) The agency also established the park's headquarters at Sedro Woolley, the Skagit District office at Marblemount, and the Stehekin District office at Chelan. By July 1969, the park's staff consisted of seven permanent and forty seasonal employees; the former were composed of career Park Service as well as former Forest Service employees, and the latter, maintenance workers and rangers, were drawn primarily from local communities. [2]

Selecting former Forest Service workers and local residents as employees of the new park complex served practical as well as political ends. Despite participating in field reconnaissance during the North Cascades Study Team's survey of the region and subsequent field work, the park managers knew little about the area under their care, and they gladly welcomed the national forest employees and relied on their experience in the early stages of management. In fact, two former Forest Service employees became the park's first acting district rangers. [3] On the other hand, hiring from local communities demonstrated the Park Service's interest in calming fears that a new park would destroy the local economy. It also
demonstrated the agency's interest in striking up good relations with its new neighbors.

Public relations played a significant role in the park's early management. The park campaign left many communities, businesses, and residents surrounding the North Cascades resentful, and some fearful of how the new parkland would affect them. Smoothing over relations was important then to the new park's success, since park managers would be replacing familiar faces in Forest Service uniforms and living among and working with those who may have opposed the park or, at the very least, were leery of the Park Service's new regulations and its overall management mission. Furthermore, public relations were important to Senator Henry Jackson and Representative Lloyd Meeds. These were the politicians responsible for bringing the park to Washington; it lay within their districts, and they had a vested interest in its success.

In late 1968 and 1969, Jackson and Meeds conducted what amounted to publicity tours with Park Service and Forest Service officials in tow, holding public meetings with community leaders in Bellingham, Sedro Woolley, Wenatchee, and Chelan. The meetings enabled the politicians and agency representatives to show how the Forest Service and Park Service had put aside their differences and were now cooperating to coordinate the management of the northern Cascades. The meetings also provided a venue for elected as well as federal officials to mend relations with locals, discuss national park management philosophies and plans, and assure them that the new park would be to their benefit -- no matter what horror stories they may have heard from park opponents, including the Forest Service, during the heated moments of the park campaign.

Economic incentives helped most to smooth relations. Meeds and Jackson stressed the advantages communities would experience as service centers for tourists and park administrators. But gateway communities only stood to gain from the new park, and the influence of a powerful senator like Jackson, if they worked to support rather than oppose it. Thus, at Jackson's recommendation, park advisory committees formed in Skagit and Chelan counties to help "coordinate county and community cooperation" with the new park's personnel and capitalize on the tourism the parkland would bring to their regions, especially once Highway 20 opened and the park was developed for visitors. Ironically, many of the park's opponents turned into some of its biggest boosters. "There is no longer a controversy," stated Dave G. McIntyre, chairman of the Skagit Valley Advisory Board. "North Cascades Park is here and we all know it's here to stay. For those of us who might have questioned the idea in the beginning it behooves us to work now for its full development....In a matter of a few years we will be showing the nation one of its most beautiful areas." [4]

The spoils of the park campaign, one might argue, went to the losers rather than the victors. Placing Park Service offices in Chelan, Stehekin, Marblemount, and Sedro Woolley served both practical as well as political purposes. In one respect, the selection of these sites represented a changing of the guard, from Forest Service to Park Service. In another, they reflected Jackson's influence, promises made or implied to local communities about their welfare after the park battle had ended. The location of Park Service offices on the west side of the park complex exemplifies this best. Neither of them lies within the complex's boundaries. The Marblemount Ranger Station was a logical place to locate a park office, for it was situated at the confluence of the Skagit and Cascade rivers, the two entryways by road into Ross Lake recreation area and the park. The ranger station, however, belonged to the Mount Baker National Forest, and the Forest Service did not necessarily have to turn it over to the Park Service, Roger Contor recalled, but they did at Jackson's request.

The location of the park complex's headquarters aroused more interest among the communities in the Skagit Valley. Marblemount, Concrete, and Sedro Woolley vied for the honor and related commercial benefits. Concrete, for example, wiped away sixty years of
cement dust after the Lone Star Cement Company phased out its operations and launched a beautification campaign, aimed partially at attracting the federal government as one of the town's new employers. Community leaders portrayed Concrete as the "natural" location for the park headquarters, close to the park but with enough services to support the Park Service operation.

Similarly, Sedro Woolley wanted to be the park's permanent headquarters and boosted itself in a similar light but with far more success. The Northern State Hospital was being shut down, a major source of revenue, it seems, for the city and the park headquarters might fill the void. The signs that the Park Service would choose Sedro Woolley were good. In 1968, the Park Service made Sedro Woolley the new park's temporary headquarters. As Superintendent Contor noted, the city was the "best immediate compromise" in the agency's search for an "ideal' headquarters location." It was the largest city near the park, accessible year round, and close to major highways. In addition, Sedro Woolley was conveniently situated near sources of supplies, repairs, and services. Moreover, at some sixty miles from the park complex, it was far enough from any one section of the park "so that all districts receive equal attention." Politics also worked in Sedro Woolley's favor. The city had the support of Governor Daniel J. Evans and Senator Jackson. The city commanded their attention, it seems, not only because of the hospital's closure, but also because the Skagit Corporation, the area's largest industry, was located there. Thus, in December 1970, Senator Jackson and Congressman Meeds informed Mayor William O. Pearson (who had vehemently opposed the park) that Sedro Woolley had been chosen as the park's permanent headquarters.

Governor Daniel J. Evans also participated in the healing process after the park's establishment. Evans decided that, despite the divisive nature of the park campaign, the state would back the new park and seek to enhance its management as well as the entire region around it. To this end, he created the North Cascades Reconnaissance Task Force in December 1968. The task force served as a forum for the future development and protection of the North Cascades, especially the access corridors to the new national park and recreation areas. In this respect, it offered a common ground for government agencies -- federal, state, and county -- where plans could be addressed and discussed, and where conflicts could be aired and hopefully resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Moreover, the task force illustrates the kind of complex management environment Park Service officials worked within; it suggests the diversity of management concerns and interest in the new parkland which park managers encountered, and stood to benefit from, as they began to shape the park complex. One might think of it as Washington State's version of the United Nations for the management of the North Cascades.

The direction the new park's management would take was outlined in three planning documents: a master plan, wilderness recommendations, and a Park Service-Forest Service joint management and development plan for the northern Cascades. Together they would guide the park for the foreseeable future, establishing in the process its management mission and satisfying its legislative mandates.

Completed in 1970, the complex's master plan, a rather slim and quickly produced document compared to contemporary plans, gave a broad and conceptual treatment of the new parkland's mission and management objectives. Simply put, the preservation of the park's "spectacular wilderness qualities" would inform all development and management decisions, and the two recreation areas would be managed and developed for "their great recreational potential, and as wilderness thresholds." Taken together, the park and recreation areas were united in the overall management of the park complex, the central purpose of which was to "offer to the American people a wealth of scenic, scientific, and recreational opportunities in
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One of the more significant management considerations for the new parkland was its proximity to a large urban population. At the time, nearly 75 percent of Washington's population resided in the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan region. This meant that some 2 million people were within a two-hour drive of the Skagit Valley and the heart of the park complex. Historically, residents from those cities had formed the majority of visitors to the state's oldest national park, Mount Rainier. The area could also expect to draw visitors from an even wider range of cities in the Puget Sound, Oregon, California, and British Columbia because Interstate 5 placed these urban centers within "reasonable driving distance" of the North Cascades.

A key element in that attraction would be Highway 20. Scheduled for completion in 1972, it would "revolutionize" vacation travel patterns, linking the heart of the new parkland with the interstate system and other state highways on the east and west sides of the state. Thus the Park Service expected that the park complex would be used extensively by day or weekend visitors and perhaps to a lesser extent by those seeking out lengthier encounters with the park's primary feature and most distinctive attraction, wilderness. The park complex was, as the master plan stated, the key link in an extensive system of recreational lands in both Canada and northern Washington, the majority of which were wilderness.

Ironically, the new park complex, despite its wilderness mission, derived its uniqueness from its close relationship with "major urban and industrial centers," a situation that "exists nowhere else in the United States." In other words, North Cascades was in the orbit of an expansive and influential urban-industrial population which would increasingly seek out unspoiled lands and recreational developments within its reach. Managing the new park as a wilderness and recreational complex would not occur separate from but in direct relationship with this urban-industrial region. As the plan concluded, traditional national park management concerns would be prevalent, for "the importance of this resource to the Nation and the region makes it essential that all who wish to experience its features be able to -- if only briefly, and from a distance." [9]

The park's wilderness recommendations and joint management plan also answered questions about how the park would be administered. First, the wilderness recommendations, produced around the same time as the master plan, called for preserving approximately 516,000 acres of the park complex as wilderness. With the exception of roads, private lands, and developed areas, the majority of wilderness would encompass land within the two park units and a much smaller amount in the recreation areas. With this review, the Park Service demonstrated its commitment to wilderness protection. The wilderness of the North Cascades, Superintendent Contor noted, was "superb." It possessed "the classic attributes of rugged high mountain character, glaciers, alpine lakes, rivers and streams, alpine forests and meadows, native wildlife and a sense of remoteness." This "wilderness quality" was central to the creation of the national park, and its "preservation will be the keystone in the use and management of the areas." [10]

Second, the coordinated management plan for public-use facilities with the Forest Service, drafted by 1970 but not officially released until 1974, rounded out the administration of the new parkland and its relationship with the three national forests (Mt. Baker, Okanogan, and Wenatchee) surrounding it. Congress had forced the two rival agencies to cooperate for political reasons; the park and recreation area boundaries followed the lines of least resistance. They excluded, for example, coveted commercial stands of timber in many of the approach valleys that led to the new park, such as along the Cascade River. The boundaries left out the Granite Creek section of Highway 20 to satisfy the Forest Service and the ski industry lobby, primarily. The revision omitted, as park advocates argued, a scenic entryway.
into the park complex. In this respect, the park complex was one piece of a larger wilderness and recreation area puzzle that included national forest lands. Thus, it behooved both agencies to coordinate the management of adjacent lands for financial as well as practical reasons.

The interagency planning teams, led by Neal Butterfield for the Park Service and Harold Chriswell for the Forest Service, covered a wide range of concerns -- from the use, transfer, and maintenance of shared trails, roads, and parking areas to the joint operation of visitor information centers and ranger stations. The final plan, an amalgam of both agencies' separate management plans for their respective areas, identified cooperative programs covering fire management, wilderness and backcountry management, visitor information services, the development and maintenance of roads and trails, and general assistance in search and rescue operations, law enforcement, use regulations, permits, and sign programs. The agencies also identified geographical areas of common interest where they would carry out some cooperative ventures, such as the North Fork of the Nooksack River, the Baker Lake area, the Highway 20 corridor, the Cascade River Road and Cascade Pass areas, and Lake Chelan. [12]

Three places had high priority for early development. One was at Fields Point on the south shore of Lake Chelan. The Forest Service would acquire Fields Point and create a visitor information and docking facility staffed by the Forest Service and Park Service. Another was at Early Winters where the Forest Service would construct a visitor information station to serve as the eastern portal to the North Cascades on Highway 20. And the third was at Concrete, where the Park Service would install a visitor contact station as the western portal to the park complex. Though early plans called for staffing these latter two facilities with park and forest employees, the final plan omitted this reference and implied that they would simply complement each other.

Recommendations for ski-area developments were noticeably missing from the plan, although their proposed development near the park, in the recreation areas or adjacent national forest lands, had been one of the main reasons behind the joint study. Roger Contor reported that the team had trouble finding any sites for a ski area close to Highway 20. The only option within the park complex was Ruby Mountain, and team members ruled it out because its slopes were too steep, thus ending the threat of ski area development in the new parkland. [13] The Forest Service's winter sports study expressed little optimism about developing ski areas in the future, too. The Forest Service looked at thirteen sites on three national forests and concluded that only one, Sandy Butte near Winthrop, possessed the "necessary physical characteristics for ski development." The agency, accordingly, recommended that the ski-area industry concentrate on developing existing sites, like Mt. Baker, Stevens Pass, and Crystal Mountain. It also recommended that the operators should improve the physical appearance of these and other ski areas through natural landscaping in order to maintain a scenic appearance year round. [14]

In what seemed to be an uncharacteristic emphasis on scenic preservation, the Forest Service appeared to be taking some bold steps compared to past management practices that would ultimately benefit the park's protection. In its plan, the agency expressed that its guiding philosophy was "the preservation of outstanding scenic resources, the careful management for natural beauty of the corridors and approach routes to the scenic core of the North Cascades, and the recreational development of the area to provide a maximum of diversified recreational opportunities." Hence, the report proposed to establish three roadless areas and nine scenic areas, totaling some 800,000 acres, around the perimeter of the park complex. [15]

The joint study also shed some light on the nature of Forest Service and Park Service

relations in the wake of the park's establishment. Thrown together by law, park and forest officials put aside their past differences and entered, at least officially, into a new "spirit of cooperation." Superintendent Contor expressed a genuine respect and admiration for Chriswell; he and his staff worked closely with the forest supervisor during the transition phase of the park's early management. [16]

The planning process, however, revealed some internal struggles within the Forest Service following the loss of the North Cascades. Chriswell believed that his agency had lost the North Cascades because "We sat on our hands," and failed to give the public a clear understanding of how the Forest Service would manage the range for outdoor recreation. Indecision plagued the agency. "We find ourselves in a serious predicament with the public," he told the regional forester. "They have been anxiously watching what we are going to do with this scenic mountain area (the great beauty of the North Cascades does not stop at the National Park boundary) as a result of the National Park Act." The forest supervisor urged his superior to approve the new recreation plan -- or make some firm decision on the direction the forests would move in. Otherwise, strained relations with both industry representatives and preservation groups would grow. The former had already criticized the agency's plan for reducing timber production and accused the bureau of acting "like the Park Service," while the latter had protested that the agency was not guaranteeing enough scenic protection. Without a strong stand, the Forest Service stood to lose perhaps more land, as the recent Mount Baker legislation suggested. Chriswell's emphasis on scenic protection could be interpreted as an attempt to redirect the management of the national forests around the park complex to more closely align with outdoor recreation interests and Park Service principles. [17]
Chapter 3:
VISITOR USE AND DEVELOPMENT

By the time North Cascades National Park had been created, national parks were a century old, yet the tensions between preservation and development, at the heart of many philosophical arguments on the purpose and management of parks, continued unabated. Traditionally, the Park Service had modified parks like Yosemite and Mount Rainier to accommodate tourists, providing roads, campgrounds, and other conveniences. These developments increased the popularity of national parks, especially in the first several decades of this century, but they did so at the expense of wilderness preservation. Moreover, the Park Service faced a different situation in its development plans for the North Cascades. The agency inherited a physical plant developed by the Forest Service. True, modifications were needed to meet park standards, yet at the same time, managers had a system of trails, roads, campgrounds, front and backcountry ranger stations, waterfront recreation facilities, to name a few things, at their disposal. However advantageous this situation was, park managers encountered controversy with their proposals. They still found themselves pressured by groups interested in different, and often opposing, uses. As was often the case, the agency tried to find a middle ground between the two, but like shooting at a moving target, the results were mixed.

As the debates over the establishment of North Cascades demonstrated, Park Service officials and a large sector of the public had concluded that the answer to overcrowded parks and imperiled natural resources was not the development of more roads and parking lots but limitations on, or alternative forms of, visitor access. By the early 1970s, for example, Yosemite closed off the eastern third of the valley and the Mariposa Grove to automobiles, offering instead access to both areas by public transportation, and was considering closing all of the valley to cars. Around the same time proposals for yet another tramway to Glacier Point surfaced, as a way to relieve pressure from crowds in the valley, setting off a firestorm of protest. Though the proposal was defeated, it suggested that there were no simple solutions to decades-old management traditions, only redirection. [1] Even in a park dedicated to wilderness like North Cascades, Park Service officials confronted similar problems as they set out to develop the complex for visitor use.

Park managers believed that concentrating visitor services in the recreation areas would solve the development problems experienced in other national parks. In one of his first discussions about the new parkland, Superintendent Contor related this management concept:

If the national economy permits, we hope to pursue an aggressive development program in the next five years. The result of this will be attractive public lodges, visitor centers, campgrounds, boating facilities and transportation facilities centered primarily in the two recreation areas. At the periphery of the park will be road and tramway access -- hopefully with associated skiing opportunities -- bringing all types of visitors to the threshold of the wilderness. The core of the two park units will remain in a wilderness state. It is not likely that we can do
anything in the way of manmade developments which could 'improve' the character of that great wilderness. We only want to introduce it to the public, to bring them to the doorway in a comfortable and pleasant manner. [2]

The wilderness concept may have been the main focus of management, but traditional development concerns and park uses were on the minds of many park boosters, politicians, and Park Service officials. More important, centering development in the recreation areas -- or wilderness thresholds -- merely transferred rather than eliminated tensions between preservation and use. As one reporter noted, "the park's destiny cannot be realized until both the highway and mass-recreation facilities are completed." Otherwise, a wilderness park inaccessible to the American people "is only an exercise in futility." [3]

The park's 1970 master plan proposed the most traditional park experiences for the Skagit Valley, lying within Ross Lake NRA. Here the majority of developments would be oriented toward automobiles. Once Highway 20 opened, windshield tourists would drive through the narrow valley surrounded by rugged terrain and view the park's scenery from their cars. For this reason, the agency planned to improve upon existing Forest Service facilities and install new conveniences for tourists along the highway. As we have already seen, both the Forest Service and the Park Service planned visitor centers on the eastern and western entrances to the new parkland. Moreover, from the highway, visitors would find access to Ross, Diablo, and Gorge lakes, ascend to the high country in one or more tramways for a territorial view of the peaks, and take advantage of a series of overnight accommodations, such as campgrounds, hostels, and lodges. In addition, to the Skagit Valley, the plan proposed expanded facilities for boating and camping (and a possible ferry terminal) at Hozomeen at the north end of Ross Lake.

On the other hand, visitors to the Stehekin Valley in Lake Chelan NRA would have a less traditional park experience, one not as oriented toward the automobile, since no outside road reached Stehekin. The emphasis would focus more on the slower pace of valley life and the region's impressive scenery. In the Stehekin River country, all developments should, the plan stated, "center around its isolated, relaxed, 'away-from-it-all' character and its unique position as a wilderness threshold."

The master plan proposed developments for two areas outside the recreation areas as well. These, like the Skagit, would also focus on windshield tourists. One area was the Nooksack Cirque near Mount Shuksan in the far northwestern corner of the national park. Superintendent Contor was particularly fond of this proposal, for it would have brought motorists within easy reach of, but not directly to, one of the park's most significant resources: glaciers. Here the agency could interpret the park's glacial and geologic story in dramatic scale with the Nooksack Glacier pushing down the slopes of Mount Shuksan in the foreground. The other area was the popular Cascade Pass. It is one of the few places where visitors could drive close to the park's scenic high country and reach the pass after a relatively short hike or ride on horseback. Because of this easy access, it is one of the most popular entrances into the park and, for that reason, the sensitive alpine environment suffered serious impacts. Rather than expand developments here, the agency proposed its first limitations on the use of the park.

In June 1970, the Park Service held public hearings on its master plan, including its wilderness recommendations. In general, preservationists "praised" the National Park Service for producing "one of the best plans" they had seen. It recognized the "truly superb wilderness character" of the park complex, and displayed a progressive "vision and willingness" in its decision to designate sections of the recreation areas as wilderness. Overall, it demonstrated the agency's willingness to place biological resources above hurried development -- and to study the potential impacts its plans could have on the region's
Not surprisingly, preservationists, who made up the majority of those who attended the hearings, reacted strongly to any potential threats to wilderness protection. The most controversial items that emerged out of the hearings had their roots in the study team's proposals, especially those offered by Park Service Director George B. Hartzog, Jr., regarding access. Initial plans had called for building four aerial trams at Price Lake, Arctic Creek, Colonial Peak, and Ruby Mountain. Preservationists fought to have them removed from the park's final plan, and only two were retained in the final plan, one for Arctic Creek, the other for Ruby Mountain. This latter tramway received the greatest emphasis, since its terminal would be the most developed site in the complex, serving visitors along Highway 20 with facilities for eating, parking, and interpretation.

The question of whether tramways should be built in the park and recreation areas touched upon important issues confronting national parks in the late 1960s and 1970s -- overcrowding by automobiles -- for which North Cascades became an important testing ground for Park Service policy. During the congressional hearings on North Cascades, Hartzog stated that both the nation and national parks were at a crossroads in their relationship with the automobile. In the past, "we have taken the view that access to the great national parks should be by roads," but with a rising population and thus rising visitation, "we are simply strangling to death in roads," and "I don't believe that we can continue to build roads to take care of the people who want to see these parks by automobile." The historic concept of automobiles as one of the primary means of seeing a national park had become "obsolete," and there must be "some other access or we will destroy the very values that we are trying to save." [5]

In Hartzog's mind, substituting tramways for roads in the North Cascades would protect its wilderness values, much in the same way his predecessor, Conrad Wirth, justified the construction of roads during the Mission 66 program. The idea of installing tramways in national parks was not new; various proposals had arisen during the first decades of the Park Service's existence. This was the first time, however, that the agency considered them appropriate -- as "a substitute for automobiles and a highway." Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall supported Hartzog's proposal, for example, as a serious "attempt to solve some of the old [park access] problems in a new way and to show that we can provide transportation in parks by means other than the automobiles." Nevertheless, the tramway concept appalled park supporters who saw trams as a way of defacing the very natural wonders they were supposed to be bringing visitors to see. "We had one proposed on top of the Grand Teton," Senator Clifford Hansen stated. "Everybody in Wyoming...was up in arms about it." Were the Park Service to reverse its policy and build tramways in a park, he concluded, where would it stop? [6]

Hartzog and Udall assured members of Congress that the tramways would be unique to the North Cascades. They were a substitute for roads but not for the traditional kind of national park experience -- the ability to have a territorial view of the park landscape. Park Service policy, Udall stated, has not been to keep machines out of national parks," since most national parks have roads. Furthermore, those roads led motorists to the rim of the Grand Canyon or through the ethereal heights of Rocky Mountain. Nothing like this was available to visitors to North Cascades without a tramway. Unlike the other national parks, Udall noted, "you really have to get up high." Building a road to a peak would have been exceedingly difficult and expensive from an engineering standpoint and, more importantly, environmentally costly. Even the contemplated road down Ross Lake, Hartzog declared, would have desecrated the range's alpine scenery, for it would have blasted away so much of the narrow canyon that it would have looked like any interstate highway. [7]

The debate over automobiles and trams introduced a new direction in how Americans visited
and experienced national parks, and it called into question the "basic park philosophy" of
Stephen Mather, the Park Service's first director. Mather, who had promoted road building
and automobile use in the national parks, helped shape a vision of parks as large, wilderness
settings in which people were welcome and certain modern conveniences, such as roads and
cars, were allowed as long as the majority of the park landscape was preserved in its natural
state. At a time when traffic jams and air pollution made roads and cars increasingly out of
fashion in American life, Secretary Udall reflected on the Mather era as a time when the
agency was "a bit too addicted to the idea of roads." In a period of rising ecological
awareness, the Park Service was already considering ways to limit automobile access to
national parks, such as Yosemite, as a way to protect biotic resources. North Cascades, Udall
concluded, offered a park where "we can plan from the beginning." Were Yosemite coming
into the park system today, we might not "plan to put a road right in the heart of the valley.
We might very well decide that we would have people park at the edge of the park and have
electric trains run into the heart of the valley and keep the automobile with all its noises and
odors out of the center of the national park." [8]

As further justification for building tramways, Director Hartzog suggested that his agency
would use design principles similar to those employed by Park Service landscape architects
to build park roads in harmony with the natural landscape during the 1920s and 1930s. That
is, he envisioned tramways as roads by another name. Typically, ski lifts or European
tramways, such as those found in Switzerland or Germany, were built in wide-open spaces
with high tension cables cutting a swath through a forest or across the horizon like power
lines. Instead, Park Service planners had carefully chosen the routes of the trams for the
North Cascades to screen them from the park's wilderness high country or popular hiking
trails up the Big and Little Beaver creeks adjacent to Ross Lake. The Arctic Creek tram, for
example, would fit inside the valley's "compressed and compact" terrain, and as Udall
elaborated, the agency planned to blend and hide it in "the natural setting to the highest
degree possible." Like park roads, tramways would provide visitors the "magnificent views"
of the North Cascades and conform to topographical features as much as possible.
Seemingly, they, too, would not intrude on the park landscape. [9]

The debate over tramways struck at the heart of wilderness protection for the nation's parks
as well as North Cascades. The question on the minds of many was: What kind of wilderness
experience should parks provide? Should wilderness be accessible or remote? Legal scholar
Joseph L. Sax argues that national parks should promote "reflective recreation" in a setting of
unmodified wilderness, and thus preserve as much wilderness as possible. "To make
wilderness areas more accessible by installing roads there, he asserts, "would put the visitor in
the wilderness without exposing him to it, and would also intrude upon others' opportunities
to experience challenging wild areas." Tramways should not provide a convenient solution
for most visitors who wanted a wilderness experience but neither had the time nor the ability
to hike into a park's backcountry. Transporting them to the top of a mountain might give
them a truly "wilderness threshold experience," but "Peering into the wilderness from a
tramway station, however, is not a wilderness experience; the sense of wilderness is not
achieved by standing at its threshold, but by engaging it from within." Visitors should have
the choice whether to experience true wilderness, which tramways or similar devices only
"falsified or domesticated." [10]

There were no simple answers to the problem of access and wilderness protection.
Preservationists, led by the North Cascades Conservation Council (N3C), objected to the
tramways in North Cascades for reasons advanced by Sax. They were willing, however, to
accept the Ruby Mountain tram -- only after extensive environmental analysis -- because it
lay entirely inside Ross Lake NRA, and would not invade or infringe upon the park's
wilderness setting. Ironically, N3C, with the endorsement of the Sierra Club, Federation of
Western Outdoor Clubs, and National Parks Association, had earlier suggested constructing a
spur road from Highway 20 to the top of Little Jack Mountain as an alternate "high-vista-point." Finally, conservationists were not always united in their views on tramways and access. Ira L. Spring, noted outdoor photographer, proposed Colonial Peak to the Park Service as a "very exciting possibility" for a tramway," one "as spectacular as any ride in the Alps." And renowned mountaineer James Whittaker heartily approved of tramways in North Cascades as one of the best ways to view the range's scenic magnificence.

Though retained in the park's master plan, the Ruby Mountain tram was, like many controversial topics, debated for years. Both Superintendent Contor and his successor, Lowell White, supported the project; they believed the views that the tramway would offer were superlative. The congressional delegation of Senator Jackson and Representative Meeds also pressed for the project. Meeds was especially active in seeking to develop the park for mass recreation. Even though North Cascades was a wilderness park, Meeds wanted its management to be "pro people."[12]

The Ruby Mountain tram would be a significant step in this direction, particularly when Highway 20 opened in 1972 bringing hundreds of thousands of visitors to the upper Skagit Valley. Meeds feared, of course, that they would have no place to stop and nothing to see, and thus the new park would be a political failure. But in the early 1970s, the cost of building the tram and related facilities -- from planning to finished product -- hovered near $8 million, a significant sum that delayed the project. In addition, upper level officials within the Park Service were uncomfortable with the project and did not support it. Although indebted to Meeds as a political ally, the agency apparently did not want to fight a political battle with environmentalists over the tramway's design and construction. In addition, Park Service managers were ill at ease with the environmental damage that the tramway's installation would cause. They also knew that once built the tramway would create more development pressures, since skiers would pressure the agency to develop a ski area on Ruby Mountain. In the meantime, other construction programs both in the park and throughout the service were given higher priority, primarily to satisfy basic visitor needs and special initiatives. By the late 1970s, estimates for the tramway and related facilities had inflated to more than $13 million, forecasting still more delays. Finally, when Meeds left office late in the decade, the tramway project lost its biggest supporter and suffered a crippling blow. [13]

Another controversial development project was proposed for Roland Point on the eastern shore of Ross Lake, several miles north of Ross Dam. Like the Ruby Mountain tram, Congressman Meeds pressured the Park Service to complete this large-scale waterfront development, which included an overnight lodge, marina, and campground, to serve the multitude of automobile tourists traveling through the park complex along Highway 20. More than the Ruby Mountain tram, park planners believed, Roland Point would be the major development complex connected to the highway for windshield tourists.

Meeds saw Roland Point as critical to the park's success. It would open the southern end of Ross Lake to cars and boats; otherwise visitors could only reach the lake from the north over a long, unsurfaced road from Hope, British Columbia, to Hozomeen. With road access from Highway 20, the Roland Point development would help fulfill Meed's vision of the park complex as "people friendly." It would make Ross Lake NRA a model of visitor dispersion; here people would leave their cars behind and head off onto the lake to boat, fish, hike, camp, or hunt. Roland Point would be a key point in the concept of the recreation area as a wilderness threshold. Visitors could explore the lake and surrounding environment with a modicum of solitude, freedom, and comfort, using shoreline campgrounds, backcountry hostels, and possibly the Arctic Creek tramway. A passenger ferry would also operate on the lake, carrying visitors from north to south, for example, in place of a road along the lake's eastern shore.
Preservationists objected to the Roland Point development because it emphasized automobiles and power boats. A high concentration of cars and motor boats, they contended, would ruin the serenity of the fjord-like lake (no matter that it was man made) damage the fisheries, and pollute the aquatic environment with gas, oil, and sewage. Groups like N3C supported using Roland Point for camping but wanted it accessible by water and trail only.

The park's master plan retained the Roland Point access road, despite these protests, primarily to appease Meeds. However, just as in the case of the Ruby Mountain tram, the Park Service seemed reluctant to press forward with the project. The critical element in the Roland Point development, as with so many park developments, came down to the construction of a road: the five-mile access road from Highway 20. The spur road would have created a long, ugly scar across the southern and western slopes of Jack Mountain, a scar visible from both the lake and the highway. Environmental assessments determined that the road's construction would have a significant impact on the natural landscape as well, causing serious erosion in the steep terrain. Finally, construction costs were substantial, ranging from $6.5 million to $10 million.

Initially, Meeds lobbied the Park Service to build the road and request the funding. He charged that the agency was dragging its feet and that it would be ill-prepared for the onslaught of tourists after Highway 20 was completed in the fall of 1972. As Meeds wrote to Director Hartzog in March 1972, "We've known all along that when the highway opens this September, it will be only a short time before the North Cascades becomes very heavily visited. And where are the people going to go?" Without the development at Roland Point, the congressman anticipated that sightseers would be frustrated and resentful. More important, he would bear the brunt of their dissatisfaction.

Eventually, park managers convinced him that the road to and development of Roland Point was not feasible at the time. Similar to other plans, the Roland Point facility had been proposed prior to detailed studies and in advance of environmental assessments and environmental impact statements required by the recently enacted National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Another factor working against the development of Roland Point was Seattle City Light's proposal to raise the height of Ross Dam and subsequently the level of Ross Lake by some 125 feet. Were this to happen, it would have inundated most of Roland Point, and because the dam project turned into an international environmental issue with Canada, dragging on from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, the Park Service shelved its plans for Roland Point indefinitely.

Nevertheless, the central issue of visitor services still needed to be addressed. The crux of the problem was drive-in campgrounds along the highway corridor in the upper Skagit Valley. At the time the North Cascades Highway opened, there were less than eighty campsites available in the recreation area. Visitation climbed from 250,000 people before the highway opened to 750,000 afterwards. "The facilities to accommodate more than a handful of the people who want to visit this magnificent park just don't exist," Meeds observed. "Unless you can afford a boat or you are hardy enough to carry a pack, there is almost no camping space available for you in the North Cascades National Park."

Early on park planners estimated that there would be approximately 800 campsites in the upper Skagit Valley, half of them at Roland Point. (After further study, planners trimmed this figure to 140 sites.) The others were to be found at Colonial Creek and at a campground planned for Newhalem. The loss of Roland Point forced the Park Service to make up the difference by enlarging the proposed Newhalem campground from 250 to 300 sites, adding 200 sites on the north side of the highway at Goodell Creek, and increasing the number of sites at Colonial Creek to 150. There was also the possibility of building 100 sites on Diablo...
Lake, east of the Diablo Lake Resort. [19]

By the mid-1970s, with Meeds leading the charge, the park had made significant advances in campground expansion. Colonial Creek, for example, had been enlarged to more than 160 campsites and included boat launching facilities and other visitor services. Hozomeen campground, though outside the Skagit corridor, was doubled in size (to 72 sites). But this still only brought the drive-in capacity to just over 230 sites. [20]

A major source of the problem had been the new park's modest appropriations for construction programs. This situation had distressed, naturally, both Meeds and Jackson and thus the Park Service. In addition, some of the problem stemmed from the fact that many of the park's projects were still in the planning stages, and that some of the park's more controversial proposals also came with high price tags. Nevertheless, Meeds put some of the blame on the Park Service. In 1975, while requesting $2.5 million for the Newhalem campground before the House Interior Subcommittee, he noted that North Cascades ranked seventh out of thirty-eight major parks with serious development backlogs. "Parks are for people," he stated, "and I am disturbed at the Park Service's reluctance to recognize this." By the late 1970s, park managers seem to have come around to Meeds' way of thinking and identified the development of the Newhalem campground as the park's "highest priority," expanding its capacity to 450 sites. [21]

Improving campground facilities at Colonial Creek and Newhalem marked an important achievement in visitor services and development during the park complex's first decade. As Superintendent Lowell White remembered, they released political pressure from developing Roland Point. There were, of course, other improvements being carried out to accommodate increased numbers of visitors. At the Stehekin Landing, for example, park managers barged out old, abandoned cars, constructed a new sewage and water system, provided for (or assisted in) garbage removal, and carried out renovations to the docks. Other improvements, such as a ranger station at Hozomeen, were accomplished, and water quality projects for this site, as well as Marblemount and Colonial Creek, were in the planning stages. As for Ross Lake, the High Ross controversy limited, or put on hold, many improvements except for basic maintenance of shoreline campgrounds, trails, docks, and other recreational developments inherited from the Forest Service. [22]

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Roads

Issues revolving around tramways and campgrounds illustrated one of the challenges of managing North Cascades as a wilderness park -- when it came to access and services, traditional national park developments prevailed. Rather than walk, visitors still expected some mechanical means of conveyance. Hence roads still played a central role in experiencing the park.

Highway 20. Highway 20 lies entirely within Ross Lake NRA, but nevertheless for most park visitors, this is their park -- and wilderness -- experience. They follow the Skagit River past City Light's dams, with their chain of emerald-green lakes: the company towns of Newhalem and Diablo, with their well-kept homes, trim lawns, playgrounds, and picnic tables. Nature along this corridor is more engineered than truly "wild." Most visitors, however, never differentiate between the recreation area and national park, never fully realizing where one ends and the other begins. Off in the distance and ethereal heights, sharped-edge peaks, snowfields, and glaciers enter the viewshed of drivers, making this a truly windshield wilderness.
The history of the highway's construction is a colorful and dramatic story, nearly a century in the making, but the essential theme is how the Park Service approached its management. As we have seen already, the park's master plan focused on developing the majority of the park's visitor services along the highway corridor. Yet the agency did not own the road. As part of the park complex's creation, law makers had allowed the state to retain control of the road's construction and maintenance. The state's main concern had been any possible limitations the Park Service might impose on the highway, especially since at the time the park was being created the road was not yet finished. Specifically, the state was concerned that the Park Service might limit, or impose fees for, commercial traffic on the highway itself. At the time, the highway's main purpose had been to tie the eastern and western portions of the state into a closer economic relationship as well as open up more forest lands to timber harvesting. Once the highway opened, however, tourism soon became the road's greatest boon. Symbolizing this was the state's decision to change the name from the North-Cross State Highway to the North Cascades Highway.

Like so much of the park complex's management history, any involvement in managing the highway involved other agencies or local governments in some form of cooperative management. In 1968, the Park Service issued a special use permit to Washington State for the highway crossing federal land (basically transferring the one originally issued by the Forest Service.) The Park Service also entered into a memorandum of understanding with the highway department that would outline the park's relationship with that state agency, namely in such matters as establishing the right-of-way boundaries. [23]

But park managers also asserted their role in the highway's completion and future management through their involvement with the governor's North Cascades Reconnaissance Task Force. Superintendent Contor, for example, was able to have his agency's concerns recognized regarding the highway's alignment in order to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the drive. This included adding several viewpoints and pullouts at strategic locations along the highway -- Gorge Dam, Gorge Falls, and Diablo Lake overlooks among them. In addition, Contor voiced his agency's concern with maintaining the aesthetics of the drive leading into the park complex. Mainly, Contor recalled, "we wanted to avoid creating another West Yellowstone or Estes Park" in gateway towns like Winthrop or Marblemount. And they did. The task force reached an agreement with Okanogan and Skagit county commissioners, who agreed to limit commercial development -- at least along the highway corridor near the entrances of the park complex -- by zoning for residential, agricultural, and recreational uses. [24] The fact that the road was closed in the long winter months of the North Cascades helped the agency prevent the new park area from being over used and kept its approaches from being commercially developed.

Cascade River Road. Highway 20 may have run through or between the northern and southern halves of North Cascades National Park, but there were few roads that actually ran into it. Short, dirt roads led up Damnation and Newhalem creeks from Highway 20; however, they offered few impressive views of the park's alpine grandeur. The only road that did was the Cascade River Road. This unsurfaced, twenty-five-mile road led from Marblemount along the Cascade River to Mineral Park. There it forked; one section turned to follow the North Fork of the Cascade River and extended some five miles inside the park's boundary to the foot of Cascade Pass. Here motorists, daring the narrow, tortuous old mining road, could view the range's scenic charms -- its awesome relief, chiseled peaks, and hanging glaciers. A hike or ride on horseback up a trail several miles would provide a park visitor an even closer encounter with this subalpine country. One could ascend to the pass and drop down into the Stehekin River Valley. In the distant and recent past, this route had been known as "the way through," one of the easier passes through the rugged northern Cascades. Used by native peoples, it was coveted by miners, boosters, and highway builders as the natural route for a transCascade road, for it would unlock the mineral and scenic riches of the range. For various
reasons, those dreams were never realized, and the establishment of North Cascades as a national park ended further plans to join the Cascade River Road with the Stehekin Valley Road.

The road and river valley were also at the center of controversy over access to the new park. During the park campaign, preservationists had argued for including the Cascade River Valley in the park to protect its scenic and wilderness qualities from destructive forest management practices. Based on Forest Service plans to manage the area for its natural beauty, politicians left the valley out of the park. After the park was established, however, the main point of contention became the protection of the sensitive, subalpine environment of Cascade Pass and nearby lakes.

The pass, easily accessible to millions of urban denizens of the Puget Sound, helped popularize the otherwise hidden wonders of the North Cascades. At peak periods in the summer, it was estimated that some one thousand people a day drove to the foot of the pass. [25] The problem, of course, was that this sensitive terrain suffered serious damage from overuse, and the Park Service found itself in a familiar paradox of preservation and use. By controlling access, park managers could restore the natural environment -- revegetate, remove campgrounds, renovate trails, ban or limit horses, and impose day-use policies. Yet they also had to satisfy a traveling public who were accustomed to automobile access to national parks, an expectation rendered all the more serious given the uniqueness of Cascade Pass.

The park's first master plan declared that the Park Service would limit access to Cascade Pass, especially once Highway 20 opened, so its fragile environment could heal. In 1974, park managers followed through on this statement with the Cascade Pass plan to help repair the area's natural conditions. An important part of this plan was controlling access to the pass itself by closing the Cascade River Road just beyond the North Fork Bridge, building a parking lot here, and implementing a shuttle service to transport visitors for most of the remaining distance, approximately three-and-a-half miles. The shuttle buses would stop near the park boundary (at the Valuemine access road), leaving less than a mile (.7 miles) for visitors to walk to road's end and the trail head to the pass. The former parking lot at the end of the road would be converted into a small campground. [26]

Getting visitors out of their cars and into closer contact with the natural world was a trend in park management during the mid-1970s. As the plan's authors noted, until the shuttle system was operational, visitors would have "the privilege of walking this very scenic" section of road. But it was this aspect of the plan to which most people objected. At the public meetings held in Mount Vernon and Marblemount in the spring of 1974, for example, those in attendance protested restrictions on their "equal access rights," a perspective that resonated throughout the history of national parks and the belief that they belong to the American people, all of whom have a right to see them. [27]

Those who protested the road's closure represented a cross-section of the general public who, for one reason or another, were not endeared to public transportation. Climbers did not like the shuttle system because its schedule might inconvenience them. More important, others noted that the road offered the only vehicle access to one of the park's most scenic places. To close it would unfairly deny those who could not easily walk the last section of road -- the elderly, physically challenged, and families with young children. Though it was only a short distance to walk, the road here was rugged and steep, and the most spectacular view of the pass and surrounding alpine scenery was at the end of the road. [28]

Other factors worked against the road's closure as well and typified some of the problems managers confronted in the new park. The Park Service inherited the road from the Forest Service but not ownership of the entire road within the park's boundaries. Only the last
several miles of the road were on government land and managed by the Park Service. The rest of the road, both in and outside the park's boundaries, belonged to Skagit County. Although Skagit County commissioners initially supported the road closure plan, they later opposed it after the plan's public meetings; it was simply politically unwise for them to back the proposal. Without the county's consent, the Park Service decided to scuttle the road closure and shuttle bus plan from its plan approved in the summer of 1974. In addition, while the county had the final word on the subject, park managers had to seek out the support of the Forest Service for constructing a parking lot on its lands and private property owners, namely the owners of the Valuemines, to assure them that they could still reach their operations. Gaining the cooperation of all groups, let alone one, exemplified the steps park managers had to take in most of their projects.

Stehekin Valley Road. The Stehekin Valley Road was the only road to penetrate for any distance into an otherwise roadless national park. Yet, as a result of the park campaign and subsequent legislation, it remained the "road to nowhere," confined to the U-shaped valley and cutoff from the outside world. To residents of Stehekin and preservationists like Grant McConnell, the road had a "quality of perfection." It had evolved almost organically. True, various government entities -- Chelan County, the Forest Service, and state -- had influenced its development, but it developed through human use over time and only then because people followed the natural corridor of travel: from the landing, along the river, through the woods, up the valley until it narrows, steepens, and ends some twenty-five miles later near today's Cottonwood Camp. Travel over it was always subject to weather and the changing conditions of the mountains. [29]

The reality of Park Service management, however, was much different than the idyllic landscape McConnell described, and the Stehekin Valley Road posed the greatest controversy for the new park where a road was concerned. On the one hand, preservationists believed that the road should be closed to motor vehicles at Bridge Creek, several miles into the southern unit of the national park. In this way, nature could soften the final eleven miles of the road, and return the valley to its wilderness state. On the other hand, the Park Service saw the road's purpose differently. Similar to Highway 20 and the Cascade River Road, it allowed park visitors to experience this new parkland in a familiar way; it was a way familiar to the Park Service as well -- by automobile and from the roadside. For this reason, one of the agency's first development projects was the reconstruction of the Bridge Creek Bridge in 1970, which had been closed because it was unsafe for vehicles. Afterwards, the service reopened the valley road to Cottonwood Camp.

The conditions in the Stehekin country differed, of course, from the park's other roads. There were a limited number of automobiles in the valley, and most visitors relied on private taxi services or the Park Service's successful shuttle service (entirely beyond High Bridge), which it instituted shortly after the park's creation. Still, the Park Service's decision to leave the entire length of the road open to Cottonwood was rooted in tradition, to ensure that all people could see the park. "Our main reason," Superintendent Roger Contor wrote, was "to provide the non-hiker and the elderly visitor a recreational opportunity in the Valley." (Ironically, the agency had proposed the opposite for the Cascade River Road.) Contor added that there was also a resource protection aspect to this position. By having the road end at Cottonwood, some five miles from Cascade Pass, instead of Bridge Creek, it would lighten the impact on Cascade Pass because hikers could reach the pass in a day hike and would be less inclined to camp overnight, a serious source of erosion for the area's fragile plants and soils. (This held true for hikers trekking up the pass from either the east or west sides.) [30]

The decision to keep the road open aroused considerable publicity and a "divergence of opinion," Contor observed, but the superintendent and agency officials tried to disarm their critics by assuring them that just as the road had been reopened above Bridge Creek, it could
also be closed at a later date. Nevertheless, preservationists like McConnell and his fellow members of N3C fired back that the Park Service's actions to limit vehicle traffic in the recreation area and park had been ambiguous. To be sure, through its shuttle busses the agency had controlled the number of cars motoring up the road during the tourist season. However, the agency was missing an opportunity to "restore the wildness of the upper Valley" and give visitors the chance to have a "wilderness experience" by rationing the "heavily used high country near Cascade Pass." [31]

In fact, its improvements to the road over the years portended increased visitation and traffic in this otherwise wild country. In addition to Bridge Creek, for example, the agency replaced two other major bridges along the road, Tumwater (1973) and High Bridge (1975). It also expended considerable sums of money to maintain the entire road, but especially the upper section that was prone to heavy snows, avalanches, and washouts. Nature wanted to reclaim the road, but the Park Service resisted.

Perhaps the most troubling improvement came in 1973 when the agency paved the lower valley road, from the landing to Harlequin Bridge, to solve problems with dust during the dry season. While park managers surfaced the road to reduce maintenance costs (grading and snow removal), they also improved the road to please visitors accustomed to modern roadways -- or at least roads in other national parks -- and make their tour of the valley smoother and more enjoyable. Seemingly an innocent act, surfacing the road changed the character of the Stehekin Valley in the minds of McConnell and others. The primitive road, which they valued, had been modernized and the valley with it. It invited people to drive their cars at higher speeds, and thus quickened the unhurried pace of valley life. It also invited private landowners to bring more vehicles to the valley, causing still more traffic and congestion at the landing. It stood to invite further development of summer homes and private lodges, too, and possibly pressures to improve the entire length of the road as a two-lane highway. Instead of maintaining the historic character of the valley, the Park Service seemed to open the door to a world from which it was supposed to be protecting it. [32]

This depiction perhaps overdraws the intent of the Park Service, for, as with any issue involving life in the Stehekin Valley, things were much more complex than this. To be appreciated fully, the agency's approach to the Stehekin Road will be handled in a broader perspective elsewhere, yet it is relevant here to note that the Park Service's activities surrounding the road were mired in issues over its ownership, which the agency assumed in the early 1970s after a rather complicated process, and by its ownership its subsequent responsibilities to visitors, residents, and property owners. Pressure came from different directions, and the agency's improvement of the long-neglected Chelan County road could not satisfy everyone. Some residents, for example, welcomed federal ownership as a means to assure maintenance of the road and, above all, snow removal. In this respect, the agency was less a custodian of the nation's natural wonders and more a county road crew. Others, like McConnell, disagreed with the agency's road policies as a slow invasion of the park's wilderness. For its part, park managers thought they had struck a fair compromise, particularly in a park, Superintendent Contor noted, that had "fewer roads than any other major park in the system." [33]

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Trails

While controversy surrounded the "few" roads that penetrated or led through some of the park complex, the primary means of access to the extensive backcountry of the new parkland went largely unnoticed. The Park Service inherited more than three hundred miles of trails
from the Forest Service in the North Cascades. In the early 1970s, park officials, like Skagit Subdistrict Ranger Robert Hentges, contemplated a number of new trails. Some of these would have reached the proposed system of hostels or would have created new high scenic routes. More importantly, trails, according to the wilderness theme of the park, would be the central focus of the park experience. Throughout much of the park complex's first decade, maintenance crews and backcountry managers -- and to a large degree, private contractors -- opened and repaired the area's trails, following the standards outlined in the backcountry management plan and leaving the system relatively in the same way as the Forest Service had left it. Some of the major accomplishments centered on the completion of new trail bridges in the mid-1970s across Thunder, Big Beaver, Lightning, and Devil's creeks. Safety played an important part in replacing the old log bridges, hand lines, or other means of crossing that may have been responsible for several drownings. Two drownings happened on the Chiliwack River, where a third bridge was planned, to replace an unsafe hand line. Another trail-related problem stemmed from the Forest Service's rerouting of the Pacific Crest Trail in 1975, when it completed the four-mile Maple Pass Trail from Rainy Pass to the park complex's boundary. The reroute, park managers believed, was the Forest Service's way of "forcing" their hand to relocate the Pacific Crest Trail within the complex itself, a project that was estimated to cost up to $200,000.

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Interpretation

The park complex's 1970 master plan set forth an interpretive concept that would allow visitors to experience the deep valleys, high peaks, and wild backcountry to gain an appreciation of the North Cascades as a scenic wonder and a tangible, thriving natural environment. Throughout the late 1960s and 1970s, the park complex's interpretive program built on this theme through many kinds of services. These included evening -- or campfire -- programs given at the complex's major campgrounds, and exhibits and publications available at visitor information centers at Concrete, Newhalem, Marblemount, and Stehekin, as well as other points of entry into the park complex, such as Hozomeen and the boat bringing visitors up Lake Chelan (from Lucerne to Stehekin). Other forms of public education involved the development of ranger-guided and self-guided nature walks, with the installation of waysides at trail heads, and research into and the interpretation of the park area's rich human history. This program was especially important in Stehekin where park interpreters began to document the valley's history and focused a great deal of their attention on interpreting the Buckner Ranch, as well as other structures and sites evoking a sense of the valley's pioneer past. Still other aspects of interpretation emphasized environmental education sending park interpreters into local schools. [34]

The greatest source of interpretation, however, was Highway 20. Initially, park planners intended to concentrate most of their efforts at the Ruby Mountain tram; the experience of ascending from valley floor to summit would expose the visitor to the park on a sweeping scale. They also proposed to make Roland Point a main focus for evening programs. But when both projects were delayed, the highway corridor itself became the central means of introducing visitors to the park complex and conveying to them its wilderness significance. [35]

This turn of events placed greater importance on visitor information centers adjacent to the highway, located at Concrete (opened in late 1974), Marblemount, and Newhalem, as well as the Forest Service installation at Early Winters. These circumstances also highlighted the interpretative program already developed by Seattle City Light. In addition to its popular dam and lake tours, the city also offered a guided nature trail and museum at Newhalem. The park
complex's 1976 interim interpretive prospectus also recognized the importance of the highway to interpretation. It proposed relocating the information center at Concrete to a larger facility at Newhalem (the Newhalem school), foreshadowing the need for a visitor center. Most of the park was hidden from motorists, the plan noted, unless they took the time to stop and acquaint themselves with the area. Thus, in addition to and while awaiting funding for a visitor center, the plan proposed waysides at key points along the highway. Of all the problems associated with interpreting the park from the narrow valley, the plan noted one of the most restrictive: there were few places, save the Diablo overlook, to provide extensive roadside facilities. [36] These and other aspects of the park complex's interpretation would await attention of managers in the following decade.
Chapter 4:
CONCESSIONS

Besides roads other traditional themes in visitor services commanded attention in the first decade of the park's management. In national parks, visitors had come to expect lodging and other amenities. The demand for them and their related costs varied widely throughout the park system. In some areas the Park Service has constrained private businesses and investors, while in others it has encouraged them or even provided its own services. By the 1960s, the national parks provided visitor services under a number of schemes: 1) by private construction, ownership, and operation of hotels and other facilities; 2) by government ownership and private operation; 3) by government ownership and operation; or 4) by government ownership and non-profit or cooperative operation. [1] The concessions in North Cascades followed the first and second schemes.

In 1965, several years before the creation of North Cascades, Congress passed the National Park Concession Policy Act that mandated stricter controls and uniformity of national park concessions. The law grew out of a lingering suspicion that somehow it is wrong for the federal government to grant a business exclusive rights to provide services in a park and to profit from it. The 1965 law directed that park concessionaires would contract with the Park Service to offer prescribed services to the public at rates set by the agency. In doing so, Congress formally established a controlled marketplace in which concession owners worried less about business competition than they did about their contractual rights and obligations. The law assured concessionaires a "reasonable opportunity" for making a profit "commensurate with the capital invested," but all too often the Park Service seemed to dictate their profit margins. [2]

Generally, the Park Service and those who owned or ran concessions within the park complex have not clashed in the same way that well-entrenched concessionaires have in older parks like Yellowstone and Yosemite. At the same time, when the Park Service took over management of the North Cascades from the Forest Service, it inherited concession-type operations, most of which had been there for some time. There were three in Ross Lake NRA: Ross Lake Resort, Diablo Lake Resort, and Newhalem Resort; and one in Lake Chelan NRA: the Stehekin Landing. These were existing businesses that operated under Forest Service special use permits, rather than concession contracts, since the bureau did not have a concessions policy. While it was Park Service policy to convert these permits into concession contracts, park managers did not attempt this change immediately. According to the park's enabling legislation, park managers were to honor these permits and essentially live with what came with the new parkland. [3]

This state of affairs did not mean that the agency assumed a passive role when it came to concessions in the park complex. The relationship between the Park Service and concession operators was mutually beneficial. The Park Service relied on the services concessionnaires provided to make the remote region more accessible and enjoyable for tourists. In the Skagit Valley this took on added importance when Highway 20 opened and large-scale visitor experiences became a possibility.
accommodations at Roland Point and the Ruby Mountain tram were delayed. The most critical area was Stehekin, a tourist destination since the turn of the century where visitors were dependant almost entirely upon services provided by the local community. In the early 1970s, for example, the Park Service worked with operators to upgrade facilities and make sure concessions met agency standards. On the one hand this meant that the agency supplied the Diablo Lake Resort with a new septic sewer system and the Stehekin Landing with a new sewer and new water system. On the other hand, it terminated the permit for the shabby Newhalem Resort. [4]

The success of these concessions and their relationship with the Park Service were a rather mixed lot. In some cases, the Forest Service legacy posed problems. The Ross Lake Resort, for example, was a sound business. It was located on the southern shore of Ross Lake just above the dam. In operation since the early 1950s, the resort was entirely afloat financially and physically. It maintained a collection of floating cabins, docks, and a fleet of small rental boats, among other facilities, and offered its clientele lake sightseeing and fishing opportunities. Its owner, Wayne Dameron, had managed to succeed by maintaining a rather small operation and attracting patrons who returned on an annual basis. Dameron and the Park Service clashed, however, when Dameron wanted to expand with an eye to taking over the concession at Roland Point. [5]

In 1970, Dameron insisted that his previous negotiations with the Forest Service in the mid-1950s and his subsequent 1962 permit granted him the right -- without seeking Park Service approval -- to build sixteen new floating cabins and to set up operations at May Creek (near Roland Point) as the sole concession, to which he claimed he had "prior rights." Park managers were skeptical that the Roland Point development would become a reality because of City Light's High Ross plans, and because they doubted he could handle such a large operation. They also worried that the agency would be legally obligated to buy the cabins from Dameron should it cancel his permit to prevent his expansion. [6]

Underlying these matters was something more important than Dameron's abilities or the future of Ross Lake. The exchange revealed the Park Service's attempt to exercise its authority over concessionaires in the park complex, especially those, like Dameron, who were under old Forest Service permits. After consulting with the agency's solicitor and concessions division, park officials successfully resolved the issue in their favor. In January 1971, Superintendent White notified the concessioner that he did not have "previous approval to construct any cabins or facilities without written permission" from the Park Service, and for that matter without an approved site plan. (Apparently, the agency also revoked any rights Dameron may have had to the Roland Point concession.) Simultaneously, White overturned an earlier decision denying Dameron's request to construct two new floating cabins. Confident now in his ability to control the concessioner, the superintendent was willing to sanction plans for improving overnight lodging. [7]

The Park Service had a slightly different relationship with the Diablo Lake Resort. Like the Ross Lake Resort, the Diablo Lake Resort began its operations in the mid-1950s under a Forest Service special use permit. It was a family-owned and operated business, run by Howard Bradley, his wife and son. Bradley's concession was located on the northern shore of Diablo Lake, just below Ross Dam. The site, buildings, and facilities had been a construction camp for Seattle City Light's dam-building projects, all of which Bradley had converted into a modest business that offered housekeeping cabins, a small marina, and a grocery store. Open in the summer, Bradley's resort was a small operation that supported his family. Its size and secluded atmosphere attracted families seeking a quiet and restful summer weekend or longer vacation. In season, hunting and fishing were the resort's primary attractions.

Unlike Ross Lake Resort, the Diablo Lake Resort was never a strong business after the
establishment of the park in 1968 and came close to failing entirely throughout the 1970s. The reasons for the business's decline seemed to be linked to poor planning and overextended finances. Both Bradley and the Park Service anticipated increased visitation once Highway 20 was completed and that the resort would play a major role in providing visitor accommodations and services in the new park. For this reason, Bradley appears to have been anxious to expand and improve his resort. He wanted to construct a restaurant, store, and new cabins (thirty). He also wanted to add a swimming pool, kid's trout pond, and playground; provide rental horses; renovate the twenty existing cottages; and upgrade the water system, among other general and related improvements. The Park Service supported Bradley's plans and produced a development concept plan in 1971 that essentially covered these proposals and projected their completion. [8]

There were questions, however, about just how much the resort should expand and what its long-term role in serving park visitors would be. The Park Service's plan, for example, suggested that after the highway was completed, the resort would serve an "immediate need for accommodations and services in the recreation area." In the future, though, other Park Service projects -- those at Roland Point and Newhalem -- would become the major centers of visitor services, and thus Diablo Lake Resort would continue to function as a small vacation retreat. Bradley, though, seems to have thought his business would continue to grow and be central to the park's visitor services. For this reason, perhaps, in the early 1970s he financed the initial phase of his expansion, a new restaurant, for a large sum of money -- $180,000 -- which after construction delays (brought on by an environmental impact statement and poor plans) and other financial obligations increased to $250,000 by 1973. As it turned out, Bradley's restaurant, which opened in June 1975, never produced the revenues necessary to make his loan payments, and by the late 1970s Bradley was putting his failed business up for sale. [9]

Bradley and the Park Service apparently made poor assumptions about what the new park and renovations to the resort would bring. Although agency officials questioned the size of Bradley's restaurant (which would seat seventy-five people) and its related costs, they supported Bradley's plan and converted his special use permit to a concession contract in 1974. Superintendent White believed, as Bradley did, that the restaurant was generally a sound idea; it would serve the resort's overnight guests as well as bus tour groups and other travelers on the new highway. An estimated 10,000 people a day would pass over the new road. With his closest competition being in Marblemount, Bradley could also expect to attract local residents employed by Seattle City Light and living in Newhalem and Diablo. Finally, as the resort expanded, the restaurant would come to rely less on highway business and more on its overnight guests. Needless to say, these expectations fell short of reality. Poor signing and difficult highway access, among other things, plagued the business, and in the coming years park officials would work with Bradley and the resort's subsequent owners to resolve these problems. [10]

Of all the concessions in the park, Stehekin's was the most important. Stehekin's popularity increased dramatically once the park complex was established. But it was also remote, accessible only by boat, small plane, foot, or horse, and visitors depended more on the services offered here than elsewhere in the new parkland. Most summer visitors, for example, traveled uplake from Chelan on the vessel Lady of the Lake, a four hour trip, and returned the same day, spending less than two hours in the valley. Some two hundred passengers arrived at the landing together and toured by bus or other means as many sights as they could see in a limited amount of time. Others, planning longer trips, ventured up the valley and into the backcountry for extended backpacking or horseback trips, or simply spent the night at Stehekin Landing where they could find lodging and food. In short, Stehekin was the central gateway for all visitors entering or leaving the southern section of the park complex, and thus its services were a key management concern.
Agency officials decided that their best option for controlling and managing visitor services in Stehekin was to acquire some of the existing businesses at the landing and lease them to concessionaires. By 1970, the Park Service purchased the landing's three private resorts: the Golden West Lodge, the Stehekin Boatel and Cafe, and the Swissmont Lodge. The agency's master plan called for improving the landing area to handle the larger numbers of visitors expected to arrive as the reputation of the new park spread. The long-range goal was to reserve the landing area -- with its limited space -- for existing day-use activities of the Stehekin community and incoming tourists, and relocate overnight accommodations away from the village. However, in these early years, the agency continued the services much as they were to meet the immediate needs of park visitors.

At the same time, agency officials worked to consolidate and improve the lodging, food, and other services available at the landing. By the early 1970s, they had reached an important step in this process when the use-and-occupancy leases retained by the owners of the Swissmont and Golden West lodges expired. The owner of the Boatel, Curt Courtney, had sold his property outright to the Park Service. Afterwards, the Park Service closed the Golden West to overnight lodging; the old hotel and its related cabins and outbuildings required extensive renovations to meet Park Service standards for which the agency did not have the funding. Instead, it was converted into an interpretive facility and visitor center.

Perhaps the most significant change came when park managers combined the Boatel and Swissmont into one concession, which came to be known as the North Cascades Lodge. As Superintendent Lowell White recalled, it seemed to be a practical and efficient way to operate the visitor services at the landing. Both park managers and a number of Stehekin residents believed that a single concessioner would help bring some sense of order and decorum to the landing. Prior to the Park Service assuming control of the businesses there, the landing had the atmosphere of "a three-ring circus" or "a zoo," some residents complained. "One summer," according to one account, "the competing businesses installed loudspeakers at the landing, and each tried to outdo the others in luring the boat passengers in for lunch and lodging. Lodge employees were sent out to greet passengers and direct them to one lodge or another." As one park staffer observed, this type of activity hardly impressed upon the visitor the atmosphere of a national park; to the contrary, the whole appearance conjured up images of one's arrival in "Shang-Hai, or some other similar city!"

Finding the right concessioner for the landing also figured prominently in consolidating services at the landing. The landing's early concessionaires, Stan Hutson who operated the Swissmont (or Stehekin Landing Concession) and John O.E. Moore who operated the Boatel, seemed to have performed poorly in the close-knit Stehekin community and the limitations imposed by the valley's physical environment. By 1972 both had sold their operations to Robert Byrd, a long-time Stehekin resident. In his selection of Byrd for the Stehekin Landing concession, Superintendent White noted that Byrd had the experience to operate the concession. He had been operating the shuttle bus and rafting trips down the Stehekin River for two seasons. He had innovative ideas for improving and adding public services, and he "worked extremely well with the National Park Service." Above all, White stated, Byrd's familiarity with Stehekin life was central to his decision. (Byrd's uncle was Ray Courtney, an influential and respected valley resident.) According to the superintendent,
common cause, which would not only benefit them but the park and traveling public as well. [15]

At first, White's faith in Byrd seemed well placed. In addition to food and lodging, Byrd offered a variety of services, including a shuttle bus, bicycle rentals, float trips, boat rentals, gasoline, and a Rainbow Falls bus trip. Byrd also complied with the Park Service's desire to keep the restaurant open throughout the year as a service to local residents, as a way to strengthen community relations, though often at a financial loss. But in 1976 Byrd's relationship with the Park Service soured, and the main reason White valued Byrd as a concessioner -- his local connections -- became the source of tension. Rather than acting as a unifying force in the community, Byrd seemed intent on dividing the community and pitting it against the Park Service.

On the surface, the rift was triggered by the Park Service's decision to take over the shuttle bus system from Byrd. The Park Service based its decision on a 1976 transportation study that, in general, recommended improvements in the valley's shuttle system to both expand the service and make it more efficient. In doing so, the agency could accomplish two things: provide better transportation for visitors and attempt to decrease residential traffic. The agency would charge a nominal fee to visitors and provide the service free to residents. [16]

Byrd, however, interpreted the agency's actions as an infringement on his rights as the owner of a private business. Moreover, he believed that the Park Service's plans portended more serious threats to the unique way of life in Stehekin. As the federal government slowly and, in his mind, secretly wrested control from individuals, their livelihoods and independence (namely the freedom to drive where and when they pleased) would be restricted. Byrd expressed his views at public meetings and in regional newspapers. What began as a critique of the Park Service's plans for the shuttle system soon extended to include nearly every aspect of the agency's presence in, and its plans for, the valley. Ultimately, he concluded that the federal government's only virtuous act would be for the Park Service to relinquish control of most services and management tasks to valley residents and businesses. [17]

Regional Director Russell Dickenson assured Byrd that the Park Service would work to improve its communications with him and other Stehekin residents as well as include them in the agency's planning efforts. For his part, Superintendent White agreed with Dickenson, but he also thought that Byrd's complaints stemmed from his inability to deal with a bureaucracy and a general misunderstanding of how the relationship between the Park Service and a concession operator functioned. It was mutually beneficial; each one helped the other and one depended on the other. White noted, for example, that nearly all of the Stehekin District's operations and development funds had been spent on the landing itself and valley road and directly aided Byrd's concession. Among these improvements were two sets of public docks at the landing, a remodeled restaurant and restrooms, a new sewer and water system, improved cold storage facilities, alternate power and energy sources (propane gas), landscaping, and general road maintenance and renovations of the valley road. In return, the North Cascades Lodge provided park visitors modest amenities that would enable them to enjoy the park for short or long periods of time.

Despite attempts to resolve their differences, the Park Service and Robert Byrd parted ways in the late 1970s. [18] Byrd apparently did not renew his temporary concessions permit and negotiations for a five-year concessions contract, begun in November 1976, failed. Thus, it seems, Byrd walked away from the business, and in October 1977, the North Cascades Lodge closed. By the following spring, however, the Park Service had awarded a new concession contract to Gary Gibson and Randall Dinwiddie, who reopened the lodge on a limited schedule in March 1978 and by the summer visitor season had it open full time. [19]
Chapter 5:

WILDERNESS PROPOSALS AND BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT

In March 1970, Superintendent Roger Contor affirmed his belief, as well as the Park Service's, that North Cascades was America's "wildest national park." The new park, Contor noted, possessed the "classic attributes" of wilderness: "rugged high mountain character, glaciers, alpine lakes, rivers and streams, alpine forests and meadows, native wildlife and remoteness." Its most distinguishing characteristic was its inaccessibility. "Terrain, vegetation, and unforgiving weather all join hands against the wilderness traveler," he concluded. Later that year, Contor and his staff met one of the park's legislative requirements by producing wilderness recommendations for the park complex. Released in June 1970, around the same time as the area's master plan, these recommendations proposed that some 516,000 acres be set aside as wilderness, excluding roads, private lands, and developed areas. With a few exceptions, the entire national park would be classified as wilderness, and to a much smaller extent so would some selected lands within the recreation areas. [1]

When the Park Service held hearings on its wilderness recommendations, preservationists "praised" the agency for its enlightened proposal. Its plan reflected a "forward thinking vision," a willingness to place the value of biological resources above development. What they considered especially important was the agency's protection of the two core areas of the national park -- the Picket Range and Eldorado Peaks. These were two areas that had been the subject of intense campaigning for wilderness protection in the years leading to the park's creation. [2]

Yet preservationists strongly criticized several items in the agency's otherwise sound plan. As we have already seen, aerial tramway proposals received a great deal of attention, because three of them -- the Price Lake, Colonial Creek, and Arctic Creek trams -- would have invaded areas recommended for wilderness. The tramways, they suggested, should be eliminated from park plans and their routes added to the park's wilderness proposal. (If they were not included, then they should be placed in a wilderness "escrow" account and returned to wilderness designation should these plans fail later.) [3]

A proposal for enclaves in the wilderness sparked even more opposition. The enclaves, areas excluded from wilderness classification, numbered eighteen altogether, most of them in the park's northern unit near the rugged Picket Range. The enclaves, wrote the Wilderness Society, undermined "the fundamental wilderness concept," for they would not be part of the "official wilderness, despite their natural wilderness character, and would not be subject to the provisions of the Wilderness Act." [4]

At the heart of the Wilderness Society's comments, and those of other preservation organizations, was that enclaves were "contrary to the intent and purpose of the Wilderness Act," the primary objective of which was to keep "inviolate from the works of man the wild lands placed within the National Wilderness Preservation System." Several of these enclaves
were to accommodate shelters, hostels, and camping facilities, while others were to provide for mechanical devices, such as radio repeaters and snow-measuring devices. [5] The size, in addition to the content, of the enclaves was especially alarming to preservationists. The shelter enclaves (fourteen) were nine acres each, and the four hostels (or chalets) were thirty acres each. Presumably, the size of the enclaves reflected the fact that they would be serviced by helicopters. Moreover, the hostels would, like the chalets in Glacier National Park, provide overnight lodging, meals, and sanitation facilities. The wilderness plan proposed to erect these permanent structures in the park's most remote and wild section. And while they were well intentioned, the hostels would attract more visitors into the backcountry increasing the damage to this fragile environment and altering the peace and solitude so integral to a wilderness experience. Finally, the Wilderness Society concluded, their "presence would open the door for the introduction of a wide range of construction, equipment, and aircraft into the heart of the wilderness." Thus preservationists urged the Park Service to reconsider this aspect of its wilderness plan, for it would not only endanger the wilderness of the North Cascades but also set a dangerous precedent "leading to the degradation of wilderness values" throughout the national park system. [6]

Similarly, other features of the park's wilderness recommendations should be eliminated as well, expanding wilderness acreage in the process. The general theme here was that wilderness should encompass all of the park and recreation areas except for existing man-made creations such as Seattle City Light's reservoirs, as well as the Highway 20 corridor with its related recreational facilities and access points to the park's backcountry. This meant that the Park Service should eliminate the eighth-mile "roadless buffer zone" (or "management zone") surrounding the park complex's wilderness boundaries. It also meant the agency should extend wilderness boundaries down to the shoreline of Ross Lake and adjust those boundaries when and if the level of Ross Lake were raised with High Ross Dam. (This "escrow" clause also applied to other areas potentially affected by City Light's plans.) Likewise, wilderness boundaries should begin as close to the park's roadsides as possible. Private lands and mining claims, both patented and unpatented, could be included legally within the proposed wilderness boundaries and purchased or condemned at a later date. [7]

The Park Service revised its wilderness proposal, released in August 1970, in response to some but not all of these recommendations. There was some support of the agency's plans for tramways and hostels, with only minor opposition to the restrictions on motorized travel -- motor bikes and four wheel drive vehicles -- that wilderness classification would impose on lands in the recreation areas set aside as wilderness. The agency retained most of its "management" provisions in its final plan: namely the buffer zone, road right-of-ways, City Light developments, and several enclaves for shelters, camping facilities, radio repeaters, and snow-measuring devices. It was also decided to keep the Stehekin Road opened to Cottonwood, rather than close it at Bridge Creek and place this section of the upper valley under wilderness designation. [8]

By retaining these elements of its wilderness recommendations, the Park Service demonstrated that its conception of wilderness did not embrace a truly primitive landscape. But park officials also made some significant concessions. They omitted all of the tramway proposals except for Ruby Mountain, which was entirely within Ross Lake NRA, and retained the Arctic Creek tramway conditionally; that is, if it did not seem feasible after further study, it would be eliminated from park plans. (This, in turn, would happen.) Of equal if not greater significance was the agency's removal of the hostels from its final plan. It eliminated all four from the Picket Range, deleting one enclave altogether and reducing the other three to nine-acre parcels to accommodate existing shelters. [9]

Eliminating the hostels had both the support of preservationists and Park Service personnel. As Superintendent Contor recalled, the hostels were Director George B. Hartzog's idea,
modeled largely after those in Glacier. Contor privately disliked the proposal for the same reasons expressed by the Wilderness Society, and other groups but he did not want to confront Hartzog over the issue. Instead, after learning that grizzly bears had been sighted in the park, he informed the director that hostels and grizzlies were incompatible. The former attracted the latter, and more seriously, grizzlies had recently killed or injured several visitors at Glacier's Granite Park Chalet. With this news and the pressure applied by leaders in the Wilderness Society, Hartzog agreed to get rid of the hostels. [10]

In December 1970, the Department of the Interior forwarded its wilderness recommendations for North Cascades to President Richard Nixon. The exact acreage of the proposal, 515,880 acres, covered land in the national park and two national recreation areas. Although the formal proposal had been completed, the wilderness recommendation's path into law languished for the next decade and a half as Congress considered numerous wilderness recommendations. Meanwhile, the park's wilderness recommendation continued to evolve. In the 1970s, it expanded as park managers acquired more private lands, dropped the buffer zone boundary, and eliminated more enclaves. Although buying private lands reflected a normal part of management, the other revisions were prompted by Congress. By 1975, the wilderness recommendation had increased to 528,550 acres. [11]

Despite this, the sluggish process of congressional approval kept the park complex's wilderness from becoming legal in the 1970s. The president first recommended the North Cascades wilderness to Congress on April 21, 1971. The North Cascades' recommendation was part of an omnibus bill made up of thirteen other parks and their wilderness proposals. The Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands held the first hearing on the legislation, Senate Bill 2453. Afterwards the agency revised its proposal and in 1975 Senator Henry M. Jackson introduced wilderness legislation for North Cascades. Although a companion bill was introduced into the House, and the same process repeated in 1976 and 1977, Congress failed to act on the legislation, something that was not unusual given the number of proposals before Congress. Other factors may have slowed the process as well, such as the status of mining claims, the need to complete an environmental impact statement to accompany the wilderness proposal, as well as support (or lack of it) for wilderness from the state's congressional delegation and local political leaders. [12]

Nevertheless, park officials managed the complex's backcountry as if it were legalized wilderness beginning with its first decade of existence. In one respect, this approach seems to reflect standard Park Service policy -- that all park backcountries were considered wilderness no matter their formal classification. In another respect, though, this approach represented a meaningful stage in the park complex's management history, and for that matter in the history of the Park Service. North Cascades was about wilderness. Some 92 percent of the complex lay within recommended wilderness and here park managers could carry out what they saw as the primary purpose of this parkland.

More than the physical landscape, timing played a role in the importance of wilderness management. This was a new parkland supposedly untainted by the tradition-bound problems of balancing visitor services with preservation that afflicted older parks. Rather than revising established uses or fending off development proposals that would otherwise damage the fragile alpine environments, park managers envisioned that they would set a new course based largely on the ideals expressed in the 1963 Leopold Report (and empowered by the Wilderness Act of 1964). That is, supported by ecological research, wilderness management - and resource management in general -- would strive to preserve natural systems and when possible restore biological resources to their "original conditions." During the park's first ten years, the major themes in backcountry management were established. Both backcountry managers and biologists faced several issues -- controlling the numbers of people in, and their impacts on, the backcountry; restoring damaged areas; limiting the use of pack stock
Superintendent Contor, an exponent of wilderness preservation and the Leopold Report, fashioned the beginnings of the backcountry management program directed at these issues; he produced guidelines for a backcountry management plan in December 1970. It was one of his last duties as superintendent. [13] In some ways Contor's guidelines represented a new direction in Park Service management with wilderness as its primary concern, yet other parks, such as Sequoia and Kings Canyon, had been fashioning similar policies since the early 1960s. [14] What Contor recognized was that North Cascades was a product of the burgeoning environmental movement of the 1960s, and that the general public would, for the most part, accept management policies directed at regulating some types of uses and excluding others, along with restoration projects. In this regard, the main goal was maintaining the ecological vitality of this impressive landscape.

But the environmental movement, ironically, also spirited on thousands of new backpackers to search for a wilderness experience and thus to invade and damage the parkland's fragile alpine reaches. Adding to the impact of the backpacker revolution was the geography of the North Cascades. It may have been a vast area but only some 350 miles of trail traversed this steep terrain, confining people to a small percentage of the park. "As in most wilderness areas," Contor wrote, "the part that has been used has been unintentionally misused. Popular places have been littered and denuded, the trees hacked up, the flower meadows trampled or laced with trails, and the few level spots strewn with fireplace scars." The area most severely damaged by concentrated use, and the area to which Contor referred, was the sensitive subalpine zone, the area most susceptible to damage. This fragile band of flower-covered meadows, lakes, stunted evergreens, and melting snowbanks formed roughly eight percent of the park's wilderness. Its beauty drew nearly all who entered the mountains and thus this zone sustained about eighty percent of human use. "Protection of this zone," Contor noted, was "the key to the entire wilderness management effort." [15]

Traditional management problems, however, affected wilderness management, too. In the parkland's spectacular wilderness, the concept of a fresh start ran head long into the area's Forest Service past. The park was only beginning anew under Park Service management, and in reality, it shared more in common with older parks than at first glance because it had inherited well-established patterns of use under six decades of Forest Service control.

Contor's guidelines reflected the importance of protecting high country meadows and soils and revising how people experienced this country, largely through restoration, rationing, research, and education. In the case of popular places like Cascade Pass especially, this meant restoring delicate plants and rehabilitating the soils through a revegetation program, and at the same time eliminating camping and instituting policies for day-use only. The success of this approach lay in a backcountry permit system to distribute hikers throughout the parkland's wilderness and control where they camped (and thus the resulting human waste and trash). The permit system would only be acceptable to visitors, he believed, after a "reasonable number of campsites" were available, and after park rangers "sold" the idea to visitors through public education. [16]

Protecting the backcountry would come in other ways as well. Eventually, campfires -- and related wood gathering -- would be prohibited altogether in the subalpine zone to prevent any further damage to what few trees or snags existed there. Contor also proposed marking trails with stakes to guide hikers across snowbanks blocking trails as one way to minimize damage to plant communities, particularly in sensitive areas like Cascade, Park Creek, Whatcom, and Easy passes.
More than hikers, horses inflicted the most serious damage to the park's high country, even though their use had been modest. Contor recommended a number of possible restrictions in order to retain, rather than eliminate, horse use including separate camps, more research for low-impact horse camping, proper trail construction, regulating the number of commercial outfitters and the number horses in any party. Later, Contor made what is considered a historic policy of limiting horse parties to twelve horses, based on the advice of long-time horse packer Ray Courtney. [17] Finally, the superintendent recommended that the best form of wilderness protection was to keep improvements to a minimum, especially new trails, and to discourage such as fish stocking in high mountain lakes. In this way, park managers would not encourage more use and thus maintain the values most people cherished in their wilderness experience -- solitude, primitive conditions, self-reliance.

Contor's guidelines, slightly revised, evolved into the park complex's first backcountry management plan in 1974. Drafted by Superintendent Lowell White and his staff, it became the blueprint for park managers for the next decade. Briefly, the 1974 plan implemented a program to both promote and regulate backcountry use employing the concept of "optimum level of use," rather than the more popular "carrying capacity" concept. The optimum level of use was a way park managers gave priority to the visitor experience, resource protection, and funding. In general, park managers would do what they had always done -- focus their energy where the most people went and subsequently repair and regulate the use of those resources being harmed the most by backcountry visitors. Consequently, the plan would "provide more camping and hiking opportunities" within easy reach of trail heads and "provide fewer" in the more "remote and fragile areas" of the park. Put another way, the plan aimed to "reduce use in fragile areas and to increase or stabilize use in resilient areas," through a program of backcountry patrols, trail relocation, trail and camp restoration, and permits. [18]

The optimum level of use concept, however, presented something of a moving management target; the number of backcountry visitors would always be "arbitrary," in which case it seemed that park managers were readying themselves to react to problems rather than engaging in long-term resource management planning based on scientific research. Visitation rather than preservation seemed more on the minds of park officials. It was estimated, for example, that the number of backcountry campsites would have to be doubled (from 160 to 300) over a ten year period to allow increasing numbers of visitors a wilderness opportunity. That said, the plan did establish some strict guidelines for campsite locations, sizes, design, and sanitation requirements; restrictions on campfires and horse use; standards for trails, signs, and sanitation facilities and practices; and a monitoring system -- using photographs, written narratives, and transect lines -- to assess environmental damage in backcountry areas. [19]

The effectiveness of this management program hinged on, as Contor suggested, the permit system and the restoration of damaged subalpine environments. First, in 1973, just prior to the release of the backcountry management plan, the permit system went into operation. Broadly speaking, the system was to limit the size of parties, disperse as well as inform visitors about wilderness regulations and practices, and acquire statistics on backcountry use. The permit system was also intended to streamline, or coordinate, the issuing of backcountry permits with neighboring national forest wilderness areas. The center of the park's wilderness operations was located at Marblemount, the backcountry -- or today's wilderness -- information center. Although visitors could obtain permits at other park portals, such as the Forest Service's Glacier Ranger Station, Marblemount's staff would track the permits and set quotas for campsites and travel routes. In addition, rangers checked permits in the backcountry, providing further opportunities for public contact, education, and protection. The permit system worked well, averaging a high rate of compliance. Over time park managers refined the system. Most noteworthy, they dropped the original reservation system
because it was "time consuming and confusing" and replaced it with a first-come, first-served system in 1976. [20]

Second, from the beginning park managers saw as their highest priority the protection and restoration of subalpine environs, especially the severely eroded low-elevation passes. Throughout the 1970s, regulating the use of and replanting these denuded areas with native plants epitomized the "new approach" to resource management in the National Park Service, based on the influence of the Leopold Report and a more recent ecological approach to management practices and decisions. Nowhere in North Cascades was this symbolized better than at Cascade Pass. Overrun for years by horse parties and hikers, Cascade Pass slowly regained some of its natural integrity by the late 1970s through the combination of research, revegetation, and restrictions.

The story of Cascade Pass intersects with other management concerns in North Cascades, such as the park's wilderness mission and issues of access. The park's creation had assured protection of this wild country and prevented the possible completion of a road over Cascade Pass. But how to protect the popular Cascade Pass, one of the few places where the casual visitor could see this spectacular country, was not resolved upon the park's establishment. In fact, traditional concerns and management approaches persisted. Preservationists called for closing the Stehekin Valley Road above Bridge Creek and returning it to a wilderness state, thus making it more difficult to reach the pass and reducing the pressures on it. Yet the Park Service thought otherwise; keeping the road open would allow visitors to drive the road, have a relatively traditional park experience, and by virtue of easy access and the schedule of the shuttle bus, limit hiking to a daytime activity. (It was believed that camping was the major source of damage.) On the other side of the pass, where the majority of visitors entered, the Park Service attempted to regulate access by initiating a shuttle system, but public opposition quelled this proposal, mainly to preserve the traditional, democratic right to see a national park from one's own car.

Use still dominated the Park Service mission, though a commitment to the protection of biological resources now shared the same stage. This commitment, however, did not lead to the closure of Cascade Pass entirely, but rather to a compromise of more restricted activities and rehabilitation. Nevertheless, park officials developed a successful program, building on early efforts by the Forest Service, dedicated to the protection of the pass's natural values. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, several botanists and plant ecologists, namely Dr. Dale Thornburgh, Dr. George Douglas, and Joe and Margaret Miller, studied the erosion problem at Cascade Pass, documenting the damage to plants and soils caused by both trails and camp sites and years of overuse. [21]

Based on these and informal observations, the Park Service decided to close the pass to camping (and horse use) in 1970, and devised a plan in 1974 to restore the camp sites at the pass and its vicinity to their natural conditions, improve trails, and revegetate the denuded meadows. After the plan was released, park officials proceeded to close all campsites in the immediate area surrounding Cascade Pass -- among them Sahale Arm, Doubtful Lake, Pelton Basin, Trapper Lake, Mixup Arm, and Basin Creek -- and initiate a multi-year rehabilitation program. The intent was to permanently close Cascade Pass to camping, develop a campground at the end of the Cascade River Road, and relocate other camp sites to lower elevations or more resilient zones. [22]

Nursing the subalpine environment back to health proved to be the greatest challenge, the greatest element in the program, and ultimately its greatest accomplishment. Although many park staffers and volunteers contributed their time, none of this would have been possible without the tireless and selfless efforts of volunteers Joe and Margaret Miller; they not only studied the natural conditions at Cascade Pass but grew plants from seeds and seedlings.
harvested from Cascade Pass at their home in Bellevue, Washington (and later in cold frames at Marblemount), and then replanted them at the pass. By 1978, the revegetation of Cascade Pass was seventy-five percent complete, and similar projects were underway for many of the park's other subalpine passes and popular camping areas, such as Copper and Egg lakes, Boundary Camp, Park Creek Pass, and Thunder Creek and Big Beaver basins. [23]

By the late 1970s park managers, like Skagit District Manager John E. Jensen, believed that the backcountry management program was working well, primarily because the backcountry management plan was "very good." Revised in 1977, the plan was essentially the same as its earlier version. The young program had also reached this point because of a growing staff, composed of a permanent backcountry ranger, eleven seasonal backcountry technicians, and nine volunteers, totaling twenty-one people in 1977. Volunteers, made up of Student Conservation Association (SCA) and Volunteers in the Parks (VIP), played a significant role in operating the information center, conducting patrols, and, like the Millers, participating in the revegetation program. Backcountry Ranger Dan Taylor oversaw the Skagit District's revegetation program, and in the coming years, it would expand further through time donated by volunteers and under the guidance of Taylor's replacement, William Lester. [24]

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For all its progress, however, backcountry management was a work in progress and the program would continue to evolve in the coming years. On the one hand, backcountry management maintained a constant vigil against threats to wilderness values, primarily in the form of private lands -- the most serious coming from mining. Mining cast a long human shadow over the North Cascades. Throughout the park complex's first decade, agency officials worked diligently to acquire the numerous patented mining claims (some 1,600 acres in the park itself, with smaller concentrations in Ross Lake NRA and the upper Stehekin Valley) as well as a vast number of unpatented claims (7,000) throughout the complex. Despite a rather successful program of acquisition and invalidation, the Park Service was not able to purchase the mining claims that posed the greatest harm to the park's wilderness setting. One of these was the cluster of patented claims in the Cascade Pass area, known as the Valuemines. The other was the group making up the Skagit Queen mining claims up the Thunder Creek basin. This latter claim presented the most serious danger to the park, because in the mid-1970s its owners planned to develop their claims by constructing a road up Thunder Creek to the base of Boston Glacier, conducting exploratory operations, and setting up a milling facility, all of which would have scarred the backcountry beyond repair. [25]

On the other hand, changes in backcountry management would respond to administrative conditions. In 1977, Departing Backcountry Ranger Dan Taylor noted that the permit system still needed some refining in terms of the way the park tracked visitors. Working with the Forest Service to issue one permit for entry into either park or forest wilderness areas was especially important. [26]

Coming to terms with structures in the park's backcountry also ranked high on the priority list. At the center of this subject was the concept of wilderness as a primitive landscape, a place in which human influences were evanescent. Returning the park's wilderness to its "original condition" influenced a practice of, or at least an attitude for, razing all unnecessary structures, especially those that were inappropriately sited and concentrated visitor use in sensitive areas. Yet some, such as fire lookouts and shelters, remained for administrative purposes. Lookouts, inherited from the Forest Service as part of its fire suppression management system, continued to serve as fire watch stations; they also aided in backcountry management for patrols and radio relays. In this regard, they were more readily accepted by backcountry managers. [27]
In direct contrast, backcountry rangers and other park staffers believed that shelters degraded the backcountry and thus the wilderness experience. Moreover, the shelter issue touched on differences between the park's divisions, for some in the park's maintenance division contended that the shelters helped in their work -- that is, in the rigorous task of opening and improving the park's trails in the rugged and remote terrain of the North Cascades. The internal controversy was also fueled by Olympic National Park's recent policy of removing backcountry shelters. At the same time, a few outspoken visitors wanted the shelters preserved. By the late 1970s, the Park Service was reconsidering its treatment of backcountry shelters, especially in light of their historical significance and the agency's legal obligation to protect them and other historic structures. [28]

Another management practice, which often sparked conflicting views, was the use of helicopters. At the time, this mode of transportation received the support of backcountry managers. Preservationists had long criticized the practice of helicopter use in the park complex, particularly during the park's first years when planners and other park officials flew frequently over the northern Cascades. Given the nature of the park's mountainous and roadless country, helicopters presented the most effective means of accessing the park, recalled Superintendent Contor. In addition, helicopters also facilitated backcountry operations by supplying and distributing backcountry workers. This was a reasonable alternative to, and less environmentally destructive choice than, using pack stock. Although park officials recognized that helicopters presented another kind of modern intrusion in wilderness, they advocated that the use of both "helicopters and power equipment" (such as chain saws) be continued -- but in a judicious manner. [29]

In the next two decades of management, the Park Service would make significant strides in resolving these issues. A major starting point was the creation of the park's wilderness by an act of Congress in 1988. The language of the bill would also help resolve other nagging management problems, in particular those surrounding hydroelectric developments and the use of natural resources in the complex's two recreation areas.
The establishment of North Cascades coincided with fundamental changes in resource management and research in the national park system. With the appearance of the Leopold Report in 1963, the Park Service shifted its emphasis from preserving and protecting objects of special interest to the general public to restoring park ecosystems and allowing natural processes to take their course. A catalyst for change, the report helped implant a new management philosophy that would stress ecologically-oriented management in place of manipulating the environment to meet the needs and desires of visitors. Returning parks to their natural conditions meant eliminating past practices that favored one particular wildlife species over another, and removing exotic -- or introduced species -- and reintroducing native ones. This new perspective applied to all resources within national parks. With ecological research, the report concluded, the Park Service should maintain -- or recreate when necessary -- "the biotic associations within each park" as nearly as possible as "when first visited by the white man." Placing natural values over human values -- or at least working to minimize human impacts -- formed the core of the agency's resource management approach. [1]

The Leopold Report offered some specific recommendations for carrying out this new management approach, namely that parks should hire a large staff of ecologists to conduct wide-ranging research projects, set aside research reserves within the different environments of the parks which might exclude visitors, and respect the findings of scientists and incorporate them into the parks' management programs. Finally, in order to implement the Leopold Report, the Park Service established guidelines for managing resources in natural parks and required that each natural area park prepare a resource management plan, all of which were to incorporate the report's basic tenets. [2]

The Leopold Report formed the foundation upon which North Cascades managers would build the park's early resource management program. While this was similar to other areas in the national park system, North Cascades differed from other parks because its establishment came after the Park Service had implemented its new direction in resource management. As in other programs, park managers looked forward to a clean start. Without the difficulties of revising tradition-bound uses and practices that often harmed the natural environment, they would push forward with a program that placed the integrity of biological resources and ecological relationships first.

As Superintendent Roger Contor believed, the agency had the opportunity to promote a new tradition of park management and shape a new set of visitor expectations based on ecologically-minded policies, and thus he made resource management, with the agency's new focus, the cornerstone of his administration. Although Contor's tenure was rather brief, his emphasis on maintaining or restoring the new parkland's natural environment and basing all management decisions on sound scientific evidence provided a solid foothold for the park's first decade of management. Beginning with the early stages of the park complex's
management, Contor and his staff developed an ambitious resource management program, based largely on a research plan that covered all of the area's resources and life zones, initiated cooperative interagency research projects with the U.S. Forest Service and various state agencies, among other government entities, and sought the assistance of university researchers in studying the North Cascades.

The importance of research to the new park area's future management was twofold. First, Contor, with a background in wildlife biology, felt strongly about research as a guide to management. This belief dovetailed with the current trends in the agency and Contor's own support of the Leopold committee's recommendations. As superintendent of Craters of the Moon National Monument in the mid-1960s, for example, Contor oversaw the completion of the monument's first resource management plan, the first in Western Region, employing the ecological principles outlined by the Leopold committee.

Second, and of more significance, without an adequate research program the Park Service could not hope to protect this new parkland. When the agency took over management of the northern Cascades, park officials discovered that they knew very little about this impressive country. This became especially apparent as they set out to draft the complex's master plan. Despite sixty years of management by the Forest Service, there seemed to be few scientific studies about the region that would help agency officials describe the basic facts, problems, and recommended management approaches for the park's resources. The most extensive information covered the range's geology, dating from the turn of the century. The range's other natural features were covered superficially in the more recent special studies generated by the North Cascades Study Team during the early 1960s. Otherwise, "the North Cascades were uniquely unknown," Contor observed. In short, the old park management saying applied: it was impossible to protect or restore the area's natural conditions if managers did not even know what these were. [3]

To resolve this problem, Contor reached out to the scientific community. In May 1969, he and his staff organized the North Cascades National Park Scientific Symposium at the park's headquarters. The symposium, made possible in large part by the work of the park's interpretive specialist, Harry Wills, brought together a group of noted ecologists from the Northwest. Its main purpose was to serve as "a notice to the scientific community that the National Park Service is interested in basing management and planning on sound research." In doing so, park officials hoped to prime the financial pump for research -- that is, make the case for funding research in the park -- and achieve the lofty goal of setting "an example to the nation of a proper approach to land management." The meeting proved helpful in establishing research priorities and management objectives for the master plan. The top priority of a long list of priorities was an ecological inventory of the entire park complex, followed by a thorough list of management problems related to human impacts on the natural environment, as well as studies ranging from research on the area's flora and fauna, to benchmark studies to evaluate future changes in the park's ecosystem, and to a complete human history of the complex. [4]

In early 1970, Contor could announce some accomplishments, many of which originated from the symposium. The highest management problem identified in the meeting was damage to the park's fragile subalpine vegetation at low-elevation passes such as Cascade Pass. Not surprisingly, several studies were completed or were underway that would have a direct benefit on the protection and repair of these sensitive areas. Since the park had no budget for research, most of these studies were university related or associated with the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Forest Range and Experiment Station; North Cascades would also benefit from the establishment of the first cooperative park studies unit at the University of Washington in 1970. Contor further noted that progress was being made on the autoecology of the horse -- a study that would help assess the effects of horses on the park environment as
a way to limit their presence in and damage to the high country. In addition, researchers were conducting forest insect and disease surveys; this work, however, was being conducted by the Forest Service as a carry over from when they managed the area. [5]

Without a research budget, the park could not expect to attract university scientists to carry out projects. But this initial work helped form the resource management statement in the park's first master plan released later that year. While the park complex brought together a variety of uses associated with a national park and two recreation areas, the plan emphasized an overall philosophy of protection and restoration of the complex's most dominant feature -- its backcountry -- and those sensitive areas highly susceptible to damage.

This backcountry and its fragile alpine ecosystems must be managed carefully to prevent damage by visitors and livestock. Corrective measures will involve revegetation of the denuded areas; improvement of the surface, grade, and drainage of trails; elimination of fires and overnight camping in the more fragile locations; control of horse traffic so that grazing and hitching of horses is not continued in the damaged areas; and the general dispersion of alpine activities, either up toward the snow and rock environment of the mountain-climber, or down into the more resistant fir and hemlock forests below the passes. [6]

This philosophy of protection and restoration also extended to the park complex's array of fish and wildlife, of which relatively little was known. Because the complex contained two recreation areas, one thing was for certain: some of these animals, namely deer, would be hunted and fish caught -- and park managers would regulate this activity through a cooperative agreement with the Washington State Department of Game as stipulated in the legislation for North Cascades.

It was Contor's hope that a comprehensive research program would develop to support the needs of resource management, but in these early years of park management, funding for special projects took time; they required project statements, priority lists, approval from the regional office in Seattle and final approval from the Washington office. Moreover, there was also the need for producing a resource management plan to forecast the future goals and objectives of the fledgling program. Contor had thought, it seemed, that while this process was underway, independent researchers affiliated with universities and other agencies might fill the void, and thus he emphasized the opportunities the new parkland held for research, especially in the form of research natural areas. We want to make an "all-out effort to learn as much as possible" about the North Cascades "to preserve the most important elements for future scientific study." Speaking at a Northwest scientific symposium on natural areas in the spring of 1970, Contor noted that some progress was being made in funding a survey of possible research natural areas in the park and he encouraged others to assist in the process by submitting proposals to his office. Similar to the Leopold committee's recommendation for setting aside research areas in national parks, the research natural areas would "preserve typical or unusual biological or geologic features, associations, or other phenomena. It is our ultimate objective to preserve examples of all significant ecosystems." [7] By the late 1970s, Contor's promotion met with some success, for at least five research natural areas had either been proposed or approved. (These were Boston Glacier, Stetattle Creek, Pyramid Lake, Ridley Lake, and Silver Lake.) [8]

The ability of research to aid in park management did not necessarily focus on the natural environment itself. Contor believed that understanding the park complex's human past occupied an important role in understanding the environment of this new park area as a whole. To this end, historian Erwin Thompson produced the first survey of the park complex's history, charting the basic themes of Indian and white history in the North Cascades. The study complemented other studies that documented the complex's mining sites
and homesteads, and gave managers greater insight into how humans had interacted with the park's natural systems.[9]

Ironically, some of the most extensive research conducted in the park during its early phase of management had little to do with the Park Service's management but rather with Seattle City Light's plans to raise Ross Lake. City Light's controversial project, which raised objections from environmentalists on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border, led to a series of biological surveys of the project area to assess the impact of the higher lake level. Scientists from Canada and the United States, some working for City Light, others for private groups or state agencies, conducted fairly extensive studies of Ross Lake and the Skagit Valley's wildlife, fisheries, and forest communities. By the mid-1970s, as part of the Federal Power Commission's requirements for its amended license, City Light undertook thorough aquatic and fisheries studies of its entire Skagit River project -- including Ross, Diablo, and Gorge lakes and the Skagit River below Newhalem. This long-term investigation produced a considerable amount of research throughout the remainder of the decade, as the complicated process of assessing environmental impacts and solving international conflicts produced by City Light's plans wore on. For the most part, as with other facets of the High Ross affair in the 1970s, the Park Service remained largely neutral on the research front, except for a study by Dr. Grant Sharpe to assess the project's damage to the Big Beaver Valley at the request of the Park Service in the early stages of the controversy. Otherwise, the park's research biologist, Robert Wasem, kept abreast of the ongoing investigations and reports, all of which might eventually assist park officials in their management efforts.[10]

Despite the attention the High Ross affair drew, park managers put together a rather impressive research program; its success varied with funding, need, and the ability of a relatively small staff -- usually limited to one permanent biologist and seasonals -- to carry out projects for a such a wild and large area. The assignment of Wasem to the park's staff in 1970 marked a high point in the park's nascent research and resource management program. (At this time in the park's history there was no formal division of resource management.) Wasem came to the park from Glacier and for at least half a year was employed by the agency's Washington office of Natural Science Studies before he, and all field biologists, were transferred to park staffs. By the end of 1972, Wasem had begun preparing the park's resource management plan with a committee headed by the regional scientist. He had also prepared a list of the approved natural resource studies. The resource management plan was more a research plan and largely ineffective because it was not formally tied to the park's budget, and because priorities in the young park changed quickly causing many of the proposals to be out of date. On the other hand, the research list was significant for several reasons. First, the twenty-four projects attested to the new park's need for research into nearly every aspect of its natural environment. Without these, as one North Cascades official noted, decisions affecting park resources would only be informed by "educated guesses." Second, many of the proposals went unfunded during the park's first decade of management. Although independent researchers connected with universities often carried out studies, their results were seldom known and their use to management were rarely of any value to park management. The list of unfunded research projects included proposals for ecological and zoological inventories, a study of plant succession, water pollution studies, exotic plant surveys, a study of the history of human uses of natural resources, an investigation of the park's climate and glacial activity, a review of the area's geologic research, a forest resource survey of the lower Stehekin Valley to manage the firewood cutting program, and ecosystem surveys to assess the impact of the park's proposed visitor-use developments (Roland Point and backcountry hostels, for example). Still other studies were needed to assess the consumption and possible regulation of resources such as river gravel, sand, and soil in the Stehekin River Valley.[11]

Finally, those projects that were undertaken reflected the most pressing management
priorities. And thus they received funding and were carried out by the park biologist as well as by independent researchers under contract. These projects included, as one might imagine, studies of human impacts on, and the restoration of, the park complex's subalpine zone, a botanical inventory, forest fire ecology, studies of the North Cascades complex's aquatic ecology -- an umbrella project for the complex's many high mountain lakes, and streams -- and the related study of assessing the effects of sport fish introduction upon naturally fishless high mountain lakes.

Repairing the sensitive subalpine environment formed a central component of the park complex's backcountry management program. Park managers depended on the volunteer work of Joe and Margaret Miller whose revegetation studies of Cascade Pass and their forest fire ecology study in the 1970s proved invaluable to the rehabilitation of this and other low-elevation passes in the park's wilderness. (Because of this, other studies, and the agency's interest in restoring natural processes, park managers developed a fire management plan to allow, within certain guidelines, naturally caused fires to burn in order to perpetuate natural ecosystems.)[12] In addition, agency officials contracted with George Douglas, a botanist at the University of Alberta, to conduct a study on revegetation of sub-alpine denuded areas. His work assisted park managers in their restoration efforts. Without the volunteer efforts of the Millers and the work of contract botanists like Douglas, the park's subalpine-zone passes would not have received the attention and rehabilitation they deserved, nor would the complex's backcountry management have fared as well as it did.

Throughout the 1970s, North Cascades Biologist Wasem conducted at least seven research projects, the majority of which concentrated on the park's lakes, reservoirs, and rivers with particular emphasis on their ecology and native or nonnative fish populations. By the middle of the decade, Wasem could count on the assistance of several seasonal biological technicians in carrying out these and other projects. However, biological research by its very nature took place over a rather long period of time, made even longer by the short-working seasons in the high country of the North Cascades. Yet Wasem's work was to serve a management purpose: to determine, according to agency policies, the natural condition of the complex's lakes and rivers. Ultimately, his research intersected with the first high profile resource management controversy of the new parkland's first ten years: the question of fish stocking in the high lakes of North Cascades.

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In the mid-1970s, Wasem's research, though not complete, suggested that many of the national park's high mountain lakes were naturally fish free, but many had been stocked over the past thirty or more years by the Washington State Department of Game -- and with the department's permission by private sport-fishing associations -- with native and non-native fish. While sport fishing in national parks dates to the creation of Yellowstone and was "enhanced" through stocking programs in many of the nation's parks, the Park Service reconsidered this policy in light of the Leopold Report, especially with its emphasis on returning park environments to their "original condition" and eliminating exotic species. Furthermore, much of the discussion hinged upon the meanings of the words "barren" and "native." Lakes without fish, for example, were often considered to be barren by the state; this implied the lakes were sterile pools of water, which was not the case at all. The best description of these lakes was "fish free," according to Park Service officials. And for the state to plant fish native to this region was highly problematic. As agency officials pointed out, an introduced fish was not native to a lake that was fish free. Lakes were not cornfields prepared for harvest.

In 1975, based on Wasem's research, Superintendent Lowell White instituted a new policy for the park's high mountain lakes stating, in essence, that the agency would no longer stock
naturally barren lakes and would not restock those lakes into which native trout had been introduced, since most of these lakes could support naturally reproducing populations and provide anglers with a "reasonable catch." The new policy would not affect the complex's two recreation areas and their sport fisheries; Ross, Diablo, and Gorge lakes as well as Lake Chelan continued to be stocked by the game department. [14]

Overall, the goal of this policy was to allow natural processes to take over by gradually phasing out "all stocking over the next 50 years," Wasem wrote, thereby leaving "only naturally reproducing trout as inhabitants of the naturally fish free high lakes of the North Cascades." From a scientific standpoint, this policy represented a compromise, for it recognized that in cases where lakes had been planted with trout, mainly rainbow and cutthroat, these lakes and their fish populations would be considered "natural" or "wild" as long as they continued to reproduce without human assistance. At the same time, it also recognized that the agency had the responsibility of preserving the integrity of the park's "remaining aquatic ecosystems" (or fish free lakes), not just from fish stocking but also from over use and thus the impacts their fragile shorelines and plant life sustained. [15]

Superintendent White's attempt to halt fish stocking in the park's high mountain lakes was met with immediate and loud choruses of anger from sport fishing groups (the Washington State Hi-Lakers and Trailblazers) and considerable resistance from the game department. The fishing groups had been stocking trout in the high lakes of Washington's Cascades since the mid-1930s, and considered the stocking program as "theirs" and bristled at any interference. They protested the new policy because they believed that the Park Service was reneging on its commitments to fish management. Both the congressional hearings on the park's establishment and the park complex's legislation mandated the agency to cooperate with the game department in fish and wildlife management. The argument here, of course, was that since the legislation called for cooperation and gave the game department the authority to grant hunting and fishing licenses in the park complex, the Park Service should continue to honor the past practices of stocking high mountain lakes. In fact, these groups believed that the game department, not the Park Service, had jurisdiction over the new park's fish and wildlife. Members of the Hi-Lakers and Trailblazers worried that without stocking their angling adventures into the high country of the North Cascades would be diminished. And they resented it. [16]

Superintendent White tried unsuccessfully to convince these sports fishermen of the virtues of managing and restoring nature to its original condition. In the summer of 1975, for example, he informed them that the fish stocking in high lakes of national parks was being "phased out," noting the course taken by Yellowstone and Glacier. This, however, did not necessarily apply to the high lakes of recreation areas. White acknowledged that sport fishing was "an approved type of visitor activity in natural areas and recreation areas." Yet based on guidelines stemming from the Leopold Report, the agency only encouraged sport fishing in natural areas as long as it did not interfere with the "restoration and perpetuation" of aquatic ecosystems. In this respect, he stated, trout were "not native to the high mountain lakes of the North Cascades." There were too many physical barriers to upstream fish migration and thus their presence was the result of artificial introduction by man, and therefore park policy would no longer allow fish stocking. [17] Leaders in the sport fishing organizations responded to White's policy explanation as simply an unsubstantiated, vague reason for betraying the public and its right to fish in the North Cascades. The organizations, in turn, brought considerable political pressure against White and the Park Service, involving Senator Henry M. Jackson's office, and forced the Park Service to reconsider its position. [18]

Another force pressing the agency to reconsider its position was the Washington State Department of Game. The legislation creating the North Cascades complex made special provision for the management of fish and wildlife. The creation of Lake Chelan NRA, for
example, was largely the result of lobbying from hunters. Moreover, out of concern for state fishery management, the legislation creating Lake Chelan NRA was meant to accommodate existing or planned fish hatchery programs in the Stehekin River drainage at the head of Lake Chelan, mainly the Company Creek hatchery. On the subject of jurisdiction, the legislation recognized the game department and its past management practices in the North Cascades and thus stipulated that the department would issue hunting licenses in the recreation areas and fishing licenses in the entire complex. Finally, the legislation asserted that both the game department and the Park Service should enter into a cooperative agreement for the management of the park complex's fish and game. To this end, Superintendent Contor, along with Olympic National Park Superintendent Bennett Gale, met with the game department's director, John Biggs, and drafted a memorandum of understanding between the two agencies in late 1968. Although the Park Service approved of the document, the game department never seemed to act on it officially. Nevertheless, relations between the two agencies appeared to be good. State field biologists worked with park biologist Bob Wasem on a number of projects and management concerns which included increasing deer browse in Ross Lake NRA, cooperating in deer habitat and population studies, looking at the possible reintroduction of native wildlife such as bighorn sheep, conducting surveys of the park complex's wildlife, overseeing hunting in the recreation areas, and coordinating fish management.

It was on this latter issue that the two agencies clashed. When Washington Department of Game officials learned of the Park Service's new policy for the high lakes in North Cascades, they were angry. They interpreted the policy as a serious infringement on their fish management program in what was now the park. Of the 235 lakes (reservoirs, lakes, and ponds) identified in the complex, according to game department biologist Douglas Fletcher, the department could only include 54 in its program; most of these were in the recreation areas and none of them was in the high country. Fletcher and the department maintained that the North Cascades legislation intended for recreational fishing to continue in park and recreation areas, and that both agencies were responsible for maintaining the fishery. The department, like the sport fishing groups, did not agree with the park's policy of managing the lakes to preserve their natural conditions. State biologists also contended that there was not enough evidence to determine which lakes were fish free before whites arrived, that the policy unfairly singled out anglers (who were not necessarily responsible for damage to high lake environments), and that the no-stocking policy was inconsistent with practices in other parks. As Fletcher concluded:

> Our administration feels very strongly that we have an important stake in the high lakes of the North Cascades Complex and it was certainly not our understanding at the time of the creation of the Park Complex, or now, that we have given up any authority to manage fish populations in the complex....[W]e feel that to give up a management option on the remaining high lakes in the Park would be a severe blow to our high lake program in this part of the State and to the high lake anglers who use them. The intent of the legislation is clear, and fishing is certainly a recreational value. [19]

In response to mounting political pressure from special interest groups and the game department, Superintendent White proposed a "policy variance" for the North Cascades. In other words, as a solution to the political fallout created by the Park Service's policy of no fish stocking in high mountain lakes, he proposed that "such a variance be on a lake-by-lake basis and not include lakes containing a self-sustaining population or that are presently naturally barren of fish life." [20] The reasoning behind this proposal, White stated, was that should the Park Service take a hard stance against stocking, it was likely that some disgruntled fishermen might illegally stock exotic species of fish in the high lakes, and thus the policy would accomplish nothing. Moreover, a policy variance might also appease the
game department and lead to a more formal memorandum of understanding between the two agencies on fish management than the 1968 agreement. [21]

The policy variance proposal eventually reached the Park Service's Washington office in December 1975, where the directorship denied it. Regional Director Russell Dickenson requested the Washington office to reconsider the proposal the following year. Dickenson pointed out that critics of the North Cascades fish stocking policy had a case, based on past practices and statements made by former Director George Hartzog during the congressional hearings on the park complex's establishment. Even though Hartzog did not specifically say that his agency would continue to plant fish in the North Cascades, his reference to the Park Service's fish-stocking practices was taken literally by sportsmen's groups, and current policies, in their minds, did not apply. The regional director recommended flexibility in this case, for the political repercussions could influence agency management practices in other areas. (Dickenson was referring in particular to recent attempts to halt fish stocking in several national parks in California. He maintained North Cascades was different because it had some legislative history referring to the practice.) By allowing some fish stocking to continue in selected high lakes, he concluded, fish planting "would phase itself out in a few more years." [22]

In July 1976, Dickenson reported that he had decided, apparently without the formal blessing of the agency's directorship, "to affirm our commitment to fish stocking" in North Cascades under the policy variance. The intent here was to work out a variance as part of a memorandum of understanding with the Washington Department of Game. Meanwhile, game department officials blasted the policy variance and its guidelines, all of which smacked of the same unwarranted restrictions proposed earlier. At one point, the game department notified Superintendent White that it intended to go forward with fish planting as planned in order to "maintain what is left of the sports fishery which we and interested sportsmen have worked so diligently to develop and frankly protect by the formation of the North Cascades Park and wilderness area." The issue here was one of jurisdiction, and the game department was asserting its authority to carry out its program without the Park Service's permission, something the regional solicitor determined the game department could not do. The department, in short, could only manage the fish and wildlife within the park as long as it was in concert with the area's management plans. [23]

The fish-stocking issue was not fully resolved in the 1970s. Despite some posturing, both sides eventually agreed to revisit the issue as part of an attempt to develop a memorandum of understanding for fish management in the North Cascades. By 1978, the variance, modified several times, was finally accepted as part of the first statewide cooperative agreement between the Park Service and the Washington Department of Game. Although all interested parties cooperated, the issue would flare up again when management priorities in the park changed in the 1980s. [24]

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While not nearly as politically contentious as the fish-stocking controversy, wildlife management mainly focused on inventorying and monitoring the complex's wildlife populations -- deer, mountain goats, mountain lions, coyotes, and bears, among many others - and their habitats. In all of this, bear management marked the most visible wildlife management issue of the park's first decade. Historically, bear management has been the Park Service's most complicated animal management problem. Bears, of course, were sources of entertainment in many of the nation's oldest parks where visitors gathered to watch them feed at the bear pits or take handouts by the roadsides and in campgrounds. When the Park Service began to curtail this activity, bears accustomed to easy handouts began to forage through campgrounds and food service areas and inevitably damaged property and injured,
sometimes killed, park visitors. To avoid these problems, the Park Service attempted a variety of solutions -- educating visitors, bear-proofing garbage containers, relocating "problem bears," and destroying "offensive bears" who posed a threat to human life. Unfortunately, destroying bears became the easiest solution in some parks. Even after the Park Service adopted a management policy based on ecological principles, bear problems persisted in most national parks. By now though, the agency had adopted more strategies to avoid human-bear conflicts, and initiated research to help solve bear problems. The need for this became especially apparent in the late 1960s and 1970s as more park visitors headed into the backcountry, thus increasing encounters with bears. Bear research emerged as one of the high points of Park Service wildlife management, leading to better methods of drugging, handling, and relocating bears from problem areas, as well as sanitizing campgrounds and storing food, all of which contributed to visitor safety. Yet for all of this research, bear management remained problematic and controversial, since people, their food, and bears continued to come into contact in national parks, and thus the potential for destructive and potentially dangerous encounters remained. [25]

These trends characterized much of the bear management in the first decade of the park complex's management. On the one hand, the new parkland held the potential for one of the Northwest's last stronghold of the grizzly. When Superintendent Contor first arrived, he learned that biologists from the Washington Department of Game as well as Canadian wildlife biologists had seen grizzlies in the upper Skagit basin near the Canadian border in what was now the park complex. Although other sightings of the bears were few and difficult to verify, Contor's spirits were buoyed when Washington State prohibited hunting of grizzlies in 1969. He had discussed the issue with game department officials and believed that these discussions and the creation of the North Cascades complex may have contributed to this decision. Manning Provincial Park across the border in British Columbia protected the grizzly and now so would North Cascades National Park. Perhaps, he concluded, "we will have the grizzly around for a while." [26]

Grizzly bears, however, never seemed to make their presence known in the park complex after these initial sightings. Black bears, on the other hand, were a source of concern in both the Stehekin and Skagit valleys as incidents of property damage and encounters with visitors and residents rose. As in most parks, problems with bears occurred primarily in campgrounds. Unlike most parks, however, encounters with bears in Stehekin arose from other sources as well, primarily private homes and the Stehekin dump. Although rangers trapped and relocated problem bears in the Skagit Valley, Stehekin posed still another variation to this approach, since it was difficult, or impossible altogether, to remove bears from the valley. (Some problem bears were captured and barged down the lake, and then they were released on national forest land without the Forest Service's knowledge.) And with the influx of visitors to the new park and thus an increase in camping in the valley, it did not take bears long to nose out this new source of food. To some degree, hunting in the recreation areas limited the black bear population. But even this was complicated in Stehekin where park managers restricted bear hunting to the upper valley, away from popular bear feeding grounds like the Buckner apple orchard, to make the event more sporting. The restrictions were also intended to protect people in this relatively populous section of the recreation area. Despite relocation and removal practices, and closing the Stehekin dump, some bears were killed annually in either district to protect life and property.

In 1975, park managers drafted a bear management plan to address the bear problems in both front country and backcountry areas. The main theme of the plan was "to give uniform guidance in the control of 'problem' bears," the main thrust of which was to "prevent bear problems from developing." The plan stressed increasing visitor education, bear-proofing garbage cans and removing garbage on a frequent basis, closing all garbage dumps, among other sanitary measures, as well as improving camping facilities by installing cables for food
storage and closing areas to visitors where bears posed a threat to human life. In Stehekin this last approach was important since relocating bears required a helicopter and one was not always available. The last resort, in controlled situations, was destroying the bear. The success of the bear management program following the release of the plan seems to have been mixed. Black bears continued to be a "problem." They did not injure visitors or Stehekin residents, yet they damaged property. Almost every year residents killed bears claiming the animals were trying to break into their homes after fruit and other foods. [27]
Among the many factors influencing the management of North Cascades, hydropower commands, perhaps, the greatest attention. Hydroelectric projects literally have shaped the landscape of the park and created an array of management issues. In the late 1920s, for example, a hydroelectric dam raised the level of the picturesque Lake Chelan, and in the late 1950s, a similar project on the Baker River, which rises in the park's high country, formed the modern Baker Lake just west of the park. In both cases, the hydroelectric operations lie outside the boundaries of the parkland but their manipulation of the level of the lakes for power production has potential consequences inside the park, ranging from shoreline erosion to the destruction of fish populations. Nature, and indeed altered nature, knows no boundaries.

The true centerpiece of hydroelectric power in North Cascades, however, is Seattle City Light's Skagit River Hydroelectric Project. Located in Ross Lake National Recreation Area (NRA), the project's three dams -- Gorge, Diablo, and Ross -- harness power from the Skagit and form a chain of emerald green lakes that bear their names. Dealing with Seattle City Light and its plans to expand its power production proved to be one of the most contentious episodes in the history of the new park. Although City Light had a number of proposals to construct new dams, the utility's main focus was increasing the height of Ross Dam, and thus the High Ross project, as it came to be known, became the most volatile and contested issue of the day. In short, it became a defining issue in how the Park Service would deal with its largest and most powerful tenant and, in turn, manage Ross Lake NRA.

In the late 1960s, Seattle City Light moved forward with its plans to increase the height of Ross Dam. The High Ross project would have raised the level of Ross Lake flooding miles of shoreline within Ross Lake NRA and flooding most of the Skagit River Valley in British Columbia. Raising the dam, completed in 1949, had been in City Light's original plans, as a means to increase power production for a growing metropolitan area. In 1942, the International Joint Commission approved of the city's project and the city had signed an agreement with British Columbia officials to compensate the province for damages. But in the early 1950s, British Columbia tried to back out of the agreement, stalling the project. In the 1960s, the movement to establish North Cascades National Park further threatened the project. In 1967, however, City Light had reached an agreement with Canada, which evidently allowed it to flood Canada, and the legislation creating North Cascades in 1968 assured the utility that the Park Service would not interfere with its plans. Although the city's way to completing its project seemed clear, environmentalists on both sides of the border rose up in opposition. They contended that High Ross would destroy the free-flowing Canadian Skagit, fish populations, wildlife habitat, and more of the northern Cascades' wild country. The government of British Columbia joined in to fight the project on environmental as well as legal grounds, asserting that Seattle could not adequately compensate the province for the loss of its valley.
Complex and contentious, the High Ross controversy dragged on into the early 1980s. By this time, the two government bodies responsible for settling such matters, the Federal Power Commission (FPC) and the International Joint Commission (IJC), had ruled in favor of Seattle City Light. That is, the FPC approved the amendment to City Light's license (needed to raise Ross Dam), and the IJC determined that City Light's legal right to flood Canada was valid, based on the 1967 agreement. Furthermore, neither one believed that the environmental consequences were significant enough to stop the project.

At the same time, however, the IJC preferred that Seattle and British Columbia negotiate a settlement. Popular sentiment was overwhelmingly in favor of protecting the wild lands of the northern Cascades and upper Skagit Valley. Although Seattle maintained it had the legal right to flood the upper Skagit Valley, it eventually agreed to seek a negotiated settlement, especially in the highly charged environmental politics of the period. Recent events such as the default of the Washington Public Power Supply System and the passage of the Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act had damaged the image of public power and placed a greater emphasis on energy conservation. As a result, City Light's argument for raising the dam -- for peaking power in winter months -- lost its vigor. More importantly, the issue had become an international incident of sorts. At one point, B.C. protesters lined the remote U.S.-Canada border at the northern edge of Ross Lake to save the upper Skagit Valley from "Yankee oppression." Thus, in 1984, more for diplomatic and political than environmental reasons, the two sides signed a treaty in which British Columbia would compensate Seattle with power comparable to what would have been generated by High Ross in return for the city suspending the project. [3]

The High Ross affair's status as an environmental issue of international proportions has obscured one major point: The raising of the dam was to take place within a unit of the American national park system. Curiously enough, Ross Lake NRA shared its border with British Columbia and would, in the end, benefit from that relationship. That is, the resolution prevented the recreation area from being flooded, and one might say, Canada saved Ross Lake NRA for the American public albeit indirectly. What role did the Park Service play? After all, it was the agency directly responsible for the area's protection.

The Park Service's role in the controversy reveals that it underwent the same change of heart as many Americans about dams. This was a period of some twenty years when changing times and values revised the image of dams from symbols of progress to symbols of ecological disaster. This popular reorientation evolved on both sides of the border and brought the High Ross project to a halt. [4] It would influence how park managers viewed their role in managing the recreation area. Although Ross Lake was artificially created, the Park Service ultimately regarded the protection of its natural environment as its primary purpose. The agency arrived at this position, however, slowly. Its approach to managing recreation areas presented something of a dam dilemma. Should they be managed for development or preservation? The agency's position on this was unclear initially; the legislation governing the recreation area was confusing, and faced with political pressure to both protect and develop Ross Lake, the agency seemed uncertain about the management direction it should take.

It appeared that British Columbia would play a greater role in protecting a parkland in another country than the agency assigned to that task. The reason for this, in part, lies in the Park Service's strange relationship with dams. Originally, the agency protected the nation's premier natural areas. The agency's creation in 1916, in fact, had been precipitated by the recent damming of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park. But during the 1930s, it began to manage reservoirs created by other federal agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation. Taking over the management of recreation areas (like Lake Mead, the first) was
part of the agency's expansion during the New Deal. It increased the Park Service's chances of survival in the government's reorganization by giving it the lead role in recreational planning and development for the nation. It was a move, critics argued, that distracted the agency from its true mission and opened the door to the proposed damming of Echo Park in Dinosaur National Monument -- the Hetch Hetchy of the 1950s. [5]

The evolution of the Park Service's management of parks and recreation areas is illustrated well in the northern Cascades. For the first time, a national park and two recreation areas were under one administration. What most accounts of the High Ross affair fail to appreciate is that all three areas function as an interrelated whole, and thus they tend to isolate Ross Lake from its larger setting. But in reality, what happens to it affects the half-million acre national park, the dominant feature of this region, particularly because the recreation area roughly bisects the park.

Besides its administrative function, the park complex represented a significant victory in wilderness preservation in the postwar era. But the new parkland's establishment represented the concessions necessary to achieve that victory. One of the many political compromises leading to the creation of North Cascades was that lawmakers drew the boundaries around Ross Lake to accommodate High Ross. (This, of course, was in addition to other proposed projects such as the one on Thunder Creek that influenced the recreation area's boundaries.) Moreover, lawmakers retained the FPC's authority over hydroelectric projects in the recreation area's legislation and thus prevented the Park Service from interfering with High Ross. [6]

What, one might ask, was Congress thinking? Had it forgotten the public outcry over the loss of Hetch Hetchy or the more recent but thwarted attempts to dam Dinosaur or the Grand Canyon? Apparently, Congress reasoned that the rising waters would not submerge any lands within a national park, and therefore would not violate the sanctity of a national park. [7] The lawmakers, of course, had miscalculated at a time of heightened environmental awareness in which dams had become the equivalent of environmental sin. Groups like the Sierra Club and North Cascades Conservation Council (N3C), among the most active in the North Cascades campaign, fought the project because the loss of any more wild lands, whether in a park or recreation area, was unacceptable. In their minds, this isolated, man-made lake, set in a jumble of precipitous, glacier-clad peaks, possessed the scenic qualities and unique natural wonders of a national park and deserved similar protection. For them, wilderness persisted even around a reservoir, and they argued that the legislation had wrongfully omitted several scenic wilderness valleys from the park, such as Big Beaver, out of deference to the High Ross project. [8]

Throughout most of the High Ross controversy, however, the Park Service seemed unresponsive to these views. To be sure, the agency found itself constricted by law and forced into neutrality on the issue, but it was also reluctant to assert itself in the protection of Ross Lake's natural values. This hesitancy reveals another reason for the agency's role in the High Ross affair. Besides the strange relationship with dams, there were the paradoxes associated with national park management. The management philosophy of preservation and use, now familiar in the annals of national park history, increased popular support for parks but all too often at the expense of the their natural conditions. Even in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the agency had adopted a management policy based more on ecological principles, its ability to break with tradition was uneven at best. [9]

If the agency's commitment to preservation of national parks has seemed at times ambiguous, its management of national recreation areas has raised even more doubts. Recreation areas were the second cousins of parks. The public's expectations of the agency, regardless of what kind of area it managed, were high; it cared for the nation's parks and should treat anything
else under its jurisdiction with similar respect. In 1964, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall attempted to clarify the distinction between areas under the Park Service's jurisdiction. He separated them into three management categories, natural, historical, and recreational, each with its own management concept and administrative policies. In doing so, he affirmed recreation areas' lower stature. In a recreation area, a wide variety of uses, such as fishing, hunting, boating, timber harvesting, and mining, were acceptable with certain provisions. While this policy recognized the expansion in outdoor recreation in the nation and the addition of nontraditional parklands like national seashores, it made the protection of the natural environment a secondary priority. In these areas, the agency only had to present a "pleasing environment" to the public. [10]

The recreation policy manual, in an attempt to clarify intent, left a great deal of the area's actual management open to interpretation. Management was based on the recreation area's enabling legislation, the fuzziness of congressional intent, and the Park Service's own ambiguous management philosophy. In seemingly concrete language, the legislation for Ross Lake NRA stated that its purpose was to "provide for public outdoor recreation" and protection of the area's "other values" was only important insofar as it contributed "to the public enjoyment" of the area. [11] The most important information regarding the recreation area's management did not appear in the legislation but in a statement by Secretary Udall during the 1967 Senate hearings on the North Cascades bill. Udall, in short, declared that the "basic reasons" for creating Ross Lake NRA were to permit High Ross and a broader range of recreational activities than "normally the custom within a National Park." [12]

Although it seemed that Ross Lake NRA was officially approved for liberal uses, similar to a national forest, each group with an interest in the area's management interpreted its purpose differently, and in turn created further management conflicts and controversy. Preservationists, for example, believed High Ross was a political birthmark in the park's creation, something it would grow out of later. In their view, the purpose of North Cascades was wilderness preservation; the decade-long, bitter struggle to create the area had proven that. And they criticized the Park Service for excluding the project area from its wilderness designations covering the entire park and portions of the recreation areas. [13]

For its part, Seattle City Light was unwavering in its own literal interpretation of Udall's statement, treating it as the central purpose of the recreation area and one of its justifications for pressing forward with the project. Nationally renowned as a successful public utility, City Light tended to see engineered nature as just as valuable as wilderness, and implied after the park's establishment that it had "created" the recreation area by making the Skagit Valley's wilderness "usable." High Ross would only create more "usable wilderness," enhancing rather than interfering with the Park Service's management of the recreation area. [14]

In either case, Congress' intent was purposefully vague. High Ross was a political expedient, something Washington's Senator Henry M. Jackson agreed to in order to accomplish the larger goal of creating the park. By withdrawing High Ross from the proposed park's boundaries, Jackson eliminated one of the many road blocks to the park complex's creation; it was a compromise that left the final decision on the project up to the FPC and not Congress. Though it may have appeared he was granting his approval of the project, the veteran politician knew that in the current political climate City Light faced a stiff challenge from environmentalists. [15]

Confronted with these differing views, the Park Service fell back on its standard approach to conflict. It tried to please everyone. Throughout its history, the agency depended on public opinion and federal appropriations for its survival. In short, its management decisions have at times seemed more concerned with achieving popularity than taking a hard-nosed stance in protecting biological resources. Its approach to managing Ross Lake NRA, at least for most
of the 1970s, did not focus on protecting the recreation area's natural values. This was a highly controversial topic during the FPC's licensing process and the 1974 hearings. Maintaining its neutrality, the agency let others come to the defense of the Big Beaver Valley's "cathedral of trees" and what forest ecologists testified was an irreplaceable laboratory of nature; it was one of the most ecologically significant sites in western Washington for studying a bottom-land boggy cedar environment. [16]

Instead, the agency embarked on a program for developing Ross Lake for recreation. This after all was the area's primary mission. It was also a program for which the Park Service could count on strong political support. Perhaps most confusing about this approach was the agency's conceptualization of the recreation area as a "wilderness threshold." A staging area at the edge of the park's wilderness, it would introduce visitors to the "mood and temper of the wild country" beyond. [17] This meant that the recreation areas (in the park complex) would be the focus of visitor services and developments, removing traditional park development pressures from the park itself. [18]

But rather than eliminating development conflicts, this strategy merely transferred them from one area to another. As preservationists discovered, wilderness threshold seemed to be a euphemism for large-scale development. They pointed to the agency's plans for tramways, large-scale development at Roland Point on Ross Lake, and a road to Roland Point from Highway 20 as evidence. The immediate issue at hand was one that has affected all parks historically -- access. Access, along with the agency's strange relationship with dams and management paradoxes, further illustrates why the agency seemed to hesitate when it came to protecting the area's natural environment. Without the Roland Point project, there would be no highway access to the southern end of Ross Lake.

The Roland Point road and lake shore development were eventually shelved, due to prohibitive costs, environmental impacts, and opposition from preservationists. But political pressure for something similar remained and led to perhaps the strangest event of all. The National Park Service endorsed the High Ross project. The main reason for this was that while it could not afford financially, environmentally, or politically to build a road to or provide services on the lake itself, it could get City Light to provide virtually the same thing as part of its construction of High Ross. The agency could make such a request as part of the licensing process for High Ross (otherwise known as Exhibit R). It was one of few areas the agency actually had any control over in this stage of the licensing process. [19]

By doing so, the agency solved its access problem. But it created another one in the process. By promoting High Ross, albeit as a planning alternative, the agency appeared to be on the verge of the inconceivable, turning back a century of national park preservation. That the dam was in a recreation area did not matter, for it was the agency charged with protecting the nation's parks that had made the decision. In order to bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to the shores of Ross Lake, national park managers were willing to concede the loss of Big Beaver Valley and the lake's other natural values. In doing so, they would fulfill the area's purpose and what was interpreted as Congress' intent -- to make the lake reasonably accessible for water-oriented recreation. All this to save park visitors the drive through Canada.

Condemning as this sounds, the Park Service's position was, once again, not entirely clear. During the 1974 FPC hearings, former Secretary of the Interior Udall testimony's cast doubt on the Park Service's position. Udall testified that the High Ross exemption had indeed been a political expedient and that he believed personally that the project should not go forward because of the environmental and scenic damage it would cause. Then, shortly after it endorsed High Ross, the Park Service began to back-pedal and shifted its emphasis to the protection of the recreation area's biological resources. When the Federal Power Commission
released its initial approval of High Ross in 1976, North Cascades park managers petitioned the Department of the Interior to intervene before a final license was issued. Their reason for intervention concerned the loss of natural resources in the recreation area -- Big Beaver's ancient trees, beaver ponds, cutthroat trout spawning grounds, and scenic attractions such as waterfalls, high bluffs, and rock outcroppings. They did not mention recreational developments. [20]

The agency's request had little effect on the licensing process. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (which replaced the FPC) approved City Light's amended license to raise Ross Dam in 1977. Afterwards, a coalition of environmental groups (both American and Canadian), the U.S. Department of the Interior, and a number of affected Indian tribes (Upper Skagit Tribe, Swinomish Tribal Community, and Sauk-Suiattle Tribe) requested a rehearing. While the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) granted the new hearing, it issued its final approval of the amended license in August 1978. And even though environmentalists, led by N3C and the British Columbia-based Run Out Skagit Spoilers (ROSS), appealed the decision to the Washington, D.C., Circuit Court of Appeals in 1980, the court upheld the decision, bringing the legal suits against the amended license to a close.

Nevertheless, the Park Service's role in this process demonstrated that its emphasis had changed in the management of national recreation areas. The preservation of natural values was now its greatest concern. This happened, one might say, because the environmental movement finally had caught up with the Park Service. This new emphasis grew out of numerous environmental laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (1969), and more specifically out of amendments to the Park Service's Organic Act in 1970 and 1978. These revisions, among other things, asserted that the agency's mission statement applied to all park units, including recreation areas, and affirmed that only Congress could authorize activities that might impair the values and purposes for which an area of the national park system was established. In other words, Congress determined that the agency's management categories had weakened rather than strengthened the park system from internal as well as external threats. The system, according to Congress, should be managed as an integrated whole. More important, all areas within the park system should be managed with the same regard as national parks. Thus, the service abandoned the separate management categories in the late 1970s and at least in theory began treating Ross Lake NRA as a national park. [21]

The most striking example of this was the Park Service's control over access to the dam site. Rather than supporting High Ross, now agency officials "unofficially" blocked the project with a special use permit. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Seattle City Light anxiously attempted to complete the final phase of Ross Dam, after it appeared the utility had won approval and before British Columbia could get the IJC to hear its case again. (B.C. was contesting not only the 1967 agreement but also the 1942 Order in Council which had precipitated much of this controversy.) And thus for a brief moment the only thing that stood between the dam and its completion was the permit itself. The permit would have allowed City Light to build a construction road across a small section of Park Service land from Highway 20 down to the dam. In return for that permit, the agency required three things: 1) that the legal suits against its license be resolved, 2) that it settle its differences with British Columbia, and 3) that it complete an environmental assessment of the road's construction. Officially, the agency claimed that these provisions were only practical; without the first two there would be no reason to build the road at all. Unofficially, it was stalling the project, in effect holding it hostage, while British Columbia continued to contest Seattle's authority to flood the Skagit Valley before the IJC. [22]

However progressive and assertive the Park Service had become in the protection of Ross Lake, it could only delay but not prevent or openly resist High Ross. It was serendipitous, then, that British Columbia contested Seattle's right to flood the upper Skagit Valley in the
early 1980s. The complicated 1984 agreement between Seattle and British Columbia ended a twenty-year struggle of what City Light called a seemingly "irreconcilable issue." [23] And the accompanying treaty between the United States and Canada removed an "environmental irritant" between the two countries at a time when environmental issues, such as acid rain in the Great Lakes region, were creating tensions along the borderland. [24]

Yet what has often been under-appreciated in this larger arena was that the agreement helped save an American parkland. This was an important turn of events, especially since at first the National Park Service seemed intent on developing the recreation area and supporting High Ross. In time, the agency solved its dam dilemma, but only after groping toward a policy position that would assure the protection of the recreation area's natural environment. In the end, the Park Service's approach to protecting Ross Lake NRA's natural values would not have been possible without British Columbia's persistent opposition to Seattle City Light's plans. The treaty has forged a relationship between Canada and the America public, and thus the National Park Service, in the protection of Ross Lake. The treaty is only a "paper dam," good through 2066, and thus Canada still controls the future of Ross Lake, for should it terminate its agreement, Seattle could, theoretically, build High Ross. The treaty further bonded the two countries in the protection of this parkland by establishing the Skagit Environmental Endowment Fund of $5 million for the enhancement of recreational opportunities in, and environmental protection of, the area above Ross Dam. The fund would be administered by a joint commission, known as the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission. The relationship fostered through the commission and fund, like Canada's role in protecting Ross Lake, was an unintended consequence. It suggests another aspect to our understanding of this international controversy, and that protecting national parks can come from unexpected sources and in indirect ways. [25]

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In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the High Ross resolution and the Park Service's new management approach to Ross Lake represented a significant stage in the park complex's history. In the near future, park managers would look to implement plans delayed by the controversy or to move forward with new ones. Likewise, resource management concerns would be approached in a similar fashion. But all was not finished with City Light, and a major undertaking awaited park managers. In 1977, City Light's license for the entire Skagit River project had expired. The High Ross affair, however, delayed relicensing until the mid-1980s. Although perhaps more complex and contentious than High Ross, as many agency officials were coming to realize, relicensing would offer new ways of interacting with City Light, especially in the protection of Ross Lake NRA's natural values.


Chapter 8:  
STEHEKIN: LAND OF FREEDOM AND WANT

Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (NRA) presented park managers with problems similar to those in Ross Lake National Recreation Area and the issues surrounding Seattle City Light's operations. They faced the challenge of managing a recreation area where the underlying question was whether or not the protection of natural values should take precedence over existing uses. At the center of Lake Chelan NRA's management, however, was something far different from a hydroelectric project. The focus here was the community of Stehekin, consisting of a vocal group of some ninety year-round residents who have captured the attention and time of Park Service staff.

The Park Service's management of the Stehekin Valley has been complicated by its classification as a national recreation area (many, including agency officials, have contended it should have been a national park) and its accompanying legislation and congressional documents. Equally important in complicating the valley's management has been Stehekin's image and its history as a place removed from the currents of modern America. Popular views of Stehekin suggest that it represents a place where America's pioneer past still exists, and this existence has had, and continues to have, a powerful hold on the imagination. Real or imagined, the frontier lifestyle of a self-sufficient, self-reliant people evokes passionate and often contrary opinions from individuals from all walks of life about how this place should be protected. Given the spirited individualism of residents and the values visitors find in the valley's isolated setting and remarkable scenery, there has been little popular consensus about the area's management, and thus the course taken by the Park Service naturally has been rocky.

One way to think of the Park Service's management issues in Stehekin is to frame them within the paradox that characterizes much of the history of the American West, the paradox of freedom and want. That is, Americans derived their sense of identity, their sense of being unrestrained and free, from the West's landscape of bountiful nature, a landscape where nature seems forever pristine and new and wears a powerfully attractive image. This condition of free land, open spaces, and natural wealth and beauty nurtured the myth of the American West. But at the other end of this state of mind was the fact that westerners came to dominate the natural world through technology, something they believed was a positive force, enabling them to extract minerals, build irrigation systems and dams, cut forests, and make other improvements for profits and livelihoods. The problem, of course, was that one came at the expense of the other; nature, restrained and altered by technology, could not offer a sense of freedom. [1]

This paradox, these opposing dreams, helps to understand the history of Stehekin, a microcosm of the western condition. At the turn of the century, the valley's impressive natural scenery and apparent wealth attracted the area's first miners and homesteaders and others who, more often with a greater margin of failure than success, pursued their visions of prosperity and new beginnings. Moreover, there is another element to this paradox that adds
some insight to Stehekin and the Park Service's presence: the role the federal government played in fostering -- and later protecting -- this sense of freedom through the ownership of property. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, the federal government distributed the public lands to Americans using a number of land laws. Soon after, however, when land speculation and resource depletion demonstrated the shortcomings of the agrarian ideal, the federal government closed the public domain to settlement. It then began to manage the nation's remaining public lands, with the rise of the conservation, as a kind of national commons -- forest reserves (national forests) and national parks being the most predominate areas. [2]

Federal land management not only regulated the use of the nation's forests and preserved the country's natural wonders, but it also helped maintain the feeling of freedom that westerners, residents of the Stehekin Valley included, derived from owning, and to a large extent, earning their living from their own land. For it was often the case that these lands were nested in, or were close to, federal lands. By protecting and managing the use of national forests surrounding private lands, such as those in Stehekin, the federal government helped perpetuate the ideal of self-reliance. The Forest Service, for example, prevented the wanton exploitation of the forests of the northern Cascades for commercial purposes that could have degraded the quality of life for Stehekin residents. In the meantime, residents were able to use these same forests, in accordance with regulations, for such things as grazing livestock or harvesting timber for their own subsistence. Paradoxically, the sense of freedom and individualism in places like Stehekin was to a large degree dependent upon a federal presence, a presence that has simultaneously engendered a hatred or dislike of the federal government because it represents a threat to the very sense of independence it has helped create. Generally speaking, westerners wanted the services and assistance provided by federal land management agencies, but they chafed at the limits to their liberty posed by the federal government.

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In Stehekin, park managers have had to come to terms with the paradox of freedom and want. This has meant striking an impossible balance, it seems, between allowing residents and land owners to maintain their lifestyles unimpeded by the federal government, while at the same time providing them with services and managing the valley in such a way that enables life here to continue much as it always has, one of the main points mandated by Congress in Lake Chelan NRA's enabling legislation. All of this, of course, has had to take into account agency policies, the purpose of Lake Chelan NRA, and the agency's responsibility to the American people. Put simply, the Park Service's management of Stehekin has been complex and contentious, weaving together the typical problems related to management of a national park area and those associated with a community.

During its first decade of administration in Stehekin, the Park Service acted, for the most part, as it did throughout the park complex. It set up its administration, and set out to purchase private lands. It also planned for, and made strides towards, the recreation area's use by improving, constructing, or acquiring facilities for visitor services and park operations. But more than any other place within the North Cascades complex, the agency's activities in the Stehekin Valley have come under closer scrutiny and have raised more criticism.

The main reason for this stemmed from the belief that the Park Service lacked a clear management focus, and that while it made some positive steps, it also contributed to the erosion of the valley's natural values and historic way of life. Thus, as Susan Georgette and Ann Harvey concluded in their examination of the agency's first ten years in Stehekin, the Park Service had managed the new park area poorly. The agency, they asserted, simply did not do enough. It purchased some private lands, nearly half of all that existed, but should
have done more to limit growth and new developments once the popularity of the park spread. In ten years, the valley's population tripled and residential development escalated. All of this encroached on the valley's wild charms and came at the expense of its limited natural resources -- wood, gravel, and sand -- which were available to residents under the more permissive policies of a recreation area. [3]

Their arguments had a familiar-sounding ring, for they echoed those levied against the Park Service in its management of Ross Lake NRA during the High Ross affair: the agency simply was not giving equal treatment to the care of the valley's natural values. It seemed more concerned with allocating resources to residents, improving the valley road and visitor facilities, installing (apparently in an insensitive manner with the surrounding scenery) its own structures near the abandoned golf fairways, and providing services to residents, such as free garbage removal. If the valley had lost any of its pioneer qualities and scenic luster, the Park Service, they implied, was the problem. Rather than take a firm stand in the face of conflict and controversy, brought on by locals who bristled at federal regulations, the Park Service instead maintained that its mission -- and thus the recreation area's purpose -- was ambiguous. In this regard, they suggested, the agency hid behind a shield of ambiguity and succumbed to local influence at the expense of the national interest.

Here, then, was yet another management metaphor and paradox: local influence and national interest. By seeking to appease local demands, the Park Service had forsaken the nation's interest in this national park area. One, it seemed, came at the expense of the other. In fact, for most of the recreation area's first decade, the Park Service let its management attention drift with the tides of local influence. In the end, Georgette and Harvey identified what they believed were the central errors in the Park Service's management of Stehekin: the issues of congressional intent and compatible uses. In their interpretation, Congress’ intent may not have been explicitly clear in defining the purpose of Lake Chelan NRA, but it was clear in that it intended for the Park Service to define what compatible uses were and then to enforce them. Having done this would have empowered the agency to control incompatible development (such as subdivisions) and population growth in the valley, resist local pressures, and defend park values and the national interest. [4]

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Georgette and Harvey present a critical portrayal of the Park Service's first ten years in Stehekin. But they made assumptions about the agency's management mission that were not necessarily borne out by history. Primarily, they believed that the agency should have accorded the Stehekin country the same status as a national park. They failed to appreciate, perhaps because they were too close to their subject in time, that the Park Service's approach to managing recreation areas underwent a marked change between the late 1960s and late 1970s. As the High Ross controversy revealed, recreation areas were treated as the second cousins of parks, with recreational enjoyment taking precedence over protection of the natural environment. The management categories that the Department of the Interior established clearly distinguished between natural areas -- or national parks -- and recreation areas. The former required stricter regulations to preserve their natural conditions; the latter allowed more liberal uses of natural resources, akin to those of a national forest. [5] Certainly, the park campaign, early legislative proposals, and the physical beauty of the Stehekin country suggested otherwise -- even in the minds of some agency officials. But the reality was that it was within a national recreation area and subject to a different set of policies, policies which would not be revised until the late 1970s and early 1980s, as Georgette and Harvey sent their draft to press. [6]

More importantly, most critics ignore or minimize the fact that Stehekin was managed as part of the larger North Cascades complex. It was part of a larger interrelated whole. And thus
park managers viewed the area from this perspective as they considered where the valley fit into their overall vision for the wilderness park. That vision appeared in the park's 1970 master plan. The Stehekin country's greatest value, the plan suggested, was its "unique position as a wilderness threshold." It was one of the few and highly valued entryways to the park's wilderness. The agency would also endeavor to retain the valley's "leisurably charm, tranquility, and rustic atmosphere." Ironically, as many learned during the High Ross affair, the wilderness threshold concept often meant visitor developments, and in this case developments which could potentially alter the valley's "away-from-it-all" character. Here then the agency faced a familiar dilemma, the paradoxical management philosophy of preservation and use. [7]

High on the priority list were improvements to the Stehekin Landing where space was limited, and for this reason, planners believed it should be reserved for existing day-use facilities such as "boat-docks, marinas, eating facilities, parking areas for cars, freight and transportation terminals, a store, post office, and visitor information facilities." The landing was the center of the Stehekin community and would be the central contact point for park visitors. In the future, all overnight facilities would be developed away from the landing, with the exception, it seemed, of private developments. Furthermore, the unsurfaced Stehekin Valley Road, what some called "the road to nowhere," would see more use and, on a much smaller scale than Highway 20, would function as the main artery of travel up and down the valley. The plan proposed a public transportation system -- shuttle buses -- that would convey hikers and others to their various destinations along the twenty-five miles of road from the landing to Cottonwood Campground. The plan also envisioned expanding on existing as well as developing new campgrounds, a series of hostels, and trails at popular hiking areas the length of the valley. It also proposed installing food services, a hostel, and a store at Bridge Creek, just north of the recreation area's boundary at the junction of the Pacific Crest Trail. [8]

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Ultimately, these plans were meant to transform the area into a national park site. The Park Service and national park patrons had certain standards and expectations, and unimpaired natural scenery was one of them. Along these same lines, agency officials moved quickly to prevent any further filling of the lakeshore near Silver Bay for residential developments, working out an agreement with Chelan County by 1970 based on a recent Washington State Supreme Court decision. This would prevent any further visual scarring and natural degradation of the shoreline that might otherwise mar the scenic experience as visitors arrived at the landing. North Cascades officials also believed that this legal decision granted them another measure of control in this regard; it provided them with jurisdiction over the portion of Lake Chelan lying within the recreation area's boundaries. [9]

Ensuring public access and services at the landing was also crucial to the new park area's operations. By 1970, the Park Service had acquired the valley's three private lodges. In this way, the agency had better control over operations by offering an concessioner a controlled monopoly. It could also remedy the competitive scene at the landing between different businesses when the boat arrived. It was a scene, as one ranger noted, hardly becoming of a national park experience. Around this same time, park officials acquired the landing site itself -- the public docks and boat landing from the Chelan County Port Authority. The agency, however, did not gain control over all forms of access -- such as the privately-owned Chelan Boat Company and float plane operations -- which continued to operate under special use permits, and whose operations were mostly subject to local and state regulations. The final key link in providing for services was the Park Service's acquisition of the valley road from Chelan County by 1970. [10]
With this kind of control in hand, agency managers set out to improve and clean up the valley. One of Superintendent Roger Contor's first management actions was to barge out some of the valley's junked cars rusting by the roadside, out in fields, or on the landing area itself. The car removal program was fairly innocuous, but it symbolized that things in the valley would not stay as they were. High on the list was the "eyesore," according to Superintendent Contor, of the landing area and nearby Purple Point. Besides shipping out old cars and machinery, park officials moved the barge dock north several hundred feet and designated parking areas (for day use and long term) as a way to relieve congestion at the landing. In time, the agency undertook several major improvement projects at the landing -- landscaping the area, renovating the lodges (including turning the Golden West into an interpretive center), and installing a sewage treatment plant and a water system by the late 1970s. Maintaining and improving the unsurfaced valley road was another major undertaking. It involved considerable funding from the park's budget, including the replacement of three bridges, Bridge Creek, Tumwater, and High Bridge, as well as annual repairs and snow plowing. These improvements, among others, illustrated the Park Service's belief that this road, as any national park road, played a critical role in the visitor's experience. Controlling the roadside's scenery, in fact, had been a major motivation in the agency's acquisition of the road itself. [11]

Only here, road ownership also placed the agency in the position of providing a service to the local community and creating another set of expectations separate from those of a park visitor. One example was Company Creek Road, which some residents wanted the Park Service to maintain and plow snow, but the Park Service did not own the road. As a measure of good faith, North Cascades officials agreed to maintain and plow the road to the Chelan Public Utility District's power plant, a distance of some one-and-half miles, and after a legal decision was handed down, the agency formally agreed to maintain this section of the road. [12]

As a general rule, the Park Service's management practices considered the most controversial were those that affected residents. As with other management issues, some of these were inherited from the Forest Service and were provided for under the recreation area's legislation and policies. Section 402(a) of the park act charges the Park Service with the "management, utilization, and disposal of renewable natural resources" and the "continuation of such existing uses" that would be compatible with both public recreation and the conservation of its other values, natural as well as historical. Section 402(b) provides for the disposal of mineral resources as well. Abiding by these legal provisions and honoring inherited practices, the Park Service continued to allow residents to harvest wood and excavate soil, sand, and gravel from its lands within the recreation area. [13]

Again the question of change to both the natural scene and historic scene was raised by these policies, for it seemed that at some point what appeared to be a compatible use would become incompatible. For the most part during this first decade of management, the Park Service made little attempt to regulate, study, or restrict these consumptive uses. (The agency would not undertake any studies until the late 1970s and therefore no strict policy guidelines were implemented until then.) Residents continued to construct foundations, surface roads, or build septic systems with soil, sand, and gravel from public lands, and to heat their homes with wood cut from those same lands, in some cases gathering driftwood from the Stehekin River. Ironically, the Park Service itself was a large consumer of gravel and other materials for its maintenance and construction projects. The valley road was a major reason for the use of gravel. High maintenance costs and gravel consumption, for example, led to the agency paving the road from the landing to the Harlequin Bridge in 1973.

Firewood cutting was regulated to some extent. In 1971, Superintendent Lowell White announced that his staff had drafted an interim firewood management plan for Lake Chelan
NRA, which essentially granted permits to residents to cut firewood in designated areas between September 15 and May 15, so as not to interfere with the main visitor season. Approved in 1972, the plan specified how much wood could be taken -- six cords for permanent residents, two for part-time residents -- from dead and fallen trees. Stehekin District Manager George Wagner, however, considered the plan as something that more or less condoned existing uses, and that the agency would have to study it more thoroughly in several years. A host of issues needed to be addressed ranging from rising residential populations to the kind of wood cut. More important, Wagner concluded, firewood cutting in the Stehekin Valley "has a long and controversial history under the previous Forest Service management in the area." And now, the recreation area's legislative history "has left us with the problem." [14]

In the case of firewood use, the question of change hinged on whether or not the service could or would alter past practices. The Forest Service bequeathed a similar "problem" to the Park Service in the form of the Stehekin Airstrip. As early as 1950, the Forest Service had wanted to construct an "air emergency strip" at the head of Lake Chelan to operate fire patrol planes and deploy smokejumpers in the northern Cascades. As an added service, the landing strip could serve as an emergency landing field for any private planes in the vicinity. The agency had nearly completed the job by 1960. Low on funds to finish the airfield, the forest bureau contacted the Washington State Aeronautics Commission seeking assistance in its completion and subsequent operation. After inspecting the airfield and conducting some negotiations with the Forest Service, the commission agreed to the bureau's terms and signed a special use permit to develop and maintain it essentially as an "emergency strip." The "Stehekin State Airport" opened in 1961. [15]

When the Park Service took over from the Forest Service, it wanted to close the airstrip altogether, but discovered that the Aeronautics Commission was a formidable political force, along with local valley residents who wanted it kept open. Contrary to being listed as an emergency airfield, the Stehekin airfield saw a fair amount of public use. Superintendent Roger Contor was the first of several agency officials who tried to close the airfield. During the planning stages for the park and his early negotiations with other state and local government representatives on the North Cascades Task Force, Contor attempted in vain to have the airstrip shutdown -- or at the very least have it listed as a private airport. In making his case, Contor cited the agency's policies against airports in national park areas and the airstrip's hazardous safety conditions. Members of the commission, however, intent on keeping the airstrip open, voiced their protest against closing it, and even suggested expanding the airfield's recreational potential. At best, the Park Service was able to have the airport reclassified as an emergency landing strip (something the commission, it seems, did not fully recognize) and continued to issue a special use permit to the commission for its operation and maintenance. [16]

The agency's positions on other issues, either inherited from the Forest Service or related to the residential population, often seemed intent on taking the course of least resistance and raised more questions than they answered about how the agency would proceed in managing the recreation area. In the early 1970s, for example, the Army Corps of Engineers bulldozed numerous logjams on the lower Stehekin River at the request of private property owners whose lands might have been eroded by spring floods. To be sure, the actions took place on private lands, yet North Cascades officials appeared reluctant to take a stand to protect the river, its wild character, its critical role for wildlife and fish habitat.

Another decision, to provide a free garbage removal system for residents, cast more doubt on what the agency intended. In the late 1970s, Superintendent White approved the service when the local landfill reached its capacity and was closed. Moreover, a change in federal policy, dating to the early 1970s, prohibited the practice of burning out garbage dumps to
create more room. Barging out solid waste was an environmentally-conscious decision, one aimed at protecting the valley's natural values and inducing residents to pack their garbage out. Otherwise, they might, as some had, leave it on federal lands or clutter up their lands with it, in the process creating visual eyesores as well as wildlife problems. Some local bears, attracted to garbage, had become "problem" bears and residents were calling for their removal. Garbage disposal was costly to the agency, for it involved the construction of a new building and the purchase of a large compactor. But it may have been costly in other ways, too. The agency seemed more concerned with keeping residents content than enforcing regulations to protect the natural environment or establishing policies for the use of natural resources.

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In all of these cases, revising past or existing practices and implementing new ones shadowed the Park Service and cast doubt, as has been argued, on many of its decisions. Above all, however, the greatest source of change was the Park Service's land acquisition program. Everything in Stehekin, especially in these early years of management, revolved around land and liberty. And thus the Park Service's land acquisition policies and practices were at the center of this small universe. Oddly enough, purchasing land seemed to be the activity the agency conducted with the most certainty, though here, too, interpretations of congressional intent varied. Historically, the National Park Service has purchased private lands from within national parks. It was a fact of life that park boundaries often embraced inholdings and that the best way to ensure preservation was to own all of the lands -- mining claims, resorts, homesteads, and the like.

The Park Service's policy of purchasing inholdings -- from willing sellers -- sparked a great deal of controversy and conflict during the movement and hearings to establish North Cascades National Park, for many landowners feared that the agency would use the federal government's powers of condemnation to take their land, and thus they would lose their unique way of life. Some of these fears were unfounded, but others were not. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Congress began to carve more new park areas out of private lands -- such as Cape Cod National Seashore (1961) -- and the service now sought to buy as much private land as possible in accordance with the new area's enabling legislation. As a general rule then, the agency tried to purchase land from all willing sellers (also known as opportunity purchases) in these newly established parklands and then use condemnation to acquire lands needed for park operations and protection. In some cases, as with Cape Cod, Congress made exceptions by allowing hundreds of residents to continue to own and occupy their homes within the area's boundaries. [18]

The North Cascades legislation, with its accompanying documents, mirrored some of these trends and attempted to address the worries Stehekin landowners had over losing their land. First, Congress created a national recreation area rather than a national park to assure the Stehekin community that it would continue to exist. Second, the legislation directed the Secretary of the Interior to purchase lands from willing sellers only, and limited the Park Service's powers of condemnation to those instances where there were incompatible uses, such as high density subdivisions, high rise developments, and logging. At the time of the recreation area's establishment, Park Service Director George Hartzog did not mention the newer land acquisition policies in his testimony before Congress but rather likened Stehekin's policies to those employed at Grand Teton National Park, which had been established in 1950. Hartzog did so perhaps because the two areas were similar in character and western; they contained modest homes, summer homes, ranches, and small eating establishments and lodges, all of which were compatible with the park. [19]

Hartzog's testimony seems to have been the source of the language in the final legislation
creating Lake Chelan NRA and was the foundation of the Park Service's land acquisition policies. This language, however, did not mean that Congress did not anticipate an active land acquisition program. To the contrary, it appropriated $3.5 million, an estimate of the fee value of all private lands within the new park complex. Moreover, in planning for the recreation area's management and its land acquisition program, agency officials employed policies for recreation areas that focused and prioritized land acquisition efforts. That is, land acquisition policies for recreation areas, released around the same time as the complex's establishment, stated that the federal government would acquire lands for public use and enjoyment and effective administration of the recreation area, to ensure that the remaining lands provided for the preservation of the area's natural values, and to prevent any uses of private lands from impairing the recreation area's primary purpose. These policies were then translated into three land classification zones: 1) public use and development, 2) preservation and conservation, and 3) private use and development. [20]

In Lake Chelan NRA, as a general rule, the agency would seek to purchase lands outright in fee simple in the first zone, and in the other two zones seek alternative forms of land use controls such as local zoning or scenic easements; however, direct purchase was still an option, especially in the private use zone, to protect the area against incompatible uses and if an owner wished to sell to the Park Service. [21] The agency incorporated these policies into its land acquisition plan (1969) and the park complex's master plan; the former document identified areas high on the list of priorities for purchase and the latter document established the land-use zones. Having done this, the Park Service actively set out to purchase private land. In 1969, it opened a real estate office, run by Keith Watkins, in nearby Wenatchee, the county seat of Chelan County. Five years later, in late 1973, the agency had nearly exhausted the original appropriation for land acquisitions. Of the original $3.5 million, it spent nearly $2.4 million on lands in the Stehekin Valley, taking possession of some 986 acres and leaving some 650 acres in private ownership. It spent approximately $800,000 on land in Ross Lake NRA and North Cascades National Park. Afterwards, with more land to be acquired (some 2,600 acres) but less than $300,000 to work with, the Park Service put the acquisition program on hold. Although Congress increased the park's land acquisition appropriation by $1 million in 1976, this money was earmarked for buying the remaining patented mining claims within the boundaries of the national park. [22]

This original land acquisition program met many of the priorities the service had outlined. One important focus, as mentioned above, was the purchase of lands and developments for visitor services, public access, and park operations. The central concern was the landing area itself -- the boat landing, docks, lodges, and other buildings -- as well as nearby lakeshore properties suitable for public campgrounds and picnic areas. Another priority area was the valley and the acquisition of large tracts of private land that might be subdivided or put to other inappropriate uses. To this end, the agency purchased land near the mouth of the Stehekin River that had been subdivided and slated for intensive residential developments. It also obtained nearly all of the Buckner homestead, approximately 100 acres, which included the historic apple orchard. Still another large tract acquired by the agency was the Peterson property, the 100-acre fairways for a partially completed golf course, which the service converted into park housing and a utility area -- home to the trash compactor building, among others. The final large purchase was several tracts belonging to the Chelan Box Company in the upper valley, comprising some 300 acres. The company planned to log this land, and its acquisition by the Park Service would help the agency ensure the protection of the wild and scenic charms of the upper valley. [23]

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In time, the Park Service's management practices -- from snow plowing to land acquisition -- became the subject of intense and acrimonious debate, legal disputes, and an investigation by
the General Accounting Office. This state of affairs has been well-documented, for it prompted the Park Service to clarify its management policies in Stehekin, to launch a comprehensive planning effort for the recreation area, and to address a number of changes in the national park system's management philosophy and regulations, including stricter guidelines in the protection of natural values in recreation areas and land acquisition policies. Most of these administrative developments appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as the complex entered its second decade of management, and are the subject of part three of this study.

From the beginning, however, Stehekin's management problems stemmed in part from its isolation. Stehekin's remoteness may have made it a special place for tourists and residents, but it was a quality that impeded management. Communications were slow. There were no phones in the early years or dependable radios, and management decisions came by mail brought by boat. Both superintendents Contor and White encountered these difficulties in their tenures. Community relations played an important role in selling the Park Service's administration to local constituents. Allaying fears of what the new administration would bring, quieting concerns produced by the hard-fought park campaign, and implementing policies and management programs became the daily routine of agency managers in Stehekin. [24]

One approach the agency took early on was to keep the Stehekin community informed about agency activities through a monthly newsletter. The newsletter answered any concerns residents might have expressed to park staff or the superintendent. But what park managers soon learned was that Stehekin, a place where people valued their independence, was a community divided. [25] Achieving consensus on any one matter proved to be nearly impossible, and most management actions received mixed reviews. What added to the problem was the Park Service's own tendency to seek popular approval for its management decisions, something the service had long done since it depended on public approval and federal appropriations for its survival.

At first, North Cascades officials tried to address the community's concerns by urging them to organize, to speak as one voice, it seems. The Park Service dealt with some issues through the Stehekin Property Owners Association (SPOA), which had formed in 1970. Through SPOA residents expressed their discontent with agency policies from parking restrictions at the landing to road maintenance. By the mid-1970s, it was clear that this approach had fallen short of its goal. The newsletter was suspended; community relations were uneasy at best, and not for any one particular reason. [26]

Perhaps the best examples of this condition were Grant McConnell, Guy Imus, and Robert Byrd. McConnell had impressive credentials for critiquing the Park Service's management. He was both a professor of political science and a property owner in Stehekin; he had lived in the valley full-time for several years after World War II, and was one of its most ardent supporters for preservation during the park campaign. Naturally, he welcomed and praised the park complex and the Park Service's presence. The creation of North Cascades ended the threat of logging in the Stehekin Valley and the threat of a road being built into the valley from Highway 20. The Park Service also reduced the threat of new private developments -- a vacation-home boom underway before the park was established -- through its active land acquisition program. To a lesser degree, park managers were working to remove the threat of mining, but here, too, the agency's presence put preservationists more at ease. [27]

Other aspects of the Park Service's presence worried McConnell and even caused him to question the agency's commitment to the protection of the valley's natural systems. The service's decision to keep the valley road open all the way to Cottonwood and its improvements to the road surface itself, especially paving it from the landing to Harlequin...
Bridge, presented serious threats to the valley's wild and historic character. An improved road invited more cars to travel at higher speeds and portended more improvements -- more widening, cuts and fills -- and thus more encroachments on the wilderness of the North Cascades. McConnell also criticized the agency's decisions not to manage or regulate preexisting practices or what he deemed were incompatible uses. Woodcutting, while a genuine need, should be managed more effectively, particularly to prevent the construction or creation of more roads farther into the valley's forests. The airstrip, on the other hand, should be eliminated altogether, for it was not only unsafe but not used for emergencies but rather fishing trips, among other things. In addition, McConnell thought airplanes were incompatible with the solitude of the valley and surrounding wilderness. But rather than take a stand, the Park Service built a campground of sorts near the airfield to accommodate an existing practice and to prevent unsanitary conditions. [28]

In this regard, McConnell's list went on, noting that the agency was unwilling to oppose unsightly or inappropriate new houses built on private property because the permitting process was Chelan County's responsibility. In McConnell's view, this was simply an excuse to avoid conflict and for irresponsible governmental behavior. At bottom, this was McConnell's main point. The agency's management "problems" in Stehekin might have stemmed from the ambiguities associated with the purpose and management of a recreation area, but these were not trivial matters. In an article for The Wild Cascades, McConnell expanded on this observation.

Most alarmingly they indicate a general passivity in confrontation with threats that cannot be dismissed by simple orders. The lack of power to give such orders on many matters or to compel compliance with the purposes for which the NPS was brought into the area is not a sufficient excuse. Compulsion, far from being the whole of government, is only its last resort. What is essential is clarity of vision and a sense of purpose. [29]

If McConnell thought that the Park Service was not doing enough to assert its authority, others in the valley, like Guy Imus and Robert Byrd, believed it had gone too far. Like many westerners in isolated locations, their main contact with the federal government came in the form of regulations. In one instance, the Park Service attempted to restrict the numbers of horses allowed in the backcountry; other policies sought to place concessions and other services, such as guided horse pack trips, under one operator. All of this smacked of government interference with private enterprise. "They got so many damn regulations," Imus stated in 1973, that "they're gonna drive all us horsemen out of the valley." In other words, the Park Service's traditional way of operating concessions -- placing them under one concessioner -- altered the Stehekin tradition of "small, independent family operations." While one outfitter benefited, others were left to look for new sources of income. The most notable example of this, of course, was the agency's move to place the landing's lodges and restaurant under one operator, Robert Byrd. At first Byrd welcomed the opportunity, but in time he, too, came to resent agency regulations and bureaucratic red tape. [30]

What Byrd and others whose families had lived in the valley for generations objected to overall was the sense that they had become dependent on the National Park Service. That is, their independence was subsidized by this government agency. Many in the valley were tied to the Park Service economically, either directly employed by the agency as laborers, technicians, or other staff members; or they were under contract for construction and maintenance projects, had special use permits to conduct businesses like guided pack trips, or a concession permit to run a business at the landing. What engendered the most criticism was that the Park Service's presence, through its land acquisition program, had increased property values and thus property taxes. Although this was itself a complicated issue, since the county set property values and property taxes, it raised the notion that many had feared before the
The park was established: the Park Service's long-range goal was to buy all the private land in the valley and remove the residents. Rising land taxes thus alarmed some and led to protests over the Park Service's land acquisition policies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Ironically, both residents and preservationists, those who generally opposed the Park Service and those who generally favored it, were responsible for the ensuing investigation by the General Accounting Office and demonstrating the need for a comprehensive management plan in the next phase of the parkland's administration.
Part III -- 1978-1998

THE WILDERNESS IDEAL AND THE CHALLENGE OF TRADITIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT

As the 1970s came to a close, the park complex's first decade ended and a new era began. The park's first decade saw the National Park Service trying to shape a wilderness park in the broadest sense. Building a wilderness park from the ground up, so to speak, offered a challenge park managers willingly accepted and viewed with enthusiasm. But as the new parkland's history unfolded, traditional park management concerns, such as the construction of facilities for park visitors, drew more attention. Moreover, other management concerns, those unique to the park complex, particularly those emanating from Stehekin, demanded that park officials come to terms with lingering questions about the true intent of the park complex's enabling legislation. Conflict generated by these and other issues was a catalyst for growth and change in the park complex's next two decades of management. This was a period in which the Park Service attempted to answer these questions and redirect the park complex back toward its primary mission of wilderness preservation. In this era, one theme was consistent. The tension between the wilderness park ideal and traditional park management was strong. The chapters in this section address changes in the park complex's administration, practices and controversies surrounding land acquisition, and hydroelectric issues. Other chapters consider the growth of the park's resource management program, accommodations for visitors, the designation of the park's wilderness, and the park's international relations.
Chapter 9: ADMINISTRATION

Several superintendents would guide the park complex through its second phase of management. In 1978, Keith Miller replaced Lowell White in a straight exchange; Miller left his post as superintendent at Acadia National Park for North Cascades, and White left his post at North Cascades for Acadia. After six years, Miller took a position in the Southwest Regional Office, and was replaced by John Reynolds, who left his post as assistant superintendent of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to serve as the park's top manager from 1984 to 1988. In late 1988, Reynolds left North Cascades to be manager of the Denver Service Center, and John Earnst replaced him, having served as superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park. When Earnst retired in 1992, William Paleck became the park complex's most recent superintendent, leaving his position as superintendent of Saguaro National Monument. These managers addressed pressing issues surrounding land policies in Stehekin, the relicensing of hydroelectric projects, and other resource management concerns. They also undertook a new planning effort for the park complex, one which stirred more controversy in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. Moreover, they also had to respond to changes within the national park system with the Park Service's recent reorganization. These issues reflected that the park's administration had become more complicated and specialized since the park's creation. And thus to meet the challenges of this new era, the park's administrative framework and management approach would have to adjust accordingly.

One measure of the park complex's growing pains was the increase in park staff. The staff of seven permanent and forty seasonal employees in the summer of 1969 had increased to forty-two permanent and eighty seasonal members by the early 1980s, and was up to seventy-four permanent and ninety-four seasonal employees in the mid-1990s. The increase was a natural progression in adding needed personnel to the young park; it also demonstrated the need for specialized positions to cover the wide array of management concerns, from law enforcement to specific resource management problems. In addition, the staff was composed of other members, such as Volunteers in Parks (VIPs), Student Conservation Association (SCA) workers, members of the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), and the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC). The presence of these volunteers and inexpensive employees, who numbered some one hundred people in 1980, illustrated the Park Service's interest in using an alternative work force to meet all the demands of park management, demands which could not be met by current funding levels and hiring policies. VIPs and other work groups provided a valuable source of labor for a variety of projects; they helped with revegetation at the subalpine passes, provided information and interpretation in front country areas, built and rehabilitated park trails, organized library records, and conducted research on the park's natural and human history. [1]

Another matter related to the park's administrative growth was the search for a permanent home for the park complex's headquarters. While Park Service administrators had selected Sedro Woolley as the location of the park's headquarters in the late 1960s, the selection of a permanent building for the park's head office turned out to be a long and drawn out affair.
The first park office, located in the State Street Office Building, was temporary, park officials contended. In a short time, they stated, the park's operations would outgrow this facility. In the meantime they, along with city representatives, began looking for another site. By 1972, they had decided on four possible sites: the city ball park, the junction of Highway 9 and Highway 20, the area west of Highway 20 near the log scaling station, and finally the old Memorial Hospital site. Park Service officials chose the hospital site as the one that would best meet their present and future needs. These were: 1) that it was large enough (two acres) to construct a good-sized building with adequate employee and visitor parking, 2) that it was located in an area in which it would be integrated with the surrounding community, and 3) that it was located on a major city street (the corner of Bell and State streets) away from commercial and industrial sections, and at the edge of a residential area. The selection of the old hospital site would also fulfill one of the main reasons for the park complex's presence in Sedro Woolley. The hospital's closure occurred around the same time as the park's creation and spurred the state's congressional delegation to seek a replacement for this loss to the local economy. Legal and political matters delayed the project for several years, the most notable problems coming from the park's current landlord, the General Services Administration's assessment of the site selection, and problems stemming from city regulations. [2]

One of the most important questions in the selection of a new office was directed at the Park Service's decision to locate the headquarters facility away from Highway 20 -- the main park thoroughfare. At the heart of the matter was the vision park planners and park managers had for the headquarters office. In 1976, Regional Director Russell Dickenson described the move as one that would intentionally eliminate the park's office "as a visitor information facility." The rationale behind this proposal demonstrated again the influence of Highway 20 in park operations. When Highway 20 opened in 1972, public use patterns changed, meaning that most visitors could be found along the highway within the park complex. For this reason, in the summer of 1973 park staffers had begun to operate the temporary information center at Concrete, Washington, as called for in the Park Service-Forest Service joint management plan for the North Cascades. The facility served eastbound travelers as they approached the park complex. The following year, the park moved the information center to a more permanent facility in Concrete, a building constructed to look like a railroad depot complementing a Sedro Woolley group's plans to initiate railroad service between Sedro Woolley and Concrete. Meanwhile, as called for in the joint plan, the Forest Service opened its Early Winters information center around this same time on the east side of the Cascades to meet the needs of westbound travelers. Still another information center for highway travelers was the park's Marblemount Ranger Station, which was also the center for all backcountry operations in the complex. The master plan for North Cascades noted that there would be more visitor information services along the highway in the future; some of these would be a visitor center at Newhalem as well as roadside waysides and pullouts to orient the motorist to the northern Cascades. Taken together, these highway information services made any additional services at the Sedro Woolley headquarters unnecessary and unjustifiable "from a cost/visitor use standpoint," Dickenson concluded. The new headquarters was completed in early 1977, and on March 1 of that year the park moved its headquarters operation into the new facility. [3]

In less than ten years, however, this situation changed again. The park's headquarters staff continued to grow, and as it did, space in the new facility decreased while rent increased. By the mid-1980s, it was time to look for another office. In its search for a new office location, the Park Service, ironically, found itself back on Highway 20. Only this time, members of the park complex's headquarters staff would be sharing a building with the U.S. Forest Service, the Mount Baker National Forest District office. This merger of facilities seemed to be both a practical as well as politically-motivated solution to the current headquarters problem. Since the parkland's inception, cooperation between the Park Service and Forest Service had been a major goal in its management, both as a matter of geography and the political realities.
underlying the park complex's creation. In 1985, conditions seemed ripe for another attempt at interagency cooperation. That year, Doug McWilliams, the forest supervisor, informed park managers that there would be a significant amount of surplus office space in the district's new administrative building, still under construction. The Forest Service was reducing its staff, and this would leave the agency with more space than it needed. McWilliams suggested that the two agencies combine their operations under one roof in order to save money on rent and office equipment, make more efficient use of conference rooms, and consolidate their public information services. For these reasons and those stemming from its own situation, North Cascades moved into the new headquarters with the Mount Baker District in March 1986. [4]

This new venture, however, seems to have solved the need for an adequate headquarters facility temporarily rather than permanently. A central reason was the continued growth of the park complex's staff. When the park moved to its new headquarters, twenty-four (twenty permanent and four temporary) employees worked in the office. Two years later, that number nearly doubled to forty-one (twenty-three of which were permanent). Looking over the advantages of the joint office, Superintendent John Reynolds noted that the joint information center worked well; the information visitors received was more accurate and current since both agencies were available in the same place and at the same time. Cost-saving measures could be found in sharing the same cooperative association for the sale of publications on the park and forest. Both agencies saved money using the same telephone system and number, and were planning on sharing photocopying services as well as internal mail service. Moreover, the two agencies were sharing knowledge by combining their libraries and they were beginning to understand each other better as well.

There were disadvantages, too. One of these was that rather than creating a greater clarity in the differences between the two agencies in the mind of the general public, sharing office space actually created greater confusion. Another disadvantage was that the building was not designed with joint operation in mind and some of the shared space (lunch room, storage areas) proved to be inconvenient to use. Interestingly, Reynolds concluded that relocating the headquarters back to Highway 20 rendered the office's daily operations less efficient, since more visitors stopped in requesting information from park personnel. (Ironically, the new headquarters area took on added importance as an information center once the park shut down the Concrete information center in the mid-1980s.) [5]

In the late 1980s, the situation had deteriorated to the point where North Cascades managers were requesting an office space requirements study. As Acting Superintendent David Pugh reported in October 1988, the park's headquarters space "does not meet the needs of present park staff in providing adequate working space," as well as storage and warehouse space, separate offices for managers and those in personnel; nor was there "sufficient parking space for Government and private vehicles." Although employees felt the squeeze throughout the year, the lack of office space was "especially acute" during the summer when Park Service and Forest Service seasonals arrived and the numbers of visitors stopping at the information center increased dramatically. Thus, before pursuing any alternatives for leasing other office space or reorganizing the current office, North Cascades wanted "a comprehensive study of office requirements" to determine "how best to meet the short and long term needs of the park for headquarters space," Pugh stated. The agency's woes would only continue in the 1990s. A space study concluded that the Park Service needed more space at a new facility because reconfiguring the office's layout was not an option. Moreover, the agency's joint lease with the Forest Service on the facility expired in 1990s, and in an effort to continue to operate in a somewhat normal capacity, the two agencies signed a lease but one that had a long list of issues that needed to be resolved, including poor lighting and ventilation systems. [6]
The trials over securing an adequate headquarters facility were indicative of a much larger administrative issue for the park -- its growing pains and its adjustments to growth. Superintendent Reynolds indicated what had brought on the recent issue over space at the park's front office. It was not simply an increase in park staff, but an increase that reflected changes in how the park would be managed. One important staff addition was a chief of resource management who worked out of Sedro Woolley, and who would help coordinate a parkwide resource management program. This meant that for the first time the park complex would have a staff member in charge of this program. Similar to trends systemwide, North Cascades would now emphasize the importance of resource management in the overall administration of the park. Other positions had been added to the park roster as well which reflected this new emphasis, such as interns to conduct base line research. The park also employed a landscape architect to assist with development plans for park projects. "All of these positions," Reynolds wrote, had been created "in an attempt to address the backlog of operational needs, and move North Cascades into the future." These positions would help accomplish one of the central goals of the park: to effectively manage the resources, and the trend in adding specialists to the park staff would continue up to the present. [7]

The park's future and resource management were central themes in John Reynolds' tenure and thus the park's administration. Many of these issues would be addressed in the park's new general management plan, which got underway in the mid-1980s. But first, Reynolds thought it important to reconsider how the park was set up as an administrative unit, namely the relationship between the headquarters staff and the complex's two districts. Revising the park's administrative structure would, in the long run, enable the park to adjust to changes in park management, such as with the rise of specialists to oversee park programs. This could not happen effectively with the current system.

When the park complex was established, the Park Service adopted the existing district manager organization. This organization, as noted earlier, separated the park into two administrative units: the Skagit and Stehekin districts. The two districts were run by district managers, who oversaw park operations and park staff for their areas; they answered directly to the superintendent who was stationed at park headquarters. In this set up, three people ran the park, each with his own staff. Naturally, the superintendent made the final decisions, but for the day-to-day operations of the park complex, Lowell White recalled, the district manager concept allowed the park to run itself. Having district managers also seemed to be a practical response to the park complex's rugged geography -- the two main river valleys, the Skagit and Stehekin -- were separated by a constellation of peaks, and thus it was easier to have local managers oversee local affairs on either side. This was especially true in the case of Stehekin, whose remote setting made communication difficult, let alone making management decisions from afar.

But as the park aged, the district manager system seemed incapable of keeping pace with new developments in the parkland's management. Superintendent Keith Miller made a step towards reorganization in 1979 when he changed the Stehekin District manager position into a district ranger. The revision, Miller suggested, reflected a weakness in the district manager concept, for it saddled the manager with numerous responsibilities. One responsibility in particular deserved attention by a full-time manager, and that was maintenance. For this reason, the superintendent transferred all responsibility for maintenance (and the maintenance division) in Stehekin to the maintenance specialist (later changed to facility manager) at headquarters. In doing so, the district ranger would be freed up to supervise the numerous programs which make up park management; some of these were visitor services and protection, concession operations, community relations, interpretation, and cooperation with the Forest Service. Moreover, Miller concluded, this revision would "enable the Superintendent to develop a more cohesive organization between the Stehekin District and Headquarters." [8]
Maintaining good community relations meant a great deal in the overall management of Stehekin and required close contact between the superintendent and his staff, so it made sense to partially reorganize the parkland's administrative system. But more still needed to be done. The evolution of the ranger division illustrates this point. At one time in Park Service history, the ranger was a versatile, "do anything" employee who was the backbone of the agency. The ranger performed a variety of duties ranging from law enforcement to trail construction. Throughout his career, the ranger acquired a variety of skills and experience and was rewarded with advancements in the ranger organization. But that picture began to change in the mid-1960s, as the ranger's stature declined relative to that of various specialists. At one time, the ranger division was in charge of both visitor protection and services as well as resource management. With the arrival of resource management specialists in the 1970s and 1980s, however, parks created resource management divisions and removed the responsibilities for resource management from the ranger corps and transferred them to this new program. Another development which influenced this evolution was the escalation in crime within national parks, all of which demanded the attention of the ranger force, focusing its attention from the backcountry to the front country where the greatest concentration of visitors were and the greatest amount of criminal acts occurred.

By the late 1980s, these were some of the forces which led to change in the administrative structure at North Cascades. Jonathan Jarvis arrived around this time to head the new resource management division. And crime, even in a region as seemingly immune from criminal activity as the North Cascades, was on the rise. All too frequently, park managers confronted incidents of car clouting, rape, and drug manufacturing. Unifying the park's districts under one management system seemed to be the most logical solution. Most parks found it more effective to have a line organization in which a park's various programs were run by program managers at the park's headquarters rather than appoint a program leader in each district. This latter approach was too expensive. It would also further divide the park by reinforcing the impression that these districts were actually two distinct park areas. To be sure, the nature of the park complex's physical and political terrain led to this perception. But the goal of the park's founders had been to treat this area as an interrelated unit, the larger aim of which was wilderness protection.

By 1988, Superintendent Reynolds had accomplished most of his goals for reorganizing the park. The district manager system, he believed, only supported the status quo -- a "caretaker" operation -- and could not guide the park along its path to the future, a future which appeared more and more complicated. He opted for a line organization to help promote a parkwide rather than district-centered vision of management. Only in this way could North Cascades meet the challenges that lay ahead. [9] Overhauling the existing administrative system had not been without some hardship, especially for some members of the park staff who believed that the district manager organization worked well. One long-time employee stated that the current system was "more appropriate for this particular park considering the geographic layout and logistics involved. I believe it makes for a more cohesive and, in the long run, more efficient team organization. It puts the Manager close to and in touch with the operation." [10]

Nevertheless, the majority of the park complex's staff supported the new administrative system, and in 1989, a year after Reynolds left the park, the new organization was mostly completed. Essentially, it retained the two districts but gave the division chiefs at headquarters line authority over the whole park rather than having them serve as the superintendent's advisors and staff. The specialists in the districts now reported to the division chiefs rather than the unit managers. (Evidently, park officials took to heart the special situation in Stehekin and reinstated the district manager position there, even though the entire park operated under a different system.) Among the highlights of the new

organization was the creation of a ranger division. With a chief ranger for the first time, the park could address increasing crime, visitor safety and resource protection issues. Other positions were subject-to-furlough, created to assist in interpretation, a result of an operations evaluation and staffing study, all of which were part of the general reorganization. Perhaps most importantly, the new organization established a wilderness district covering the majority of the park complex. Bringing over ninety percent of the parkland under one district was a practical solution to maintaining consistent management of the complex's extensive wilderness. Superintendent Reynolds brought about this change primarily because he wanted the park to have a strong wilderness ethic. Because William Lester was the Skagit backcountry ranger and a leading proponent of a park wilderness ethic, the new district would be run out of Marblemount. With such a large portion of the park set aside in the wilderness district, the Skagit and Stehekin district rangers would have their jurisdiction confined, for the most part, to the recreation areas, mainly the road corridors, reservoirs, and other developed sites in those areas. [11]

The new organization proved to be quite effective, it seems, for only minor reorganizations have taken place since then. In 1993, for instance, Superintendent William Paleck instituted an employee committee system for management. The intent was to create a closer working relationship among the park staff, who were located in remote areas, and to make them more a part of the decision-making process. Thus, the new committee system would help empower employees and give them "more immediate access to management and managing." By 1995, Superintendent Paleck also revised the district manager position at Stehekin, converting the position to a management assistant stationed in Chelan, whose primary duties now were public outreach and coordination. In addition, Paleck consolidated all administrative services in the park complex's two districts under the administrative officer at park headquarters; the administrative function itself had been merged with the Forest Service's administrative services. Now the Chelan management assistant, administrative officer, and chief of resource management reported directly to the superintendent. Finally, Paleck converted the two sub-district ranger positions into separate district rangers positions. [12]

Reorganization was indicative of much larger changes in the park complex's administration. As mentioned above, John Reynolds wanted to guide the parkland into the future, and the way to chart its course was through a new general management plan (which replaced park master plans). The 1970 master plan, while effective, had outlived its usefulness; times had changed. In 1985, Reynolds recounted those changes in a lengthy memo, entitled "North Cascades 20: Direction to the Future." Surveying the 674,000-acre park complex, the superintendent wrote that "These park areas range from the wildest, most isolated peaks and valleys to the proud Stehekin community and one of the Northwest's most scenic highways. The opportunities for protection of mountain ecosystems and what is left from those who came before us provide a base for a wondrous array of visitor enjoyment and inspiration potentials." The park complex and the communities within and near it, however, were at a "critical and important juncture in their history. The initial development phases of their early years are past, and they are moving from adolescence to maturity." With that, Reynolds launched a program to prepare a new general management plan, encompassing the full scope of the park's management, to be in place by the parkland's twentieth birthday. [13]

Even though Reynolds' ideas would be expanded on in the park's management plan, his memo provided a good survey of the park complex's growth after more than fifteen years of management and his reasons for moving forward. Land protection, namely the acquisition of important property in Stehekin and mining claims throughout the park, was mostly complete. Wilderness management, including both visitor use and resource protection, was well established. The North Cascades Highway, after being in use for over ten years, was a popular feature in the park experience. Moreover, the controversial High Ross Dam issue had been settled with the signing of the 1984 international agreement between Canada and the...
United States. The treaty finally provided a sense of direction for the future management of Ross Lake and the upper Skagit country. With its provision for the environmental endowment fund, the treaty promised at long last funding for recreational improvements as well as environmental enhancement and land acquisition projects on Ross Lake. Nevertheless, a great deal still remained to be done. "Although it may appear today that the park areas are well protected and that visitors are easily and well served," Reynolds asserted, "a look at the future indicates that complacency not only would be naive, it would be irresponsible." [14]

That future could be read in the region's increasing population. In the past fifteen years, each county within close proximity to the park complex had grown from fifteen to more than fifty percent. The counties with the highest margin of increase were the nearby Snohomish and Whatcom counties; the former increased by fifty-seven percent (with a population of 367,000), and the latter by thirty-eight percent (with a population of 114,000). The largest population base in the region, however, still belonged to the more distant King County with more than 1.3 million people. In addition, the "high-tech" corridor was moving north of Seattle, which included the Boeing Company and the Navy in Everett. As had been predicted in the 1970 master plan, the greatest potential impact from future growth was the Puget Sound corridor, along Interstate 5, between Oregon and Vancouver, British Columbia. All of these population figures suggested increased pressure on the park and "undoubtedly" created "the single greatest concern for the continued vitality and health of the North Cascades ecosystems in the future." [15]

Population growth posed a serious external threat to the park complex's ecosystems from air pollution and acid precipitation. It also posed internal threats in the form of increased visitation. Already, Reynolds noted, the park areas had a visitation of nearly one million a year. As a recreational draw, the complex could expect even more visitors and more pressures on the parkland's resources, ranging from impacts to the popular yet highly sensitive subalpine passes to pressures in Stehekin for more primary residences and second home construction. In order to address "both the opportunities and possible impacts to park and recreation area resources," the superintendent concluded, park managers must approach the situation in "an organized, thoughtful manner, with resolve to protect our resources, provide for their enjoyment," and to do so "in harmony and cooperation with our neighbors." [16]

Although the general management plan would cover the Park Service's approach to these issues, Reynolds' memo contained some salient points for his vision of the park complex's overall management direction. Foremost in that vision was that the park would have a strong resource management program, with an emphasis on ecosystem management. At the same time, it was important to consider the average visitor's experience. The main focus of their encounter with the North Cascades came by way of the North Cascades Highway; some 800,000 visitors passed over the road through the park complex in the short summer season, and thus the highway would be the focus of new developments. Linked with the "highway experience" was the need to improve the park's interpretive program, all to enhance the visitor's experience, enjoyment, and understanding of the entire North Cascades complex. Gathering information about the parkland's rich cultural heritage -- from the archaeological record to the memories of early residents of the Skagit and Stehekin country -- was an area of management that deserved more attention. Reynolds also believed that the park complex needed to coordinate other plans with its general management plan, plans for such things as land protection and resource management issues in Stehekin. Besides that, it was imperative to coordinate maintenance and improvement programs with sound resource management. Moreover, he believed in a strong commitment to the park's own employees by involving them in the decision-making process as well as using their expertise in management projects. Some of this commitment was demonstrated by his reorganization of the park's administration, but Reynolds also showed it through his efforts to increase base funding for
park staff (many of whom were at lower grades compared to other parks of comparable size). In addition, he worked to increase park appropriations to fund the programs he was seeking to improve and initiate.

In still other areas, Reynolds' vision for North Cascades was more expansive. He wanted to enlarge the park by adding the Cascade River drainage, most of Ross Lake except for the hydroelectric sites, and the lower reaches of Bacon Creek. Like the preservationists who fought for the park, the superintendent believed that the Cascade River Valley deserved national park status, especially because the river itself was designated a wild and scenic river and because the Forest Service still planned to log this area. Placing most of Ross Lake NRA in the park proper reflected Reynolds' belief that the area displayed national park values -- impressive scenery and unique natural and cultural resources. It also demonstrated that park managers were ready to reclaim portions of the recreation area reserved for future Seattle City Light hydroelectric projects in the park's legislation. With the recent High Ross settlement and City Light's decision to scrap other projects, the time had come. Finally, Reynolds cast his vision for the park to the north and Canada and the world. He hoped to see an international park created someday, a park that would include the North Cascades complex with Manning Provincial Park (as well as an ecological reserve adjoining the park in the Chilliwack drainage) in British Columbia, Canada. Moreover, the superintendent wanted to see the entire North Cascades ecosystem -- encompassing Canadian and surrounding Forest Service lands -- designated as an international biosphere reserve. [17]

Taken together, Reynolds' proposals thrust North Cascades forward to meet its new challenges, though many of his ideas would remain in the planning stages for some time. Even so, Reynolds had helped to ensure that the park complex would emphasize its primary mission of wilderness preservation, and that, despite all of these changes, that its administration would carry out this mission in a "new steady state."

Reynolds' successors discovered that the path to this new steady state could be filled with obstacles. Superintendent John Earnst inherited the master planning initiated by Reynolds and was faced with the lawsuit filed by the North Cascades Conservation Council against the Park Service in 1989. The lawsuit claimed that the Park Service had failed to comply with National Environmental Policy Act regulations by not adequately assessing the appropriate long-term effects of its projects proposed in its management plans for the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. The lawsuit was resolved out of court with a consent decree in 1991, and it was left to Superintendent Paleck to oversee the environmental impact studies and the drafting of the new general management plan and supporting plans for the recreation area. Completed in 1995, the plans marked an important turning point in the Park Service's management of the recreation area. After nearly thirty years of administration, it appeared the agency had a clearer picture of how it would protect this area which had been rife with controversy.

Both Earnst and Paleck would carry forward another important aspect of the complex's administration that was underway during Reynolds' tenure: the relicensing of Seattle City Light's Skagit River Project. The negotiated settlement, which was finally signed in 1996, was a landmark in the history of North Cascades' administration as well as in the history of federally licensed hydroelectric projects. The settlement agreement addressed the presence of the hydroelectric project in Ross Lake National Recreation Area and its mitigation, and helped direct the future management of the recreation area, so long in question because of the uncertain relationship between the Park Service and Seattle City Light. Moreover, the settlement helped spawn park resource management and environmental education programs. At the same time, the settlement's benefits were still undefined, for the administrative costs for carrying out some of the projects in the agreement were more than the park could afford.
One of the more notable events affecting the recent management of North Cascades came from the National Park Service's reorganization beginning in the mid-1990s. In part a response to the Clinton administration's call to streamline government operations and the Park Service's own efforts to reinvent the way it conducted its operations, the reorganization placed greater responsibility for park programs in the hands of national park managers. The reorganization changed the way the Park Service conducted business, from the revision of park regions to the formation of executive committees and park cluster committees to decide on park project priorities and other matters. Superintendent Paleck played an instrumental role in the agency's restructuring. He helped draft the agency's restructuring plan, served on the regional leadership council for the Pacific Northwest, and chaired the Columbia Cascades Cluster Leadership Council and its executive committee. In addition, other park staffers served on various advisory committees. As part of the new organizational effort, the park's administration placed a greater effort on partnerships, such as alliances with the U.S. Forest Service and other federal and state agencies involved in managing the North Cascades. North Cascades also sought other means of funding park projects through the creation of the Mount Rainier, North Cascades, Olympic Fund.

For years, park managers had been trying to build programs, and the effort to seek other sources of funding reflected a desire to find financial support for park operations. Twenty years after the establishment of North Cascades, Superintendent John Reynolds had called attention to the park's "unacceptably low financial base." North Cascades was deficient in both its operating base and capital improvements funds. In a sense, North Cascades was operating at 1968 funding levels which supported basic park operations but little more. Reynolds pointed to disturbing trends in decreasing service to the public, visitor and resource protection, and facilities maintenance. In part, Reynolds pushed for a new general management plan as a way to raise awareness of the park complex's critical resource protection issues. With the completion of the 1988 general management plan, the superintendent was then able to assert that contrary to popular views, North Cascades had several "critical resource issues...with many more developing rapidly due to population increase and other factors in Western Washington." In this way, he argued that the park had only the "minimal staff capability to address these issues" with little money left over to establish any "meaningful and effective inventory and monitoring programs." [18]

Funding from fee legislation made only a slight difference. Ironically, Reynolds suggested, North Cascades was a major national park without "entrance stations, since the main 'park road' is a state highway." The situation may have been politically acceptable and attractive from the standpoint of wilderness preservation, but it placed the park at a disadvantage. North Cascades collected "only user fees, not entrance fees," the superintendent asserted. "As a result, this park does not benefit from the revenue program that is helping other National Parks with similar visitation and operations. Dependency on fees is unrealistic in North Cascades." To resolve the park's funding woes, Reynolds recommended an increase of some $300,000 in its congressional appropriation to establish an inventory and monitoring program, protect cultural resources, provide better wilderness management, enhance interpretation, and expand facilities maintenance activities. His efforts met with some success, for he secured funding from a number of Park Service programs for the protection of natural and cultural resources. The operating fund increase was also justified for the maintenance of the new visitor center. [19]

But conditions within the park continued to change, and the park complex's administration seems to have struggled to keep pace. That is, as the park staff expanded to meet the challenges of resource issues, base funding has been stretched thin. Two increases in the park's operating base have been made since 1992. The increases have made North Cascade's budget comparable to other parks its size, an improvement over the 1980s. Still, as Superintendent William Paleck noted, North Cascades has a $1 million shortfall each year in
funding for basic operating needs. Now rather than being poorer than other parks its size, North Cascades was just as poor. The projects associated with the City Light settlement and the new responsibilities associated with reorganization added another dimension to this situation. Park staff had been creative in seeking funding from other sources, such as the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission, and, it seems, would continue to adjust. [20]
Chapter 10:
LAND USE AND PROTECTION

In an ideal world, creating a wilderness park means drawing boundaries around a pristine landscape to ensure its preservation. In reality, this is not as easily accomplished. North Cascades was an amalgam of recreation areas and national park, making the singular mission of wilderness protection more complicated. Recreation areas and national parks had different purposes. In the case of the North Cascades complex, the recreation areas contained permanent residents, artificial lakes, dams, and power plants, and they also offered a variety of other uses deemed inappropriate in national parks. On the other hand, North Cascades National Park was, like all parks, intended for higher uses: preservation of nature in its original state, and human appreciation of this wilderness condition. Yet one theme connecting the management of both recreation areas and national park was the acquisition of private lands.

In the park complex, private lands came in a number of forms, from mining claims to private residences and commercial resorts. During the park complex's first decade of management, park managers set about the task of purchasing private lands, the use of which may have posed a threat to the preservation of park resources, or the acquisition of which would aid in the administration of the park complex. In the late 1970s and 1980s agency officials renewed their efforts to acquire private lands and carry the program forward. In doing so, they encountered some of their greatest controversies. These controversies stemmed from the threat of renewed mining activities in the park as well as legal challenges to the Park Service's land acquisition policies in Stehekin.

To better understand this issue, it is helpful to first look at why there was an issue over private land in the first place. Typically, as in the case of North Cascades, Congress created national parks before it secured ownership of, or cleared title to, any inholdings. Doing so prior to the establishment of a park would have been time consuming and expensive. The saving clause in the language of most, if not all, park legislation was that the creation of a park area was subject to "valid existing rights." This meant that after a park's establishment, Park Service officials set about the task of purchasing private lands, the use of which may have posed a threat to preservation. Acquisition was often a delicate process of reconciling park needs with those of private landowners. If done quickly, acquisition could keep land prices low and thus costs to the government down. If done well, acquisition could keep public perceptions of the Park Service positive, aiding in further land purchases and promoting a positive view of the agency. [1]

Inevitably there were problems. This was especially true where the interpretation of the park's legislation, particularly a park area like North Cascades and the Stehekin country, continued to be the subject of some debate well after the park act was passed. In the first place, when a parkland was created with valid existing mineral rights, conflicts surfaced between the public's interest in the parkland's preservation and the interest of the mineral claimants in mineral development. [2] In the second place, rarely did Congress appropriate enough money
for the purchase of all private lands in national parks. North Cascades was not exception. Prior to the 1960s, this did not always present a problem because most parklands were carved from other federal lands and required only a transfer from one public agency to the other. In other cases, state governments might become involved in the purchase of private lands for the Park Service. Similarly, philanthropists might step forward, as in the case of Grand Teton National Park, and buy the land for and transfer ownership to the service. By the 1960s, however, Congress began creating more parks from private lands, necessitating a new approach. The old approach had been to "wait for willing sellers" unless threats to resources were imminent. The new approach was that each area's enabling legislation guided the process of land acquisition. [3]

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Park Service's approach was similar: first the agency would buy land from willing sellers, and then acquire lands needed for park management and use through condemnation. The situation was slightly different at North Cascades, given the political controversy and compromises surrounding the creation of the park complex (in particular Lake Chelan NRA). The area's legislation instructed the Park Service to buy lands from willing sellers only and not to purchase lands unless it was to protect an area from an incompatible use. In other words, it would not use condemnation as a general tool of land acquisition.

One can gain a sense of how important land acquisition was in the new park's management by the fact that acquisition preceded the completion of most formal planning documents and the implementation of other park programs. Complications arose in this process, however, that were common throughout the park system. Congress authorized new parks faster than it authorized appropriations for land acquisition. This led to delays in land purchases and the related problem of inflated land prices -- one reason why the Park Service used up its appropriation so quickly in Stehekin. Problems also surfaced with the Park Service's treatment of private land owners. During the 1970s, some land owners charged the agency with mistreatment; its acquisition program, they contended, was forcing inholders out of parks in which they were legally allowed. In other cases, agency officials were accused of harassing land owners until they sold out. Addressing these concerns, a series of General Accounting Office (GAO) reports, including one assessing the agency's practices in Stehekin, concluded that the Park Service had purchased too much land rather than employing other forms of protection such as easements and zoning. These latter methods would have allowed private owners to remain inside park areas. [4]

The result of these controversies was a new Park Service policy toward land acquisitions. In 1979, the Carter administration required that all parks have land acquisitions plans; these set forth overall strategies for the agency's acquisition program before it began purchasing land. The plans would provide a general order for land purchases, clarify what interests would be acquired -- such as full fee or scenic easement -- and identify what were compatible and incompatible uses on private lands. In doing so, land owners would know what was an acceptable use of their lands within the larger park or recreation area setting. More than one hundred plans were produced under the new policy for existing park units, North Cascades among them, over the next several years. Still more changes to the land acquisition program came in 1981 when Secretary of the Interior James Watt took office. Watt tightened the policy on land purchases even further; he replaced the land acquisition plans with land protection plans. The main intent of these new plans was that their programs were to be cost effective to the federal government. Put another way, they needed to find other "practical" means -- whenever possible -- other than federal purchase to protect lands within park areas. What followed was the development of a more methodical process (set down in more plans) to determine that federal funds were spent to buy only the "most critical parcels." [5]
A Story of Two Mines

One of the main priorities of the land protection program was to acquire all of the patented mining claims within the park complex. Dating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mining in the North Cascades was a colorful subject in the region's history. Here, as elsewhere in the American West, hopeful prospectors flooded into the range looking for its hidden wealth of gold and other valuable minerals. Leaving more often than not with empty pockets and little to show for their hard life in the extreme mountain conditions, prospectors left a legacy in the landscape; it was a legacy of environmental conquest as well as their own failure. River beds and mountain slopes bore the physical scars of prospecting and excavation. Mining machinery lay scattered among the ruins. Nevertheless, the hope of finding new wealth persisted. That hope persisted in both patented and unpatented mining claims. When the park complex was established in 1968, there were ninety-one patented mining claims, amounting to approximately 1,660 acres, all of which were south of Highway 20, and there were some 7,000 unpatented claims throughout the park complex. Despite the large number of unpatented claims, the most serious threat from renewed mining activity came from the patented claims. The owner of a patented claim, having proven his claim contained a commercially viable mineral deposit, had full fee ownership of the minerals and the surface. More importantly, he had the legal right to develop his claim for any purpose.

Throughout the early 1970s, agency officials carried out a rather successful program of acquisition or invalidation of unpatented mineral claims. But they were less successful in purchasing the patented claims that presented the greatest threat to the park's wild setting. These claims were in the areas of Cascade Pass and Thunder Creek. In 1971, North Cascades managers gave these claims their highest priority, but before they could negotiate and purchase these clusters of claims, the original appropriation for land acquisition was all but exhausted. Around this same time, the owners of the Skagit Queen mining claims, located in the upper Thunder Creek basin, voiced their interest in developing their claims. The claims stretched for several miles along both sides of Skagit Queen Creek, a tributary of Thunder Creek, below Boston Glacier. Park managers considered this drainage "one of the most beautiful areas" within the park, and its "destruction...for commercial purposes would strike a devastating blow to one of the most spectacular areas in the Pacific Northwest." [7]

It had been nearly seventy years since the area had been "improved" for mining. In the first decade of this century, the Skagit Queen Consolidated Mining Company and later the British Mining Company set up mining operations. Surface developments included a power house, a barn, assay office, pumphouse, and machine shop, among other structures. Subsurface developments were never as impressive as those on the surface, but they did include a 670-foot crosscut adit. The operation itself, however, proved less successful than the construction of the mining facilities. By 1915 the mine owners had patented most of the property, most likely with the intent of selling out, and subsequently abandoning the developments to the elements.

But in 1972, the Skagit Queen claims suddenly became a valuable commodity, not so much as a storehouse of minerals but as a piece of real estate. The government needed to purchase these private holdings in order to protect the park's wilderness character, and the current owner of the mining claims, Glenn Widing, believed the government would pay a substantial amount for his land. He was disappointed. In the summer and fall of that year, the Park Service's mineral appraisals determined that the mining claims had no mineral value, and furthermore, that the traces of minerals discovered were of insufficient quantity and quality to show a commercial value for ownership. Moreover, contractors for the Park Service determined that the timber values of the claims were high, but the costs of removing the
timber from such a remote location made the net value of the timber nearly nothing after harvest. Finally, without mineral or timber values, the land was appraised at $168,700. This was hardly the figure, it seems, Widing had hoped for when he purchased the claims from the Natural Resources Development Corporation, which retained an interest in the mining claims by contracting with Widing to buy the property for a low down payment. When the Park Service offered to purchase the claims for their appraised value in January 1973, Widing turned it down. [8]

In response to this "unsatisfactory price," Widing and his associates informed the Park Service that they planned to conduct more "exploratory work" that summer, their apparent intent was to determine for themselves whether the minerals of the Skagit Queen claims would pay. What followed were two proposals -- or veiled threats -- aimed at forcing the government to increase substantially its offer for the claims. The first of these proposals was to construct a road up Thunder Creek in order to bring heavy equipment to the site for mineral exploration. The road, naturally, would have to cross national park land and into the park's proposed wilderness area. Under federal mining law, mining claim holders retained a right of "reasonable" access to their properties within national parks if their claims existed prior to the park's establishment. For this reason, the Park Service might have been obligated to grant such a permit. Park officials, faced with the possibility of such wholesale destruction to this wild region, planned to condemn the land to prevent the road's construction. Yet before using condemnation procedures, agency managers had a relatively new management tool at their disposal: the environmental impact statement (EIS) required under the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In January 1973, Superintendent Lowell White informed Widing and company that before construction could proceed they would have to provide information for an EIS. Expensive and time consuming, the EIS provides a detailed statement describing the proposed action -- or project -- taking place on federal land, its direct and indirect impacts to the natural environment, the cumulative and long-term effects, alternatives to the proposal (which includes a "no-action" alternative), and identifies any irreversible impacts to natural resources. In short, the EIS, with its comprehensive analysis and public disclosure, could conceivably stall or halt a project altogether.

Perhaps for these reasons, Widing and the Natural Resources Development Corporation met the request with silence. Two years later, in January 1975, they submitted another request for a permit to move ahead with mineral exploration and development, having conducted assessments of ore samples the previous year. Apparently, these samples boosted their interest in the value of the mining claims. Once again, a main feature of the project was the construction of a road up Thunder Creek. And once more, Widing and his associates did not comply with the park's request for information to prepare an EIS. As if to force the Park Service's hand, the owners of the claims flew a crew by helicopter into the millsite that summer to survey the claims and conduct further mineral assessments -- all under careful watch of park rangers. [9]

This work led to the second proposal that seemed intent on pushing the Park Service to pay a higher price for the claims. The proposal had nothing to do with developing the minerals but logging the timber from the mining claims. In late September 1975, Widing and company filed an application with Washington State's Department of Natural Resources to log 220 acres of their claims. The state required the application under the Forest Practices Act, even though the mining claims were privately owned. Similar to their road proposal, the claim owners failed to provide enough information about the proposed logging operations. And a month later, the state, the claim owners, and Superintendent White met to discuss the project. The owners, again, seemed less interested in the logging proposal itself as they did in the threat it posed, for they reduced the amount of land they would log to twenty acres. They also renewed their request to construct a road up Thunder Creek, to aid in the removal of timber and to bring in heavy equipment to the site. [10]
The requests for permission to log and to construct a road -- and thus develop the mining site -- appeared to be more a threat than a reality. By the end of 1975, the owners of the mining claims had not submitted more information to the state in order to receive their logging permit. Under the state's version of NEPA, the logging project might require an EIS, another potentially expensive and time-consuming roadblock. Moreover, Widing and his associates had not supplied enough information about their proposed road up Thunder Creek, and park managers assured them that the road project would require an EIS, since it would enter the park's proposed wilderness area and have such "a major impact." Preparing the report would require a minimum of a year, given the project's extent and the fact that surveys could not begin until the snowpack melted in the late spring or early summer. [11]

Whether or not the owners of the Skagit Queen claims actually intended to go through with developing a mine did not matter. The plain fact was that the Park Service could not force the owners off their property by legislative or administrative means. Besides mining, the owners of the claims could not only log the land, but under existing regulations they could also subdivide it for private residences or a commercial backcountry tourist operation. Above all, the threat of mining itself required action. In December 1975, Regional Director John Rutter informed Representative Lloyd Meeds about the issue. The problem, Rutter suggested, was very simple. The only way to solve the threat of mining up Thunder Creek was to acquire the claims through purchase or condemnation. Both approaches required money. (To carry out condemnation, the government needed to have sufficient funds to cover the cost of the land itself.) As of early 1973, however, North Cascades was out of acquisition funds authorized under its enabling legislation. [12] Most likely, Meeds carried this message to Congress, for on October 1, 1976, the president signed into law an omnibus bill that raised the appropriation ceilings for land acquisitions in a number of national parks, and North Cascades was among them. The law granted the park an additional $1 million for land acquisition because the original estimate from 1967 "did not include funds for acquisition of outstanding mineral interests." More importantly, the central reason for the increase was "to forestall" the "imminent" threat of mining in the Thunder Creek Basin. [13]

Meanwhile, in 1976 Congress passed another law, the Mining in the Parks Act, that would allow the Park Service to regulate mines on national park lands. The act's purposes were broad and general, stating that "all mining operations in areas of the National Park System should be conducted so as to prevent or minimize damage to the environment and other resource values." Park managers found little comfort in the law's language or its provisions for strict regulations of mining activities in national parks. The implication was that mining would happen in North Cascades, though the law enabled the Secretary of the Interior to close all units of the park system to further mineral location and mining entry under the Mining Law of 1872. The law also empowered the secretary to declare as invalid all existing unpatented claims within units of the park system not properly recorded by September 28, 1977. [14]

Condemnation was the preferred procedure for dealing with the Skagit Queen claims. In 1978, the Park Service initiated condemnation procedures, and three years later, on September 16, 1981, the court proceedings ended in favor of the agency. The court awarded the Skagit Queen mining claim owners $277,000 for approximately 645 acres. "This action," wrote Superintendent Keith Miller, "assures the visual and resource integrity of this superb area located in the heart of the North Cascades National Park." [15]

Following the resolution of the Skagit Queen controversy, park managers continued to pursue the acquisition of the remaining private lands within the park. Fee acquisition, according to the park's 1983 draft land protection plan, was the "only alternative that adequately satisfies the requirement for complete protection" and preservation of the park's resources. There were six patented mining claims, two mill sites, and one mineral right making up the sole
The remaining private interests within the park; they encompassed approximately 236 acres. The claims were clustered in and near Thunder Creek, Cascade River, Boston Basin, Bridge Creek, and Lake Anne. Of these, park managers rated the Thunder Creek Mines (or Dorothy claims as they were also known) as their highest priority for acquisition. There were at least two reasons for this. First, this one property totaled around 126 acres; this accounted for more than half of the remaining private lands. The property was made up of six patented claims of approximately 121 acres and one mill site of approximately 5 acres. Second, like the Skagit Queen claims, this property was located in the park's proposed wilderness, and its potential development now represented the wilderness' greatest threat. By comparison, the other claims were much smaller and the likelihood of their development did not seem as imminent.

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Like the Skagit Queen mine, the Thunder Creek mines were a going concern early in this century in the upper Thunder Creek drainage. In 1921, the Thunder Creek Mining Company was issued patents for its claims -- the Dorothy claims -- and mill site. The company erected a number of structures as part of its operation and pressed hard for access to the site. In 1929, the Forest Service issued the company a special use permit to construct a roadway up Thunder Creek so trucks could reach the mine. The company also considered a more ambitious plan to construct a narrow gauge railroad from Diablo up Thunder Creek to its property. Neither project was ever realized, and mining had long since ceased on the Dorothy claims. The idea of mining, however, has carried on, especially after the establishment of North Cascades National Park. And in the early 1980s, the new owners of the claims embarked on their own mining venture.

Similar to the controversy over the Skagit Queen claims, this mining venture aimed to profit from rising property values more than it did from the mineral wealth contained in the property itself. After all, the Dorothy claims were surrounded by a national park and some of the country's most spectacular wild country, and the new owners expected great returns on their investment. To protect this pristine landscape, they believed, the government would be willing to pay a substantial sum. Proving the property's value, though, became something of a life-long mission for the mine's owners, for the gulf between what the Park Service and what the owners believed was a "fair" market value for the property was as wide and deep as the Thunder Creek drainage itself. Trying to bridge this gap would lead to one of the park complex's longest cases involving mining properties.

The story begins with an old mining company, the Thunder Creek Silver-Lead Mines, Inc., dissolving in 1965. William H. Webster, an officer in the company, became the liquidating trustee, and continued to pay taxes on the land and thus retained ownership. In the early 1970s, as part of its land acquisition program, the Park Service offered Webster $1,000 per claim. Webster refused the offer, stating that he had been paying taxes on the property for more than fifty years and that several mining engineers had assured him that his claims contained "very valuable ore." Thus, he expected an offer of around $2 million for the property. In the late 1970s, in an attempt to resolve the issue, the Park Service conducted two appraisals of the claims, one for their mineral values and the other for their overall property values. In 1978, the agency determined that the property had no commercial mineral values; that is, similar to the Skagit Queen assessment, gold and other precious metals did not exist on the property in "sufficient quantity and quality" to justify a commercial venture that would realize a profit. Around this same time, the Park Service appraised the value of the property itself at $38,800. Obviously, this was far below what Webster desired.

Matters only grew more complicated. In 1980, William Webster passed away. His two nephews, William C. and John C. Webster, who lived in Tonka Bay, Minnesota, inherited
their uncle's estate and eventually gained clear title to the property. In order to satisfy the numerous shareholders in the now defunct mining company, the Websters were forced to purchase the claims at a public auction on June 17, 1983, for $67,000, almost twice the appraised value. Meanwhile, the Webster brothers were anxious to sell their property to the United States, but like their uncle, they believed it was worth "substantially more than $38,000" and, of course, the price they paid at auction. Over time, their figures would range from $3 million to $50 million, far beyond the Park Service's appropriations for the acquisition of all private lands within the North Cascades complex.

Their reasons for such a high asking price were based on independent evaluations, evaluations which markedly differed from those commissioned by the Park Service. In September 1983, for example, George Weaton, a mining engineer, appraised the value of the Dorothy claims for the Websters at approximately $5 million. Two months later, however, Luther Clemmer, a Park Service mining engineer, appraised the mineral value of the same claims at $6,500. Clemmer argued that Weaton's report was poorly done, incomplete, and inconsistent with "proper appraisal technique," for the report failed to demonstrate whether the ore could be mined, processed, and marketed at a profit," which, Clemmer concluded, it could not. Without proof of the claim's economic potential, there was no valuable ore reserve and thus no mineral value that one could attach to the mine, save for "mine-related improvements and exploration potential." Weaton's estimate of value, moreover, was not based upon objective research but "the fantasies and speculation found in old reports prepared 50 years ago." [20]

Although William C. Webster, the main spokesperson of the two Webster brothers, maintained that he wanted to sell his land to the Park Service and "protect" the scenic wonders of the North Cascades, he was adamant about getting a large sum of money in return. To force the issue, he proposed a number of development schemes, none of which actually materialized, but they nevertheless generated concern from park managers. In 1984, Webster proposed the first of several ventures: a logging operation on the Dorothy claims. The operation was highly unlikely. Like the mining proposal, logging would not be economical; the terrain was too steep, the trees were too mature, and the area was too remote. Access, a central issue in any case involving private lands surrounded by a national park, would be a serious problem. In order to protect the wilderness values of the Thunder Creek basin, among other things, Park officials would not allow a road to be built up Thunder Creek, and so the only way to reach the claims and remove timber was by helicopter, an expensive prospect. Furthermore, Webster's proposed logging operation would have to pass a complete environmental assessment by the state, a review open to public comment. The logging proposal faded from sight. [21]

Webster's interest in proving the value of his property remained strong. In 1985, Webster received another report on the potential value of his property, this time from a geologist, that was quite optimistic -- "overly optimistic" in the Park Service's opinion. With this report in hand, Webster announced plans to conduct more ore sampling and map vein exposures. Although it appeared that he might be preparing to develop the mine, Webster's main interest was establishing -- and perhaps proving the Park Service's assessments wrong -- the true mineral values of his property.

While Webster was free to develop his property under the Mining Act, he could not do so without consulting the Park Service first. This stipulation had come with the passage of the Mining in the Parks Act in 1976. To be sure, the act did not enable the Park Service to eliminate mining altogether, but it did allow the agency to implement stricter controls over mine operations, the central feature of which was a "plan of operations." The plan described the proposed operations, set forth the timetable of those operations, provided a reclamation plan, outlined the steps taken to meet federal and state environmental standards, and supplied

Webster's plans, however, kept Park Service managers and real estate specialists busy. Mostly, they attempted to convince Webster what the federal government meant by "fair market value." In August 1985, Harlan Hobbs, then the Pacific Northwest Region's Chief of the Division of Lands, informed William Webster that the government has "a responsibility and a duty to pay 'just compensation' for the property we are acquiring." By law, just compensation was "the fair market value of the property at the time of taking." Simply put, fair market value was the price a knowledgeable seller and buyer would agree upon. Moreover, fair market value did not involve the "mere possibility of minerals" or other valued resources; one could not put a fair price on such a possibility. Fair market value also did not involve "any special value of the property to the owner not directly reflected in the market value," such as a sentimental attachment to or associations with a particular place. Finally, the "Fifth Amendment allows the owner only the fair market value of his property; it does not guarantee him a return on his investment."[24]

Nevertheless, Webster, now a partner in the recently formed Thunder Creek Mines company, pressed on with his challenge. His challenge was not only to establish the value of his property but also to test agency policies about access to his property. In May 1986, he informed park managers that he planned to develop a wilderness camp on his claims. The camp would have been for outdoor recreation -- hiking and mountaineering -- as well as for rock collecting, specifically quartz crystals. Quartz crystals were the most recent minerals of value, he asserted, found on his property. In order to make this new operation work, Webster would once again need some means of access to his land. He proposed using helicopters that would leave from Colonial Creek Campground. He also proposed using all-terrain vehicles along the Thunder Creek Trail to reach the camp from, and take materials out to, Highway 20. He would once more be disappointed with the Park Service's response.

Superintendent John Reynolds replied to Webster, stating that he was not opposed to the "idea of a wilderness camp," but he had concerns about the operation and there were regulations with which Wester needed to comply. First, park lands could not be used for helicopter operations without a special regulation. Second, regulations barred motorized vehicles on trails; moreover, the area through which he would travel was proposed wilderness and thus managed as legal wilderness, yet another reason for barring motorized travel. Third, his camp would require a commercial license. And finally, the removal of crystals or other rocks from the property -- even by guests of the wilderness camp -- was considered mining and required a plan of operations.[25]

Webster seemed less concerned about the future of his new business venture than he did about his "constitutional rights" to use his land "in a normal way, including mining gemstones." He suggested that the superintendent was interfering with his "prior existing rights," the language in the national park's legislation which allowed him to continue to use his property after the creation of North Cascades. In a comment that typified his thinking, Webster stated that Thunder Creek Mines would cooperate with the Park Service fully, and

promised "not to harm the environment, but we certainly do not need an access permit to enter our property," and "we will not wait for one." [26]

However threatening Webster sounded, he eventually relented and provided the appropriate documentation to the Park Service; it was a pattern that repeated itself over the next decade. One reason Thunder Creek Mines submitted to the Park Service's regulations was that the agency was the only likely buyer for its property. Another reason was the law. In October 1986, for example, the Park Service's solicitor, Richard Neely, asserted that the "right of access is not unlimited" but should be reasonable; access was also subject to regulation. Furthermore, the Park Service was not violating Webster's "constitutional rights" by subjecting his access to "reasonable regulation." Because Thunder Creek Mines acquired its patent long before the establishment of North Cascades, the "valid existing rights" proviso in the park's legislation did not apply. The status of Webster's property, in other words, was that of private land within a national park, the use of which was protected by the Constitution, but still subject to regulation. Congress, Neely pointed out, could "regulate mining in national park areas." Therefore, he advised that Webster "must comply with regulations and obtain an approved mining plan of operations with an access permit before attempting any type of exploratory or mining operations" on his property. [27]

In the meantime, Webster commissioned another mineral report, this time one evaluating his property's quartz crystal and other gemstones, to bolster his assertion that the property was extremely valuable -- and therefore its fair market value was worth considerably more than the Park Service's appraisal. In December 1986, Webster supplied Park Service real estate specialists with another proposal documenting the "potential" income from his property if Thunder Creek Mines developed a quartz mining operation. According to the mine company's authority, Gary Coleman, and its own calculations, Webster estimated that his business could expect an annual net income of $2.8 million over a period of ten years, which was evidently the amount of time it would take to mine all of the quartz. Therefore, Webster calculated that the real value of the property was $28.6 million. Add to this other "gemstones...timber, silver, lead, zinc, and gold, plus recreational income from heli-hiking, mountain climbing school leases, etc.," he noted, and the property's "income potential" increased substantially. The potential value of Webster's property, however, never seemed as attractive as finding a way to get the Park Service to buy it from him. As he concluded, "we are expecting the National Park Service to buy our property," and would be willing to settle for a figure less than $28.6 million. The question again was what was the fair market value? If it was not a figure in the millions of dollars, Webster implied, his company would begin mining at once.

The owners of Thunder Creek Mines spun elaborate plans and threatened to invade a wilderness setting in order to pressure the Park Service into buying its property for a much higher price than the agency's offer of approximately $69,000. The agency, though, stood firm. In 1987, Harlan Hobbs received an independent report appraising the quartz crystal value of the Dorothy claims. It disputed the findings of Webster's report and suggested that the quality of the crystal was not very impressive, and that there was "little probability" that Thunder Creek Mines could "develop a successful crystal-producing venture." Hobbs, whose patience was apparently wearing thin, informed Webster that it appears that "your efforts to rationalize some substantial mineral values have been a waste of time and money." [28]

Not one to give up on a dream, Webster submitted Thunder Creek Mines' plan of operation for crystal collecting, which the Park Service approved in May 1987. The collecting evidently did not produce any new results, and in September of that year, Hobbs reminded the owners of the mine company of his agency's conclusions: mining might produce crystals in better condition but not of better quality. Moreover, he noted that his agency's experts concluded that there was no value to the crystals (or any other minerals) on the claim; even the mining company's own consultant had not attributed a value to the crystals. It seemed to Hobbs that
at the very least the Webster brothers wanted to cover the cost of their original investment and expenses to prove the value of their property. William Webster, for example, believed his company could still profit from "a recreational crystal collecting operation," even if the gems did not have any commercial value. For this reason, Hobbs wrote, "he still wanted several million" for the claims "based on the hypothetical income" from this unproven venture. No matter what arguments the Websters presented, it was "simply not the government's responsibility to provide you a return on a bad investment."  

Resilient, though perhaps irrational to some, the Websters employed several new strategies over the next several years. In October 1987, they attempted to donate the property (as a tax-deductible charitable contribution) to the National Park Service. In doing so, they would have been able to reclaim their initial investment and through a complicated process have increased the value of the property enough to grant them a substantial profit. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) turned down their proposal. In the IRS's opinion, the Websters did not have a fair market value established and the service would not issue a ruling to establish a value. In addition, the Websters' proposal called for forming a partnership, made up of them, who would buy the mining company and then donate their interests in the company (the mining claims and their "appraised" value) to the government -- provided that the appraisal exceeded "3 1/2 times their initial investment in order to reach an economic break-even point for federal income tax purposes." This proposal, the IRS noted, was not about "furthering a business purpose" but rather about obtaining "a federal tax deduction based upon the appraised value of their partnership interests being significantly in excess of their acquisition cost of the partnership interests." In other words, the Websters wanted to form a dummy company to buy the Dorothy claims, inflate the value of their interests, and then donate their property to the Park Service. What they could not get from the Park Service in cash, they could get as a deduction on their taxes from the IRS.  

When this alternative failed, the Websters returned to familiar territory. They once more requested the Park Service to evaluate their property in the Thunder Creek drainage, primarily to determine the value of its quartz crystals. When that was not forthcoming, the Webster brothers laid plans to develop a permanent resort on their property. Presented in October 1988, this latest venture would resurrect the wilderness camp idea; the new operation would combine crystal collecting, mining, as well as recreational activities. The Websters estimated that two to three hundred people would visit their resort in the summer season. They would fly in by helicopter and initially stay in temporary buildings. Other developments included sewage systems and landing areas for the helicopters. The mine owners went so far as to hire recreational consultants to produce a prospectus for this service. Apparently, the venture proved to be more complicated than the Websters anticipated and it never got off the ground.  

The plan for a resort evidently did not have the desired effect; the Park Service continued to monitor the Websters' proposals but did not raise its offer for the Dorothy claims. On May 17, 1990, the agency made a second offer for the claims of $56,000, substantially less than its earlier offer. Naturally, the Websters considered this figure "unrealistically low." But the Websters had reason to believe the Park Service was still interested in their property, for the 1990 land protection plan for the park listed it as the highest priority for acquisition. So they began to consider other approaches that would move the acquisition process along in their favor. First, they alerted the Park Service that they had received an offer of $250,000 for mineral exploration rights to their property, but wanted to allow the government time to respond before they made any decisions. Second, when the government did not respond to this new development, the Websters then notified the Park Service that they had connections to Congressman Bruce Vento, who chaired the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, and would take their case directly to him. Apparently, the Websters were interested in receiving a settlement similar to the recent one in Voyageurs National Park,
where a park inholder agreed to sell for $1.2 million after a lengthy battle with the Park Service. [32]

Although their sights were still set high, the Websters had little to show for their efforts. William Webster continued to inform park managers of his interest in gaining access to his property to conduct more surface exploration to establish -- yet again -- the property's value. He also suggested that he and his brother might reconsider donating their property to the United States, presumably using another approach to write off the donation at a much higher value. On September 18, 1991, William Webster made his most concrete proposal to date; he offered to sell his property to the government for $3,387,600. The figure's exact amount was important, for it represented how the Websters arrived at their version of fair market value. Although the property was worth $21 million, "based on the projected consolidated appraisal" by Northwest Bank, William Webster stated, the Thunder Creek Mines would sell for the lower amount of $3,387,600 because it was a "fair price to pay." The price was the cost of his family's original investment in the property, compounded for sixty-five years at 4.7 percent interest. The Park Service, of course, legally could not pay the Websters this amount for their property, since it exceeded the fair market value. [33]

Nothing, it seems, had changed. William Webster continued to try and prove his right to have motorized access to his property, and agency officials continued to respond that he had misinterpreted the regulations and that they could deny his requests for access, at least the means of access. In February 1992, Webster offered to accept half of his earlier offer, and continued to strike an old theme -- that the Park Service had denied him his "constitutional rights" to access his property. Perhaps, he hoped, that the threat of a law suit, or the threat of driving a snowmobile or all terrain vehicle up Thunder Creek, would convince the Park Service to buy his land. Two months later, Webster attempted to increase the political pressure on the Park Service to meet his demands. He informed Rick Wagner, Hobbs' successor, that Vento's office agreed with his terms, evidently suggesting that "friendly condemnation" procedures should commence, in which the government would pay Thunder Creek Mines its most recent asking price of $1.7 million. [34]

Once more, Webster did not receive the desired response. Wagner related that it was not that simple. First, Congressman Vento could not dictate to the current administration that condemnation should proceed apace. He simply did not wield that kind of influence. Second, condemnation was a slow process. Third, the Park Service could not even begin to think of initiating condemnation for the appraised value of the Dorothy claims because it barely had enough funds to cover the appraised value. Finally, Wagner suggested that, as an alternative, Webster and his lawyers might try to initiate an inverse condemnation, forcing the government into court and moving the proceedings along. Apparently, Webster was not interested in pursuing this option. [35]

In 1993, the option Webster chose instead was to mount more legal pressure, and over the next several years attempted to build a case of "taking" by the federal government. That is, the Park Service had denied him his legal right to the use of his property, while at the same time the agency had included the Dorothy claims as part of the national park. In support of this allegation, one of Webster's main points was that his company should have had motorized ("all weather") access up Thunder Creek. To support this claim, he argued that the trail and its bridges had been built by the original mine developers in late 1920s and early 1930s, an assertion based more on speculation than fact. This alone should have been enough information to suggest the trail somehow belonged to the current company and allow it to build a road and drive to the mine site. (One section of the mine company's so-called trail was under Diablo Lake.) Superintendent William Paleck notified Webster that, again, building a road where there had historically only been a trail, one which predated his company's ownership and now passed through what was now designated wilderness, did not
constitute "reasonable access." The property owners, in his opinion, had not been denied access; they could reach their land by helicopter or by foot or pack animal over the trail. In fact, they could not produce any legal documents to prove ownership of the trail, after the Park Service noted that its historical research suggested that the "road" up Thunder Creek had never been finished by the Thunder Creek Mining Company. Furthermore, the Thunder Creek Trail was on federal land. [36]

Second, Webster argued that the Park Service maintained a trail through his property, and thus encouraged park visitors to trespass on his land -- and thus "use" his property. To this Paleck noted that, while park managers might have relocated the trail at some point, it was more likely that this trail had always crossed the property, for it was built early in the century. Any "trespass" by park visitors was unintentional, it seems. Third, there were other related violations of private ownership. Apparently, park staffers had destroyed one or more structures on the Webster's land, a claim, the superintendent noted, which could not be verified. And Webster claimed that the Park Service was trying to "regulate" commercial activities on private land, that is, requiring a permit for running the proposed wilderness camp. To the contrary, Paleck asserted, the park had required a permit because the camp would run some of its programs on park lands. [37]

Despite making these clarifications, the Park Service failed to convince Webster that it was not denying him or his brother the "real" value of their property. Park managers continued to inform Webster that regulations were legally binding, and yet Webster continued to propose ventures similar to previous ones, apparently in an attempt to build his case that the government had "taken" his land. [38] In support of this tactic, he asserted that the Park Service had been disingenuous in dealing with him and his family. Agency officials had attempted to cover up important facts about his uncle's ownership, such as the amount of money he had invested (and thus the figure of $165,000 the Webster brothers used to calculate their price for the property.) Of course, the Park Service denied this accusation, but in time it became clear that Webster was making this kind of assertion not only to further his legal and political battle but also to mount a media battle. [39]

In 1995, Congressman Jim Ramstad inquired with the Park Service, on behalf of William Webster, regarding the Thunder Creek Mines. At that time, Acting Regional Director William C. Walters responded to Ramstad, assuring him that his agency had followed the letter of the law. More importantly, the Park Service lacked "appropriated funds to acquire the property," and as had been the case for some twenty-five years, "there appears to be a large difference between the potential appraised value [of the mining property] and Mr. Webster's asking price." Ramstad's concern, apparently, was that the agency was not negotiating in good faith. Although Walters' agency intended to "gladly resume earnest negotiations" for the property, it could only do so when "funds become available for a current appraisal and potential acquisition." What Webster believed, and the reason he had contacted Ramstad, was that the Land and Water Conservation Fund could be used to purchase his land for his asking price. While it was true that the fund was the source for the agency's land purchases, the Park Service reminded Webster that it could only pay him the appraised value, for Congress closely monitored any purchases drawn from the fund's trust account in excess of the market value. Congress had to approve any negotiated settlement exceeding market value. Meanwhile, William Webster was submitting information regarding his case to CBS's news show, "60 Minutes," regarding Land and Water Conservation Fund abuses and the unconstitutional taking of private property. Apparently, his case was a prime example. [40]

The outcome of all this was a stalemate. Lawsuits waited in the wings. CBS camera crews might show up at park headquarters any moment. William Webster continued to propose new ways to establish the value of his property. The most recent plan, which emerged in 1995, was to use an air-crane helicopter (Sikorsky) to fly some forty to sixty loads of galena ore
from the Thunder Creek mine to trucks on the Cascade River Road, and from there transport
the ore to a smelter in Canada, where it would be processed and finally the property's mineral
value would be firmly established. As of July 1997, Thunder Creek Mines was still finishing
its plan of operations for this latest project, and many questions remained to be answered
concerning environmental impacts and restoration. Perhaps the most intriguing was whether
or not the project was possible. Could a Sikorsky helicopter carry its maximum load of nine
tons, or a load near this, at such a high elevation? Could it then safely ascend and fly over
Cascade Pass to waiting trucks? Meanwhile, Webster pressed for purchase of his land
through an appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund; his most recent
valuation, factoring in potential revenues from galena ore as well as tungsten and
molybdenum, came in at $7 million. Once more the idea of a donation surfaced, so that
Webster could deal with the IRS rather than the Park Service in justifying the fair market
value of the Thunder Creek Mines' property. In the end, in the words of Superintendent
Paleck, the "fundamental difficulty is the tremendous difference of opinion" over the value of
the Webster's property. [41] And it was on this point that the issue began and currently rests.

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**Land Crisis in Stehekin**

By the late 1970s, the National Park Service's management of Stehekin had a number of
unresolved issues. Most of these stemmed from the agency's land acquisition policies and its
ambiguous definition of compatible use, that is, the kinds of development on private lands
that would not detract from the Stehekin Valley's historic character and its natural beauty. At
this juncture, a decade since the park complex's creation, there were divided opinions about
which direction the Park Service should take to address these issues. Environmental groups
expressed concern for preserving Stehekin's natural and cultural values and pressed the Park
Service to assert its authority and do more about restricting new -- and largely --
inappropriate developments on private property. The agency could do so, they believed, if it
were more assertive and implemented stricter zoning and, more importantly, purchased the
remaining private lands. Others, primarily Stehekin residents and property owners, wanted
the Park Service to be more specific about its management objectives, too. Their interest,
however, arose from a concern that the Park Service presence seemed to be overwhelming
the valley and its "unique" way of life. They reasoned that the agency had purchased too
much private land. Of the approximately 1,700 original acres, the Park Service owned nearly
half. In doing so, it had reduced the valley's land base and thus its "rich heritage" of
pioneering families. Moreover, the agency exercised too much influence in the way the
community conducted its daily life. Examples of this ranged from its control over the
appropriation of natural resources to the limits it placed on business ventures. Whatever their
views, these groups had in mind similar goals for the Stehekin country: protect the historic
community and way of life and the valley's scenic and natural values.

Realizing these goals, however, was another matter. It required that the Park Service establish
management guidelines and define "compatible use" for the Stehekin Valley, two topics with
which the agency seemed to struggle. In this way, agency managers would invariably have to
justify their position to opposing interest groups, and there did not seem to be any political
high ground to shield park officials from public criticism. To coalitions like the North
Cascades Conservation Council (N3C), the goal of park management should have been to
preserve, as intact as possible, the community of Stehekin as it was when the park complex
was established, not the community it had become since 1968. This new Stehekin, N3C
maintained, was dramatically different than the original pioneering community, one
characterized by its small population and subsistence economy. What created this new and
arguably different Stehekin, N3C contended, were the increase in Stehekin residents (many of
whom were recent arrivals) and property owners, and the shift in the community's economic base. In 1980, only a small percentage of the year-round residents called Stehekin home twenty years earlier. A startling figure was the increase in permanent residents. In 1968, there were thirty-five permanent residents in Stehekin. Ten years later, there were nearly one hundred. One could hardly grant the current Stehekin population "pioneering" status. [42]

Just as it would be inaccurate to portray Stehekin as a stable community composed of families with a long history in the area, it would be equally inaccurate to characterize this new community by its subsistence economy. A cash economy dominated now, one dependent on outside income from tourism and the National Park Service, which employed up to thirty-five people on a permanent and seasonal basis. Other evidence of the community's change was written in the landscape. There were some one hundred dwellings in the valley, nearly half of which had been built since 1968. These new structures were not only products of an increased population but also a building boom and land speculation that crested with creation of the recreation area and its ineffective land-use controls; the worst example of this was subdivision. Stehekin, the conservation council concluded, had faded into myth. It was a dangerous myth, for Stehekin had only stopped growing in people's minds. Meanwhile everyone -- longtime residents as well as recent arrivals -- believed that the recreation area's legislation protected his or her way of life. This meant that all were "entitled" to use the valley's limited supply of gravel, sand, top soil, and firewood, when in fact those rights applied to valley residents at the time the legislation passed. Resource consumption, it seemed, would go unchecked if the myth were not destroyed; otherwise, the valley's natural integrity would suffer irreparable damage. [43]

On the other hand, various groups of landowners and residents, represented by the Stehekin Property Owners Association and Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee, believed otherwise. From their perspective, the recreation area's legislation and the agency's mission should have allowed for the continued use of resources without question, and should have limited -- if not prohibited -- any infringements on these rights by the Park Service. They should have also protected the rights of property owners to develop their land, mainly to subdivide it into smaller tracts (which would further increase the valley's population) as they saw fit. In short, less government involvement was better than more. Any change in this regard by the Park Service, such as greater regulation of resource use and further land acquisition, was seen as a threat to the Stehekin way of life. By acquiring more land in the valley, the Park Service was slowly eliminating the Stehekin community from existence; it would become more a display piece than a reality in the parkland setting.

In 1977, responding to public pressure to offset the changes in the valley, Regional Director Russell Dickenson initiated a land-use study. Broadly speaking, a development concept plan (DCP) would have addressed a host of specific problems related to the Park Service's management of the Stehekin country and thus finally provided more substantial guidance for the agency in its management of the recreation area. Previous plans -- the 1970 master plan and land acquisition policies -- were too general. Among the issues were congestion and substandard visitor services at the landing, and the design and location of maintenance facilities and employee housing. Yet a definition of compatibility was central to any planning success. Without it, planning for the valley would have been a difficult task. That no criteria for compatibility had ever been developed, noted John Ochsner, head of the planning team, was a "gross oversight." The reason, ironically, was rooted in what made Stehekin special: its remote location. The Park Service simply had not anticipated the rate of growth and development pressures affecting the valley. [44]

In an attempt to define compatibility as well as chart a direction for managing the recreation area, park planners held workshops and conducted visitor surveys. For the most part, the responses confirmed existing beliefs about how best to preserve the Stehekin country. Nearly
everyone in the Chelan, Wenatchee, and Stehekin meetings expressed their desire to maintain the valley's primitive character and slow-paced way of life; however, they almost universally opposed Park Service interference with development on private land, except in cases where pollution and other negative side effects of urban living were concerned. Most participants in the Seattle meeting expressed their support for protecting Stehekin's unique setting and lifestyle, but they emphasized a different approach, one in which the federal agency assumed greater regulatory authority, particularly by establishing limits on private development -- and hence limits on population growth. Furthermore, Seattle participants, most of whom had strongly supported the cause for a national park in the North Cascades, stressed that management of the recreation area should spring from a national rather than local interest; its purpose was after all national, and the concerns of residents and landowners in Stehekin, while valid, should not take precedence over the interest of the American public. Interestingly, a 1978 survey revealed that most visitors thought that the private homes in the valley enhanced their experience. [45]

The planning effort was short-lived. In September 1978, the agency suspended its planning efforts before it had the chance to present any alternatives to the public. The main reason for the suspension was the release the previous September of the Park Service's new land acquisition policy. The new policy, as it would turn out, was one of several in an evolution of the agency's land acquisition program in the late 1970s and early 1980s. As noted earlier, the evolving program tightened controls over acquisitions, leading first to land protection plans with a program of land purchases and a definition of compatible and incompatible uses of private land, and then to land protection plans that identified direct purchase of private land for emergency purposes only and assigned other means of protection whenever possible. These latter policy changes reflected a new presidency in the 1980s. With the installment of the Reagan administration, Republicans sought to restore power to private interests in all matters of federal land policies in the West. [46]

The 1977 land acquisition policy was written to protect the national parks and other parklands from private land uses that diminished the values for which each area had been set aside. Largely written in response to congressional concerns over the large number of new developments in Grand Teton National Park, the revised policy also reflected Congress' concern that these new developments existed in many park areas, both because they detracted from the scenic beauty of the parklands and because they inflated the cost of Park Service acquisitions. At this point in time, the Park Service's policy became more aggressive, and the agency moved to acquire more unimproved lands within park areas with, according to Director William Whalen, great "urgency." The Park Service divided its park areas and acquisition program into two general areas: older parks with remaining pockets of privately owned land, or "inholding areas" (dating before 1960), and "newly authorized areas," more recently established areas, like the North Cascades complex, containing extensive amounts of private lands. Land acquisition would differ in each area. In the older parks, the agency would pursue land purchases from "willing sellers" and use condemnation only as a last resort. In newer areas, the agency would seek interest in private property in order to manage the area effectively and achieve its primary purpose. Thus, direct purchase was not always necessary. In both types of areas, existing private uses could continue provided they did not impair the area's resource values or its primary purpose. For a time, a determining factor in the case of the latter provision was that all areas had specific legislative policies that applied to each kind of park area (park, recreation area, historic site); the Park Service abolished the area categories in 1977, and the specific enabling legislation rather than unit title became the key factor. More importantly, the acquisition policy defined incompatible use rather strictly. Essentially, it stated that any development on unimproved lands or significant alterations to existing improvements was considered an incompatible act. In this respect, any new construction permits or filing of subdivision plats would be interpreted as an incompatible act. [47]
An outcry from land owners in several of the nation's parks, specifically Yosemite, Grand Teton, and Olympic, led to the creation of the National Park Inholders Association (NPIA) under the leadership of Charles S. Cushman. Cushman's group lobbied hard against the restrictive definition of compatible use, painting the Park Service in the national media as an aggressive and arrogant agency infringing on the rights of private property owners. Bowing to public pressure somewhat, the agency released a revised land acquisition policy in April 1979. While offering clearer language about what it intended in older parks, the Park Service policy offered only a general picture of its acquisition plans for newer areas like Lake Chelan NRA; the policy simply stated that acquisition would be carried out in accordance with the area's authorizing legislation. In short, the revised policy spoke more to what was compatible and incompatible use in an older national park area than in a newer area like the North Cascades complex.

In Stehekin the main outcome of this revised policy was confusion. When the first policy version appeared, the agency was engaged in planning for the valley, but Park Service leaders were not certain how to apply it to Lake Chelan NRA. They questioned whether or not the new policy applied to the recreation area. After deciding that it did, agency administrators assumed that the policy's definition of incompatibility applied to the Stehekin Valley, and until the revised version appeared in 1979, they worked under this assumption. Some property owners became agitated with the Park Service; they distrusted the agency and its intentions under this new acquisition policy. Moreover, NPIA president Charles Cushman fanned the flames of resentment in 1978 when he spoke at a community meeting in Manson, which a number of Stehekin land owners and residents attended.

The main concern for both the Park Service and Stehekin interests was how the agency would employ these new compatibility standards in the Lake Chelan NRA, specifically in the private use and development zone. On March 1, 1978, Superintendent Lowell White informed Stehekin residents and landowners of the new land acquisition policies and that the bureau would modify them "to some extent" in order to comply with the language of the act establishing the park complex. In May, Superintendent White and planner John Oschner held a public meeting in Stehekin to discuss some of the alternatives. While presenting their alternatives, they suggested that the Park Service might exempt the private use and development zone from the new standards and instead continue to rely on county zoning. But the county would have to implement stricter zoning regulations for this to occur. To bolster their argument, they described a future for Stehekin under current zoning that was anything but attractive. The number of homes would nearly triple, the population would increase nine fold, and the overall quality of life in the valley would decrease. With the right county zoning, then, the private use zone would not have to comply with the new standards, and development could continue.

Although this entire discussion would become moot soon enough, this latter point was important because it revealed how the public could come to question the Park Service's ability to manage the recreation area. It left the impression with Stehekin property owners in the private use zone that they would be exempt from the policy's compatibility restrictions. But Park Service administrators left their interpretation of the policy open. In his meeting with Stehekin property owners and residents, Superintendent White suggested that the Park Service had little control over implementing compatibility standards in the valley, despite the new policy. As White informed Stehekin residents, it was Chelan County's responsibility to develop adequate zoning for the Stehekin Valley; the Park Service hoped these regulations would match their own. Reliance on the county took on a greater importance when the agency's land acquisition policies became official in 1979. It was then the Park Service came to rely on the park complex's legislation for its authority. And since the legislation did not grant it specific power over the county in the recreation area, the Park Service could not
override the county's zoning regulations should it not approve of them. In effect, for all of its posturing, the Park Service seemed powerless to control the use of private land in the recreation area.

To agency officials, cooperating with the county presented perhaps the quickest solution to the land-use controversies in Stehekin, particularly since the Park Service's land acquisition policies were currently in a state of revision. This approach, then, was another reason the Park Service suspended its planning efforts. In June 1978, the Chelan County commissioners, moved to action over the problems in Stehekin, renewed its planning efforts in Stehekin. In September of that year, Michael Cecka, an associate planner with the Chelan County Planning Department, informed Regional Director Dickenson that the county's plan would not be ready until the spring of 1979. At the request of the commissioners, Dickenson agreed to suspend the development concept plan, due for release in several weeks, until the county plan was completed. Both the county and the Park Service were prepared to come to terms over acceptable kinds of development in the valley, among other land uses. A truce of sorts was called. Dickenson told the commissioners that his agency intended to define compatible use as clearly as possible, and the commissioners promised to be cautious when they issued development permits in the valley. [51]

The accord, however, did not last long. The county released a draft of its plan in April 1979. The plan, in Cecka's words, was "very permissive" regarding the land-use regulations in Stehekin, and would do little to control development in the valley. [52] As the plan stated, its intent was to "recognize and preserve the values which contribute to Stehekin's uniqueness." In doing so, it focused on "the use of private land within Lake Chelan National Recreation Area...and its relationships with the public lands and their administration." A major tenet of the plan was to achieve what long-time resident Ray Courtney described as the true meaning of Stehekin: self-reliance. Making the valley too accessible and living conditions too convenient would only weaken this quality. Implementing too many regulations, moreover, would destroy this quality as well. In general, the plan's recommendations covered topics specific to Stehekin such as Park Service activities and cooperation. The recommendations also covered a broad range of topics common to all private lands in the county, including floodway construction, water quality, resource use, visual quality, transportation, residential and commercial development, and subdivision. [53]

Although the Park Service had maintained a low profile during the county's planning process, it reacted strongly against the plan. The county suggested that the Park Service should accept the plan, particularly its emphasis that the principles of private land use and development were fully compatible with the intent of the recreation area's legislation. All of this meant, of course, that the county had interpreted the federal legislation as justification for, or at least implicit approval of, its proposals. What agency managers took special issue with was the plan's policies dealing with subdivisions. The two most important subdivision policy proposals were 1) a minimum lot size of two acres for any new subdivision in the Stehekin Valley, and 2) subdivision activity should be restricted to short platting, which would allow for the creation of four or fewer parcels. With a two-acre minimum lot size, the policy would allow 250 new houses to be built in the valley. If some of the restrictions on development on large tracts of private land were followed, then the number of structures in the valley would be around 150. The county plan viewed these provisions as both realistic and restrictive; that is, development would happen, but the extent and rate of that development might be effectively controlled through these and other measures. [54]

Perhaps the most significant outcome of the plan's release and recommendations was that it forced the Park Service to clarify what it meant by compatible use; it was a task the agency would address time and again without producing a satisfactory definition. Regional Director Dickenson characterized the plan as a "spur to development" in Stehekin and prepared a
formal statement opposing the draft county plan. Superintendent Miller presented it to the Chelan County Commission at a public hearing in Stehekin on October 6, 1979. Dickenson commended the county's efforts, but he charged that the plan did not provide "adequate zoning and land use controls. The plan would provide for growth of buildings and seasonal population to a degree that would be irreversibly damaging to the nationally significant resources of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area." Second, the plan reflected only local opinions, and eschewed the views of "a national constituency" which should be consulted in regard to plans for a "national area." In shaping its response, the Park Service, Dickenson stated, had consulted this constituency, particularly those who had fought for the park complex, as well as representatives of the county and Stehekin. [55]

Finally, based on these observations and surveys, Dickenson presented his agency's first effort to define compatibility in the valley. And that definition focused intently on subdivision:

The legislative record shows that there was no intent to eliminate uses that existed when the legislation was passed. In existence were modest homesites, ranches, limited food services, and lodges. There also were parcels with no development. It is logical to assume that the type and density of land use that existed when the area was established was compatible with the purpose of the area. Further, the intent was to permit development of modest homesites, ranches, and limited eating establishments or lodges on the then existing undeveloped lots where such development did not conflict with park needs and conservation of the scenic, scientific and historic values of the valley. [56]

The Park Service concluded, the regional director stated, that "Congress intended" for Stehekin to remain as it was when the park complex was established. His agency's primary responsibility then was to make sure that any "appreciable change" in its size and character would be considered incompatible with its purpose and thus opposed. Congress had reinforced this position by authorizing funds to purchase private lands in the valley "in order to reduce the land base available for additional development and to provide for those parcels needed for park management. In this way, Stehekin could remain in "balance," that is, with an "acceptable balance of resource use and services, while preventing congestion and safety hazards on the valley road, in addition to a deterioration of water quality, both surface and subsurface. Therefore, Dickenson asserted, "the time has come to stop all subdivision," and he "urgently" requested that the county implement a two-year moratorium on any subdivision permits, or until both the Park Service and county could work out a solution to "this critical problem." [57]

Dickenson addressed other elements of the plan that were incompatible with Stehekin's purpose or contrary to the Park Service's mission. He proposed that the county plan include a provision to limit only one single-family dwelling on any existing parcel and that it include more provisions for protecting the valley's visual quality, such as having all new construction along the road or lakeshore be setback or screened from view. He also noted that the agency planned to purchase a 156-acre tract on both sides of the lower Stehekin River in order to increase public access to the river and protect the west bank's relatively pristine state. This kind of acquisition was fully justified to preserve the character of the valley, and the agency would acquire other tracts of private lands for similar reasons. The regional director, however, did not mean that his agency would oppose any developments on private lands, but would work toward establishing regulations to soften the physical and visual impact of new developments and ensure that it fit with the character of the Stehekin country. Along these lines, he responded to the plan's discussion of the Park Service's management activities, noting in particular that the agency was not planning any new construction -- or allow others to do the same -- that would increase visitor use. [58]
The Park Service appeared ready to defend its definition of compatible use. However, the regional director remained conciliatory. In late 1979, Dickenson noted that his agency would cooperate with the county "to develop a plan that will preserve the area as intended by Congress." He chose this option because it was more direct; the park bureau could achieve the same goal and give the impression that the federal government was willing to work with rather than against the local government and Stehekin community. [59]

But it seemed that the Park Service was bluffing. Unless the bureau's position on compatibility was legally binding, the county would essentially control the future of the valley. This, at least, was how preservation groups interpreted the agency's actions, and what drove them to pressure the Park Service to assume its rightful role as the defender of this national treasure. In the summer of 1979, the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (SCLDF), on behalf of the Sierra Club's Cascade Chapter and the North Cascades Conservation Council, entered into the fray. As one of the SCLDF's lawyers, William S. Curtiss, noted, the Park Service was wrong to think that it could not regulate the "threats posed by private land development and increased consumption of Valley resources directly." This was an "unfortunate and erroneous conclusion" and one not "dictated by the requirements of law." According to Curtiss and the SCLDF, Congress did not intend to limit the Park Service's ability to control private development in the valley, especially when that development threatened its wild character. Nor was the Park Service without legal recourse. The agency could regulate inappropriate activities on private land by enforcing existing regulations (under Title 36 CFR), by promulgating new regulations under that title, and by using condemnation. [60]

The lawyer expressed views of those closest to the North Cascades campaign. He echoed Grant McConnell's opinion that the Park Service had overlooked the true purpose of the recreation area's legislation -- protecting the Stehekin country's wild and scenic grandeur with accommodation for the small community's historic uses of the land. The agency's oversight was largely responsible for the valley's current problems. Regulation and land acquisition, in McConnell's opinion, were the two solutions to overdevelopment and resource consumption. Curtiss also contested Dickenson's response to McConnell: that national recreation areas operated under different policies (policies allowing for multiple uses) and that the Park Service interpreted Senate Report 700 to mean that private development should continue in the valley. This was not "entirely correct," Curtiss wrote. He suggested that the recreation area had once been proposed as a park and was only removed from that status to allow those living in the valley "to remain there and to enjoy the existing uses of their land," and to allow local sports hunting to continue. Nothing in the congressional record could be construed to suggest that Congress changed the area's designation to "invite the commercial exploitation of the Stehekin Valley." [61]

One of the most effective management tools, according to the SCLDF, was condemnation. And it urged the Park Service to use it. The defense fund lawyer noted that Secretary of the Interior was not restricted in his power to condemn lands, as the Park Service maintained, if the use of those lands was incompatible with the preservation of the recreation area's values. Nothing in the recreation area's legislation specifically prevented it, and in fact the legislation emphasized that the secretary could use the appropriate "statutory authority" available in the administration of national parks and preservation in general. Nothing in the congressional testimony, furthermore, authorized any continued development, particularly since the recreation area's act gave the secretary such broad powers. Finally, the lawyer pointed out that the agency's solicitor had misled Dickenson. In the solicitor's opinion, condemnation was an ineffective form of land-use control because it placed a "heavy burden" on the Park Service; that is, the agency would have to bear the burden of proof -- to prove that a land-use was incompatible and, it seems, define compatibility once and for all. The agency, the lawyer suggested, should not shy away from court cases with such important outcomes, especially
since there was such a good chance of success. [62]

Should the agency not choose to use condemnation, Curtiss proposed a number of other alternatives. First, the Park Service should implement stricter zoning, by reclassifying the lower valley as either "Preservation" or "Public Use and Development" (the Park Service's classifications), thereby eliminating the problem with the private use zone. Moreover, to make this work, the agency would have to "assert itself in the face of local planning efforts which would replace the Park Service authority with County authority." Second, in addition to using existing Park Service regulations, the agency had an obligation to "promulgate and enforce such regulations" in order to "preserve the natural endowments of the Stehekin Valley." The reason for this stemmed from the recent Redwoods Act of 1978, a major piece of legislation that would, in time, play a key role in changing the way the Park Service managed all park areas for the integrity of their natural values. Finally, the SCLDF implored the Park Service "to rethink its timid and gloomy view of the regulatory options" available to protect Stehekin Valley's unique character. "The tools necessary to accomplish the task are at hand." [63]

In his response, Dickenson stood his ground. The Park Service believed that Congress intended to preserve the historic community of Stehekin but not to freeze it in time. The rub in all of this was that compatibility was not precisely defined; it was somewhere between the Stehekin of 1968 and a Stehekin fully developed for recreation. In other words, Stehekin should continue to evolve. As for the Park Service's legal authority, Dickenson point out that condemnation was not politically expedient, while it may have seemed the clear choice of action to the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund. The solicitor's opinion, as the regional director noted, was that the Park Service had no direct judicial or statutory authority for regulating the use of private land; however such an authority might be inferred from recent court decisions. Besides the desire to avoid lengthy litigation, the Park Service appeared to be against condemnation because it would require funds appropriated by Congress and it would be expensive. Perhaps more importantly, it would mean accurately defining compatible use and risking bad publicity. In this regard, the court would have to agree with the agency's interpretation, and if it did not, this legal precedent might further weaken the service's ability to protect the valley. That is why, Dickenson concluded, county regulation was "the most realistic approach" to solving land-use problems in Stehekin at the time. [64]

The outcome of all of this was impasse. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Park Service and Chelan County officials never arrived at mutually agreeable land-use controls for the Stehekin Valley. Without an agreement between the Park Service and the county, private development and expansion of existing facilities in the valley continued with only "minimal county regulation or oversight." Meanwhile, the Park Service continued to develop compatibility standards for Stehekin, and the county proposed alternatives for its draft plan in 1980, none of which came close to meeting Park Service priorities. The main issue continued to be subdivision, and the county suspended its planning process. Until an agreement could be reached, the entire valley was zoned for "General Use," a classification that allowed property owners to subdivide and build on a minimum one-acre parcel using a septic tank and private water supply. [65]

The main reason the county suspended its planning process was that the General Accounting Office (GAO) was investigating the Park Service's land acquisition program in Lake Chelan NRA. Responding to criticism against the Park Service's policies in Stehekin, the GAO, urged on by Alaska Senator Ted Stevens, selected Lake Chelan NRA as part of its a larger examination of the park bureau's land acquisition and management practices. [66] The two-person GAO team, led by Charles S. Cotton, conducted its study in the spring of 1980 and produced its final draft on January 22, 1981. The report's title said it all: "Lands in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area Should Be Returned to Private Ownership." [67]
The GAO report concluded that the agency had inappropriately purchased lands in Lake Chelan NRA. Many acquisitions were "contrary to Congress' intent to preserve the private community of Stehekin and to permit additional compatible development to accommodate increased visitor use." At issue, it seems, was the rate and type of purchase. By acquiring nearly half of the private lands in the valley in fee simple, the Park Service appeared to be bent on eliminating the old Stehekin community altogether at a high cost to the government. Moreover, the GAO believed that "much of the land acquired by the Service was compatible with the recreation area and did not have to be acquired." Other land protection strategies would have worked well and at a lower cost to the government, including zoning and scenic easements. Thus, the GAO report recommended that the Park Service develop a land acquisition plan for the recreation area, one that clarified compatible and incompatible uses, and that it sell back "all lands compatible with the recreation area." The report also recommended that Congress conduct oversight hearings to determine why the agency had not followed Congress' intent, and that Congress restrict appropriations for land acquisition in the recreation area until the service had corrected its practices. [68]

The GAO's findings affirmed that congressional intent was open to interpretation, for the report drew a distinct line between what the Park Service believed and what the agency's critics believed Congress had meant when it established the recreation area. The question was whose interpretation was correct? The Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior responded strongly against the report. Agency officials defended their actions, and pointed out that the report was "biased." It was "based upon individual comments" provided to Cotton by several valley residents. Moreover, the report "was filled with inaccurate statements, unsubstantiated conclusions and recommendations based on hearsay and limited investigation of material available for review." [69]

To a large extent, this response was valid. In its preliminary review, the GAO suggested that the agency's land acquisitions were suspect, and that its management did not focus enough on development for recreation and more on managing the area as part of the park. Moreover, Charles Cotton's activities and conduct suggest that his conclusions would be highly subjective and reflect the views of Park Service critics. He was interviewed on a Chelan radio program prior to the report's release in which he implied that the report would find fault with the Park Service. He also maintained contact with some Stehekin landowners -- after his investigation but before the report's release -- informing them of the report's recommendations during its official review. All of this cast his conclusions in a partisan light. [70]

Moreover, the report's portrayal of the Park Service's single-minded drive to literally "purchase" Stehekin was overdrawn. The GAO investigators did not fully appreciate the complex nature of the recreation area's establishment, the point in time it was created, and the conditions in Stehekin at that time -- all of which influenced the agency's management of the area. Nothing about Stehekin's management was as straightforward as the GAO seemed to suggest. One example of this was the Park Service's purchase of commercial property at the landing. The agency needed access to, and visitor service facilities for, the recreation area, but its legislation limited the Park Service to purchasing only those lands offered for sale by willing seller. When the commercial properties at the landing became available, the purchase was carried out. The site was attractive because it would require renovation rather than new construction and it was already an established point of access. In the eyes of the Park Service planners, this deal was mutually beneficial. [71]

Other examples were related to the threats the Stehekin country faced, threats which had led to its protection and thus which influenced agency actions. Logging was one of these threats, and by acquiring the holdings of the Chelan Box Company, the agency eliminated one of the major threats. Subdivision, of course, was another threat. The Park Service tried to reduce the
opportunity for overdevelopment by purchasing those tracts offered for sale, including lakeshore and valley properties. Finally, the land acquisition program had hardly dented the number of privately owned parcels in Stehekin. Of the nearly 174 tracts in the recreation area in 1967, there were only seven less owners by 1974 when the agency's acquisition funds were exhausted. Ownership splintered and multiplied, and improved properties continued to grow. [72]

In March 1981, Regional Director Daniel Tobin stated that the Park Service "has never intended to acquire all the lands in the Stehekin Valley. We are currently unable to acquire even those lands necessary to protect the original atmosphere of this remote community. We believe that we have acted in good faith and within the letter, intent, and spirit of the law." Nevertheless, Tobin and other agency administrators agreed with some of the report's conclusions, including development of compatibility standards and preparation of a land acquisition plan for Lake Chelan NRA. But at the same time, it disagreed with other findings. It renewed its request for an increase in appropriations for acquisitions and opposed the recommendation to sell back compatible lands to private owners. (The Park Service maintained that any sale of land back to private owners would require legislation.) [73]

Naturally, the GAO report caused a stir in Stehekin. Rumors flew that soon the Park Service would be selling land back to the people of the valley and other interested parties. To those who viewed the Park Service's presence with suspicion, the GAO report seemed to offer local interests some advantage over the federal government. But this sense of overcoming a powerful, outside force soon faded. Although it may have appeared to have the force of law, the GAO's study was a document informing Congress of the Park Service's activities. It was up to Congress to follow through with its recommendations. Neither the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee nor the House Committee on Interior Affairs held oversight hearings on the report, as the GAO had recommended. Furthermore, Congress would act in direct contradiction to the report by appropriating funds for more Park Service land acquisition in years to come. [74]

This is not to say, however, that the Park Service ignored the report. To the contrary, the report underscored the fact that park managers still had not addressed one of the most fundamental aspects of the recreation area's administration, to define compatible and incompatible use, despite the mitigating circumstances. On August 6, 1982, the service rectified this situation and issued compatibility standards for Lake Chelan NRA. Public review was a long and at times contentious process, but the finalized standards would "provide the documentation" necessary to identify what the Park Service considered as an "appropriate use and development" of the lands within the recreation area. Some of the incompatible uses were the construction of apartments or condominiums, new construction in floodway, any new construction that required the dredging or filling of Lake Chelan or the Stehekin River, the modification of the valley's landscape or conspicuous siting of structures which would alter the scenic and natural qualities of the area, timber harvesting for commercial purposes or use outside of Stehekin, and small lot subdivisions. Compatible uses were defined generally as "existing" and "nonconforming" uses, which referred to those uses which were in place at the time the standards were written, and which, generally speaking, could continue.

The document also spoke to the question of how the Park Service would remedy incompatible uses. Here no new ground was broken. The first step would involve negotiations with private owners when incompatible uses were being proposed or had occurred. Condemnation remained a last resort. Moreover, enforcing these land use standards still seemed ambiguous. The service continued to emphasize its desire to rely on Chelan County to implement these standards by adopting a similar zoning ordinance. At the time, this seemed unlikely. Despite this and even though the standards were subject to clarifications,
qualifications, and exemptions, Regional Director Tobin heralded them as an important stage in the recreation area's management. For the standards would "enable the National Park Service" to carry out its administration of the area, and for the first time clearly inform "property owners of the land uses which are compatible with the recreation, scientific and historic values" of Lake Chelan NRA. [75]

There was more to solving Stehekin's management problems, however, than defining compatibility. The land acquisition program was a lightning rod for other problems for the Park Service in Stehekin, for the agency's ability to purchase private lands touched upon the extent of its authority over individuals and the land itself in this isolated valley. If standards were in place, then the Park Service must be in a position to assert its authority. [76] The main issues revolved around the agency's jurisdiction in the recreation area. Did it truly control and own the valley roads? Could it enforce the licensing of vehicles, many of which were decades out of date? Did it own salvage logs, especially those in the Stehekin River? Could it control business operations on private land? Were its policies regarding the removal of firewood, top soil, gravel, and sand valid? Thus, how much control it exerted over everything from land-use planning to natural resource use brought into question what affect this would have on the way of life in Stehekin. Ironically, this way of life celebrated individualism, one which was unhampered by federal regulations and reliant on local initiative, but now its preservation would be ensured by a federal agency. [77]

Ray Courtney, a life-long valley resident and reluctant supporter of the park, summed up this sentiment when he grew disenchanted with the Park Service's presence in the early 1980s. The agency's policy, he stated, was that "the only good resident is a dead resident." The park bureau seemed more at ease with preserving the memory of the old Stehekin homesteader than the homesteader himself. [78] However critical of the Park Service, Courtney was a voice of reason among the valley residents, who were an eclectic group of reclusive old timers, wealthy urbanites with summer homes, passionate preservationists, and employees of the park complex and its concessionaires. When Courtney died in a trail accident in 1982, the valley residents lost a leader, and previously unknown clashes among residents and with the Park Service erupted. In an era of public outcry over federal land regulation, "Stehekin became a tiny mountain outpost of the Sagebrush Rebellion." [79]

Several incidents illustrate how tensions grew in the valley. In the late 1970s, when the Park Service refused to allow a resident (Bob Byrd) to start his own taxi service because it would have competed with the park's licensed concessioner, a handful of protesters stood at the landing and greeted visitors arriving on the Lady of the Lake with a banner that said "Welcome to Poland!" Around the same time, the superintendent of the Stehekin School started a series of anti-Park Service broadcasts on a Chelan radio station. And in the summer of 1983, a major confrontation occurred when Karl Gaskill, owner of the Honey Bear Bakery, began selling baked goods from a cart on the dock at the landing. Gaskill asserted that he was not violating Park Service policy -- selling wares without a permit on Park Service land -- because he was on a narrow strip of land that still belonged to the Chelan County Public Utility District (PUD). Although the entire situation seemed petty, it remained unresolved for several years, the subject of varying legal interpretations. More so, it reflected a number of problems related to the agency's jurisdiction in the recreation area; the list included issues over the Stehekin School, the valley road, firewood permits, and the Park Service's ban on salvaging cedar from the Stehekin River. [80]

Talk of protest rippled through the community and came to a head when the Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee filed a lawsuit against the National Park Service on January 20, 1985. Made up of residents like Roberta Pitts, Ron Scutt, and Cliff and Tom Courtney, the Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee wanted to force a showdown with the federal agency that had, in their view, undermined many of the isolated community's traditional values. The
Park Service had pressured residents to become "more modern" and in the process more "dependent upon this federal agency." Someday, "Stehekin could become an historic exhibit...A place where...visitors can come and see how WE once lived." [81] The lawsuit made two general claims. One was a long list of grievances, asserting that the Park Service administration of Lake Chelan NRA had willfully caused economic hardship to the community by limiting the size of tours, trapping, and use of roads, and by generally suppressing the economic development of the "town of Stehekin." The agency's management had also "Perverted the Stehekin cultural life-style intended by Congress and created an artificial Park Service community." And it had wrongfully asserted its jurisdiction over the waters of Lake Chelan and the rivers within the recreation area, which should have belonged to the state, and strip of dock at the landing "actually owned by the Chelan County PUD." The second claim was much shorter and more direct. The group wanted the Park Service to sell back the land it had bought, in accordance with the GAO report, and thus return Stehekin to a viable community. [82]

On August 6, 1985, Judge Robert J. McNichols of the United States District Court in Spokane, Washington, dismissed the committee's complaint. Judge McNichols ruled that the court had no jurisdiction over any of the plaintiffs's complaints because the act establishing the recreation area clearly vested administrative authority over the area with the Secretary of the Interior and the National Park Service. Moreover, while the judge could understand the plaintiffs' position, they did not allege any basis for the court to take jurisdiction." The only way for the court to become involved would be if all "administrative remedies" were exhausted. Specifically, the plaintiffs would need to show an instance of damage that was the direct result of a particular Park Service rule or regulation. Another aspect of the suit which the judge ruled against was Curt Courtney's claim that the Park Service coerced him into selling his property (the Boatel) at the landing in 1970. [83]

The Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee, disappointed over the judge's ruling, decided not to appeal the decision, primarily because the judge stated the need for specific examples of damage and the need to exhaust administrative remedies first. There was also the skyrocketing cost of legal fees. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund had intervened in the suit on behalf of the Park Service at the request of N3C and the newly formed Stehekin Valley Protection Committee. The Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee's budget of $20,000 a year was no match for the Sierra Club's $2.5 million. Thus the committee's hopes "to dispel the emotional tension that has divided our community through far reaching litigation," was "dashed" by the "dismissal order, while turbulent times continue in the Stehekin Valley." [84]

In the minds of defense committee members, Stehekin was in a state of crisis. The Park Service wanted to control residents rather than implement rational and practical policies for the area's management. It wanted to destroy the community and transform the recreation area into a national park. [85] Yet because Stehekin meant different things to different people, the North Cascades Conservation Council and the local Stehekin Valley Protection Committee interpreted the crisis much differently. They advocated the protection of the recreation area's "unique natural environment," and stressed that the agency was not exerting enough control in the valley. As Grant McConnell informed Park Service Director William Penn Mott, Jr., in August 1985, the Park Service's weak administration "has fostered a sense" among "residents here that they have an entitlement to cost-free firewood from the limited forest, topsoil, sand and gravel and other building materials, all without regard to limits of availability or conflict with the purposes [of the recreation area] clearly stated by Congress." This situation has "encouraged demands on an escalating scale for services of many kinds." Meanwhile, a local attitude espoused the view that "any regulation by the Park Service whether for protection of the natural scene or for public safety" was improper and not to be observed. The recently dismissed Stehekin Heritage lawsuit exemplified this. Currently, the crisis emanated from a dwindling supply of firewood, which locals took for granted; a number of new houses under
construction, with the prospect of more and inflated land prices; an increase in junked cars; and increased pressure on wildlife. Thus McConnell noted that in "very nearly every respect the deterioration of the area is accelerating and is highly visible." [86]

The solution was twofold and by now familiar. First, the Park Service director should impress upon park managers that they have the "authority (and obligation) to regulate the area as a unit of the National Park System as explicitly provided" in the 1968 legislation. More importantly, the "local illusion that because this is a National Recreation Area Park Service regulations do not apply must be dispelled." Second, he urged the director to press forward with the land acquisition program. The program promised to resolve the crisis. It would not cost much "in the scale of things," McConnell observed, "but continued over a few years can reduce all of the problems indicated above to a manageable scale." McConnell's belief that the "only long term solution" to the area's problems was land acquisition typified the views of other preservation interests, who in 1985 lobbied Congress to appropriate $1 million for land purchases in the park complex (and Stehekin country). [87]

Whatever one's perspective, the Park Service's land acquisition program was a major force in Lake Chelan NRA, (even though no land had been purchased there since 1973 and none would be purchased until late 1986.) Superintendent John Reynolds believed that the main problem in Stehekin was the absence of "clear, written policies and plans." In March 1987, Reynolds expressed these views in a report entitled "Bringing Stehekin to a Manageable State." The time had come, the superintendent stated, after seventeen years of "haphazard" operations, to "resolve Stehekin." The only way to accomplish this was in "an all out, planned, coordinated effort." In this respect, two types of plans would provide the agency with the proper guidance in Stehekin's management. One was a land protection plan; the other was the general management plan. According to Reynolds, land protection was the single most important "component of our program in Stehekin," and the general management plan would serve as the "cornerstone of the policy guidance needed for Stehekin." [88]

Both plans were produced simultaneously and were intended to complement each other. The land protection plan, approved in March 1988, replaced the earlier land acquisition plan. Its most notable characteristic was that it established acquisition priorities. The plan's list of priorities was to be used with the "willing seller/willing buyer" policy to guide land purchases. In this way, agency officials could ensure that the park complex's limited acquisition funds were spent in the best public interest to protect resources. In addition, the ranking system gave Stehekin property owners a guideline for Park Service management concerns, particularly when private lands were being proposed for development or expansion.

The plan proposed five categories for the remaining private lands in Stehekin. The first group focused on the protection of scenic, historic, and wetland/riparian habitat areas; visitor access to the Stehekin River and Lake Chelan; and areas needed for administrative facilities. The second group of properties were those considered to have visual and environmental qualities, but were not threatened by subdivision. These tracts lined the river, lake, or valley road. The third priority group was made up of properties in the upper valley close to the valley road. These tracts, the plan proposed, should be protected for their natural qualities, and any development should follow historic use patterns. The fourth group consisted of those properties with some level of development or subdivision in place. In the case of these lands, the plan was concerned with improving water and sewage treatment and maintaining some control over future development. The final group, labeled "No Interest" or "No Priority," was made up of lands the agency did not consider important to purchase but rather better left to retain the community's historic scene. Finally, the plan also contained a provision for "exchange" tracts. These were unimproved parcels previously purchased by the Park Service that it would exchange for other higher priority private properties. [89]
At long last, it seemed, the plan offered some insight into how the Park Service intended to approach the management of the valley and its remaining private lands. Nearly 700 acres of private lands remained in the Stehekin country, and around the same time the protection plan was being drafted, the agency began an active acquisition program. The renewed purchasing was driven by funding. In 1986 and 1987, Congress appropriated close to $1.5 million. In the summer of 1986, some of this money went towards an important purchase, the Getty property, a riverside parcel containing 153 acres; it was the largest single purchase since the acquisition of the Chelan Box Company's lands and a prime area promoted for subdivision. With the plan in hand and funding available, the agency started negotiations with the backlog of offers from willing sellers. In this regard, the land protection plan's priorities were quite useful; they recommended acquiring in fee simple 92 acres and easements for 345 acres, for a total of 437 acres, all of which were in the first four priority groups. (The last group contained 65 acres.) [90]

On its surface, the land protection plan appeared to seek a compromise between the two political extremes alive in Stehekin. One example of this was the Park Service sale of land it had previously acquired to the Stehekin School District. The school district land had been controversial for some time. Chelan County Commissioner John Wall had been demanding its return to county ownership, along with the valley road and Stehekin community center, and the Park Service approached the sale as a way to demonstrate its commitment to the Stehekin community. The sale allowed for the construction of a larger, modern school facility. [91]

Nevertheless, no group was entirely pleased. To the North Cascades Conservation Council and the Stehekin Emergency Committee (a new group dedicated to protecting Stehekin's natural values), the plan did not go far enough. They particularly thought the "No Interest" category and the policy of land exchange ran counter to the bureau's mission in the valley. Both of these approaches literally wrote off the protection of some of "the most sensitive ecosystems in the Stehekin Valley," and promoted more, not less construction, in the process. On the other hand, despite the sale of the school land, property owners and county commissioners, such as John Wall, thought the plan and recent Park Service acquisitions of small, undeveloped parcels reinforced the agency's intentions to take over Stehekin. Some even suggested returning the valley to the Forest Service, and in what had now become a familiar refrain, returning all Park Service land to private ownership. [92]

Superintendent Reynolds, faced with numerous problems in Stehekin, drafted the plan to appeal to all interests, but his intent was to acquire as much land as possible within the purview of the land protection plan. He believed that acquisition was the most important solution to Stehekin's woes, save redesignating the recreation area as a national park. [93]

At least unofficially, Reynolds' land protection plan seemed bold, and was incorporated into the 1988 general management plan. Although the new plan charted the course for the administration of the valley into the next century, it had serious flaws, according to the North Cascades Conservation Council. Its main problem was that it was one of many plans in various stages of development. The general management plan cobbled them together and confused rather than clarified the bureau's management of Stehekin. In the broadest sense, both the land acquisition and general management plans did not adequately provide for the protection of the valley's natural and cultural values. The plans were too liberal; they did not take a firm stand on the side of preservation. They did not address a number of long-standing issues that would have truly promoted land protection; the most significant of these was the Park Service's firewood management plan, which the conservation council viewed as the "logging" of trees in the valley. Other issues that would have ensured land protection included the acquisition of all the private lands possible, closure of the Stehekin air strip, and the prevention of any further modifications to the valley's natural systems. The Park Service
was letting the wondrous Stehekin country be nibbled to death. [94]

The time had come for preservation interests to sue the government. On September 7, 1989, frustrated over what it viewed as years of Park Service neglect and mismanagement of Stehekin, the North Cascades Conservation Council filed a lawsuit against the National Park Service and Department of the Interior. Filed on behalf of N3C by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, the lawsuit contended the Park Service had violated the National Environmental Policy Act by not completing environmental impact statements for its various plans for Lake Chelan NRA. It had not assessed their cumulative impacts. Instead, it had produced environmental assessments, a faster yet less intensive analysis, and one not necessarily open to public review. The principal legal issue was that the assessments failed to analyze the cumulative impacts of the agency's plans. After two years of negotiations, the Park Service settled the case out of court, agreeing to a consent decree on April 22, 1991. In doing so, the bureau would produce a comprehensive environmental impact statement (EIS) analyzing environmental consequences of private and public land uses as well as management practices. Until the completion of the EIS, the Park Service agreed to suspend any plans that might alter the recreation area's natural resources. Moreover, the wide-ranging EIS would address many of the concerns expressed by preservationists over the past two decades, such as firewood cutting, sand and gravel mining, transportation services, Park Service developments, and land acquisition. [95]

The Sierra Club and North Cascades Conservation Council treated the consent decree as "a great victory." According to Stephan Volker, lawyer for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, the "Park Service was presiding over the recreation area by private and public development, and refusing to do the environmental studies that would have revealed what was being lost." Once the environmental studies were prepared, the agency would be able "to determine on a rational basis how to preserve the scenic grandeur and ecologic values of this spectacular area." [96] Moreover, the settlement was precedent setting for the entire park system. Prior to this settlement NEPA compliance for general management plans was generally an environmental assessment, though policy required a more thorough analysis. The consent decree provided a wake up call for agency officials and the need to prepare environmental impact studies for general management plans. [97]

The consent decree served as a benchmark in the history of land protection in Stehekin. In order to protect Stehekin's natural as well as cultural environments, there had to be sound land acquisition policies. Yet while planning efforts and environmental studies went forward, Washington's Senator Slade Gorton threatened the new accord. He lashed out at the Park Service for its land acquisitions in Stehekin. On March 12, 1992, Gorton accused the agency of "rabid" land acquisition practices, which ran counter to the intent of Congress as set down in the 1981 GAO report. The agency's stated goal, he noted, was to reduce the amount of private property in Stehekin to sixty-five acres, those tracts in the so-called no interest zone. "I will not stand for that," he said. In addition, there was the bureau's insensitivity towards those who owned property in Stehekin. The Park Service's alleged aggressive tactics, it seems, bordered on harassment. Ultimately, Gorton was responding to the views of his local constituents who disliked the Park Service presence and policies, and who continued to interpret land acquisition as "one of many tools" to transform the recreation area into a national park. [98]

Unless the Park Service took steps to reform its activities in Stehekin, Gorton vowed to amend the Interior appropriation bill to halt it himself. Two months later, on May 15, Senator Gorton followed through with his warning. Senator Gorton's efforts to block land acquisition in the Stehekin country harkened back to the same issues surrounding the 1981 GAO report. However, his efforts met with resistance from environmental groups, who viewed Gorton's tactics as a threat to the consent decree, and other members of Congress. As a compromise,
the appropriations committee directed the Park Service to submit a report to Congress that
presented the agency's position on its past and proposed land acquisitions. The report was due
to Congress by April 1, 1993, and until then the agency temporarily suspended land
acquisition. More than twenty years after the park complex's establishment, the agency
continued to search for stability in its land acquisition program. [99]

The program, it seems, was often misunderstood, and the Park Service used the recent
challenge, as one preservationist noted, to "lay to rest many of the misconceptions" about its
land protection policies and to "finally bury the GAO report." [100] In May 1992, the agency
took an important step in this direction when it produced a paper on the laws affecting the
administration of Lake Chelan NRA. Released as part of the general management planning
process, the paper addressed a wide array of issues and had special relevance to land
acquisition. Its general message was that "Law and policy are dynamic." Laws and policies
governing the management of Lake Chelan NRA extended beyond the area's original
legislation and policies in place at that time, and they embraced a host of federal legislation
and agency policy revisions that placed a greater emphasis on the preservation of natural
resources. Hence, the management of Lake Chelan NRA, the paper concluded, must consider
"the whole body of legislation, amendments, proclamations, executive orders, rules and
regulations, and directives that are in effect today." [101] Land acquisition, then, was
essential to preserving "the scenic, scientific, historic, and other values" for which the area
was established as well as providing for public outdoor recreation.

The Park Service carried this theme through in its report to Congress on its land acquisitions
in Lake Chelan NRA. Released in April 1993, the report gave a detailed account of its past
and proposed acquisition program. The report's main conclusion was that agency's
acquisitions had been true to the intent of the recreation area's legislation. Since the
establishment of Lake Chelan NRA, the Park Service had purchased approximately 1,170
acres under the "willing seller/willing buyer" program; condemnation had never been used.
Some 460 acres remained in private ownership and approximately 250 acres were owned by
the Chelan Public Utility District. The agency acquired lands to preserve natural resources
and to provide public access to Lake Chelan and the Stehekin River. It also purchased lands
to provide adequate public facilities and administrative facilities. Other purchases provided
employee housing. And perhaps most important of all, the service purchased land to prevent
excessive subdivision. [102]

In making these statements, the agency was responding to recurring questions about
management of the recreation area and its land acquisitions. Contrary to what some argued,
the Park Service claimed that it had not purchased too much land in the Stehekin country.
There were no acreage limits placed on land acquisitions within the area, and all acquisitions
were conducted in strict compliance with the law and guided by planning documents.
Moreover, because land acquisitions were intended to protect natural resources, supply visitor
services and benefits, and provide for administrative needs, the Park Service had not acted
arbitrarily and capriciously in its land purchases. The agency had consistently used the
"willing seller/willing buyer" approach and appraised property at its fair market value, in
accordance with federal regulations. The bureau had also used alternatives to fee simple land
acquisition, such as life estates and easements (first used in 1994), and allowed the continued
use of public land through special use. By the mid-1990s, the agency's report offered a
declaration of sorts, a claim that the land protection program was valid and valuable. At long
last, it seemed to be on solid ground, especially with the completion of the revised general
management and land protection plans in 1995. These two plans, subject to extensive public
review and environmental analysis, in a sense reinforced agency practices in the Stehekin
Valley. In the end, the Park Service continued to rely on Chelan County zoning, to make land
exchange available, to provide firewood and gravel, and to keep the airstrip open. The
question of land protection seemed to have been answered, too. The Park Service retired the
old concept of compatibility standards and initiated compatibility reviews on a case by case basis; the reviews would parallel the Park Service's evaluation of its own. Land protection issues appeared clearer in Stehekin. [103]

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Ross Lake NRA

Some of the park complex's most controversial land protection issues revolved around the mining claims in North Cascades National Park and the Park Service's land acquisition policies in Stehekin. Ross Lake NRA's land protection program fell somewhere in the middle. Compared to the park and Lake Chelan NRA, the land protection issues for Ross Lake NRA seemed almost benign. In the first place, Ross Lake did not have the same kind of impending threats posed by mining in the park, though there were some mining issues. In the second place, as noted at the outset of this chapter, priorities were different for land protection in recreation areas than in national parks. Where the park had preservation of natural resources as a primary goal, Ross Lake NRA had for its main goals the management and development of a "maximum variety of active outdoor recreation experiences." These experiences included boating, camping (both by boat and car), hunting, fishing, hiking, picnicking, and horseback riding. At the same time, park managers were also concerned with conserving the "scenic, scientific, historic, and other values" contributing to the public's enjoyment of the recreation area's lands and waters. [104]

But unlike Lake Chelan NRA, Ross Lake NRA did not have controversies erupt over the meaning of compatible use, and park managers did not find themselves responding to accusations of both heavy-handed and passive acquisition practices. What united the Park Service's management approach to both recreation areas was that it came to regard the protection of their natural values as equally if not more important than their development for outdoor activities. Still, recreation areas differed from national parks, and while important for their natural values, Ross Lake NRA and Lake Chelan NRA served as wilderness thresholds to North Cascades; they were the setting for visitor developments and other facilities deemed inappropriate for the park's larger wilderness setting.

Two of the main goals, then, of the Park Service's land acquisition program for Ross Lake NRA were to protect aesthetic values along the Highway 20 and thus the Skagit River corridor, and to ensure public access to the Skagit River for rafting, camping, and other activities. By the mid-1980s, the Park Service had acquired several large tracts of land along the Skagit, lessening the prospect of logging along the narrow river valley. Several of these were owned by Georgia Pacific and Scott Paper companies. More importantly, the purchase of the Scott Paper Company lands (some 560 acres) made it one of the final purchases under the original $3.5 million acquisition ceiling. By the mid-1980s, just over 876 acres had been purchased in Ross Lake NRA, but there were approximately 2,500 acres of land in nonfederal ownership, while Seattle City Light had limited rights to 19,266 acres under federal license for the operation of the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project. [105]

According to the recreation area's 1985 land protection plan, the recreation area's management was not in stasis by any means. There were a number of important management considerations. First, the existing nonfederal lands fell within Class I or Class II land categories, land designations for high density recreation or general outdoor recreation, respectively. In other words, these were the areas that would see the greatest visitation. Second, some land within the recreation area had been proposed for wilderness designation, a higher land classification which demanded more restrictive management. Third, park management plans had designated the Highway 20 corridor as a prime area for expanding
visitor services and facilities, which also included rafting put-in and take-out facilities. This kind of concentrated development contrasted sharply with wilderness use.

Meanwhile, mineral leasing and exploration were potentially on the rise in the recreation area, activities which could have serious impacts on the area's scenic and natural qualities. A recent ruling by the Department of the Interior, however, promised some protection. The ruling identified "excepted areas" within the recreation area which were closed to mineral leasing. In Ross Lake NRA the areas closed to mineral leasing were: all lands within a half mile of Gorge, Diablo, and Ross lakes; all lands proposed for, or designated as, wilderness; all lands within a half mile of Highway 20; and Pyramid Lake Research Natural Area and all lands within a half mile of its boundary. The ruling also provided strict guidelines for mineral leasing in other areas of the recreation area.

Finally, proposals to construct several small hydroelectric facilities on federal land presented perhaps the greatest potential threat to the recreation area's scenic and natural values. At the time the plan was completed, however, the small hydroelectric projects were on hold pending legal review. (Eventually, the Washington Park Wilderness Act of 1988 would eliminate FERC's authority over these projects and thus the projects themselves since they were included within the park's wilderness area.)

A central component of the land protection plan was its definition of compatible and incompatible uses on nonfederal lands. It described the kind of action the Park Service would take to protect the recreation area's aesthetic values and natural conditions. Compared to Stehekin's issues, these seemed straightforward. Some examples of this were: firewood and Christmas tree cutting were allowed within City Light's transmission line corridor, but clearing forested land or vegetation within the river and highway corridor was not, specifically because it would scar the landscape and impair the visual character of the area; small-scale mineral extraction on private land with an approved plan was permitted, but mineral extraction that would detract from the river and highway corridor's scenic values or degrade the river's water quality was not.

Another consideration in ensuring compatible uses of nonfederal lands and protecting scenery and river access was the type of land ownership. There were three kinds of land owners in the recreation area. Of the 2,500 acres, Seattle City Light owned 1,128 acres, including the towns of Newhalem and Diablo; Washington State owned 480 acres, making up the bed of the Skagit River; private interests owned subsurface mineral rights to 746 acres along the Skagit (the government retained ownership of the surface rights); and the remaining 145 acres were owned by private parties (the majority of this land being a patented mining claim). With lands under municipal, state, and private ownership, park managers proposed a variety of approaches to land protection, primarily through cooperative agreements, regulations, easements, and fee acquisition.

Some of the top priorities for land protection reflected these different ways of acquiring interest in the various nonfederal lands. One of the top priorities identified by the plan was to enter into a cooperative agreement with City Light for public access to the river on a ten-acre parcel at the boundary of the recreation area; this would ensure that there would be a take out for rafters and others using the river once they left the park complex. Another top priority was the direct purchase of the subsurface mineral rights along the river to ensure this landscape's scenic beauty and natural integrity. However, where the other patented mining claims were concerned, the plan proposed seeking conservation easements and fee simple ownership through donation. Other priorities involved not only protecting natural beauty but wildlife habitat as well. High on the priority list was the purchase of a conservation easement for thirty-seven acres of private land adjacent to the Skagit in order to protect wintering bald eagle habitat. The largest land area involved embraced the 940 acres owned by Seattle, a
series of tracts along the Skagit corridor. The sole interest here for the Park Service was scenic preservation -- the landscape viewed both from the river and the highway -- which could be accomplished through a cooperative agreement. Finally, there were some nonfederal lands considered to be adequately protected; these were the 188 acres comprising the towns of Newhalem and Diablo.

As with any management program, developing a plan was the first step, implementation was the next. The latter generally took more time than the former. In 1986 and 1987, this changed somewhat; the park complex's acquisition funds increased by nearly $1.5 million, stimulating the protection program. As a result, one of the main accomplishments of the land protection program for Ross Lake NRA was the purchase of private land along the Skagit River bald eagle habitat in 1988. Initially, the land protection plan called for purchasing a conservation easement for these two tracts; however, further study revealed that these parcels were important feeding areas for bald eagles wintering on the river. With this information, park managers revised the plan in order to purchase this land in fee simple for the greatest degree of protection available and gave the purchase top priority.

By the early 1990s, however, this purchase stood out as the only priority satisfied in the Ross Lake plan. Except for the above purchase, the 1990 land protection plan made the same recommendations as the previous plan. But there were two notable differences. The first stemmed from the recently completed 1988 general management plan for the park complex. The plan revised the land classification categories within the recreation area. It identified three: the natural zone, a largely unaltered environment managed to protect its natural integrity; the special use zone, an area for non-Park Service activities, such as City Light's hydroelectric project; and the park development zone, lands that would support the major visitor developments. The second difference was the official designation of the park complex's wilderness in 1988. With the passage of the Washington Park Wilderness Act, 74,000 acres of land within the recreation area's "natural zone" had become part of the Stephen Mather Wilderness. Moreover, this wilderness legislation amended earlier regulations regarding the use of minerals. Briefly stated, the legislation virtually eliminated mining in the recreation areas. It also effectively eliminated the proposed small hydroelectric projects because it clarified and limited the authority of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in Ross Lake NRA. That is, it specified that FERC only had jurisdiction over City Light's Skagit River project and its related elements, both existing and proposed. In this way, park managers were free to draw the wilderness boundaries to include more of the recreation area and to assert their authority over the kinds of uses proposed for this area (rather than having the power rest with FERC), all of which ended the threat of small hydroelectric projects.

These changes, it seems, placed the recreation area on relatively firm footing for protection. In December 1993, park officials noted that there was "no real need" to update the land protection plan for Ross Lake NRA. The only potential problem was with the "many split estate situations," which referred to the federal ownership of surface rights and unknown or ambiguous ownership of the subsurface rights. In this regard, condemnation would be the main procedure. Moreover, the most of the nonfederal lands were owned by Seattle as part of the Skagit project, which was operated under a FERC license, and apparently did not present any great threat to Park Service interests. [106]
Chapter 11:
HYDROPOWER AND PRESERVATION

Hydroelectric developments, both existing and proposed, took center stage in the park complex's management in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The license for Seattle City Light's Skagit River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 553) expired, leading to the Park Service's involvement in the lengthy and complicated relicensing proceedings. Proposed hydropower projects appeared on the scene as well when dozens of applications for small hydropower projects were filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Many of these were in or near Ross Lake National Recreation Area. These, in addition to some other hydropower issues, forced park managers to attempt to protect park resources without infringing on FERC's authority. In all cases, preservation became the ultimate goal; achieving it required diligence and creativity.

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One of the most important accomplishments in the management of the North Cascades complex was the relicensing of Seattle City Light's Skagit Project. Until the project was relicensed for a thirty-year period, the Park Service could not approach the protection of Ross Lake NRA in a comprehensive manner. As the High Ross Dam affair demonstrated, the future of Ross Lake was uncertain, and the way to ensure that there would be appropriate recreational developments and resource protection programs for this area was through the licensing process. The problem was that even though City Light's license for the project expired in 1977, its renewal was delayed until the High Ross controversy had been resolved in 1984. Until that time, and for sometime thereafter, FERC allowed the city to operate under an annual license.

Thus, in 1984 once the international treaty ending the High Ross dispute was signed, the Park Service prepared to move forward again as one of the intervenors in the licensing process. Besides High Ross, a number of plans in City Light's license concerned agency managers. One of these was the Thunder Creek project, which called for constructing a diversion dam on Thunder Creek and using a tunnel to divert its water through Ruby Mountain into Ross Lake. Another was the Copper Creek project, which called for building a dam near the western boundary of Ross Lake NRA. These were significant issues for the Park Service in its efforts to protect the recreation area's natural and cultural values, especially since the license would have such a lasting effect.

Initially, the Park Service picked up where it had left off in the 1970s. It began with Exhibit R, the section of the Skagit project's license that was essentially a recreation plan. In this regard, the Park Service could require from City Light that it develop a substantial portion of the recreational facilities managers believed would be necessary for the protection and public use of Ross Lake NRA. Even though the Park Service had no legal control over the project itself, it could under the Federal Power Act (and the authority of the Secretary of the Interior) direct City Light to mitigate any adverse effects caused by the project. In the early 1970s,
park officials had concentrated on one element of City Light's operations, High Ross. They reached an agreement in which the city would compensate the agency for the loss of existing facilities -- campsites, bridges, trails, and boat docks, among other things -- and provide new ones, all of which would enhance recreation in the area. They also were aware that City Light's license was due to expire and that they would need to develop a plan to cover the entire project. [1]

By 1984, however, the Park Service had changed its views on what it wanted from Exhibit R. In one respect, this change reflected practical concerns. Regional Director Daniel Tobin noted that it was important that park managers act quickly because the recreation plan was out of date. In September 1977, nearly one month before the Skagit project's license expired, Seattle City Light had filed an application for a new license. [2] The application, Tobin asserted, contained provisions for an initial five-year program in which City Light would contribute $500,000 to fund the construction of four major facilities. The trouble with this plan was that the funds were in 1977 dollars. In addition, Exhibit R provided for a continuing program at five-year intervals beginning in the fourth year of the first phase. This continuing program would have been a cooperative effort between the Park Service and City Light. Although no dollar figure was attached to this second phase, the language in the plan suggested that it would be less than phase one of the program.

Tobin's interest stemmed from the fact that the plan had never really been implemented. Many of the facilities "included in the Initial Program have been constructed by the National Park Service with appropriated funds." He outlined several ways to approach City Light for reimbursement as part of the revised Exhibit R. One way was direct repayment to the government for the cost of facilities; another was reimbursement through donation to the Park Service for future development at the recreation area. A similar approach would have been the identification of other facilities needed at the recreation area which City Light would provide. And a final possibility was an approach that combined both financial compensation and the identification of new projects. Whatever approach managers chose, it should adjust the estimate for inflation. [3] Moreover, behind the regional director's interest was the fear that the international treaty might grant City Light unilateral authority over raising Ross Dam, should Canada break the agreement, and grant it similar authority over relicensing. This, it seems, was a view espoused by the attorneys for City Light. [4] Tobin's worry, that City Light might find a way to exclude the Park Service from the current relicensing proceedings by using the treaty, was unfounded, but it did underscore that the Park Service viewed relicensing seriously.

On another level, the Park Service approached relicensing with broader goals, goals that included recreation but also the preservation of natural and cultural values within the recreation area. As we have seen, the agency's interest sprang from a new environmental awareness, the passage of major environmental legislation, and changes in popular attitudes towards the construction of more hydroelectric dams on the nation's last free-running rivers. Thus, the Park Service looked for ways to mitigate the impacts of the project as a whole while enhancing the environment and other intrinsic qualities of the recreation area at the same time. To a large extent, this approach was what many intervenors supported. Indian tribes, environmental groups, and state and federal agencies, many of whom had participated in the High Ross battle, saw relicensing as an opportunity "to redress the unmitigated impacts of the Skagit Project." [5]

It was a situation City Light had not foreseen, for in the past its applications to develop and expand the Skagit Project had proceeded smoothly, its work viewed as a social amenity rather than as an ecological disaster. To City Light's credit, it established an Environmental Affairs Division to handle compliance with the numerous environmental regulations affecting hydroelectric operations in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and to take the lead in
City Light's approach to relicensing grew from its experience on several fronts, such as with High Ross, but also with controversy surrounding its interim relicensing agreement after 1977. Indian tribes, state and federal agencies clashed with the city in 1979 when the Federal Power Commission accepted the utility's application for relicensing. The various parties filed motions asserting that City Light had not studied or presented ways to mitigate the project's major impacts on fisheries. Furthermore, the state of Washington severely criticized the city for a similar lack of consideration and measures for mitigating impacts on wildlife. The outcome of all of this was an interim agreement with the city, agencies, and tribes signed in 1981. The agreement recognized that more information was needed on fisheries issues, and thus stipulated that City Light would modify operations and conduct studies to assess the project's impacts on fisheries. Other studies, however, to address concerns for wildlife populations and recreation went unaddressed. To a large extent these were overwhelmed by the fisheries studies, which were scheduled for completion in the mid-1980s, and formed another reason for delaying the relicensing process. [6]

Public reactions against City Light's Copper Creek project offered perhaps the most visible example of the new circumstances faced by the utility. In 1979, the Seattle City Council approved an environmental impact statement for the dam. The dam, however, was controversial. Skagit County residents viewed the project with trepidation since it would be constructed in an area lined with dangerous fault zones. Other interests, such as environmental groups, fisherman's groups, and river rafters, opposed the project because it would have inundated a ten-mile stretch of the free-running Skagit River, harmed wintering bald eagle habitat, and destroyed highly productive salmon spawning grounds. Most importantly, the Skagit tribes had recently won a court decision over reserved treaty rights for fishing, and asserted their interest in stopping the project since it threatened to destroy the fishery for which they had fought to protect. The tribes assumed the lead in protesting against the dam, and other groups allied with them. [7]

Their arguments provided a convincing case. Studies showed that the dam would flood important salmon spawning beds, thus reducing the number of salmon in the river. Directly related to the fate of the salmon was the fate of the bald eagles who wintered on this section of the Skagit. Without the salmon carcasses, on which the eagles usually fed, the eagle population would suffer and decline. The Nature Conservancy, who owned a 300-acre eagle sanctuary downstream from the dam site, called for City Light to abandon the project. Other studies and events mounted against the public acceptance of the new dam as well. Adding to the Skagit's intrinsic value was its recent congressional designation as a wild and scenic river in 1978, under the Wild and Scenic River Act. The designation mandated that this federally-recognized "wild" river remain in its current condition and that all projects that might affect this be evaluated. This and other environmental legislation, like the Endangered Species Act, could have restricted the city's development of Copper Creek. Similar to the High Ross proposal, a report concluded that conservation and the use of solar energy rather than the construction of a new hydroelectric facility would provide more energy at a lower cost to City Light. Because of public opposition, concerns over environmental protection, and the small amount of power return (the project would have illuminated a few office buildings downtown for the cost of a $137 million dam), the Seattle City Council shelved the Copper Creek project indefinitely in August 1981. [8]

The effect, however, was not immediate, and tensions mounted. In 1986, leaders of the North Cascades Conservation Council, David Fluharty and Patrick Goldsworthy, urged City Light to engage in the relicensing proceedings. Specifically, they asserted that City Light was obligated to study ways to mitigate the effects of the Skagit Project's original inundations behind Gorge, Diablo, and Ross dams. In reply, Randall Hardy, superintendent of Seattle City
Light, informed Fluharty and Goldsworthy that his agency's view on the matter was quite different from theirs. In the first place, progress in relicensing was, it seems, awaiting the completion of studies on the project's impacts on downstream fisheries, related directly to reservoir fluctuations. Second, Hardy believed that, contrary to the conservation council's opinion, City Light had conducted "extensive studies of adjacent habitat areas and recreational use...in connection with the High Ross proceedings and in support of the 1977 application for relicensing." These studies, according to the superintendent, provided a "sufficient base of field study" to understand generally the "effects of original inundation and to allow an approximate reconstruction of the habitats now submerged under Ross Lake."

Hardy, it seems, was suggesting that the studies conducted for High Ross and those nearing completion for downstream fisheries should be enough for the entire project. Or, put another way, as Ross Lake went, so too did the rest of the Skagit Project. [9]

The council, though, had raised concerns far beyond what City Light's studies had addressed. They were concerns especially important to the Park Service. Council members stressed that in relicensing the Skagit Project, City Light should consider "mitigation for upstream impacts relating to wildlife populations and to recreational and scientific values associated with reservoir inundation, in other words, the area now included within Ross Lake NRA."

According to Associate Regional Director Richard Winters, this was "a somewhat new direction for the deliberations," one that had "not been considered previously." This new dimension became more attractive to agency officials over the next several years, and recreational needs would soon be one of several areas of interest as they negotiated with City Light over its project's impact on the entire recreation area. [10]

In 1987, Superintendent John Reynolds and his staff made the first formal step in the negotiations when they submitted a recreational development proposal for Ross Lake NRA to be funded by City Light under its new license. But in a short period of time, the entire process and scope of the park's perspective changed. One reason for this change was that FERC seems to have grown tired of City Light's delays. In October 1988, FERC notified City Light that it had nine months to submit its application. More than ten years had passed since the city's license had expired, and it had yet to submit the various packages to the federal agency as required by the Federal Power Act and its amendments. Specifically, the city needed to complete mitigation studies under Exhibit E in 18 CFR Ch. 1; these were far more inclusive than Exhibit R (a section revised to become Exhibit E). The reports covered water use and quality; fish, wildlife, and botanical resources; historical and archaeological resources; recreational resources; and land management and aesthetics. [11]

In response to FERC's order, City Light asked for and received an extension of at least eighteen months, so it could seek a comprehensive, negotiated settlement agreed to by all parties to the relicensing proceedings. Broadly speaking, the city was attempting to streamline a complicated process. Each intervenor had the right to petition FERC independently, in a sense challenging City Light's application and compelling it to respond as to why it had not addressed such measures. This approach could, and often did, lead to hostile rather than amicable relations, and the chances for a fair settlement were remote. As it turned out, both City Light and the various parties, including the Park Service, saw the advantages to a settlement and agreed to negotiate an agreement which would then be presented to FERC for its approval. [12]

In January 1989, Jonathan Jarvis, the park complex's chief of resource management, expressed a second reason for the Park Service's shift in its approach to relicensing, a reason that was related directly to Exhibit E because of its full range of natural and cultural investigations. For the first time, park complex managers began to think that the entire process held indefinite possibilities for their understanding and protection of Ross Lake NRA. Central to the Park Service's involvement, Jarvis noted, was its position that the project...
should be "operated and the effects of its presence be mitigated so as to have 'no effect' on the function of the larger ecosystem." Thus, the agency decided that the "recreational potential be developed only to the point that the recreational use has 'no effect' on the function of the ecosystem." [13]

What Jarvis and other managers were suggesting was that this position was the best one available to them. The complex's original legislation, after all, prohibited the agency's outright opposition to the Skagit Project. And though the recently passed 1988 Washington Park Wilderness Act restricted FERC's authority to City Light's existing project and proposed projects within the recreation area, the fact remained that FERC still had authority over the Skagit Project's operations. Thus, the debate for park managers centered on understanding the consequences of the continued occupancy of the area by the Skagit Project. However attractive in an Edward Abbey sense of environmental reclamation, removing the project was not a viable option. But assessing the changes brought about to the natural and cultural environments of the Skagit country by the project was viable -- and critical to protecting the recreation area's values. [14]

The task ahead was not a simple one. North Cascades managers had to integrate all of the categories within Exhibit E into "a coherent package." The first stage in this process was determining the effects of the project's past and continued presence for the next three decades through a series of studies funded by City Light. Rather than rely on the utility to provide the information to the park, managers decided to participate in the studies. Park and regional office staff assisted City Light by writing scopes of work for contracts, serving as technical advisors, and participating on habitat evaluation teams. When it came to erosion and archaeological studies, the Park Service conducted the work for City Light under several memoranda of agreement.

The studies, conducted in the late 1980s, concluded that the project had significantly affected the upper Skagit Valley. Wildlife and vegetation studies indicated that large habitat losses contributed to the decline of at least ten wildlife species. Recreation studies found that over all the impoundments had a serious influence on the management of Park Service lands and limited the potential management of adjacent recreational resources. More specifically, the level of Ross Lake, dictated by power generation and flood control, directly affected recreational boating and fishing. Soil erosion studies concluded that the project caused, primarily through fluctuating lake levels, more than sixteen miles of eroding shoreline and resulted in an estimated loss of 1.5 acres a year. Visual quality and aesthetics studies indicated that the entire project, consisting of dams, reservoirs, company towns, roads, and power transmission corridors, affected the aesthetics of the recreation area. The transmission lines had the greatest visual impact. Studies of the upper Skagit basin's cultural resources revealed more than 120 prehistoric sites within the drawdown of Ross Lake. In all cases, Ross Lake's continuous fluctuations caused materials to erode from these archaeological sites, and in some cases, this action caused the loss of, or endangered, the integrity of these sites. Finally, the fisheries studies suggested that the flow of the Skagit River, controlled by power production and flood control, had an adverse effect on downstream fisheries. Spawning habitat was particularly damaged. While salmon and steelhead species were the primary focus of these studies, they also suggested that many other resident fish experienced similar disturbances due to stream flows, and that changing lake levels influenced the vitality of lake fisheries. [15]

The next stage in the process was one of the hardest, deciding what to ask for in the mitigation package. Initially, the park complex's various divisions, such as resource management and interpretation, held a series of meetings to draw up a "wish list" of projects and proposals. They had several park-wide plans on which to rely. The most important of these, perhaps, was the 1988 general management plan which outlined some long-range plans.
projects. More specifically, the recreational development proposal submitted to City Light in 1987, with some modifications, proved to be useful. Recently completed resource and wilderness management plans also identified a list of needs. The relicensing process, however, offered managers the opportunity to address issues and develop programs that the Park Service might not otherwise fund. Thus, the final list, complete with specific details and cost estimates, was a product of both approved plans and long-term needs. It also reflected a screening process involving a number of criteria; each project was evaluated for its environmental impact, consistency with approved park complex plans, opportunity for other sources of funding, and direct relationship to the impacts of the Skagit Project itself. One thing that was not a limiting factor in the development of the final package was cost. City Light had not set a cost ceiling, yet it was understood that the utility's net worth was $100 million.

The Park Service's mitigation package proved to be quite effective as the agency entered the next phase of the process, the negotiation forums. City Light's Environmental Affairs Division established five forums for negotiation, all of which reflected the topics listed under Exhibit E. These were fisheries, recreation and aesthetics, wildlife, erosion, and cultural resources. The division's specialists led the forums, and the intervenors attended those forums in which they had an interest. Given the range of the Park Service's responsibilities, North Cascades managers participated in all five. The meetings were time consuming and rigorous, especially since FERC's deadline was approaching. Members of the park complex's resource management staff, assisted by regional office specialists, attended more than one hundred meetings in a one-year period. Each forum was charged with developing both an agreement and a mitigation plan. This process, though complex enough considering the number of intervenors and interests, was made even more complex when one considers the overlap between forums; there was always the chance that mitigation procedures for one problem might have a negative effect on another. For those in the fisheries forum, for example, maintaining downstream river flows was essential to the protection of spawning salmon. Yet this meant that lake levels would fluctuate leading to problems with erosion, recreational boat launching, in-lake fish spawning, and lake aesthetics. The formation of loose coalitions among the forums and convening of informal conferences helped resolve many of these concerns.

What remained to be accomplished was the final settlement itself. There was little to no precedence for the approach City Light was taking to the relicensing process, and thus there was little upon which to base expectations. Moreover, there were few ground rules throughout the meetings, and each intervenor approached the negotiations differently. Some parties held their cards close. But as Jon Jarvis recalled, the Park Service showed its cards early. Having a package was quite effective because it told City Light everything his agency wanted, from greenhouses to an environmental institute and what it all would cost. The surprise, though, was that City Light seemed willing to accept the park's offer. The real test, however, came with legal review. Relicensing and settlement agreements were a legal process, and technical advisors and lawyers representing the various federal and state agencies and other intervenors worked with City Light lawyers to produce a legal document that actually "reflected the technical intent of the negotiators."

Still, bringing all of the parties together was stressful in the final months of negotiations. City Light was especially fearful that there would be a break in ranks, that one disgruntled party could derail the entire process and jeopardize relicensing. As a result, in September 1990 all parties signed a preliminary agreement in which they agreed to abide by the proposals already on the table. Though nonbinding, the agreement was the first formal commitment by the intervenors and Seattle City Light. The document seems to have served its purpose, because in November one First Nation from Canada, the Nlaka'pamux Nation (the Lower Thompsons), unexpectedly tried to join the proceedings. Seattle City Light refused the
Nlaka'pamux Nation's request and negotiated an independent agreement with the group after it had a final settlement agreement. The signing of an official settlement by all parties took place on April 26, 1991, and City Light submitted it to FERC on May 1, 1991. [16]

Although subject to FERC's approval, the settlement was "unprecedented nationally," according to City Light, and had profound benefits for North Cascades. The agreement stipulated that City Light would pay $100 million for mitigation over a thirty year period (for a total of fifty years beginning when the original license expired in 1977). Some of the more noteworthy provisions were that City Light agreed to

- buy Diablo Lake Resort and construct an environmental learning center;
- construct, maintain, and renovate trails, campgrounds, and boat launches in Ross Lake NRA;
- purchase approximately 5,000 acres of land along the Skagit River and South Fork of the Nooksack River for wildlife protection;
- construct a greenhouse to grow 30,000 native plants a year for revegetation of damaged sites in the project area;
- establish a flow plan for the Skagit River to protect spawning salmon and steelhead;
- implement erosion control measures;
- document and protect archaeological and historic resources within the project area. [17]

The license also contained a controversial element. City Light still maintained that High Ross was viable, and included it in the license. In order to move negotiations along, intervenors decided to take High Ross off the table; however, they did not support the project, and the settlement agreement contained measures to reopen negotiations if High Ross should proceed. Finally, High Ross did not pose the great dilemma for the Park Service as it once had. The agency still could not oppose the project, but with the various natural and cultural resource studies conducted for the relicensing, managers could make a strong case that Ross Lake country was "a good piece of land that shouldn't be lost." [18]

Moving from negotiations to implementation of the settlement agreement awaited FERC's approval of Seattle City Light's license. Park officials expected approval to come sometime in 1994, after the commission had completed its review of the license application and conducted an environmental assessment for the agreement. It was this very process, however, that threatened the entire agreement. At least, that was how Seattle City Light and the parties to the settlement viewed the commission's actions. The critical measure upon which the settlement agreement rested was the condition that FERC accept the package as a whole; any "material modification" would void the agreement at the option of any party. Throughout 1991, FERC seemed poised to do just that with its environmental assessment of the Skagit Project, because it was considering it as part of its larger study of the cumulative impacts of hydroelectric projects (existing and proposed) in the Skagit Basin. The energy commission staff noted that by taking this approach it might require City Light to carry out more mitigation -- in addition to the settlement -- or in place of parts of the mitigation settlement. Either scenario, noted one City Light official, "could be a deal killer." [19]

The National Park Service requested that FERC reconsider its environmental assessment. It was unclear, Regional Director Charles Odegaard wrote, how the commission intended to integrate the Skagit Project with its larger study of the Skagit Basin. City Light's Skagit Project lay entirely within Ross Lake NRA and the "direct impacts on the park" were limited to the project. More importantly, Odegaard, echoing the concerns of all parties involved, urged FERC to consider the magnitude of the agreement at stake. More than a decade of work had gone into this settlement agreement that already contained a negotiated mitigation package, as required by the commission, for the Skagit Project's effects on the recreation
area's various resources. [20] To the relief of park managers and others, FERC's environmental assessment exempted the Skagit Project from the cumulative environmental assessment because it did not have "the potential for adverse impacts to at least one target resource" (anadromous fish, recreation, cultural resources, and sensitive terrestrial ecological resources). Thus, the commission recommended a separate assessment for the project, which, it proclaimed, "would range from no effects to substantially beneficial effects" under conditions proposed in the settlement offer. [21]

Such a positive statement belied the energy commission's treatment of the settlement agreement. In its draft environmental assessment for the Skagit Project's license, which was released March 3, 1994, FERC included a preferred alternative that tracked the settlement agreement. But the license the agency issued did not. What the Park Service and other interested parties soon realized was that FERC had packaged the offer of settlement and modified some of the individual mitigation agreements to meet what it viewed as necessary for issuing a license. This did not necessarily reflect what the parties believed was the true intent of their agreement. Among other things, North Cascades managers argued that the proposed license terms were substantially different from any alternative evaluated by the environmental assessment. Managers also noted that the energy commission had omitted funds for long-term monitoring in Ross Lake NRA because the commission concluded in its assessment that relicensing the Skagit Project would have no cumulative adverse impacts and would even have beneficial effects on the Skagit Basin. (This applied to both environmental and cultural resources.) Therefore, FERC used this analysis when it reviewed City Light's license, all of which seems to have mystified City Light, the Park Service, and other intervenors. As the Department of the Interior related in its comments on the draft assessment, FERC's review was inadequate and fell short of the requirements under the Federal Power Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. The department recommended that the commission need not conduct its own environmental analysis of each of the settlement agreements. The proposed action was to "relicense the Skagit River Project as mitigated by the measures described in the Settlement Agreements and to implement those mitigation and enhancement measures." In other words, much of the commission's work had already been considered and it should have spent its time considering the various proposals as part of a comprehensive package designed to streamline the assessment process. [22]

In May 1995, Seattle City Light, along with all of the parties to the settlement agreements, petitioned the energy commission to reconsider its draft license for the Skagit Project; that is, all parties wanted the commission to issue a license that contained all of the terms and agreements of the settlement offer intact. [23] On May 24, 1995, the energy commission, however, issued the license without reconsidering these pleas. Elizabeth Moler, commission chair, notified Seattle Mayor Norman Rice that the "Commission approved all provisions of the settlement." But there were minor stipulations with major significance to City Light and others. As Moler noted, the license would include

all provisions of the settlement that involve matters within the Commission's jurisdiction. The order accepting the settlement agreement also recognizes that certain aspects of the settlement are beyond the Commission's jurisdiction. The order supports the settlement and explicitly recognizes that the licensee may proceed under these provisions as private agreements among the parties. [24]

In June, the City of Seattle appealed the license order and requested a rehearing before the commission to resolve "numerous technical problems and omissions in both the license and environmental assessment," and to have the commission provide an adequate explanation of "why certain parts of each of the settlement agreements were included as license conditions and others were not." This latter aspect of the city's complaint was especially baffling to the parties. The most detailed explanation they received, for example, was when the commission
excluded elk habitat from the wildlife mitigation plan. The commission chair stated tersely that FERC was not "in the business of managing elk habitat." [25]

The energy commission granted the rehearing, and the following year, on June 26, 1996, the commission issued an order for the Skagit River Project's new license, which included "the measures at issue in the license, together with the terms needed to enable the Commission to enforce such measures." The commission maintained that the parties criticized it for not incorporating, word for word, "the language of every element of every Agreement, suggesting that failure to do so threatens the entire Agreement." This argument focused primarily on off-site mitigation, FERC noted, and tended to overshadow the commission's general "acceptance and implementation of the Settlement." In addition, the commission maintained, even with a settlement agreement, that it was part of its responsibility under the Federal Power Act to "frame license articles in the manner we deem sufficiently clear and concise to allow for effective oversight and enforcement." Nevertheless FERC decided to reconsider its position in order to settle the major issues surrounding wildlife and recreation agreements. These were namely

- provisions for the licensee to obtain and manage off-site elk habitat and six off-site recreation areas;
- fund the Park Service's long-term environmental monitoring within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area, the North Cascades National Park, and Lake Chelan Recreation Area;
- fund the Forest Service's inventory and planning of bald eagle and other wildlife habitat in the Skagit National Recreation River Corridor and the Sauk, Suiattle, and Cascade National Scenic River Corridors.

There were also a number of other issues surrounding fisheries agreements as well as miscellaneous articles, which the commission agreed to correct; many of these related to programs to be carried out in the park complex and involved clarifications and revisions to correct inadvertently omitted language. Throughout this process, the energy commission went on record stating that many of "the measures will constitute enhancement beyond that which we determine is required by the comprehensive development standard," and that the settlement agreements were binding between the parties even if they did not appear in the license itself. Nevertheless, for all intents and purposes, the commission restored the license to its original form as presented by City Light in 1991. [26] The relicensing process, furthermore, contributed to FERC’s development of its alternative relicensing process.

With the relicensing of the Skagit Project, a new era was launched in the management of Ross Lake NRA. As Superintendent William Paleck noted earlier, he anticipated the settlement agreement to present the park with "a great challenge," for it would bring it into a closer working relationship with City Light, the Forest Service, North Cascades Conservation Council, and other intervenors. [27]

Part of that challenge also lay in carrying out the projects. How this would unfold remained to be seen. The Park Service had essentially contracted with City Light to undertake many of the projects since they would take place within the park complex. But it was no simple matter, for they would require staffing and organization. Jon Jarvis had argued for the Park Service's role in these projects, and attempted to have every project proposal developed with an overhead figure of some 10 to 15 percent, a figure lower than City Light would have had to pay a consulting firm. Moreover, the overhead should have been enough to hire a staff to do the projects -- or at the very least cover the costs of existing park staff. Yet in January 1995, the park complex reported a $200,000 shortfall to cover "additional new NPS operating/consultation responsibilities called for under the settlement agreements." [28]
At the same time, the agreement did not commit the agency to finish each project at a certain time but within a range of years. If the service then failed to complete the construction of a dock, for example, City Light could then let a contract. More important to remember, Jarvis recalled, was that the projects had to be specific in order to be approved, and that they were earmarked to further resource management and recreation in Ross Lake NRA. In this way, one could argue that they helped foster these programs for the recreation area specifically and the park complex generally. Already, North Cascades had gained the services of an archaeologist and a geologist as part of the relicensing investigations [29]; their work, as well as that of other professionals, would expand our understanding of the area's natural and cultural values and thus better enable managers to protect them. [30]

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**Newhalem Project.** The National Park Service was involved in the relicensing of one more City Light hydroelectric project in the 1990s. The Newhalem Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2705), part of the city's early development of the Skagit Project, is a run-of-the-river plant with maximum power production of 2.3 megawatts. The city constructed the Newhalem Project in 1921 to supply electricity to the town of Newhalem during the construction of the Gorge and Diablo hydroelectric facilities; afterwards, the project's power was tied into the Skagit system. The Newhalem Creek Project's original powerhouse was destroyed by fire in 1966 and reconstructed in 1969. Afterwards, Seattle applied to the Federal Power Commission for the project's first license; the power commission issued the license in January 1975, but made it effective January 1, 1970. [31]

The Newhalem Project's license expired at the end of 1994, and North Cascades managers became actively involved in the relicensing process. The Park Service believed that the project, located within Ross Lake NRA, had "considerable cumulative impacts...in the past" and would continue to harm the "aquatic resources of Newhalem Creek without additional protection or mitigation for the aquatic resources of Ross Lake National Recreation, especially anadromous fish habitat. Seattle City Light's current flow regime of 5 cfs would render much of the chinook and pink salmon spawning habitat unavailable, would adversely affect the habitat of juvenile chinook and steelhead, and would further increase the impacts to fry standings." The Department of the Interior expressed a "strong interest" in the project's relicensing, primarily to protect "fishery resources and their habitat and mitigation of the continuing project impacts to those resources, including the effect on the federal reservation of Ross Lake National Recreation Area and the treaty-reserved fishery interests." [32]

The Department of the Interior concluded that Ross Lake NRA constituted a "reservation" for the purposes of the Federal Power Act. Therefore, the Secretary of the Interior had the authority under Section 4(e) of the power act to impose mandatory "conditions for the [adequate] protection and utilization of the Ross Lake National Recreation Area" as part of the project's relicensing. [33] (The department's use of Section 4(e), it seems, may have been the first time it was used in a park area.) In the summer of 1995, the Park Service, in concert with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs, developed preliminary conditions for the proposed relicensing, and the Secretary of the Interior filed these conditions with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. A year later, the secretary submitted a revised list of conditions to the commission. There were six conditions. City Light would

- maintain seasonally adjusted minimum instream flows, or the natural flow, which ever is less in the Newhalem Creek bypassed reach;
- install a tailrace barrier to prevent anadromous fish from entering the tailrace;
- implement sequential start-up ramping rates;
- move accumulated gravel from behind the diversion downstream to provide a spawning

channel;
- place woody debris, which has accumulated in the diversion or intake structure, into the Newhalem Creek bypassed reach, and not change woody debris movement procedures without Park Service approval;
- implement the Newhalem Creek Hydroelectric Project Final Erosion and Drainage Control Plan, and remove any unnatural debris that has fallen or falls in the future into Newhalem Creek from the diversion access road. [34]

In addition to these imposed conditions, City Light agreed to other measures as part of its license. The city proposed to develop a historic resources mitigation and management plan to protect the historic integrity of the project's facilities, which were part of the Skagit River and Newhalem Creek Hydroelectric Projects Historic District, and to undertake recreational improvements. The city proposed to construct a trail parallel to the powerhouse road and to renovate the powerhouse viewing platform and the Trail of the Cedars to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, if necessary. Besides these enhancement proposals, the city agreed to continue several existing measures. These included the operation and maintenance of its fish rearing facility, its powerhouse interpretive display, and the maintenance of the Trail of the Cedars interpretive trail. [35]

On February 7, 1997, FERC issued the new license for the Newhalem Creek Project, the operation of which reflected the interests of the Park Service and Interior Department in the protection of the recreation area's aquatic resources. [36]

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In the midst of relicensing the Skagit and Newhalem projects, the Park Service faced another potential threat to Ross Lake NRA in the form of small hydroelectric projects. Small scale hydropower projects (small hydro) were mostly "run-of-the-river projects," so named because they used the fall of water rather than the volume of a reservoir to generate power. They became popular in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This was, after all, an era of environmental awakening and a perceived energy shortage. Small hydro projects were deemed less destructive than large-scale hydroelectric projects and far less hazardous than nuclear power plants. (In fact, a nuclear power plant was proposed by the Puget Sound Power and Light Company near Sedro Woolley on the Skagit River in the late 1970s.) Moreover, several federal laws -- the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, the Energy Securities Act of 1980, and the Crude Oil Windfall Profit Tax Act of 1980 -- provided the tax and regulatory incentives for private industry and investors to pursue these projects. Especially attractive was an incentive under the Energy Securities Act that authorized FERC to grant exemptions from licensing to certain small hydro projects based on the agency's discretion. These measures set off a small hydro rush, many of them in the vicinity of the nation's parks. Among these areas, Ross Lake NRA stood out because so many projects were proposed within and near the area in the early 1980s (more than fifty) that agency managers were concerned about their cumulative impacts on the Skagit River watershed. Ironically, this flood of proposals came at a time when the projections for energy shortages in the 1970s had been revised to energy surpluses in the 1980s. Nevertheless, the schemes went forward leaving park officials wondering, as they had during the High Ross and Skagit Project relicensing, how they could protect the recreation area's values while not infringing on FERC's jurisdiction. [37]

Park managers had reason to be concerned. At least nine of the proposed projects lay within the boundaries of Ross Lake NRA: Damnation Creek, Sky Creek, Thornton Creek, Thunder Creek (three sites), Birch Creek, Ruby Creek, and Panther Creek. In addition, seven applications were filed for projects east of Ross Lake NRA on Granite, Canyon, and Ruby creeks. All of these proposed projects would have adversely affected the recreation area over
time by altering stream flows, fish and wildlife habitat, and the area's aesthetics with the installation of generating facilities and more transmission lines, to name a few things. [38]

In 1981, the park sought legal advice from the solicitor's office about its authority over such projects. What managers learned was largely what they already knew. The Park Service's ability to regulate dams and hydroelectric projects in and near national park areas was hardly absolute, and in many respects it was uncertain. In general terms, the Federal Power Act's 1921 amendments excluded parks and monuments, thus prohibiting FERC from licensing any hydroelectric projects in these areas. But there was disagreement over whose authority governed projects in other types of national parklands, such as recreation areas (since they were not specifically mentioned in the act). Naturally, the Park Service believed that the FPA's exclusion of parks and monuments should apply to all areas within the park system. On the other hand, FERC believed otherwise and issued licenses for hydro projects in national recreation areas, the more renowned being one in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. [39]

Further complicating matters in Ross Lake NRA was Section 505 of the North Cascades Act, the section that prohibited the Park Service from interfering with FERC's jurisdiction over hydroelectric projects. In an effort to prevent small hydropower projects from damaging the park's ecosystems, managers sought the advice of the solicitor's office as to whether this section applied to projects other than City Light's. On July 30, 1981, David Watts, assistant solicitor, gave his opinion that the park act and its legislative history did in fact grant FERC authority over all projects, not just those existing or anticipated in 1968. [40]

By early 1982, FERC granted exemptions from licensing for the proposed Thornton, Damnation, Sky, and Birch creek projects in accordance with the Energy Securities Act. Park managers countered that while FERC could grant exemptions, these did not include a right to use of the land. In other words, the project applicants would need to apply to the land management agency, in this case the Park Service, for a special use or right-of-way permit for the hydro project's features. These included waterlines, penstocks, powerhouses, and transmission lines, as well as access roads for construction and operation of the projects. The agency's approval of the permit seemed to present the agency with some means to at least stall the small hydro proposals; however, the solicitor noted that because of Section 505, the Park Service could not deny a special use permit to a FERC permittee. As Superintendent Keith Miller noted, the entire process seemed academic. [41]

Nevertheless, park officials sought a finer ruling on what options were available to them, specifically whether or not they could deny the permit should the hydro project unduly impair the recreation area's values. In this regard, Richard Winters, associate regional director for recreation resources and professional services, reminded Superintendent Miller of the solicitor's 1981 opinion -- that any restrictions on the project should be "reasonable." According to the solicitor, an unreasonable restriction was anything that "would absolutely defeat the economic feasibility of the project." On the other hand, it was reasonable to impose restrictions that would limit the project's economic potential in order to protect the values of the recreation area for the enjoyment of the public. [42]

This perspective was put to the test in 1983 when the proponent of the Damnation and Thornton creeks projects applied to the Park Service for rights-of-way permits for access roads to their sites. The critical point at this juncture in the proceedings was whether the agency had the authority to grant these permits to the hydropower developers. Once more the solicitor's opinion was sought. In May, the solicitor informed the Park Service that the applications were "legally sufficient to support the granting of rights-of-way," provided that they were neither "incompatible with the public interest...nor inconsistent with the values which the recreation area is intended to protect." Put another way, the solicitor suggested that
while the Park Service could not deny a permittee access, it could impose "conditions calculated to maintain the identified values of the area." [43]

With this ruling in mind, the park proceeded with the permit process by conducting an environmental assessment to evaluate the federal action. This process seemed to place the Park Service in a position to request a full-scale environmental impact statement, thereby stalling the projects and possibly leading to their demise. But as Daniel Allen, the park complex's natural resource specialist, noted "We were specifically advised that the subject of the assessments was NOT whether to construct the projects since that was not the proposed NPS action." Evidently, Superintendent Miller's sense that all of this was an exercise in paper work contributed to the production of a "ineffective" draft environmental assessment, according to Solicitor C. Richard Neely. The preliminary version of the document, he noted, fell far short of the intent of NEPA; it was too general and did not consider the cumulative impacts of the projects. When it was released on July 13, 1983, for public review, the environmental assessment had been revised to reflect most of Neely's comments. For the most part, conservation organizations, federal and state agencies, and others who commented on the assessment opposed the projects or found serious shortcomings in its consideration of the impacts on the cultural and natural resources of the recreation area. In particular, lawyers for the North Cascades Conservation Council submitted a lengthy brief indicating that the Park Service had the authority over these small hydroelectric projects and did not have to grant them permits at all. [44] And the council would file a lawsuit against the proposals if the agency did not act.

Park Service officials were intrigued by the council's ideas, namely its legal interpretation of the park complex's legislation, its view of the Park Service's power through NEPA, and its view that the agency had the power to oppose such projects because of its primary mission of protecting the recreation area's values. In fact, they were so intrigued that in August 1983 the regional director requested that the solicitor review the council's comments and if possible use this to revisit his 1981 opinion. Several months later, David Watts rejected the council's main argument that FERC's jurisdiction was "limited to site-specific projects" and did not "extend to the issuance of exemptions from licensing." In general, Watt stood behind his original opinion, stating that Ross Lake NRA was not like most units of the park system because it was subject to FERC's "general jurisdiction to authorize projects" here. Section 505 of the North Cascades Act supported this conclusion, and moreover, it did not "impose site-specific limitations." Furthermore, the exemption process was a "procedural component" of the energy commission's jurisdiction under the FPA" which it could exercise in the recreation area under Section 505. However, the solicitor seemed to take a firmer stand on the Park Service's options. Not only could the bureau impose conditions in the permit to protect the recreation area's values and purposes, but it could also "deny permission to use NRA lands...after appropriate environmental and administrative review." [45]

Although Watts' comments seemed to leave an opening for the Park Service to deny the rights-of-way permits, the solicitor pointed out that there were significant reasons for not challenging FERC's authority. First, in his view, should the agency successfully deny the permits (and by association deny FERC's use of exemptions), the applicants would then seek licenses for their projects. Second, N3C's threat to file a lawsuit contesting the use of exemptions might have the opposite effect the group intended by placing parks -- instead of recreation areas -- within the jurisdiction of hydropower exemptions. This would set a precedent that greatly concerned the solicitor, for it could undermine the protection of the nation's parks. [46]

The solicitor's opinion apparently satisfied Park Service managers, and by early 1984, they had issued a finding of no significant impact, essentially completing the environmental assessment. The official reasons for this stemmed from the fact that the proposed actions did
not constitute a major federal action and would not affect the quality of human or natural environments within the recreation area. Altogether the projects consisted of sixty acres and generated four megawatts each. More importantly, rights-of-way permits normally did not require an environmental impact statement because they tended to be confined to a small area. The affected environment covered a fraction of the total land base within the recreation area and had previously been logged. [47]

Consequently, on January 20, 1984, the Park Service approved the permits for the Damnation Creek and Birch Creek projects. It was still reviewing the Thornton Creek permit project and delayed its approval indefinitely when the energy commission encountered legal problems that would, it seemed, bolster the Park Service's case for denying the small hydro projects. Two judicial decisions handed down in 1984 promised to have "a significant impact on the licensing process under the FPA and the issuance of exemptions by FERC. Both cases," the solicitor wrote, "will strengthen NPS ability to deal with water power projects of all types within NPS areas where such projects have been authorized." In the first case, The Tulalip Tribes of Washington et al. v. FERC, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court ruled that FERC "is not authorized to issue case-specific exemptions for any project that involves new dams or the impoundment of water such as a diversionary dam." In its ruling the court held that the Energy Security Act of 1980 authorized FERC "to exempt only those projects that utilized natural water features for the generation of electricity. FERC's rule that allowed structures not exceeding 10 feet in height and impounding no more than two acre-feet of water as eligible for exemptions was struck down by the court as being contrary to the law and thus invalid." In the second case, Escondido Mutual Water Co. et al. v. La Jolla Band of Mission Indians, et al., the court ruled that FERC "must accept without modification conditions that the Secretary of the Interior deems necessary for the adequate protection and utilization of the reservation in accordance with the purpose for which the reservation was established." [48]

As anticipated by the solicitor, the Ninth Circuit ruling invalidated many, if not all, of the small hydro exemptions in the North Cascades, including two of the three projects (Damnation and Thornton creeks) within Ross Lake NRA; these were new projects, calling for the installation of dams and/or water impoundments, whereas the Birch Creek project called for renovation an existing project. [49] By no means, however, did this terminate the small hydro proposals. It meant that the applicant had to request a license from FERC for a minor project. In October 1984, William L. Divine, who operated the WLD Glacier Energy Company, submitted license applications to FERC for the Damnation Creek Project (FERC No. 4412-001) and the Thornton Creek Project (FERC No. 4435-001). Like the relicensing of the Skagit Project, these applications contained materials covering an overview of the project, its environmental impacts, and its general design. As part of the application, Divine also submitted a State Environmental Protection Act checklist to the Washington Department of Ecology. [50]

In 1985, a number of organizations filed motions to intervene in the licensing process. Groups like the North Cascades Conservation Council, the Seattle chapter of the Audubon Society and the Seattle Mountaineers were among them, and protested the projects in order to protect the recreation area's values. As intervenors in the licensing, they argued that FERC did not have the jurisdiction to license these projects in a national park area, presumably contesting the agency's interpretation of the FPA. They also contended that, contrary to the Park Service's legal opinion, Congress' intent was to limit FERC's authority to those City Light projects existing and planned when the North Cascades legislation was enacted. However good the intentions, these views seem to have gone unrecognized. [51]

The larger issue, it seems, was the role the National Park Service would assume as the federal land management agency empowered by recent judicial rulings. The North Cascades
Conservation Council interpreted the Park Service's apparently passive position on the small hydro issue as typical of the agency's faults when it came to preserving nature. Despite these views, the Park Service displayed a great interest in blocking the projects. In October and November 1985, the National Park Service, through the Department of the Interior, made its formal review of the Damnation and Thornton creeks hydropower applications to FERC. Essentially, the Park Service expressed its concern over the lack of measures to mitigate damage to the recreation area's natural as well as outdoor recreational values. Therefore, it recommended that FERC place special conditions for mitigation in the licenses before any construction or operation of the projects began. At bottom, the Park Service suggested that FERC must assess all of the cumulative impacts of these two projects and their mitigation measures. The sense here was that it was entirely possible that mitigation would not adequately repair the damage to the recreation area's values, and thus the agency would have a strong case for terminating the projects. [52]

To reinforce its position, the Park Service, again through the Interior Department, filed to intervene in the proceeding for licenses to construct and operate the hydropower projects on Thornton and Damnation creeks. By September 1986, FERC had granted the department status and the Park Service began to establish the conditions it believed should be part of the applications. The department had the option of negotiating these conditions with the applicant or having FERC impose these conditions under Section 4(e) of the Federal Power Act. [53] Just what role the agency could take in the negotiations still seemed unclear to park managers. In January 1987, Superintendent John Reynolds requested the solicitor's opinion "concerning the appropriateness of the National Park Service intervening in the licensing process to challenge FERC's jurisdiction within Ross Lake National Recreation Area." The superintendent once more asked the solicitor to revisit his 1981 opinion, to which Richard Neely replied that nothing in his legal interpretation had changed. In addition, the superintendent wanted clarification about his agency's ability to ensure that the projects complied with environmental laws, such as NEPA. The solicitor assured the superintendent that the park, as with any other agency or member of the public, was within its legal rights to comment on "the potential impacts from, or alternatives to, the development of small hydroelectric projects" within Ross Lake NRA. Finally, the solicitor reminded the superintendent that Section 505 of the North Cascades Act still applied, yet because of recent litigation the Park Service stood a greater chance now of controlling the development and operation small hydro projects through the licensing process. [54]

At this juncture, the Park Service's position to challenge but not oppose the projects outright had improved. The agency took advantage of these changes in the summer of 1987. During that year, the projects edged closer to approval when the Department of Ecology found that they would have no significant environmental impact. All that remained was FERC's approval, pending its environmental review, which was at least two years away. [55] FERC's review, however, was part of a larger study of the cumulative impacts that might result from small hydroelectric projects proposed on the Nooksack and Skagit rivers. Thus, as part of this process, the Park Service requested that the commission "fully consider the potential cumulative impacts of the proposed Thornton and Damnation Creek projects on the Skagit River system." The request conceded that FERC had jurisdiction over such projects in the recreation area, but urged the commission to "fully consider the purpose of the recreation area as required by the Federal Power Act." The Park Service also urged the commission to remember that it could issue a license within a reservation only after finding that "the license will not interfere or be inconsistent with the purpose for which such reservation was created or acquired." [56]

Park staff, working with FERC in this process, had every reason to believe that the commission would consider this request. FERC's study of the cumulative impacts of proposed small hydropower projects led to the withdrawal of many applications, primarily
because of the time and money required of the applicants to satisfy the compliance with environmental regulations. Moreover, it appeared likely that the two proposed projects in Ross Lake NRA might be canceled. In June 1988, the commission dismissed the license applications for both the Thornton and Damnation projects for a lack of progress. The applicant, William Devine, had not produced the necessary studies and investigations agreed to in his application. But then things seemed to turn against the Park Service. In March and April 1989, the commission granted Devine's appeal and reinstated his license applications, giving him an extension to the end of the year to file the requested information. [57]

In the meantime, however, one of the most significant events in the administration of the park complex took place with the passage of the federal Washington Park Wilderness Act of 1988. Passed on November 16, 1988, the act gave formal protection to the park complex's proposed wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964. Moreover, the law amended the North Cascades Act in several ways, one of which was to clearly state the role of FERC in the park complex. This amendment, written by Jon Jarvis with the blessing of Superintendent Reynolds, responded to something Interior Department solicitors had been suggesting for years: that until Section 505 was changed FERC would have authority over hydroelectric projects in Ross Lake and Lake Chelan national recreation areas. Section 202 of the wilderness legislation limited the number of hydroelectric projects in the complex, and thus the commission's authority to those projects already in existence or proposed at the time of the area's establishment. According to the legislation, FERC's responsibilities were not "in the recreation areas," but in the

lands and waters within the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project...including the proposed Copper Creek, High Ross, and Thunder Creek elements of the Project, and the Newhalem Project...within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area; lands and waters within the Lake Chelan Project...[and] the Company Creek small hydroelectric project at Stehekin within the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area; and existing hydrologic monitoring stations necessary for the proper operation of the hydroelectric projects listed herein. [58]

In addition to these revisions, the act placed the wilderness boundary downstream from the proposed projects on Thornton and Damnation creeks.

With these changes, the small hydro issue ended quickly in the North Cascades complex. In 1989, the Park Service informed FERC that the intakes for both the Damnation and Thornton projects lay within a wilderness area, and that FERC's licensing authority over the projects had been withdrawn by the Washington Parks Wilderness Act. Although these changes meant an obvious loss of power for the energy commission, it abided by the new legislation, finding it sound, and subsequently dismissed the license applications on July 29, 1989. Upset that nearly a decade's worth of work had ended abruptly, William Devine appealed FERC's decision on August 21, 1989; however, FERC denied his appeal on January 26, 1990, stating that the law clearly prohibited the commission from licensing the Damnation Creek and Thornton Creek projects. [59]

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Compared to the issues surrounding Seattle City Light's operations on the Skagit and the flurry of small hydropower proposals in Ross Lake NRA, Lake Chelan NRA's issues regarding power production were less controversial. In the Stehekin Valley, for instance, the Chelan County PUD operated the Company Creek Hydroelectric Project, a small plant generating less than 2,000 horsepower for the community of Stehekin, under a special use permit. [60] More important was the Lake Chelan Hydroelectric Project. Its relicensing was less controversial than the Skagit Project's, but it was not without important meaning for park
managers. First licensed in 1926, the Lake Chelan project, operated by the Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County (Chelan PUD), was up for relicensing in the early 1970s. The High Ross issue on the Skagit River and later the relicensing of the Skagit project itself tended to overshadow the Lake Chelan project. To be sure, City Light's operations had a far greater presence in, and thus greater impact on, Ross Lake NRA than the Chelan project did on Lake Chelan NRA. Nevertheless, the hydro project at the foot of Lake Chelan, some fifty-five miles from Stehekin, raised the lake's level by twenty-one feet to 1,100 feet. The effects of this could be seen at the head of the lake. Fluctuating lake levels, though not as dramatic as on Ross Lake, created problems with shoreline erosion. During periods of maximum drawdowns, some 140 acres of mud flats were exposed at the lake's northern end, near the outlet of the Stehekin River. Blowing silt was an intermittent problem. In April and May, the flats dried out and strong spring winds blew silt to the Stehekin Landing, obscuring the view of the valley and causing silt to accumulate in houses and vehicles and on vegetation. Blowing silt caused discomfort in most people and possibly respiratory ailments in others. Changes in the lake's level also caused wear and tear on the docks at the main landing at Stehekin.

In the early 1970s, as the Park Service became immersed in the High Ross dealings, officials applied similar tactics in addressing the Lake Chelan project. That is, as a condition of Chelan PUD's license, the Park Service could require recreational developments, among other measures, as mitigation for the project's impacts on the lands under its management. Similar to its negotiations with City Light, the Park Service focused primarily on Exhibit R. In 1974, the year in which the Chelan project's license expired, Superintendent Lowell White proposed a number of items for recreation, such as the construction of new boat docks, campground expansions, and channelizing the lake bed near the Stehekin Landing for the barge. White also thought that the utility could improve recreational opportunities at the head of the lake by expanding its lake cleanup, similar to a service performed by City Light on Ross Lake. Moreover, White believed that the most important project for the PUD would be to assist the Park Service and Forest Service in the development of Field's Point. In this way, there would be an opportunity to run the tour boat between Field's Point and Stehekin twice a day, rather than the daily trip from Chelan, thereby reducing the pressure on Stehekin's services. [61]

After learning that this was a simple relicensing action, and therefore no new sources of revenue for substantial recreational improvements would be available, Superintendent White emphasized the Field's Point development as his agency's primary objective in relicensing. In early 1977, when Chelan PUD released its recreation plan for Lake Chelan in order to satisfy its requirements for Exhibit R, the Park Service's objective was missing from the plan. The utility's study, prepared with the assistance of its consultants and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR), considered the whole lake but focused primarily on the lower end. The reasoning behind this decision was a simple one. Investing some $2.6 million in recreation here would satisfy the "greatest need." The BOR supported this decision, stating that the utility's money should go towards enhancing recreational opportunities in an area that was predominately privately owned. These lands held great recreational potential and were closer to the residents who could benefit from it. The Park Service and the Forest Service, however, objected to this reasoning. They believed that the "licensee should aid in the development of Field's Point." Their main point for involving the utility in the Field's Point project was that fluctuating lake levels had an impact on uplake recreational opportunities. Moreover, the two agencies stated that without financial assistance from the utility in the project they could make a better case to receive federal appropriations to complete it. The BOR viewed this proposal as "inequitable." Federal agencies should fund federal projects, just as private agencies funded their own projects. If Field's Point was to be such an important ingress and egress point for Lake Chelan NRA and Forest Service lands uplake, then the responsibility lay not with the utility but with the government. To do otherwise would be "at the expense of recreation development" currently proposed in the utility's plan. [62]
In their meetings with the BOR, the Park Service and Forest Service continued to press for some assistance from the utility in the development of Field's Point. While the two agencies reluctantly agreed with BOR that the utility should not have to share costs for Field's Point, they seemed intent on having the Chelan PUD provide the boat dock at the new facility. (How this would be justified was not clear.) This, in the minds of agency managers, was a compromise because they had earlier wanted the utility to provide not only the dock but also the access road, parking, and day-use facilities there. In this regard, the agencies were more successful. When FERC issued the new operating license for the hydroelectric project on May 12, 1981, the license directed the PUD to "attend to soil erosion adjacent to streams and other waters, water pollution and air pollution on federal land's caused by the District's operation or maintenance of its Lake Chelan Project works." In 1982, this led to an agreement between the utility and the two agencies to undertake a pilot project to study methods of erosion control on Lake Chelan's shoreline owned by the federal government; it was the first stage in a shoreline stabilization plan.

Certainly, the Lake Chelan Hydroelectric Project was not as controversial as the Skagit Project from a management perspective. Nevertheless, by the late 1990s, the Lake Chelan project's thirty year license was nearly up for renewal (2004), and Park Service officials anticipated that they would approach the process differently. If their participation in the relicensing of the Skagit Project was any indication, they would press hard not only for mitigation and enhancement measures for recreation but for preservation of resources as well. Chelan County PUD saw the collaborative approach taken by City Light in the Skagit Project relicensing favorably, too, and in May 1998 filed a request with FERC to use an alternative approach in relicensing the Lake Chelan project.
Chapter 12:
RESEARCH AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The resource management program at North Cascades fell within the influence of the Leopold and the National Academy of Sciences reports of 1963. Park administrators stressed the importance of scientifically informed management, and set out to base their management decisions on sound research. North Cascades got off on a strong foot in this regard. The formation of the first cooperative park studies unit at the University of Washington was directly related to the park's establishment; the new university-based research facility assisted managers early on in their efforts to understand the wealth and diversity of park resources. But by the early 1980s, science at North Cascades, as throughout the park system, had not developed enough to support all management decisions. [1]

The Park Service's own 1980 State of the Parks report concluded that the agency had not established a comprehensive and coordinated scientific management program. The report underscored the variety and magnitude of threats to park resources and the agency's inability to document the pace of change because it did not have an adequate knowledge of the resources under its care. Out of the report, and its follow-up report in 1981, came the most significant boost to science in park management since the Leopold and National Academy reports. The primary proposals included comprehensive inventorying of natural resources, the development of monitoring programs to detect even incremental change in park resources, the production of park resource management plans, and an increase in staffing and training in science and natural resource management. [2]

To a certain extent, these changes at the national level were felt in North Cascades. By the 1990s, the park complex's staff had grown considerably with the addition of a chief of resource management, wildlife biologists, an aquatic ecologist, and geologist, among other specialists. Over the years, the staff developed more extensive resource management plans and developed some of the first long-range inventory and monitoring programs. One recent study was monitoring the park's glaciers. Although the park contained one-third of all glaciers found outside of Alaska, little data existed about their histories and role in the park complex's hydrologic systems.

By the early 1990s, park resource managers conceded that there were still great gaps in their knowledge about the health of the park complex's natural systems, largely from a lack of funding and a commitment to research at the national level. This opinion was consistent with another agency report, National Parks for the Twenty-First Century: The Vail Agenda, which stated that the Park Service's overall approach to scientific management has been "sporadic and inconsistent, characterized by alternating cycles of commitment and decline." The protection of natural resources based on sound scientific research still had shortcomings from the standpoint of staffing and funding. The agency's acknowledgement of the situation and its promises to make substantive changes failed to allay the fears of scientists and environmentalists. They continued to exert pressure on the service to expand scientific research, viewing the agency's promises as largely rhetorical. [3] In effect, this kind of ebb-
and-flow cycle of support for scientific-based resource management tended to focus attention on the most controversial topics, and projects worthy of long-term research often went unaddressed. At North Cascades, the most visible topics included issues surrounding fish stocking, resource consumption, Stehekin River erosion, and fire.

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**Fisheries.** In its efforts to preserve natural systems, the Park Service often encountered conflict with those who believed national parks should be managed for the enjoyment of people rather than the protection of nature. North Cascades officials set out to establish a foundation for the latter in their resource management program and to inform all decisions through sound research. Yet, as the controversy over fish stocking revealed, this approach was not always enough to quiet agency critics, many of whom embraced a more traditional view of national parks in which recreation was the primary goal. Often recreation involved more than enjoyment of a primitive natural setting; it involved some kind of manipulation of the environment, such as planting fish in the high mountain lakes of North Cascades so people could go fishing.

By the late 1970s, fish stocking continued to be controversial. The policy variance proposed by Superintendent Lowell White in 1975 was revised and signed by the park and Washington Department of Game (WDG) in 1979. The policy variance stated that the department of game could continue stocking lakes that already supported introduced trout populations "where natural reproduction" was "inadequate to support a reasonable harvest success." [4] The policy also stated that the department could not stock lakes "naturally barren of fish life and presently barren of fish life." The park's long-range goal was that all stocking would be gradually phased out over fifty years. "This would leave only naturally reproducing trout as inhabitants of the naturally fish-barren high lakes of the North Cascades." [5] The department of game objected to the elimination of fish planting, it seems, and this language was left out of the policy variance. Otherwise, it agreed to work with the Park Service to develop a recreational fisheries management program. The problem was that the Park Service wanted a program that would rely eventually on natural conditions to sustain fish populations in high lakes, and the game department wanted a program that would involve an aggressive stocking program for sport fishing.

The agreement seems to have accomplished little in the way of resolving the differences between the two agencies. By 1985, the Park Service decided that North Cascades National Park [6] needed a stronger fish management policy in order to comply with the Park Service's policy against fish stocking; the policy was set down in the new agency policy book (the "blue book") that evolved from the three separate policy books for recreation areas, historic areas, and natural areas. Under the current program, fish planting was increasing and there was no clearly stated long-range goal to decrease fish stocking altogether. Superintendent John Reynolds believed that the stocking program needed to be phased out, or at the very least needed to be modified so that natural conditions prevailed. In addition to his concerns about the protection of the park's ecosystem, Reynolds worried about the precedent the current program was setting for the park system. Three parks, Yosemite, Sequoia, and Lassen, had minimal stocking programs, remnants from larger programs of the past. Since the early 1970s, their programs had been stable, and they had long-range goals of eliminating stocking. Moreover, they were not operating under variances from National Park Service policy. Their superintendents, however, were concerned that stocking was on the increase in North Cascades and that it might impinge on their efforts to phase out fishing planting. Recently, they had been approached by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife about adopting a similar variance. [7]

Bringing North Cascades into line with Park Service policy proved to be just as controversial
as the policy variance. Washington Department of Game officials expressed their outrage and disappointment over the Park Service's new goals; they felt they had been slighted in their "co-management" of the park's alpine lakes, and vowed to continue operating under the variance. Oddly enough, both the WDG and the Park Service signed a new memorandum of understanding, approved on August 15, 1985, that nullified all previous agreements, including the one for the stocking program. Then began the long process of finding a compromise policy. The WDG clung to the variance, declaring that it was still in effect; the Park Service, on the other hand, asserted that it had the legal right to phase out fish stocking within North Cascades. [8]

The Park Service faced a complicated political matter. Convincing the department of game and its constituents of the value of its management plans appeared to be an insurmountable challenge. The director of the WDG, Jack Wayland, insisted that "fish planting" should continue in North Cascades "forever." He believed fish planting was the intent of Congress, and even the Park Service, as expressed during the park hearings. Wayland refused to acknowledge that the variance was no longer valid and stated that his agency would continue to plant lakes with fish as long as it had political support for the program (which it did) or until the courts ruled against it. Justifying his position, Wayland argued that the long-range objective had not been expansion of fish planting but "simply full implementation of the variance, a critical element of which was classifying the lakes in the park with fishery potential." [9]

In truth, the Park Service was not proposing to eliminate fish stocking entirely but rather to limit it in order to preserve as many lakes as possible in their natural state. At the heart of the dispute was a question: Did preservation interfere unfairly with recreational fishing? Sport fishing groups as well as the department of game seemed to think so and mounted a vocal campaign against the agency's new proposal. In June 1986, National Park Service Director William Penn Mott, Jr., responded by establishing a new fish management policy for the North Cascades complex. The policy sought to find a compromise that would be attractive to those who thought of parks as purely recreational resources and those who thought of parks as relatively pristine natural areas.

Mott's policy acknowledged that fishing was an acceptable recreational pursuit in the national park, but fishing should not come at the detriment of lakes in their natural state. In this regard, the policy assigned the park's lakes to three categories: "natural fish-free waters, self-sustaining fish population waters, and continue to stock waters." The lakes would be managed so that those without fish will not be stocked "with any kind of fish." The policy also stated that the park's other lakes with fish populations, the result of stocking, would be largely left to survive under natural conditions. Finally, only those waters within the park that were selected specifically to be managed as "enhanced recreational fishery waters...may be stocked now or in the future." The three classes of lakes, the policy concluded, "will provide for an enhanced recreational fishing experience in the park while at the same time assuring that we provide the opportunity for aquatic research under natural conditions." [10]

In keeping with the agency's emphasis on research-informed policy, Mott ordered that the Park Service develop and implement a research program that addressed three things. First, the research program should establish "current fish and aquatic habitat baseline conditions in park waters." Second, the program should monitor "the impacts of this fish-stocking guidance on fish and other wildlife." And third, it should determine "changes over time referenced against current baseline conditions or undisturbed natural conditions where they are known." The data would be used then to make an informed decision about the future of "our fish-stocking management." [11]

Before the Park Service could move forward with its research program, it first had to consult
with the department of game. The 1985 memorandum of understanding bound the Park Service to consult with the state prior to initiating any research projects or carrying out plans or programs for fisheries. The memorandum also required the two agencies to consult about proposals to transplant fish in North Cascades. [12] Coming to mutually agreeable terms was unlikely. The department of game continued to reject Park Service attempts to limit or phase out fish planting in the lakes of North Cascades. Wayland informed Mott that his department could not accept his new policy because it would exclude the state and other interested parties from the recreational fish management program. [13]

The fish-planting issue came to a head in 1987. In their meetings with the Washington State Department of Wildlife (formerly the department of game), park officials maintained that they were abiding by Mott's 1986 directive, thus continuing the moratorium on any stocking of fish-free waters. Park managers also issued a compromise; they would provide a total of forty recreational fishing lakes within the park, for a total of sixty-one in the park complex. Finally, the agency would not make any changes in management actions until completion of the fishery research project. (The three-year research project, agreed to by both agencies, was approved for fiscal year 1989.) The project, above all, would satisfy the Park Service's responsibilities under NEPA to assess the environmental consequences of introducing fish into naturally fish-free lakes.

The department of wildlife and its supporters objected to the Park Service's proposal; they claimed that despite finding some common ground on the issue, the agency was still intent on eliminating fish planting from the park. The controversy, it seems, was on the verge of exploding into a full-scale interagency battle. In the fall of 1987, Director Wayland threatened to "bomb" twelve lakes in the park with trout, planting the fish by helicopter, "unless I am assured that we have reached a satisfactory long-term resolution which allows continued planting of lakes in the Park." The Park Service replied that it would seek an injunction in federal court to block the planting. "We are not backing off," noted Associate Regional Director Michael Tollefson. "We have tried to work with the state and we feel our position is valid and reasonable." Should the state follow through with its plans, the Park Service threatened to cite the state for violating federal regulations and would consider killing the planted fish through "accepted chemical means." [14]

A short time later, however, Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks William P. Horn intervened and asked the agencies to work out their differences. [15] A truce followed while the agencies presented their positions to Horn. In the spring of 1988, the assistant secretary notified the agencies that he had reviewed their materials and found they agreed on a number of critical matters -- which lakes had been stocked in the past, which were presumed to be fish free, and which were thought to have the least reproduction of fish. Beyond that, Horn acknowledged the Park Service's policies regarding fish stocking had become more conservative in recent years. Thus, the Park Service's study would be a valuable source for deciding what role "fish-stocking would have in the management of recreational fishing in the park." Over the next several years, Horn recommended that the current program continue while the research program was designed and implemented. Afterwards, he suggested that the two agencies use the research to work cooperatively in developing a viable recreational fishing program, one subject to public review. [16]

To this end, both the state and Park Service signed a supplemental agreement to the earlier memorandum of understanding on July 12, 1988. [17] The agreement allowed the department of wildlife to continue stocking forty lakes (twice as many as under the variance) within the park for the next twelve years. The two agencies would consult on the number and species of fish, specific lakes, and the planting frequency of those lakes to be stocked. By all indications, park officials would limit the fish-stocking program. The Park Service noted that while Horn's letter and agency policies for natural zones supported this management
approach, it intended to use the research and monitoring program to "review and modify its decisions and the agreement as necessary." [18]

In 1994, Oregon State University, which conducted the fish research project for the Park Service, reported that fish stocking might alter "the invertebrate community structure as well as indigenous salamander populations. Human impacts on fragile lakeshore environments" appeared to be more "pronounced where fish are stocked." In other words, sport fishers attracted to lakes stocked for fishing in turn harmed these sensitive areas. Recent plans called for more research to be completed by Oregon State University in 1995 to assess the "impacts of fish stocking on salamander abundance and distribution." All of this would assist managers in understanding the impact of fishing on mountain lakes over time and assist in the development of "aquatic resource mitigation and restoration plans." [19] In the new millennium, the fish stocking policy will be revisited using this and other research data.

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Other fish management issues in the park complex reflected concerns similar to fish stocking without the same level of controversy. The primary management theme was to maintain fisheries in their natural state as much as possible whether in the park complex's reservoirs, rivers and tributaries, or natural lakes. By the 1990s, research, inventorying, monitoring, and coordinated management with other agencies dominated the approach taken by park staff. The intent was to protect and if warranted reintroduce native fish. The internal and external influences affecting the park complex's fisheries were quite varied, including recreational fishing, the introduction of non-native species, and the presence of hydroelectric projects. [20]

In Lake Chelan NRA, preserving the fish native to the lower Stehekin River and Lake Chelan seemed impossible. Bull trout and Lake Chelan cutthroat trout, the most dominant sport fish, had all but disappeared after the introduction of such alien species as rainbow trout, brook trout, kokanee salmon, chinook salmon, and lake trout. Moreover, the introduction of other genotypes of cutthroat trout made it doubtful that any remnant populations of native cutthroat lived in the lower Stehekin or in Lake Chelan. One of the biggest problems for the lake was the introduction of mysis shrimp. These freshwater shrimp had been successful in raising the size of fish in some Canadian lakes so the fish and game agencies were planting them in lakes all over the West. In deep lakes like Chelan, however, the nocturnal shrimp dive during the day below the feeding zone of the fish and rise again at night to feed, competing directly with the fish for food they were planted to fatten up in the first place. The shrimp almost proved fatal to the kokanee population in Lake Chelan, in a sense paving the way for the introduction of chinook salmon and lake trout. Managing the native fish in the lake was only possible if a fish trap was operated at the mouth of the Stehekin River to prevent kokanee and chinook from migrating up the river to spawn. The situation was further complicated by the number of agencies responsible for fisheries management in these waters. There were at least five: the National Park Service, Washington Department of Wildlife, Washington Department of Fisheries, Wenatchee National Forest, and Chelan County PUD.

Although the Park Service did not oppose the enhancement of habitat for introduced fish in Lake Chelan NRA, it wanted to ensure that habitat enhancement did not harm or further deteriorate the area's native fish population. One way to accomplish this objective was through a comprehensive fishery management plan for Lake Chelan; the plan would coordinate the various agencies with interests in the lake's fisheries. Although an interagency committee produced a draft fishery plan in 1979, it was never finalized and was ineffective. In the early 1990s, Park Service officials renewed efforts to produce a comprehensive plan, especially since the department of wildlife had renewed stocking of chinook salmon in 1990. The idea, according to the park complex's resource management plan, was to "eliminate the
shotgun approach of each agency managing the fishery for its own particular interests." [21] Another way was through the relicensing of the Lake Chelan Hydroelectric Project, scheduled for 2004. As part of the Park Service's mitigation package, agency officials anticipated that they would submit a proposal for a genetic study looking for remnant populations of native fish in the Stehekin River, and possibly reintroduce historic fish species to the river and Lake Chelan. They also anticipated that the proposal would be controversial. Among other things the question of what was "natural" had changed over the years. Although introduced by the state in the 1910s, kokanee salmon were now considered a natural fish, since they had been successfully reproducing in the lower Stehekin River and Company Creek. In addition to many political and economic considerations, any program to enhance habitat for a known native fish would have to assess the possible influence it would have on existing "natural" species like the kokanee.

In the northern half of the park complex, fisheries management operated on a much larger scale geographically as well as politically. The most notable example of this was the role played by hydroelectric facilities. They altered the flows of both the Baker and Skagit rivers and damaged fish habitat; any mitigation of the damaged habitat and restoration of fish populations involved a complicated bureaucratic process. Salmon received a greater emphasis in this region, since they were native to the Skagit River system. In fact, it was one of the few watersheds within the Puget Sound region managed for natural production of salmon. For much of the last century, Skagit River salmon stocks have declined for a number of reasons that are not fully understood. But the decline most likely can be attributed to habitat loss from logging, farming, non-point pollution, and hydroelectric developments. Moreover, overharvest from commercial, sport, and tribal fishing has reduced salmon populations. Ultimately, the park complex's ability to protect and manage the salmon runs within its boundaries depended on its cooperation with other agencies and groups. On the Baker River, for example, park staff helped several agencies to save the river's native sockeye, one of three runs left in Washington. Under the current plan, the salmon are trucked around the dams and deposited in spawning ponds or released into Baker Lake or lower Baker River; from there they swim up river and into the park to spawn.

On the Skagit River, the Park Service worked with the state and Seattle City Light to coordinate and monitor salmon and other fish populations and then make recommendations for management decisions. On the Skagit, however, dams did not block the historic salmon runs, since salmon did not migrate beyond the Skagit Gorge. [22] The chain of dams did alter the river's flow though, which in turn altered the spawning grounds for salmon and other anadromous fish. Furthermore, salmon used the side channels, or tributaries, of the Skagit to spawn. Without flooding controlled by dams, these channels disappeared. As part of the fisheries settlement agreement with City Light's relicensing of the Skagit Project, the Park Service was able to have these and other fisheries issues addressed through Skagit River flow and non-flow mitigation plans. The plans, extensively detailed, generally provided for river flows that would maximize the protection of spawning salmon and steelhead and their offspring. The plans also provided for steelhead production, off-channel salmon habitat enhancement, chinook salmon research, and the development of the Ross Lake resident trout program.

The park engaged in cooperative efforts with other agencies to restore fish habitat as well. One project was the construction of a spawning channel near Newhalem Creek. Constructed in 1985 by the Washington Department of Fisheries with the assistance of park biologist Bob Wasem, the channel was intended to benefit both chum and coho salmon populations returning each year to the upper Skagit. The department proposed eleven more sites within Ross Lake NRA for spawning channels, hoping to restore coho salmon populations in the Skagit system. Although the Park Service agreed that the need for restoring habitat was great, it believed that monitoring the Newhalem spawning channel was essential to understanding...
the value of such a program. Park biologists initiated a seven-year monitoring program in the early 1990s, and will use this data to determine whether more spawning channels should be constructed. In another venture, park officials reached a settlement with City Light as part of its relicensing of the Newhalem Creek Hydroelectric Project. As mitigation for fisheries, the settlement reduced the project's operation time to about half a year, thereby providing enough water to support chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.

In other areas of management, the fisheries program broadened its scope by examining the ecological conditions of the park's fish populations. This kind of work had been the goal of park officials since the creation of North Cascades. But it took time and funding to implement, and funding was often unavailable to launch a comprehensive program. In the first decades of management, the park biologist and his seasonal staff focused primarily on a wide range of survey work which covered fish, streams, ponds, lakes, as well as basic water quality analyses. The main intent of this approach was to assess the state of natural systems before a crisis appeared, but it was piecemeal. In 1993, the program was poised for change when North Cascades was one of eleven parks accepted for a long-term ecological monitoring program. Unfortunately, the program, with an annual cost of $1 million, went unfunded.

Meanwhile, park biologists attempted to support the long-term study by conducting smaller, pilot projects to classify habitat types and characteristics, for example, in order to extrapolate from this evidence for the whole parkland. As part of this effort, the park geologist undertook a project to create landform maps, which would contain information essential to identifying and classifying aquatic habitat. Particularly significant was a recent arthropod study in the Big Beaver Valley, a research natural area. Funded by a grant from the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission, the two-year study identified at least six hundred species previously unknown to researchers and the habitats in which they were found.

Finally, because park boundaries were influenced by politics and not natural conditions, ecosystem management was often management by committee. Park biologists were members of at least five committees for the management of the Skagit River. They had also linked up with the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, which had one million acres surrounding the park. And they have recently entered into a cooperative monitoring project of the Chilliwack River with British Columbia; Canadian authorities wanted to use the Chilliwack as a reference for pristine habitat for their restoration of other streams in the lower mainland.

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Resource consumption. The North Cascades Act allowed the use of renewable natural resources in the park complex's two recreation areas, but the legislation was primarily written to accommodate existing uses of resources by residents in the Stehekin Valley. [23] The continued use of the valley's forests for firewood was a volatile topic, and in the late 1970s, park administrators revisited firewood policies in the Stehekin country. Environmental groups criticized the policies as "logging" rather than the milder description of "wood gathering" used by valley residents. Grant McConnell read the 1972 interim firewood plan as a document condoning the expansion of wood cutting. The plan identified the former Courtney mill and a "fairway" near the airstrip as two possible sites for wood cutting. Wood cutting in these areas would lead to the development of more informal roads, McConnell argued, leading to the needless invasion of a particularly "wild and beautiful part of the Stehekin Valley." [24] On the other hand, valley residents feared that there would be a firewood scarcity if wood cutting were restricted to the areas designated in the interim plan. Park Service managers were also concerned about firewood supplies. They needed to consider the continuing use of firewood as well as the potential for increased demand for firewood with a rising local population. Although some checking was done on the amount of wood cut, the
program operated primarily on the honor system. Managers worried that the current plan would not allow for a sustainable harvest of firewood.

In 1978, concerns over firewood scarcity motivated the Park Service to better understand the forest resources of the lower valley. The subject of forest research had arisen as early as 1973 when a proposal was submitted by Park Biologist Bob Wasem. But like most "proposed contract research," the forest resource study went unfunded. As of 1978, Wasem noted, the study was ninth on the park's priority list for research. He urged his superiors to fund the study as soon as possible. With a little luck, he quipped, the study might be completed "while a forest still exists." [25] The following year Superintendent Keith Miller made the research project the park's top priority, and the agency contracted with the University of Washington to complete the Stehekin firewood study. Miller asserted that the issue of firewood use in Stehekin, as with the use of renewable resources in general in Lake Chelan NRA, was not going to be resolved without research. [26]

In 1981, Chadwick Oliver and Bruce Larson completed their survey of the Stehekin Valley's forest resources and related consumptive use of firewood. Their report suggested that there was a severe depletion of dead trees within the valley and that the current rate of removal of trees exceeded those dying of natural causes. In other words, the firewood program was not being managed for sustained yield. Moreover, the current program was having an adverse affect on a variety of native wildlife; dead trees were important habitat for wildlife, particularly cavity nesting birds and mammals. In part, the study also concluded what preservation interests had insisted: the program had created an extensive network of access roads and unsightly stumps, reducing the valley's scenic appeal. Finally, the study proposed a woodlot system for firewood cutting that could be managed on a sustained yield basis. Oliver and Larson established woodlots in four areas. One lot was near the airstrip; two were up the valley near McGregor Meadows, and the fourth woodlot was part of the old golf course area in the vicinity of the River Trail. Within the woodlots, there was a total of seventy-six lots up to an acre in size. In general, the plan's intent was to provide a "perpetual sustainable supply of firewood" by prescribing that the lots be cut on an eighty-year rotation. The plan also suggested methods of replanting and other management techniques. All told, the "system was designed to minimize regeneration problems, maximize flexibility, and provide general simplicity in management." [27]

Oliver and Larson's study reinforced the need to update the existing firewood management plan, but there were still questions that required answers before a new plan could go into effect. The main question was whether the consumption of firewood met the requirements of Section 402 (a) of the North Cascades Act. Was the harvesting of firewood, a "renewable natural resource," compatible with the recreation area's recreational, natural, and cultural values? In 1984, park officials began to revise the valley's firewood management plan with this and other questions before them, and worked closely with the firewood committee of the Stehekin Community Council. When Superintendent John Reynolds arrived at his new post in October of that year, he recognized the plan's importance and pushed for its completion. North Cascades released a draft firewood management plan and environmental assessment in April 1985, but it had serious shortcomings, perhaps because it was hastily done. Public comments illustrated some of the plan's problems. Preservation groups, like the North Cascades Conservation Council, decried the proposed woodlot system as "clearcutting," while some valley residents felt betrayed by the plan's suggestion that their wood gathering practices were harming the environment. After hearing these comments, Superintendent Reynolds further investigated firewood gathering in the valley, especially reports of illegal and insensitive cutting practices. Afterwards, he realized that the draft plan was "unworkable" and rejected it in December. [28]

Based on his own observations and the recommendations of his staff, Reynolds stated that the
original draft plan "did not adequately address present and future cordage limits to prevent significant impairment to the area, did not present a truly sustained yield cutting scenario or a plan for cutting that followed or could be justified by the Oliver/Larson study." Furthermore, the alternatives in the plan "did not address other heating sources, replanting programs or the impact of sustained and increased cutting to meet a growing demand on wildlife in the Valley." Finally, Reynolds wanted to ensure that firewood cutting was within the intent of the recreation area's legislation. [29]

Like many issues in Stehekin, firewood cutting was sensitive, and Reynolds assigned Stehekin District Ranger Curt Sauer the responsibility of writing another draft plan. It was particularly important that Sauer head up the planning process, so he could work directly with Stehekin residents and hear their viewpoints. Until the new draft plan was ready, Superintendent Reynolds issued a temporary plan based, with a few modifications, on the 1972 interim plan. By no means was the planning process without conflict. Park administrators were attempting to balance resource use and preservation. Many valley residents chafed at more restrictions on their "rights" to use resources while preservationists, led by the N3C, continued to insist that wood cutting was inappropriate, and that nothing in the North Cascades Act required the Park Service to supply firewood to anyone. [30]

After a period of public review, Superintendent Reynolds adopted the new Stehekin Valley firewood management plan on September 2, 1987. Reynolds chose the Park Service's preferred alternative: firewood was to be cut in a sustained yield woodlot system, managed on an eighty year rotation. This would allow for an initial annual limit of 150 cords decreasing to an annual limit of 120 cords by 1992. Afterwards, the sustained annual yield would be approximately 100 cords. There were two woodlots, one south of the airfield and the other on the eastern edge of the former golf course. The woodlots embraced nearly seventy-five acres. Each year the program would be administered by park staff who would issue permits, collect fees for the permits, conduct on-site wildlife surveys, enforce regulations and woodlot post-treatment. Post-treatment required slash to be piled and burned, and native seedlings to be planted. The plan addressed other points of contention as well, noting that the agency would regulate access to prevent the expansion of primitive roads. In addition to the woodlot system, the plan identified several other sources of firewood in the valley. These included "administratively-derived wood," such as hazardous trees removed by the Park Service; naturally fallen trees; and driftwood from Lake Chelan. The policy also stipulated that residents would need to burn wood in stoves that met Washington State standards for emissions and efficiency by 1992. In this way, residents would burn less firewood and thus conserve firewood on federal land. [31]

Reynolds' decision was not popular with environmentalists. The North Cascades Conservation Council was particularly offended that the agency would allow live trees to be cut, even though evidence suggested that the health of the forest was dependent on dead and decaying trees, too. Moreover, the group stressed that no wood should be cut from federal lands. The fact that the Park Service condoned this practice suggested that the Park Service was placing the needs of Stehekin residents above those of the American public. Why should the resources of public lands benefit so few, and at what cost? How could the agency ensure that the woodlot system would not damage the natural, scenic, recreational, scientific, and cultural values of the recreation area? Superintendent Reynolds defended the Park Service's position by stating that the North Cascades Act "clearly allows the NPS to permit the utilization of renewable natural resources," such as the collection of firewood, as long as it does not "impair the values for which the area was established." The current policy, he concluded, would strike the appropriate balance called for in the enabling legislation. [32]

Members of the conservation council thought otherwise, and the firewood management policy was the key reason for the group's 1989 lawsuit against the Park Service and its
administration of the Stehekin Valley. As part of the settlement reached in 1991, the Park Service agreed to review the firewood program as part of an environmental impact statement. Specifically, the agency would consider alternative sources of wood and fuel to be used by valley residents in the future to heat their homes. In 1995, the Park Service completed its new fire management plan. The greatest difference between this and the former plan was that firewood cutting would gradually become part of the valley's forest fuel reduction program. The plan called for phasing out the practice of woodlot cutting over a two-year period while forest fuel reduction areas were established; the reduction areas would replace the woodlots as the primary source of firewood. In time, residents would gather firewood from familiar sources -- such as hazard trees, blowdown trees, trees cut as part of management projects, driftwood from Lake Chelan -- as well as new sources, such as trees removed from forest fuel reduction areas by selective manual thinning. The full transition from woodlots to selective thinning depended on the success of a long-term monitoring program. Finally, the Park Service seemed to suggest that over time the firewood supply would diminish, and that while a "renewable resource," it was not an infinite resource. In the future, residents would burn what was available and seek other sources of heat if necessary. [33]

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**Mineral resources.** In the case of firewood, the Park Service could say with certainty that trees were a renewable natural resource and their use was covered under Section 402 of the North Cascades Act. The agency could not say the same about mineral materials such as soil, sand, and stone, covered generally by Section 402(b) of the legislation. During the first decade of management, park administrators allowed valley residents to excavate these materials from federal land for their own use with little regulation; the consumption of these resources fell under the umbrella of existing historic uses mentioned in the complex's enabling legislation. Moreover, the Park Service was the largest consumer of these resources and continued to use them for administrative purposes, such as maintaining roads and trails, without claiming any adverse impacts. The agency, one could argue, created its own problem. When it paved the lower section of the Stehekin road in the early 1970s, the Park Service opened a gravel pit on Rainbow Creek and a borrow pit, and started the use of riprap instead of rounded river rock along the river to shore up the road. By using these resources, the agency did not, or could not, deny residents the right to continue to take rock, sand, and soil from federal lands for their own projects, albeit on a small scale. Officials assumed that as long as they were allowing private use that it was better to concentrate use in areas managers had already developed rather than disperse use. According to one park document, this "private use, initially allowed on a minimal scale and without an overall plan for the valley, became an accepted way of managing Lake Chelan NRA." [34]

Meanwhile, the Park Service focus changed regarding the use of natural resources, especially to more closely conform to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and to revisions in the Park Service's policies in the late 1970s which stressed greater protection of natural values in all park areas. It was around this same time that the Park Service began to tighten its regulations governing the private use of soil, gravel, and other mineral materials. In 1979, Superintendent Keith Miller decided that the Stehekin community could not remove any more topsoil, sand, or gravel from federal land until a permit system had been established. Miller was concerned especially about the excessive removal of topsoil from Park Service land by residents for their gardens and lawns. The superintendent's guidelines basically allowed the practice to continue but to be more closely monitored by the district ranger. Miller followed up with a soil borrow management plan in 1981, which contained specific guidelines for public and private use, notably the amount of dirt available on an annual basis. (Evidently, Miller believed that sand, rock, and gravel were renewable resources, since the Stehekin River's annual floods replenished supplies found along the river and in the floodplain, where many found these resources.) The plan limited
the removal of soil to the one borrow pit on federal land, and the agency did not plan to develop any others. [35] (The plan was in effect until the late 1980s.)

Miller's stand against the overuse of topsoil raised some protest from members of the Stehekin community. Roberta Pitts, president of the Stehekin Property Owners and Residents Association, suggested that the superintendent's policy ran counter to valley tradition and foisted yet another set of regulations on property owners. Miller defended his position, stating that residents could continue to use topsoil for an indefinite period. But more importantly, he declared that he did not consider soil to be "a renewable resource when one considers the hundreds of years it takes nature to develop soil. There is no way within our life times that the soil removed from the pit will be replaced." The superintendent even suggested that closing the pit might be the best solution to the issue. It was his responsibility to "assist the community in sharing a resource to a degree which would help in the development of gardens, but at the same time insuring that a resource which will not renew itself in hundreds of years, be carefully controlled and used wisely." [36]

At issue was whether or not the Park Service could legally allow residents to use mineral resources such as sand, rock, and gravel, in addition to topsoil, taken from federal land. In 1979, as part of a court agreement involving Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, the Secretary of the Interior agreed to establish regulations implementing the mineral disposal authority found in the enabling legislation of the five recreation areas, including Glen Canyon, that permitted mineral extraction. Ross Lake and Lake Chelan recreation areas were among these areas. In 1981, the secretary published the regulations and they consisted of three major elements that were applicable to Lake Chelan NRA. First, the only minerals that could be removed were solid leasables, such as sodium, and solid locatables, such as gold. Second, a lease was required to remove all minerals. And third, Lake Chelan NRA was declared an "excepted area," a designation which prohibited all mineral leasing from the federal lands within its boundaries. According to the environmental assessment carried out in support of the regulations, the government granted Lake Chelan NRA the "excepted area" status because any mineral extraction would adversely affect the area's environment and visitor experience. [37]

The Park Service interpreted the new regulations to mean that it could continue to allow residents to remove sand, gravel, and similar materials from federal land in Lake Chelan NRA for private use. Superintendent Miller based his soil borrow plan on this interpretation, and Superintendent Reynolds extended the plan in 1986. However, agency officials misunderstood the regulations. Although sand, rock, and gravel were defined as "non-leasable minerals," and therefore were not included in the new regulations, the Park Service still could not allow their removal until it had prepared a new regulation for this action, promulgated by the Interior Secretary. Topsoil, on the other hand, was neither a renewable resource nor a non-leasable mineral, and its extraction in the valley was prohibited altogether. Superintendent Reynolds informed the Stehekin community of the change in policy in 1987, stating that past practices were in violation of federal law, specifically Section 402 and the Mineral Materials Disposal Act. And until the issue was resolved the Park Service would "not be issuing any permits for the removal of sand, gravel, or stone." [38]

The change in policy created an "unexpected" disruption for many people living in Stehekin, Reynolds noted, and he vowed his staff would find an "equitable solution" as soon as possible. The superintendent asserted that the general management plan would address the issue as part of the current park planning process. Finding a solution, however, presented something of a paradox. While the Park Service had the statutory authority to permit the removal of mineral materials such as sand, rock, and gravel, a new regulation could set off even more problems than it solved. First, such a regulation could threaten the recreation area's "excepted status," and create pressure to remove leasable minerals from the area. It could be
argued that the removal of sand and gravel was like surface mining conducted in search of precious metals. Second, if promulgated, the regulation could set a precedent for the three other park areas with enabling acts similar to Lake Chelan NRA's. Finally, there was also the ongoing debate about the "renewableness" of sand and gravel, which they were in geologic terms, and thus covered under Section 402(a) of the North Cascades legislation; sand and gravel, in other words, would be treated the same as firewood. All of this served to complicate rather than simplify the situation.

Park officials found a partial solution in the Washington Park Wilderness Act of 1988. Section 206 of the act amended Section 402 (b) of Lake Chelan NRA's enabling legislation. The section clarified the authority for mineral resource use:

Within that portion of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area which is not designated as wilderness, sand, rock, and gravel may be made available for sale to residents of Stehekin for local use so long as such sale and disposal does not have significant adverse effects on the administration of the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. [39]

The legislation granted the Park Service specific authority in the recreation area over mineral resource use without a special regulation. In doing so, park managers gave up on the debate over sand and gravel being renewable and saved other recreation areas from a legal precedent. [40] After the act passed in the fall of 1988, the Park Service resumed the sale of sand, rock, and gravel to local residents from the Company Creek pit. The pit had been selected in 1981 as the main extraction site because it was located away from primary visitor areas, and because its use would relieve impacts on more sensitive sites along the Stehekin River.

The Park Service's solution did not sit well with preservation groups. The North Cascades Conservation Council included the agency's policy for mineral resources in its 1989 lawsuit, and as part of the April 1991 consent decree, park managers suspended private use of public sand, rock, and gravel. As specified in the settlement, the Park Service developed a sand, rock, and gravel plan for the recreation area that once again allowed the removal of mineral materials by Stehekin residents. The plan and its environmental assessment explored the entire range of alternatives for the use of sand, rock, and gravel for private as well as public use, since the National Park Service continued to be the principal user of these resources. The alternatives included closing the pit and importing material from outside the valley to using the pit for most administrative and private uses. In general, the most practical option was to "allow mining of sand, rock, and gravel in the valley but restrict mining to the Company Creek pit for NPS maintenance and public use and to allow private use for minor reconstruction only and to allow for importing of material from outside the valley for new construction." The idea was to confine the size of the pit's footprint and to aggressively rehabilitate "abandoned" portions of the pit. All of this would be subject to applicable laws, agency policies, and plans. The main criteria was that use of the valley's mineral resources would not adversely affect the purposes of the recreation area. Upon completion of the plan in June 1995, private use of sand, rock, and gravel resumed. [41]

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Rivers. Although the Park Service manages the rivers in North Cascades in their natural condition, two of the largest rivers have been significantly modified for human use. Dams have segmented the Skagit River into three reservoirs for the production of electricity above Newhalem, and regulate the river's flow below there. The recent settlement agreements for Seattle City Light's relicensing of the Skagit Project covered much of the mitigation for erosion, fisheries, and recreational enhancements. Still, managers needed to address
recreational use of the free-flowing Skagit. Because the dams controlled stream flows, the river was always runnable and challenging. Beginning in the late 1970s, the Skagit attracted growing numbers of kayakers, canoeists, and rafters who floated the river on their own or with commercial guides. [42]

In 1978, park officials studied the effects of river running on the Skagit's riparian zone caused by overcrowding, human waste and garbage, as well as possible impacts to the river's aesthetics; they also considered the needs of visitor safety. Managers then developed a system for monitoring use of the river through a voluntary permit system for private users and a mandatory permit system for commercial users, who were required to meet certain safety standards. Rangers also conducted daily river patrols, checking for hazards, picking up trash, and conducting safety checks of river runners. Other measures included organizing put-in and take-out parking to relieve congestion. The system appeared adequate since the number of users had leveled off since 1980, when around 3,200 visitors floated the Skagit, and by the early 1990s had leveled off at around 2,000 visitors a year. Yet a more pressing concern was the effects of recreational river running on the overwintering bald eagles along the Skagit Wild and Scenic River, downstream from Ross Lake NRA. In 1986, the Forest Service, which managed this section of the river, completed a study of the issue and concluded that more exhaustive research was needed, and thus the Park Service would develop mitigation procedures when more information became available. [43]

The Stehekin River vividly displayed human modifications mostly through erosion control measures rather than large-scale hydroelectric developments. Rising in the glaciers and snowfields above Horseshoe Basin, the Stehekin meanders through the lower valley in a wide, uneven floodplain. Over time, its course has changed with spring floods and debris dams. New channels have formed as the river abandoned old ones and carved a course along the path of least resistance. From High Bridge to where it empties into Lake Chelan, the river flows through the recreation area and a mixture of private and public lands where the natural processes of flooding and erosion threaten, and at times destroy, property and improvements such as homes, the valley road, and bridges.

Human encounters with the river have centered on protecting land and improvements. Before and after the Park Service entered Stehekin, residents and government officials altered the river's course by riprapping its banks to protect their property as well as roads and bridges from erosion. Other attempts to control the river have been through salvage logging and channelization. Residents and Park Service managers alike have mined the river at times for sand, gravel, and stone; in some instances, they wanted to direct its course and in others to collect materials for development projects. All of these actions have often had unintended consequences. Riprap to save the road or a home may have been successful, but the solution to one problem was often the source of another; riprap may have altered the river's flow away from one area, but as a result, the river threatened another area farther downstream.

The Park Service either ignored or sanctioned activities altering the river's flow for nearly twenty years. Ironically, agency managers played a large role in the river's changes because the Park Service had accepted the responsibility to protect public roads and facilities from flood damage; this meant that the agency carried out a number of riprapping and bank stabilization projects. While the agency wanted to preserve the river in as natural a state as possible, its goal was complicated by questions of ownership and multiple jurisdictions, as well as by the rights of private property owners and the river's use for recreation.

The way the Park Service treated the troubled Stehekin River Resort illustrated one aspect of its management of the Stehekin River, in particular the relationship between private and public lands. Shortly after the establishment of the park complex, the owners of the Stehekin River Resort, which was located near the mouth of the river, contacted the Park Service about
the damage to their property from severe erosion. In the past, the resort's owners had worked with the upstream landowner adjacent to the resort to protect the river bank and had planned to carry out more bank stabilization with log cribbing and riprapping, possibly with old car bodies filled with gravel. They also contemplated reopening an old river channel so they could reclaim a "considerable part of our property now in the main bed of the river." The Park Service, however, had recently purchased this property, and the resort's owners wanted the agency to consider assisting them in making these modifications. The other option they proposed was to reclassify their property, eliminating it from the private development zone, so that the government could purchase it. In either case, the Park Service would help solve their problem. [44]

The Park Service responded that it did not want direct involvement in river stabilization for private property owners. The agency simply did not have the funds, and if it assisted the resort owners then it might set a precedent for helping other owners along the river. However, park managers agreed to let the resort operators have access to the Brownfield property if they wanted to carry out the stabilization project on their own, as long as "it was reasonably compatible with the overall management of the area." [45] Instead, the owners of the Stehekin River Resort decided to sell their property to the National Park Service. District Manager George Wagner was interested in the property because the cabins would provide seasonal housing. In this way, the Park Service could protect the natural outlet to Lake Chelan from being destroyed by river stabilization work. Superintendent Lowell White thought otherwise. By acquiring the property, the agency might set a dangerous precedent of violating the private development zone, and the agency opted not to purchase the resort property.

The Park Service was trying to prevent setting two precedents and preserve the river in a mostly natural condition. The resort owners did not share these goals. One owner was caught trying to riprap the river bank on federal land on the old Brownfield property. In 1972, the resort's owners notified the Park Service that their property was in danger of being washed away by the next flood. And that the agency, as the upstream, adjacent landowner, bore some of the responsibility because it was not stabilizing the stream bank on its property and because it would not allow them to undertake any stabilization measures. The owners' most recent proposal was to have the Army Corps of Engineers, currently clearing wood debris upriver, reopen the old channel as well as place log cribbing and other materials along the river bank. The project would protect property belonging to the Park Service and resort owners. Superintendent White notified the owners that flooding and erosion were natural and that altering the river indiscriminately would have environmental consequences and destroy one of the "prime features the visitor has come to see and enjoy." Richard Jeffers, one of the resort's owners, bristled at White's letter, and insisted that this was an emergency situation and the federal government had some obligation to "preserve some little remaining private property in this area." [46]

Agency officials were assured by the regional solicitor that the Park Service was not liable for the plight of the Stehekin River Resort or similar situations. However, park managers were concerned that they would face severe local criticism if it appeared that they willfully allowed the loss of both public and private property. They viewed the situation as an opportunity to purchase more private land. In the spring of 1973, after Dan Campbell, another owner of the resort, contacted Senator Henry Jackson about the situation, the agency moved quickly to assure the resort owners that it would seek to buy their property, once it had obtained a variance to the private development zone policy, and would send engineers to devise, if possible, an environmentally sound bank stabilization project. [47]

Later that year, however, the agency's Washington office notified Senator Jackson that the Park Service would not be able to help the resort owners at this time. Again the agency
worried about precedent. Although it was perfectly legal under current conditions to purchase the resort property, other owners in the private development zone might request the agency to buy their properties as well. Certainly, park officials were willing but they had nearly reached the legislative ceiling for land purchase. Furthermore, a study of the river erosion problem concluded that the cost of stream bank maintenance for private property far exceeded available funds, and even if the funds were available, the agency could not legally spend this amount of money on private lands. It could not afford to help one landowner, and by helping one it would really need to help many. Finally, the agency continued to have concerns about the ecological damage river bank stabilization would cause. [48]

Nearly a decade later, park officials revisited the erosion issue. The situation was serious enough now that managers were willing to take some action to stabilize the embankment. But the Park Service continued to have reservations about what assistance it could provide without setting into motion a sequence of events that would be beyond their control. Contemplating an erosion control project for the Stehekin River Resort, Stehekin Ranger Noel Poe summed up the situation this way:

If we followed through with rip-rapping and opening stream channels it would be the first time that the NPS has gone to lengths to protect private property in Stehekin Valley. Are we required in a NRA to protect private property from a free flowing river? How much protection? If we start where will we stop? Did the property owners assume any responsibility when they built on the river bank? I know if we protect the S.R.R. [Stehekin River Resort] then other property owners will demand the same effort. At every bend in the river, erosion is occurring and it is threatening private property. [49]

The Park Service went so far as to draft an environmental assessment of the erosion control project, but never finalized it. Evidently, questions went unanswered about the river's hydraulics and what effect the project would have on them. Also unclear were the agency's legal obligations and authority regarding the river.

The Park Service still approached the issue of erosion with the goal of protecting the river in its natural state, and hesitated to undertake any projects, such as riprapping or salvage logging, that would unnecessarily disturb the river's flow. By the late 1980s, the agency had firmed up its policy regarding the management of the Stehekin River. The 1988 general management plan stated that the Park Service would implement erosion and flood control measures in order to protect life and health, public roads and bridges, and to repair erosion caused by human activities along the riverbank. As for flooding, the agency would allow "a minimum action to alleviate the immediate emergency flood hazard to existing development in the floodplain, with the costs of such actions paid by the landowner." What this meant specifically for the Stehekin River Resort owners, and potentially other private land owners, was that the Park Service was not going to interfere with the process of erosion on undeveloped federal lands. By law it could not build in the one hundred year flood plain, which contained a number of private and agency developments, the Stehekin River Resort among them. Any erosion control measures would constitute a form of development, and therefore any proposed projects would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In this regard, simple bank erosion affecting private land did not count as an "emergency" and any proposals to stabilize embankments would be denied. In the view of park managers, only unoccupied federal lands were being threatened by erosion, and therefore they would not recommend any erosion control action.

This policy did not necessarily release any tension between private landowners and the federal government. The Park Service maintained that it had proprietary jurisdiction over the river because it was not a navigable river and could enforce its policy. Private landowners
had some recourse, however; they could protect their property from floods by erecting riprap and manipulating the river on their own land with state permits. But often the best place to alter the river's course was on federal land. Stehekin River Resort owners continued to press this exact point, but the Park Service refused, in their eyes, to address the problem. The owners attempted to motivate the Park Service to reconsider its policy by making a special request to Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan in 1990. The request only sharpened the agency's resolve against further manipulations of the river, especially since the resort lay within the floodplain and would always be subject to threat from flooding. Control of the river through riprap in other locations, one senior agency official argued, had shown that such actions were "expensive, temporary, and do not result in any guarantee against washout." Each erosion control measure was connected to erosion at another site, either on the opposite bank or downriver on private or public land. The erosion taking place near the resort had been occurring for a long time and would continue "in spite of efforts to control it." Finally, the resort's owners had not pursued all of the options open to them. The Park Service agreed to let them complete the erosion control project on federal land at their own expense, provided they obtain the appropriate permits and complete a plan of operation. They never followed through. [50]

As with other resource issues in Stehekin, the Park Service's management of the river came under review with the lawsuit brought by the North Cascades Conservation Council in 1989. The suit contended that the agency shouldered most of the responsibility for manipulations of the Stehekin River through its authorizations and actions to riprap the river, in most cases to prevent the valley road from sliding away. As part of the settlement agreement, the agency prepared an environmental impact statement for its management of the Stehekin River, which was included in the amended general management plan of 1995. Until that time, the agency agreed to end all riprapping along the Stehekin River except in emergencies, and even then to carry out the action in a temporary fashion. The agreement did little to help the owners of the Stehekin River Resort or other private landowners seeking to conduct erosion control measures on federal land. And once the agency had completed its detailed analysis, the likelihood of the Park Service aiding the resort's owners and others like them did not change. The agency asserted that in its efforts to manage the river in its natural state, it would not manipulate the river or its tributaries, and it would not manipulate woody debris -- vital habitat for fish and other wildlife -- "except to protect public roads and bridges." The agency would allow some changes to woody debris, such as trimming limbs, to protect kayakers, canoeists, and rafters, as long as these changes met appropriate guidelines. Woody debris would not be removed in any case, and the agency would urge private landowners to leave log jams and other forms of woody debris intact. If necessary, they would take action to ensure the protection of recreation area resources. [51]

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**Wildlife.** Wildlife management concerns in the North Cascades complex tended to cluster around the various large species of mammals found, or were thought to be found, in the park: black bear, grizzly bear, wolf, deer, and mountain goat. Historically, these were the animals visitors associated with a large natural park, especially one of such wild proportions as North Cascades. Some problems arose directly out of interactions between visitors and wildlife. More often though, wildlife management issues related to inventoring, monitoring, and studying the wildlife populations and habitat, as well as hunting in the recreation areas. Park managers, however, still have only a limited understanding of the wildlife of North Cascades.

**Bears.** In general, bears have had the greatest potential for harming human life and property in national parks. In North Cascades, black bears were the greatest threat, though they only occasionally caused problems. Over the last twenty years, backcountry incidents were still rare, since bears in more remote locations tended to shy away from human contact. Most
Incidents of human-bear conflict were confined to frontcountry areas -- campgrounds in the recreation areas and the Stehekin Valley -- where food attracted black bears. As a result, they became habituated to humans, entered campsites and private property to steal food, and damaged property in the process. The 1975 bear management plan, revised in 1982, continued to guide managers in their efforts to reduce the number of human-bear conflicts, and managers attributed the reduction of incidents to the plan. In particular, improvements stemmed from better visitor education, an increase in bear-proof garbage cans in frontcountry campgrounds, the closing of camps frequented by nuisance bears, and the removal of problem bears through relocation or killing. Destroying bears has steadily declined since the 1970s. During the mid-1980s, park managers killed three bears, but as of 1994, no bears had been relocated or destroyed for three years. However, it was time to revise the bear management plan to incorporate the most recent management techniques, to improve both backcountry and frontcountry campsites to lessen the chances of attracting bears, and to expand public education and employee training about how to deal with possible human-bear encounters. [52]

**Grizzly Bears.** The most significant aspect of bear management, and in part the impetus to revise the bear management plan, was a renewed interest in grizzly bears. Although park managers suspected the presence of grizzlies in the North Cascades, they were never able to verify their suspicions beyond the occasional sighting. That changed in 1975 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service added the grizzly to the endangered species list as a threatened species in the lower forty-eight. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the listing prompted several important surveys of grizzlies in the North Cascades, which evaluated their habitat and possible reintroduction into the North Cascades. The classification also led the Washington Department of Game to list the grizzly bear as endangered throughout the state in 1981. The following year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service produced the grizzly bear recovery plan that identified the North Cascades grizzly bear ecosystem "as one of six possible recovery areas south of Canada." [53]

The park complex, along with surrounding national forests, was the centerpiece of the ecosystem. In 1983, the recovery plan was set in motion with the formation of the interagency grizzly bear committee; representatives from North Cascades National Park participated on the committee, as did specialists from the Washington Department of Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, British Columbia Wildlife Branch, and B.C. Parks. Interagency cooperation sparked more research. One study catalogued historical and recent grizzly sightings in the North Cascades ecosystem. And in 1986, the North Cascades grizzly bear working group was formed to evaluate whether the North Cascades grizzly bear ecosystem could support a viable grizzly bear population. The evaluation concluded that grizzly bears had existed historically throughout the west slope of the Cascades Mountains, including the North Cascades complex, and that the North Cascades ecosystem supported a small, widely-distributed, resident grizzly population of some ten to twenty bears. A recovery plan for the North Cascades ecosystem was expected to follow in the mid-1990s. [54]

In the meantime, however, the subject of grizzlies in the North Cascades became a politically hot topic. Even though researchers were trying to determine whether grizzlies lived in the North Cascades Range, confusion about the project's intent surfaced in nearby communities. The possible reintroduction of such a large predator generated considerable interest and fear. Some members of the public assumed that federal officials might reintroduce the bears into specially designated recovery areas like the park without consulting them. These concerns were unfounded, largely because the evaluation did not recommend such an action, and because a lack of funding jeopardized further work. [55] Finally, the controversial nature of bear recovery led to the program being placed on hold.
**Wolves.** The recovery of the gray wolf in the North Cascades, like the grizzly, generated public interest. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, wolf tracks were discovered in the Ross Lake area. In May 1990, an adult wolf was seen along the international border near Hozomeen. Park biologists reported hearing wolf pups in the area the following year, and rangers also saw two gray wolves in this same area that year. Nearly twenty years had passed since the last wolf sighting in the North Cascades. The wolf signs and sightings stirred discussion about the presence and possible recovery of wolves in the North Cascades. In recent years, under authority of the Endangered Species Act, the Park Service has teamed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a wolf reintroduction program for Yellowstone National Park. The initial release of wolves in Yellowstone took place in March 1995, and was followed with great public support as well as reservations. On the one hand, supporters touted the return of a key element of primal Yellowstone, and on the other hand, critics argued that a vicious predator was being released and would destroy local livestock with the government's consent. [56] Beginning in the early 1990s, North Cascades managers took the first steps in developing their own wolf management program. Park biologists concentrated their efforts in the upper Skagit Basin near Hozomeen, documenting wolves through howling surveys, observations, photographs, video recordings, and plaster casts of tracks. At present, it appears that wolves have "reintroduced" themselves. At least six packs have been reported in the Cascades north of Interstate 90 (Snoqualmie Pass).

**Ungulates.** The Park Service's understanding of the ungulate species in the park complex was narrow, too. Elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mule deer, and mountain goat were all known to have existed within or near the park complex at one time. Yet only a few studies were available to inform management decisions, and managers continued to promote the inventorying and monitoring of ungulates and their habitat. Habitat was especially important to the health of ungulate populations, and natural fire played a role in stimulating the growth and production of browse plants. Managers believed that reestablishing a natural fire regime through a program of prescribed burning and prescribed natural fire management was essential to their survival.

Restoring ungulates to the park complex was another aspect of management. Bighorn sheep had been proposed for possible reintroduction, but the restoration of mountain goats received more interest. Park biologists had considered reintroducing or attempting to restore the park complex's mountain goat population since the mid-1970s. Historically, biologists knew that mountain goats were commonly seen in winter months along the shores of Lake Chelan and commonly seen in the Skagit River drainage. By the 1990s, sightings were less common and their distribution and status in the park complex and surrounding lands were uncertain, leading the state to close the park complex to goat hunting. One attempt to restore goat populations in the Lake Chelan area had occurred in the early 1980s when the Washington Department of Game, in cooperation with the Chelan PUD and Forest Service, transplanted twenty-eight mountain goats from Olympic National Park to the northern shores of Lake Chelan. (The closest site to Lake Chelan NRA was near Lucerne.) Some were known to have wandered into the recreation area, but their fate was unknown. But much remained in question about the goat population within the park complex, and park staffers continued to participate in goat surveys along Lake Chelan and in the Stehekin Valley. Recent plans called for initiating a parkwide survey of mountain goats to identify their habitat, population, and distribution. Manager also expected a newly completed graduate thesis on the habitat of goats in the park to enhance their understanding of the park's goat population. [57]

**Birds.** Protection of the park complex's wild birds, comprised of some two hundred species, needed more baseline information. For years, park biologists conducted breeding bird surveys and an Audubon Christmas bird count centered around Newhalem. But the most high profile species, namely such endangered or threatened birds as the peregrine falcon, bald eagle, and spotted owl, received the most attention. Ironically, none appeared to live within the
boundaries of the park complex. Park managers knew the most about bald eagles. Although eagles were not known to nest within North Cascades, the Skagit River, below the complex's boundary, hosted the largest population of wintering bald eagles in the lower forty-eight states. A long-term monitoring program, initiated by Jonathan Bjorkland in 1981, a biological technician, determined that the wintering eagle population was stable or increasing. Long-range plans, which were tied to the Seattle City Light relicensing agreement, included further inventoring and monitoring of eagle use of the Skagit River in Ross Lake NRA below Newhalem. Other plans were carried out to create surveying and monitoring programs for spotted owls, peregrine falcons, loons, and harlequin ducks. [58]

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Forest and wildland fire management. Suppressing fires was a practice followed in all national parks until the late 1970s, when fire was officially acknowledged as having a vital role in natural processes. In the early 1970s, park staffers developed a preliminary fire management plan to ensure that naturally-caused fires would be allowed to burn, within reason, in order to enhance vegetation and wildlife habitat, and to reduce the risk of catastrophic fires. The plan indicated that natural fires, primarily from lightning, would run their course as long as they did not threaten private property and developments. All human-caused fires would be suppressed. In July 1981, an updated fire management plan was approved, expanding upon the early version. The new plan caused some problems among park staff. The plan would essentially classify the park as a natural fire area, with numerous exemptions for suppressing fires. Superintendent Keith Miller was worried that there was too much risk should a fire get out of control, whereas members of his staff contended that the park's topography had many natural barriers that made it a good area for allowing natural fires to run their course. Nevertheless, the plan was implemented. In 1982, resource specialist Dan Allen proposed a hazard fuel reduction program for the Stehekin Valley, using prescribed burns to reduce the risk of catastrophic fires. But Miller would not allow it, evidently the liability and risk being too great, and Stehekin remained in a fire suppression zone. After the sensational fires in Yellowstone in 1988, the Park Service revised its natural fire, or so-called "let it burn," policy, leading to the tightening of national policy and guidelines for the management of naturally ignited fires. The most recent fire management plan reflected these changes. The park complex was divided into two zones, the suppression zone and the prescribed natural fire zone. Although naturally occurring fires would still be allowed to burn, a number of conditions first had to be satisfied, including environmental as well as political consequences. Fire would ultimately have only a partial rather than a complete role in the park's ecosystem. [59]

The Hozomeen area and Stehekin Valley were two developed areas in the park complex where fires had been historically suppressed, and demonstrated the need for an active fire management program. The approach involved reducing forest fuel loads through mechanical means or through prescribed burning. In the Stehekin country, for example, fires had been suppressed for over a hundred years resulting in dangerous accumulations of fuel. Agency managers recognized in the late 1980s that it was time to rethink past policy. Forest uses and forest fire suppression had created unnatural conditions for the valley's late successional stage Douglas fir/ponderosa pine forest stands. The dense forest was less resistant to wildfire, and the accumulation of downed woody debris created conditions for a crown fire, which was not natural for this type of forest environment. [60]

In 1989, the park implemented a hazard fuel reduction plan for Stehekin to reduce the chances of a catastrophic fire wiping out the valley's forest, and destroying human life and property in the process. The plan initiated a prescribed burning program in the Stehekin Valley during the early 1990s. The prescribed burns successfully reduced fuel loads on the forest floor but were unsuccessful in reducing ladder fuels or the dense canopy that cause
wildfires to spread through tree crowns. The Boulder Creek fire of 1994 underscored this situation; four thousand acres burned above Stehekin, and the fire could have swept down the valley. In 1995, park resource specialists revised the fire management plan for Stehekin and combined it with the firewood management plan. Along with fire suppression and prescribed natural fires in designated areas, managers also asserted that they would employ both management-ignited prescribed burns and selective manual thinning in six forest fuel reduction areas. In doing so, managers believed they would strengthen wildland fire protection, and as a secondary measure provide firewood for Stehekin residents from thinning operations. The ultimate goal was to restore the valley's forest to as natural a condition as possible, and at the same time help resolve long-standing issues over firewood collection.

Environmental monitoring. In the 1980s, the National Park Service began monitoring several resources that may have been taken for granted in North Cascades: clean water and clean air. Concern for their protection stemmed from the mandates of environmental protection laws and concentrated use within the park. In 1974, for example, park biologists initiated water quality monitoring to measure bacteria in surface water collected near public use areas like Ross Lake Resort, Stehekin Landing docks, and a number of campgrounds in the two recreation areas. The program was curtailed after 1990. Concern also arose over the fact that even the fresh air and pure water of the park complex could be affected by the larger metropolitan area of the Puget Sound. In the Clean Air Act of 1977, as amended, Congress mandated an effort to improve or preserve air quality in national parks and wilderness areas. Under the law, the park was designated a Class I area, which allowed for little increased air pollution from any new or nearby sources. The recreation areas were designated as Class II, which allowed for minor increases in pollution from moderate, well-planned growth.

These designations gave the park administration added responsibilities and prerogatives to maintain visibility and document, and limit when possible, the direct impacts of acid precipitation. Protecting air quality, like other ecosystem management objectives, demanded that park managers cooperate with other land management and regulatory agencies in the North Cascades. Over the years, park managers have worked with the Washington Department of Ecology on air quality studies and monitoring, primarily in visibility and acid precipitation problems. Beginning in 1984, park staff carried out visibility monitoring using automatic 35 mm cameras pointed up Stetattle Creek and Ross Lake. The program was discontinued in the early 1990s, and no long-term visibility monitoring station had been erected because of limited funding. In the meantime, park resource specialists concentrated on monitoring, visually and photographically, smoke conditions from wildfires and prescribed natural burns within the park complex; they also wanted to ensure that all summer slash burning was carried out on weekdays during the summer months so visibility would be high on weekends when visitation was highest.

The park's attempts to monitor and assess potential damage from acid precipitation has been slightly better. North Cascades lies in the path of prevailing westerly winds blowing across the urban-industrial complex of the Puget Sound. Although sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions in the Puget Sound were far below the rest of the nation, the parkland's bedrock was extremely sensitive to acid precipitation because it lacked calcareous components. Acid precipitation studies were initiated in the Pacific Northwest in the late 1970s by a number of government agencies. In 1980, the Park Service engaged in its own work monitoring the acidity of rains and snow at sampling sites set up in eight locations: Sedro Woolley, Marblemount, Newhalem, Ross Dam Trailhead, Hozomeen, Stehekin, Copper Ridge, and Cascade Pass. In 1987, North Cascades was one of four parks in the Pacific Northwest nominated as a site for the National Dry Deposition Network. During the 1980s, studies were
also undertaken to measure the impact of acids in rain and snow upon lichens, vegetation, and lake chemistry. In 1984, a National Atmospheric Deposition Program National Trends Network (NADP NTN) was established at the Marblemount Ranger Stations and continues to operate to the present. The station measures about eight chemical parameters of precipitation including pH. And in 1992, Western Washington University monitored ozone concentrations at Marblemount. Although data showed that the park was within an acceptable range for air pollution, more research and monitoring were necessary to assess the long-term effects of this potential problem. Funding, again, was often only available for the short-term. [64]

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Cultural Resource Management. More than ten years after the establishment of the park complex, Park Service officials turned their attention to the protection of artifacts and structures that represented the relationship of humans to the natural environment of North Cascades. Early park managers like Roger Contor had emphasized the importance of historical research in understanding the park complex's natural as well as human history. On the one hand, biologists used historical accounts to determine the "original condition" of the North Cascades environment -- the composition and extent of its wildlife, fish, and forests, and the forces of change brought about by human activity. This kind of evidence would help them in their efforts to protect or restore the parkland's natural environment. On the other hand, research into the park's human past sometimes challenged the area's wilderness mission. The allure of the North Cascades was the range's perceived pristine quality, its reputation as an alpine fortress against human settlement and resource exploitation. Any information that would reveal otherwise might tarnish, in the eyes of some, this wilderness image. Informally, it seems this perspective colored the park's interest in cultural resources. Federal law, however, mandated that government agencies protect cultural resources under their jurisdiction. True, North Cascades was valued as a wilderness refuge, and its enabling legislation did not identify as its central mission preserving relics of the human past. However, park managers were "responsible for complying with the laws and regulations applicable to all cultural resources" in every kind of area managed by the National Park Service, "regardless of their primary mission." [65]

In the late 1970s, historians, archaeologists, and other specialists working for the Denver Service Center and under contract made initial forays into researching the park complex's human history. Among other things, they produced the park's first history study, helped interpret the Buckner Homestead in Stehekin, and inventoried some of area's historic structures for the List of Classified Structures. Despite these early efforts, the Park Service did not develop a cultural resource management program for North Cascades until the early 1980s. At that time, cultural resource professionals from the regional office in Seattle approached park management with a plan for a multi-year, interdisciplinary cultural resource inventory. The program would identify, evaluate, and protect the complex's cultural resources. The approach was similar to natural resource management's emphasis on baseline inventory, for it would enable managers to assess the past, current, and long-term condition of the park's human artifacts and structures. [66]

Beginning in 1983, the cultural resources program produced a series of studies focusing on the complex's history, cultural landscapes, archaeology, historic architecture, and museum management. By the late 1980s, park managers could draw on a number of documents to assist them in their understanding and protection of resources related to the early and recent human history of the North Cascades. Among these documents were a historic structures inventory, historic resource study, historic structures preservation guide, archaeological and ethnographic overviews, collections management plan, and cultural landscape inventories for the Golden West Lodge and Buckner Homestead in Stehekin. The documents contributed in part to a number of accomplishments in the park complex's management of cultural
resources, including the listing of many structures and sites in the National Register of Historic Places. Attention to the park's history also renewed efforts in maintaining and in some cases restoring historic buildings, especially at the Buckner Homestead in Stehekin. [67]

The park's collections also benefited from the cultural resources program. It funded the much needed cataloging of the park's collections, one of many serious backlogs throughout the park system. It also helped build a bridge between cultural and natural resources management in the sense that the collection reflected work conducted in studies ranging from biology to archaeology. Interest in the collections, in fact, assumed such importance that park officials moved the responsibility for the collection from the division of interpretation into the division of resource management in 1988. North Cascades was one of the first parks to make this change, largely because the objects within the collection were park resources and important for research. The collections program was "entering a new phase," noted Chief of Resource Management Jon Jarvis. Three seasonal museum technicians had been hired to work on cataloging, with the intent of entering them into a computer database; the park had signed a loan agreement for the Buckner property, with its array of farm machinery and tools; and a new collections storage area had been built in Marblemount, with plans for one in Stehekin. Current and anticipated field research would generate volumes of items for the collections, adding further impetus to improve the program. Park officials felt strongly enough about the collections that they attempted to add a permanent curator to the park staff. [68]

The first specialist in cultural resources to join the park staff was an archaeologist. Archaeology was one of the more entrenched disciplines in the Park Service, partly because some of the earliest legislation in preservation focused on protecting the archaeological sites of the Southwest. In addition, sites related to prehistory and more recent Native American activities in the North Cascades spoke to a time before exploitation of the range, and other places in the country, by Anglo Americans. Indians and their ancestors were part of a popular picture of original America, one that the Leopold Report endorsed, and since most native peoples, except in Alaska, had been screened out of national parks, they posed little threat to modern management interests. At a more bureaucratic level, federal law required archaeological surveys for any ground disturbance related to park developments and management decisions. For these reasons, the need for an archaeologist carried more weight than other specialists in historic preservation. [69]

The regional office in Seattle oversaw the archaeological program for a number of years. Although the Park Service hired archaeological consultants to perform archaeological surveys for compliance purposes beginning in the early 1970s, it was not until 1984 when an archaeologist would have a long-term presence in the park complex. That year, Regional Archaeologist James Thomson contracted with Washington State University to have Robert Mierendorf conduct parkwide archaeological surveys and produce the park complex's archaeological overview (People of the North Cascades), among other smaller projects. By 1989, Mierendorf had become a regional office employee stationed in the park to carry out the Ross Lake surveys and assist the park with compliance-mandated surveys. He would not become the park's permanent archaeologist until 1995 when a servicewide professionalization initiative provided base funding for his position in the park. [70]

Archaeology also made its place in North Cascades because Mierendorf's work revised past perceptions about the range. Rather than a country native peoples avoided, he discovered evidence suggesting the opposite. From the ancient trail over Cascade Pass to high elevation sites such as the one near Juanita Lake, prehistoric peoples as well as historic tribes were frequent visitors to the range. Citing Mierendorf's overview and research design, Regional Archaeologist Thomson and North Cascades Chief of Resource Management Jarvis were able
to convince City Light that one of the key issues in relicensing was the mitigation of cultural resources in the project area, primarily archaeological resources. In 1987, the Park Service and City Light entered into a memorandum of agreement, in which City Light would fund a multi-year archaeological survey undertaken by the Park Service. Mierendorf's surveys of the Skagit basin, specifically the drawdown area of Ross Lake, uncovered numerous archaeological sites, confirming that prehistoric groups had made "extensive use of the upper Skagit Valley." In essence, City Light funded the park's archaeological position until base funding became available in 1995. It also contributed to an ongoing archaeological program in Ross Lake NRA as part of the negotiated settlement for the Skagit Project's relicensing. An estimated $1.5 million was identified in the licensing agreement to support investigations and mitigation as part of a comprehensive archaeological management plan. [71]

Archaeological investigations would eventually expand to embrace the entire park complex as part of the Park Service's obligations to inventory all known cultural resources under its protection. Although most of the park complex was designated wilderness, archaeology rarely clashed with wilderness management. Archaeological sites and artifacts were obscured by vegetation, invisible in most cases to the untrained eye, and therefore their protection did not conflict with notions of a wilderness landscape unmodified by human contact. The presence of a park archaeologist allowed for close interaction with the park's interpretive staff who spread the information about the park's prehistory to the public. The presence of a park archaeologist also helped create archaeological programs in cooperation with the North Cascades Institute and the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission. Recently the park archaeologist joined the park complex's wilderness committee. [72]

Historic preservation faced a more difficult task in becoming accepted by park managers who believed that the protection of structures in the park's backcountry was in direct conflict with wilderness management. Historic preservation had assumed a higher profile in park management with the relicensing of the Skagit Project, when the Park Service became involved in the documentation and interpretation of the project's historic buildings, cultural landscapes, and engineering resources. [73] Internally, however, North Cascades managers shared the concerns of many wilderness advocates within the service who found any historic structure in wilderness as an unacceptable intrusion on their conception of wilderness as a depopulated landscape. In the late 1960s and 1970s, backcountry rangers eliminated many structures, burning trail shelters and other structures considered inappropriate for the wilderness setting. And the practice continued, although to a lesser extent, throughout the early 1980s. These practices were among the primary factors leading to the proposal by regional office cultural resource specialists to conduct multi-disciplinary cultural resource inventories and intensive training for park managers in the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. As part of this training, key park managers were persuaded that the Wilderness Act contemplated that areas with historic values could be included within designated wilderness, and under current regulations, such structures could be protected in ways consistent with the preservation of the area's wilderness character. One of the strengths of the Wilderness Act was that it could prevent developments from invading a park's backcountry. The designation of the North Cascades wilderness in 1988, for example, eliminated early agency plans for the Ruby Mountain tramway and the Roland Point road. At the same time, it did not grant blanket authority to managers who wanted to raze structures they thought diminished the park's wilderness stature, or in a very real sense, created management problems by concentrating visitors in fragile, subalpine areas. Making these decisions required a process of evaluation and public comment, which drew on the appropriate studies and satisfied the appropriate regulations for compliance with Section 106 of the historic preservation act.

By 1989, many of the park complex's historic structures were listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a designation which did not guarantee their preservation but did recognize
their association with the human history of the North Cascades. Whether a Forest Service ranger station or an abandoned mining site on a talus slope, these places were physical reminders of the past. Their presence could be appreciated more because of their association with the cultural history of an area as remote and forbidding as North Cascades. Within the last decade, then, park managers have recognized more readily that large natural areas can have a distinctive and valuable history, something that does not necessarily detract from one's understanding of their wilderness values. Some examples of this new mindset could be seen in repairs to the park's fire lookouts, the restoration of Meadow Cabin, and the maintenance of historic log buildings in the Stehekin country, including the George Miller House and the trail shelters built by Civilian Conservation Corps. Perhaps more than any other place within the park complex, Stehekin has received the most attention for historic preservation, given its standing as a historic community, the number of structures owned by the Park Service, and the fact that Lake Chelan NRA's legislation specifically mentions the area's history. Interest in adapting the Golden West Lodge for Park Service offices and the recently completed management plan for the Buckner Orchard spoke in part to this attention.

There were other events that marked the development of the park's cultural resource program. One of these was the construction of a collections facility for housing the park's collections in Marblemount as well as administrative offices for the cultural resource staff in 1993. Another was the creation of a cultural resource management specialist position in 1996. The position, filled by Jesse Kennedy, was created as part of a long-range plan to place cultural resource professionals in parks. This fit well with the Park Service's 1996 reorganization, which placed a greater emphasis on park-based specialists. Besides overseeing the park archaeologist and the newly-hired, permanent park curator, Kennedy worked to develop the park's cultural resource program. He took over the compliance issues related to federal historic preservation laws, advised park staff on cultural resource issues such as the protection of historic structures, and helped develop management plans for some of the park complex's historic buildings and landscapes, as well as project statements for the park's resource management plan. Along with the park curator, Kennedy also oversaw the management of the collections for San Juan National Historical Park. At present, the cultural resource program has grown considerably in a relatively short period of time. Through the program, the park has established strong ties outside the park regarding the cultural history of the North Cascades. On a regular basis now, park managers consult with tribal governments, especially the Skagit tribes, who have an interest in park projects. And the park's first curator not only organized the park's collections but also began collecting oral histories and records belonging to local families with ties to the history of the North Cascades. [74]
Chapter 13:
VISITOR USE, CONCESSIONS, AND DEVELOPMENTS

In the history of North Cascades, there was an inherent tension between wilderness preservation and traditional national park management. No aspect of the park complex's management revealed this tension more, perhaps, than the agency's attempts to accommodate the average visitor. During the complex's second era of management, agency officials addressed some of the more grandiose plans as well as devised new plans to meet the basic needs of visitors in a large-scale planning effort. The 1988 general management plan, spearheaded by Superintendent John Reynolds, emphasized that the visitor use pattern evident at the park's creation was well established. More than 90 percent of the parkland was considered wilderness, while the remaining non-wilderness sections of the parkland saw more than 90 percent of its visitors. The new plan also revised proposals now considered inappropriate or simply unrealistic in an age of environmental activism, and given the agency's stronger interest in maintaining the integrity of the park's ecological systems. As in the past, the plan focused primarily on the two geographic regions of the complex, the Skagit and Stehekin districts. Essential to the planning effort was the role of the Ross Lake and Lake Chelan national recreation areas as wilderness thresholds, buffer zones to the park wilderness, and the zones set aside to provide visitor services typically found within a national park. In a sense, the new planning effort would expand the wilderness threshold concept to its fullest.

In the Skagit District, one of the most evident visitor use patterns was that most of 800,000 visitors to the North Cascades traveled along Highway 20 and stayed within the highway corridor for the duration of their visit. The challenge was to convey to these visitors and all visitors, Superintendent John Reynolds believed, the meaning and value of North Cascades as a wilderness park, to make them participants in, rather than observers of, this wild landscape. [1]

The general management plan used his idea as its central theme. Certainly, there were other areas of the parkland that drew the agency's attention, especially Stehekin, but Highway 20 symbolized the challenge of managing a park for wilderness while still meeting the needs of everyday visitors. Highway 20 was the wilderness threshold of the Skagit District. Superintendent Reynolds suggested that the highway was "an interpretive and inspirational visitor enjoyment facility." It provided outstanding scenic driving opportunities, as well as access to visitor facilities -- concessions, campgrounds, existing and planned overlooks, waysides, and trails. Moreover, it was the single most important means of communicating "park values to visitors, and will be throughout the park's history." With wilderness as the park's main theme, the highway, like other national park roads, was the central means of conveying this to the motoring public. Indeed, the highway was and would be as close as many would come to experiencing the park's wilderness values. [2]

Interpretation was an integral part of relating to visitors the meaning of North Cascades and thus influenced many of the developments planned and completed along Highway 20.
Although addressed in previous management plans, interpretation received a boost in importance from the 1988 general management plan. Besides expanding on the park's interpretive themes of wilderness, natural forces, humans and the environment, the plan stressed the need for a visitor center along the highway within the park complex. The park complex's 1976 interim interpretive prospectus had suggested the need for such a facility in order for visitors to stop and learn about the park landscape through which they were traveling. And the 1988 general management plan made it one of the highest priorities for North Cascades. The visitor center, proposed for an area just west of Newhalem, would provide "an inspirational and informational introduction to the North Cascades," according to the plan, using a film and exhibits to inform visitors about the parkland's wilderness, the role of wilderness in American life, resource issues facing the park, and the full range of opportunities available in the park complex. Park planners realized that what visitors learned at the visitor center, through various forms of media, would perhaps be their closest encounter with North Cascades, their only chance to reflect on its wilderness mission and to appreciate the landscape they could not see themselves beyond the highway corridor.

Park officials believed that the new visitor center would serve several other important functions. One of these was that it would be an "ideal place to interpret Senator Jackson's contributions to the national park system and the people of the United States." In 1987, Congress dedicated North Cascades to Senator Henry M. Jackson's memory, and the law was one of the reasons for spurring on development because it specifically stated that the agency should establish sites to interpret Jackson's contributions to the establishment of North Cascades as well as to "the national park system." The North Cascades visitor center was one of several places in the park complex chosen for recognizing Jackson. Another function of the building was that it would have an education center for providing environmental and resource study programs to "large numbers of schoolchildren and adults from local communities and the Puget Sound region." [3]

In addition to introducing visitors to North Cascades, the visitor center was a key link in the agency's plans for the Highway 20 corridor. Many of these plans had been introduced in the park's 1986 development concept plan for the highway. In that plan, the Park Service pledged its support to continue its cooperation with other agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service and Washington State, "to maintain and enhance" the highway's "scenic and recreational values." Reasons for this stemmed in part from the highway's popularity. In 1984, the portion of highway crossing the Okanogan National Forest was designated the North Cascades Scenic Highway. More specifically, the development concept plan emphasized the development of new and the renovation of existing day activity sites along the highway and at Cascade Pass. The plan called for interpretive waysides to be incorporated with recreational facilities at a number of popular sites, among them the Cascade Pass trailhead, the Copper Creek take-out, the proposed Pickets overlook, the Goodell Creek campground, Newhalem, and the overlooks at Gorge Dam, Gorge Falls, and Happy Flats. [4]

One of the main ideas behind these interpretive waysides was to bring to motoring tourists and other recreationists the story of the North Cascades' natural and cultural history. Each site, in effect, would provide some elements of the story. Cascade Pass was important because there was no place to see the park's most notable features -- the Picket Range and Eldorado Peaks -- from the highway. In this regard, the pass continued to fill this void. Drivers who wanted to hike the relatively short trail to the pass from the end of the road were rewarded with views of the parkland's mountains, glaciers, and subalpine terrain at close range. Similar to past proposals, the agency planned to use a shuttle service to bring people to the trailhead, if the parking lot at the foot of the pass were filled during peak use periods. The popularity of Cascade Pass made it difficult to limit visitor use, though the notion surfaced again during Reynolds' tenure, and thus difficult to prevent damage to the area's sensitive subalpine vegetation. A compromise of sorts was that interpretive waysides at the
trailhead would relate information about the natural environment and the revegetation program. Other areas along Highway 20, namely the overlooks at Diablo and Ross lakes, would interpret the spectacular mountain scenery and efforts to protect this country, as well as the history of public power so evident in the landscape of reservoirs, dams, and company towns along the roadway. [5]

Besides developments for interpretation, the Park Service planned to construct activity sites along the highway so visitors could have a variety of experiences with the park's diverse natural resources. Superintendent Reynolds believed this approach was in keeping with what the Park Service's founding fathers, Stephen Mather and Horace Albright, wanted -- to let everyday Americans experience their national parks, to create ties between them and the natural world. The main goal of visitor use was to "encourage and help people enjoy their natural surroundings free from the distractions of mechanized equipment and imposing structures." [6]

Echoing the 1970 master plan, the 1988 plan wanted to get people out of their automobiles and into nature, even in a limited way. The plan contemplated a number of short trails for highway travelers to give them "the opportunity to enjoy and explore the variety and grandeur of the North Cascades." Some of these were a trail to Thunder View and a trail to Happy Falls. An especially important development was the Happy Flats area near the trailhead to Ross Dam. The area encompassed a wide variety of terrain and environments and offered many opportunities for visitors "to explore and better understand the unique east-to-west ecosystem transitions that occur in the North Cascades." The area was within easy walking distance of the highway and demonstrated, according to Reynolds, how roadside activities could be provided in a sensitive manner. As a rule, however, the general management plan shunned new developments; it excluded any new roads, tramways, or other major visitor facilities except the visitor center at Newhalem. In this regard, it finally put to rest many long-standing proposals, such as tramways, which had been shelved indefinitely. Unlike early park complex managers, Reynolds and others of this generation did not feel the same compelling need to provide a high vista for park visitors from Highway 20. Opportunities were available outside the park complex, they believed, primarily on national forest lands, as well as at Cascade Pass. [7]

In addition to day-time uses, the general management plan noted that Ross Lake NRA would continue to provide a "variety of overnight experiences." With the exception of Hozomeen and campsites along Ross Lake, Highway 20 was the central focus. The two concessions, the Diablo Lake and Ross Lake resorts, still served the general public, however with different rates of success. The Diablo Lake Resort had never been a successful operation and it continued to suffer financial losses throughout the 1980s; it changed ownership several times, but a great deal of the resort's success rested upon traffic from Highway 20, which never provided enough income, it seems, in the short summer season when the road was open. After the general management plan was released, the resort failed. By 1990, the resort's most recent owners listed it for sale. At this point, the concession effectively ended. In December 1991, Seattle City Light bought the facility to use for an environmental learning center, as called for in the city's negotiations with the Park Service as part of the relicensing of the Skagit River Project. On the other hand, the Ross Lake Resort, a popular floating fishing resort, continued to expand and enjoy success. [8]

For highway users seeking something more basic, the three campgrounds in the recreation area would continue to meet their needs. Campgrounds for auto tourists had been a great source of contention in the 1970s. Congressman Lloyd Meeds persistently had lobbied the Park Service to increase the drive-in facilities along the Skagit River, especially since development plans for Roland Point had been terminated. By the late 1970s, the Park Service had expanded and improved Colonial Creek and Goodell Creek campgrounds, but it was the
Newhalem Creek Campground that provided the greatest increase in camping sites. Listed as the park's top priority for development, Newhalem was opened in 1982. It was thought that after several phases of construction, it would have a capacity of some 450 sites, beginning with an initial phase of some 250 sites. It seems, however, that there were problems with funding and contractors, and when the campground opened there were approximately 120 sites available within five loops. (Later, danger from hazard trees would close several loops.) News of the campground spread slowly. It was located across the river from the highway by way of a single-lane bridge, and it rarely filled. [9]

All three campgrounds offered visitors with "distinctly different camping experiences," noted the general management plan. Goodell, on the highway-side of the Skagit, was and would remain "an intimate, small campground." Newhalem, located across the river from Goodell, was best suited for large numbers of people and diverse kinds of users -- those who wanted a traditional national park car camping experience and those who wanted something similar but with the comforts of home in their motor homes. Newhalem could also be expanded in the future to accommodate more of these types of vehicles, as well as expanded to accommodate a general increase in visitor use. Finally, Colonial Creek would remain a typical park campground for people in tents and recreational vehicles, especially those who wanted to boat on Diablo Lake. [10]

Preserving the park's wilderness character was also evident in the Park Service's plans. The agency expressed interest in studying the Stehekin River and the Skagit River and its tributaries for wild and scenic river status. The agency's plans for water-based recreation also demonstrated this focus. Boating would continue to be a viable form of recreation, but the agency would not go to great lengths to increase its use. In Lake Chelan NRA, the agency planned to move the boat-in campsites at Flick Creek to Four-Mile Creek, a more attractive and protected area. The agency also proposed building up to six more boat-in campsites at Riddle Creek. Yet Park Service officials opposed any expansion or modification of the Stehekin docks for boats or houseboats because these kinds of changes would alter the character of the Stehekin landing.

Although valued for its scenic qualities, Ross Lake differed from Lake Chelan because it was less accessible. In light of the recent High Ross decision, agency leaders decided that they would manage Ross Lake "to retain its character as the only large wild lake in the region, offering excellent opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, and fishing." Repeating the ideas of preservation groups, Park Service managers emphasized that the man-made lake had wilderness qualities; it provided a "different kind of recreational opportunity," primarily non-motorized boating and thus greater opportunities for solitude in a wild setting. By preventing new developments such as the long-promoted access road for boat launching and a marina near Ross Dam, park leaders believed they would also help protect "the unique Ross Lake fishery as a naturally reproducing recreational resource." The decision did not necessarily prohibit motorboat use of the lower end of Ross Lake, yet for practical purposes confined the use of powerboats to the northern end of the lake near Hozomeen. Boaters could reach the lake by way of the access road from Hope, British Columbia; most used the lake for fishing. At the lower end of the lake, boaters had several options. None of them was easy. Boaters could carry their canoes or kayaks down a short, steep trail to the lake from Highway 20, rent fishing boats from the Ross Lake Resort, or make arrangements with the Seattle City Light boat to carry their craft up Diablo Lake and then have it hauled up to Ross Lake by the Ross Lake Resort truck. Congressman Meeds' dream of a lake easily accessible from Highway 20 was dead. [11]

For the rest of Ross Lake NRA, the agency proposed only modest improvements. The management plan envisioned few changes for Diablo and Gorge lakes, except for improving launching ramps on both lakes. Hozomeen would retain its status as "a quiet eddy between
recreation corridors to the north and south." All management proposals would seek to ensure that it held on to its "feeling of a simpler time and place with fishing as the primary pastime." In this regard, Park Service plans called for keeping the area's facilities "semiprimitive," for boat launching and camping. Most new construction would take place on the Canadian side of the border with a new visitor center, jointly operated by the Park Service and British Columbia Parks; it would serve both visitors to the park complex and the Skagit recreation area in British Columbia. Other plans called for removing the existing amphitheater on the U.S. side because it was poorly located and moving future programs to the vicinity of the new visitor center. In addition, there would be trail construction and improvements as well as the installation of new interpretive waysides in the Hozomeen area. One proposed trail would follow the lakeshore trail linking the visitor center with the lakeside campground; another was a section of trail along the east shore of Ross Lake connecting Hozomeen with Desolation Peak and Lightning Creek.

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Environmental groups, with few exceptions, warmly welcomed the Park Service's plans for the Skagit district. The Sierra Club and North Cascades Conservation Council, along with other groups, applauded the park's decision to eliminate ill-conceived proposals for tramways and other kinds of developments for visitors to see the park landscape. While they appreciated the Park Service's intent to keep Hozomeen a "quiet eddy," preservationists asserted that plans for trails and boat services contradicted this idea. They also argued that the agency should consider more extensive restrictions on visitor use at Cascade Pass.

Preservationists reserved, however, some of their most pointed criticism for the new visitor center. In general, they wanted to hold the Park Service to earlier plans, promoted by Superintendent Reynolds, to construct a new visitor center in Marblemount. Reynolds conceived of the idea as a way to better meet the needs of visitors traveling to the park and as a possible way to better facilitate the distribution of backcountry permits and information. The advantage of Marblemount was that it was located on the highway before the road to Cascade Pass, and in this way park managers could greet more visitors. In addition to providing better public service, a visitor center in Marblemount would strengthen the community, and "avoid taking additional lands from the NRA for development, especially in the valuable riparian zone." [12]

These and other comments by preservationists pointed up a larger issue about visitor use at North Cascades: the fact that there was the need at all for a visitor center. Past management statements had emphasized the need for only minor facilities, yet the new general management plan was calling for a major structure as the focal point for North Cascades. Contrary to what critics like the North Cascades Conservation Council contended, the new visitor center was not "conceptually inappropriate" in a park whose natural features lacked a central focus, noted agency officials. To the contrary, the facility visitor center would help give North Cascades a sense of identity. It was a major national park without an entrance station or grand entry arch signaling to visitors their transition into a special landscape. [13]

Besides defending the purpose of the visitor center, park managers defended the site selection for the facility. The North Cascades Conservation Council felt strongly that the visitor center should have been located outside of the park complex, in particular to contact east-bound visitors before they passed the Cascade River Road. The agency's decision irritated council members who saw the bureau returning to its old ways of giving greater priority to tourism development than resource protection.

The Park Service based its decision to locate the visitor center near Newhalem for several reasons. First, the agency determined that contrary to earlier proposals it needed a visitor
center within the boundaries of the park complex. Even though an early version of the Washington Park Wilderness Bill contained the authority for purchasing land for a visitor center outside the park boundaries, this language was marked out in the bill's final version. In part, the reason, agency leaders noted, was that it was too expensive to buy land outside the boundaries and there would be no way to control land use around the new facility, jeopardizing the visitor experience should commercial or residential growth expand around the center.

Second, the motivation behind the site selection stemmed in part from the 1987 dedication of the park to Henry Jackson. (The official dedication ceremony took place on September 6, 1988.) The visitor center was part of the first proposal for a Jackson memorial project, which included memorials at new interpretive sites and facilities at the Diablo and Ross Lake overlooks, Happy Flats, and Stehekin. Secretary of the Interior Don Hodel and his staff championed the cause of the visitor center to honor Jackson. Although a career Republican, Hodel believed that Senator Jackson, a Democrat, had deeply influenced his career. He inserted the visitor center into the president's budget request and sold it to Congress. In this context, the ideal place to interpret Jackson's role in the park's creation was within the park itself. [14]

Third, the Washington State Highway Department had long-range plans potentially to reroute Highway 20 around Marblemount, bypassing the proposed visitor center. Fourth, placing the visitor center outside the boundaries would not have served westbound visitors who, by the time they reached Marblemount or another location west of the park, would have missed the opportunity to receive information about the area altogether. And finally, locating the visitor center east of the Cascade River Road would not be the inconvenience it was once thought; most people who used the road were going on day hikes or backcountry trips, and the backcountry center at Marblemount would continue as a contact point for these users. [15]

Park Service officials were also forced to justify their selection of the Newhalem site for environmental reasons. There were concerns that the new facility might adversely affect bald eagles on the Skagit River with an increase in traffic, the possible loss of roosting sites in the site's old growth stands, and the possible construction of a two-lane bridge. Park Service environmental assessments concluded that the new facility and potential developments would not harm salmon spawning activities. The visitor center site was a considerable distance uphill from the river and would not impact salmon spawning. In addition, park studies, drawing on more than a decade of bald eagle surveys, determined that the proposed visitor center location was not a roosting site for bald eagles. [16]

Environmental concerns influenced the Park Service's selection of the Newhalem site in other ways as well. Initially, planners had selected the Goodell Creek Valley for the visitor center. Evidently, the area selected was in the vicinity of what was then known as the Goodell Creek Viewpoint, near today's group campground. (The visitor center team had also considered a site just downstream from the Goodell Creek Campground, on the river side of the highway and a site just west of the Ross Lake overlook.) Agency leaders favored the site because it was large, away from competing interests, easily accessed from the highway, and offered a good view of the Pickets. Upon closer evaluation, they realized that the new facility would be within or dangerously close to the Goodell Creek floodplain and the creek would require significant manipulation to protect the facility. There were also concerns that if Seattle City Light built the Copper Creek Dam, an unlikely prospect, it would essentially make the visitor center "lakeshore property" at full pool and at drawdown make it an overlook of a mudflat. The highway would have to be relocated, affecting access to the site, and more importantly, the relocation of power lines north of the proposed visitor center would invade the view of the Pickets. [17]
The alternative site was a glacial bench behind the Newhalem Campground, and its attributes far outweighed those of Goodell Creek. Newhalem had an excellent view of the Pickets, good access from Highway 20, and it was a large, flat area. Moreover, it was out of the flood plain and would not be threatened by Copper Creek Dam. There were some problems but for the most part were considered minor. The one-lane bridge would need to be replaced eventually by a two-lane bridge to handle larger volumes of visitors. The area was also on a north-facing slope and would receive little light in winter. Finally, the visitor center would be out of the way slightly. The entrance road first took visitors to the campground and then southwest to the new facility. In September 1988, a park planning team surveyed the two sites, and after hearing all the options, Regional Director Charles Odegaard decided to change the location of the visitor center from Goodell Creek to the Newhalem site. [18]

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As part of the Henry M. Jackson memorial project, the visitor center and related developments were intended to be completed at a relatively quick pace. The legislation dedicating the park to the late Senator Jackson had strong political support; it authorized the Secretary of the Interior to oversee the memorial project, and Jackson's family, friends, and the foundation established in his name were particularly influential in pressing for the project, aiding in the design, and securing funding. But the Park Service experienced some problems in completing the developments. The trouble mostly stemmed from, it seems, the accelerated rate of design and construction in order to use the available funds in time. There were also cost overruns. Original estimates for the visitor center and adjacent environmental learning center were approximately $4 million; other rough estimates placed the cost of the Stehekin and Diablo sites at $60,000, and the cost of Happy Flats at $450,000. The entire memorial project would cost approximately $4.5 million. By early 1989, the Stehekin and Diablo sites were finished for the most part and within their budgets. The other elements of the memorial project, however, were not as successful. "Additional site and engineering studies," the Park Service reported, showed that Happy Flats would cost nearly $300,000 more than originally estimated, and the visitor center complex nearly $3 million more, "excluding the new bridge," bringing the adjusted estimate to approximately $6.8 million. [19]

When the Park Service began construction of the visitor center in 1990, there was only enough funding for the visitor center building, restroom, parking lot (120 spaces), and general site developments. But there was not enough funding for the design and construction of the exhibits for the visitor center, new bridge, additional parking spaces, environmental learning center, and Happy Flats Overlook. Over time, it seems, North Cascades managers were forced to use park operating funds to complete the visitor center's exhibits, other developments for the new facility, and projects for the Jackson memorial. The one exception was the environmental learning center, which would be funded by Seattle City Light as part of its relicensing agreement with the Park Service, and located at the former Diablo Lake Resort. Even so, the construction of the visitor center itself was plagued with problems; the contractor evidently failed to comply with the appropriate design specifications identified in the contract, and park maintenance personnel had to spend considerable amounts of time overseeing the project and settling disputes. These troubles increased the cost of the visitor center. When it was finally completed in 1993, the building's construction bill hovered near its original estimate of $4 million, without the environmental learning center. A year later, the Park Service settled a claim with the contractor for an additional $2 million for uncompensated work, and paid nearly half a million dollars to replace the visitor center's leaking aluminum roof with a copper roof. [20]

On May 30, 1993, the North Cascades Visitor Center was officially dedicated in a ceremony attended by Park Service leaders, Helen Jackson, Washington State's congressional delegation, and representatives of the Skagit River Tribes. Opening day of the visitor center
also featured the debut of the park's slide program, "A Meditation on Wilderness," and even though the facility's displays were incomplete, the program focused visitors on what park managers had long wanted to interpret: the wilderness values of North Cascades. Within several years of the North Cascades Visitor Center's dedication, its popularity grew as news of the facility spread and highway signing was improved. In 1995, more than 73,000 visitors had stopped at the center, an increase of some 80 percent from its first season. Park officials were, as a result, planning the replacement of the Newhalem bridge with a two-lane structure. By this time as well, the center's exhibits were in place, and park managers turned their attention to designing and constructing more trails in the vicinity of the visitor center. Visitors consistently wanted to hike or take a nature walk in the area. Two trails of note emerged from this work. In 1994, park staff completed the Sterling Munro Trail, a boardwalk to a viewpoint of the Pickets, in honor of Henry Jackson's trusted assistant. The following year, the River Loop Trail, a short nature trail from the campground to the river, was completed. [21]

Conveying the park's wilderness message to visitors of diverse backgrounds, who were primarily bound to autos, influenced the agency's planning efforts and the type of facilities it constructed. The visitor center represented one of the tradeoffs necessary to manage the park as a wilderness stronghold yet supply traditional national park services at the same time. The visitor center's location and design particularly suited North Cascades, and complemented information provided to visitors at other satellite offices, where visitors entered the park complex. Among them, the Field's Point facility on Lake Chelan, jointly operated and developed with the U.S. Forest Service, stood out. Dedicated in June 1991, it was a self-service center, with exhibits conceived and designed by the Park Service, providing visitors with information about the history of the country they were passing through, between Field's Point and Stehekin on Lake Chelan. [22] Moreover, the completion of the visitor center at Newhalem was important because it accomplished what park leaders like Superintendent Reynolds had envisioned for North Cascades. It also came at a time when most other proposed developments in the Skagit District awaited, or were in some way connected with, Seattle City Light's relicensing of the Skagit Project, which was not final until 1996.

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In the Stehekin District, the general management plan addressed how the Park Service would develop the Stehekin Valley for the visitor experience as well as the agency's administration of the area. Relying on a number of more specific development concept plans, it outlined current and future management actions for visitor information and services, overnight accommodations, and transportation. As with many management proposals for Stehekin, these were controversial, but they tended to be overshadowed by the always factious topics of natural resource use and land protection.

The release of the draft general management plan in 1987 along with the land protection plan for the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (NRA) further intensified the controversy associated with the management of the Stehekin Valley. Valley residents viewed the documents as the agency's attempts to further limit growth and restrict individual rights. Environmental groups thought the plans did not limit growth and protect the area's resources enough, and in 1989, the North Cascades Conservation Council sued the Park Service for not complying with the National Environmental Policy Act; the agency's plans did not take into account the cumulative impacts of their actions. Even though the conservation council's outrage over the Park Service's firewood management program triggered the lawsuit, the legal action brought all of the agency's plans to a halt. In 1991, the parties signed a consent decree, a settlement in which the Park Service agreed to produce a comprehensive environmental impact statement examining the environmental consequences of its plans for land protection, natural resource use and protection, and other management practices in Lake
The final general management plan, with accompanying environmental impact statement, was released in June 1995, and fulfilled the Park Service's obligations under the consent decree. The recent plan altered significantly some earlier management proposals for natural resources, such as firewood collection, and clarified the use of sand, rock, and gravel. In another respect, the new document illustrated further that Lake Chelan NRA, with its centerpiece of the Stehekin Valley, was more complicated than the rest of the park complex. It now had its own, multi-volume general management plan to prove it, while the rest of the parkland operated under the slim document produced in 1988. Nevertheless, both the past and recent management plans paid close attention to the area's management for visitor use, and the most consistent theme was that the recreation area served as the gateway to the wilderness park beyond.

Although the idea of the recreation area as a wilderness threshold, valued for its rustic and isolated qualities, was first set down in the complex's original master plan, the new planning efforts revised some earlier proposals now deemed inappropriate for this setting. Gone were the "wilderness threshold hostels" envisioned on the east side of the valley. Gone as well were the hostel-type accommodations, store, and food services clustered around Bridge Creek, and major campground expansion for Cottonwood. Gone also was the emphasis that the landing be strictly a day-use area. More importantly, however, the management plans attempted to answer long-time issues surrounding developments in the Stehekin Valley for visitor use. As in the past, these centered on what was considered appropriate for a national recreation area, and the often debated true meaning of Stehekin.

In general, the development proposals were relatively benign. They demonstrated the Park Service's desire to rectify past problems, such as adding employee housing in appropriate areas, away from the Stehekin River's flood zone and out of other hazardous areas. The agency also would seek to restore the natural conditions of the shoreline at the head of Lake Chelan, institute user fees for solid waste disposal, erect a new maintenance facility near the airstrip, out of the floodplain, and once more remove derelict cars from the valley.

The landing figured prominently in the agency's plans. The idea was to retain the peaceful atmosphere at the head of Lake Chelan, and the vibrant community activities associated with the arrival of the boat (with its cargo of mail and supplies). The emphasis was not on expanding developments for visitor services but on renovating existing facilities and making the operations at the landing more efficient. The intent was to ensure that visitors, many of whom stayed only part of the day, could orient themselves to their surroundings, find information, transportation, food, and lodging so they could experience the recreation area's range of scenic and recreational opportunities. The landing's development concept plan proposed redesigning the area, in part, by improving circulation patterns through the installation of signs and walkways to direct disembarking passengers to the lodge, Golden West visitor center, nearby shops, and existing trails. The plan also noted that there would be improvements to the landing's road system, in particular a one-way section of loop road, better parking, and a reconfiguration of moorage and marina services to accommodate recreational and commercial activities. Lodging facilities would also be upgraded and possibly expanded, and the Purple Point Campground and overflow campground would be retained and improved. Other proposals called for making modest changes to existing structures and the possibility of constructing new buildings.

The Golden West Visitor Center played a key role in the Park Service's vision for the landing. The Golden West Lodge, the visitor center's historic name, would be rehabilitated to serve as both the Park Service's administrative headquarters and visitor center. As a visitor center, the lodge would introduce visitors to the recreation area, informing them of its history.
and natural surroundings, through a variety of media. The building's rustic character was essential to conveying the historical ambience of the Stehekin Valley as an "outpost community," and therefore would be preserved in its original condition as much as possible. The grounds around the lodge would also be restored to recapture the historic scene from early this century in hopes that visitors would relax and enjoy the view of the lake and mountains.

The Park Service's attention to the historic character of the lodge set the tone for the management of other historic structures. Any renovations or new developments would have to comply with the overall character of the landing during its historic period, according to the 1995 general management plan. Furthermore, agency plans affirmed the importance of preserving the Buckner homestead and orchard, and the integral part the Buckner property played in relating to visitors the valley's history. Much, however, remained to be accomplished in the way of cataloging, maintaining, and using farm equipment and other materials, as well as interpreting the area to the public. Similarly, plans also pointed out the necessity of preserving and rehabilitating the High Bridge Historic District.

In other instances, though, plans for the valley continued to be contentious. One long-standing issue was the Park Service's management of the valley's roads. From the beginning, the agency considered the Stehekin Valley Road as a motor nature trail, an essential means for visitors to see the valley and retreat into the Stehekin country's wild landscape. The 1988 general management plan continued this theme. It stated that the road would be "maintained at its current length, width, and character." In other words, it would be kept open from the landing to its terminus at Cottonwood. The road would gradually progress from a two-lane, paved road from the landing to Harlequin Bridge, to a gravel road from there, until above Bridge Creek where it narrowed and became a primitive road, still safe for vehicles at slow speeds. The idea was to "increase the visitor's perception of penetrating more deeply into wilderness, leaving modern America behind. Because of the narrowness and roughness of the road surface, speeds will be kept very low (between 5 and 25 mph) to allow travelers to relax and study their surroundings. The low speeds will also allow wildlife and horses to safely use the road." [25] As a general rule, there would be no public use of vehicles above High Bridge; only Park Service shuttle buses would be allowed beyond this point.

The Stehekin Valley Road provided a familiar national park experience to most visitors, and at the same time fulfilled the Park Service's desire to impress upon visitors their gradual entrance into a wilderness parkland. But not all parties were in agreement on the subject. Preservation groups continued to object to the agency's decision to keep the entire road open. They argued that the road should end at Park Creek to reduce the cost of maintaining the upper road which washed out on a regular basis. Nature wanted to reclaim the road, and it was time to let it. In this way, the road from Park Creek to Cottonwood would revert to a trail and expand opportunities for visitors to experience wilderness.

The North Cascades Conservation Council, in particular, was outraged over the agency's numerous bank stabilization projects to protect the road and its bridges from sliding into the Stehekin River. The conservation council thus included the Park Service's management of the road in its lawsuit against the agency in 1989. The lawsuit and negotiated settlement forced the Park Service to suspend any significant modifications to the road, until it had produced the necessary environmental studies. Meanwhile, new problems arose that further complicated the situation. In 1990, the Stehekin River flood caused serious damage to sections of the valley road, as well as other park roads, but the flood came at a crucial point in the Park Service's negotiations with the conservation council. And while immediate repairs were allowed, more extensive repairs, especially the washout of the road at 8-Mile, were stymied by the legal action. The conservation council considered repairs to this section of road a significant action because they required substantial amounts of gravel and rock for
riprap, the use of other local natural resource, and alteration of the river's course. Thus, the agency delayed the project until well after the consent decree was issued; otherwise it would have risked reaching an out-of-court settlement and violating the consent decree.

Further complicating the issue, Chelan County renewed its attempts to regain ownership of the Stehekin Valley Road. In 1990, the county tried to claim the first nine and half miles, including the disputed section of road at 8-Mile. In June 1993, the Park Service won its lawsuit against the county and retained ownership of the valley road. Afterwards, park managers were able to implement a short-term solution to the erosion problem, by constructing rock barbs along the river bank to deflect and slow the river's current, and by revegetating the river bank to prevent further erosion. [26]

In the 1995 general management plan, the Park Service deviated little from its past management of the valley road. Based on extensive public review, the agency decided to keep the road open to Cottonwood, making the gradual transition from country lane to primitive road. The plan differed slightly from the 1988 general management plan. Rather than limit paving at Harlequin Bridge, the Park Service now intended to pave the road (single lane) to Nine-Mile, evidently to maintain the road surface better and reduce dust over this well-traveled section. From Nine-Mile to High Bridge, the road would remain single-lane and gravel. Besides minor improvements for drainage, road surfacing, and turnouts, the plan noted that private vehicle use beyond High Bridge would be regulated, primarily because of the poor road conditions, and only the public shuttle, hikers, horses, and bicycles would be allowed to use the road above Bridge Creek when the shuttle was in operation. Finally, the agency intended to support its plan for regulating traffic on this upper section of road by maintaining it to accommodate heavy-duty, high clearance vehicles.

In November 1995, several months after the general management plan was approved, the worst recorded flood in Stehekin's history occurred, putting the new plan to a test. The Eight-Mile section of road withstood the flooding, but the upper road did not fare so well. Above Bridge Creek, the road near Carwash Falls was washed out and other sections were damaged; the Stehekin River changed course below Cottonwood and was now running down the roadbed. The flood damage caused the Park Service to close the road between Bridge Creek and Cottonwood. As an interim measure, park managers built a trail over the damaged sections and opened the upper section of road for use as a trail. These recent events stimulated more discussions about closing the upper road and permanently converting it to a trail. The Park Service, however, decided that it would repair the road, citing the general management plan. Such a decision, noted Superintendent William Paleck, was "the product of a thoughtful and deliberate decision making process." The plan guided the agency's decision to repair the road and made it defensible, despite its expense. As outlined in the plan, the agency set out to repair the road to "heavy-duty, high clearance" vehicle standards, first near Carwash Falls. But the agency recognized its limits. It could not reroute the upper road because it was constrained by the wilderness area's boundaries, and thus would wait for the river to change course before it repaired the section of washout near Cottonwood. [27]

The valley road was a magnet for other issues, especially the protection of the Stehekin River in its natural state and the erosion of private property. The new plan nevertheless addressed what the Park Service intended for all roads in the Stehekin Valley. The agency would maintain the Stehekin Valley Road and protect it from erosion only as a final measure. It would also maintain the Company Creek Road in a similar fashion; the road's maintenance had been the subject of some dispute for years between residents and the Park Service. Moreover, the Park Service determined that it would maintain all other public roads as well, such as existing gravel roads to Rainbow Falls, the Buckner Orchard, and the airport. Any materials for major road or bridge improvements would be barged in from downlake, while materials for routine maintenance would come from the valley's gravel pit. The agency would
also provide snow removal on the valley road up to Nine-Mile.

A related and controversial subject over the years was how visitors, as well as residents, moved around the valley. Both the 1988 and 1995 general management plans proposed the construction of a new, eleven-mile trail from the landing to High Bridge, parallel to the road, giving hikers and horseback riders views of the river and lake whenever possible. The 1995 plan added some other trails; it recommended a trail system linking key scenic sites and features in the lower valley, and a new trail from the Castle area to the river trail (which connected Weaver Point with Harlequin Bridge). The more recent plan also encouraged the use of bicycles and other forms of nonmotorized transportation on the valley's roads but not on pedestrian trails.

The most popular means of travel in the valley was by automobile, and the shuttle system was the major source of transportation during the summer season. In the late 1970s, the Park Service had taken over the shuttle bus service from a concessioner, believing it could operate the system more efficiently. The shuttle bus was primarily a way for visitors who arrived by boat or by hiking over Cascade Pass to see the Stehekin Valley and reach points of interests, trailheads for backcountry trips, or residential areas. The shuttle service also reduced the amount of traffic on the valley road, enabled the agency to control access above High Bridge, and provided the opportunity for interpretation. At the same time, park managers authorized private tours of the valley, in particular those connected with a resort like the Stehekin Valley Ranch. In the new management plan, agency managers contemplated turning over some or all of the operation of the shuttle bus system to the private sector, apparently in an attempt to reduce costs.

The most contentious transportation issue, however, continued to be the use of the valley airstrip. Environmental groups strongly opposed the continued use of the Stehekin airstrip. According to the North Cascades Conservation Council, the airstrip was "the worst scenic scar in the entire" park complex, and its use had increased throughout the 1980s. The council, along with other preservationists, not only opposed the airstrip as a visual blight on the landscape and the inappropriate invasion of the valley's solitude by small aircraft, but also the maintenance of the clearing -- the trimming of trees and brush in the flight path -- and the invasion of exotic weeds in the landing field. Council members strongly urged the Park Service to cancel the state's permit for use of the field and naturalize the landing strip. Meanwhile, some valley residents, pilots associations, members of the Chelan City Council, and the Washington State Division of Aeronautics (successor to the Aeronautics Commission) voiced their interest in keeping the airstrip open. [28]

Overall, the controversy surrounding use of the airstrip hinged on either side proving its case. The issue came to a head in 1984, the year after a small plane crashed attempting to land killing several people. Afterwards, the field was temporarily closed because of hazardous approach conditions. Moreover, the state's special use permit would expire in 1985 (authorized in 1977), and opponents of the airstrip were renewing their efforts to have it closed. While Park Service leaders agreed to allow minimal maintenance, they contended that the airfield was an emergency airstrip and that it was more a luxury than a necessity in the national recreation area, and it should at some point be closed. The Division of Aeronautics, however, contended the opposite. The airfield was a "state airport" open for public use, and was of vital necessity for emergency landings, search and rescues, as well as recreational use. Closing the airfield was not an option, according to the state. In fact, the airport was one of the "major resources and facilities for protecting the Lake Chelan Recreation Area," noted one state official. There were three general original reasons for the airport and they were still valid for keeping the airfield open. First, the airport was necessary for "rapid air access" aside from the limitations of float planes; second, it was needed as an emergency facility for airplanes in distress; and third, it was valuable because it provided air access for property
The issue appeared to be deadlocked. Neither side was willing to budge easily. Rather than issue a long-term special use permit to the state for its operation of the airfield, the Park Service issued a renewable, annual permit, and decided that the propriety of continuing the airstrip would be addressed as part of the park complex's general management plan. Superintendent John Reynolds wanted the airstrip closed. His view of the airstrip, as with past park managers, was that this was an emergency airstrip that was not used for emergencies. Some property owners flew into the valley; others camped by the airfield. Furthermore, the airstrip was "visually inappropriate" and current trends in use of the airfield indicated that traffic would increase for recreational and private use, creating "an intolerable situation for the Service." [30]

But in preparing the 1988 general management plan, Reynolds and other agency officials decided after public review to retain the airstrip but in a limited capacity. The airstrip would be retained "in its present condition as an emergency landing strip unless it is declared unsafe by either the Federal Aviation Committee or the Washington Department of Aeronautics." In addition, the Park Service declared its preference to close the airfield in the future, especially if there were problems with air safety and the valley's airspace became overcrowded, and it was determined that the airfield ran counter to the recreation area's purpose. The agency also would not encourage recreational use of the strip, would not allow clearing limits to be expanded, and would require, under permit, that Washington State maintain the airfield. [31]

By the late 1980s, it appeared that the Park Service and the state had agreed to disagree. The state most likely did not approve of the language in the general management plan which referred to the airstrip as an emergency landing strip, and thus not necessarily available for recreational use. Even so, it agreed to a new special use permit. The 1989 lawsuit filed by the North Cascades Conservation Council forced the Park Service to revisit its decision about keeping the airstrip open. Superintendent Paleck wanted to close the airstrip, but noted that the Park Service had testified during hearings on the Washington Park Wilderness Bill that it would keep the airstrip open as along as the state wanted it. Hence, the language in the 1995 general management plan, while more specific, was similar in content to the early document. The agency's intent was to place the focus on the state, make it accountable and liable for the use of the airstrip and proper maintenance as approved by the Park Service, and ultimately make the state responsible for the airfield's closure.

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Visitor services in Stehekin have been a great source of concern for park managers since the complex's creation. Even though park officials liked to play up the "outpost" character of Stehekin, they still felt obligated to provide visitors with a range of services to enhance their experience. The Park Service's goal had changed little over time in this area; it wanted to rely as much as possible on community-based businesses for food, lodging, and other services. In the past, agency leaders had absorbed criticism for unfairly controlling free enterprise with its concession contracts, especially at the landing. The most recent occurred in the mid-1980s when the owner of the Honey Bear Bakery was issued a citation for selling baked goods at the landing when the boat was in. And it was likely that friction between private businesses and licensed concessionaires would continue. Nevertheless, by this time, the Park Service believed that there were a number of adequate services available at the landing and throughout the valley to accommodate visitors, ranging from day trips to overnight stays to extended vacations and backcountry trips.

Most services were clustered at the landing. The North Cascades Lodge was the largest business; it offered cabins, motel rooms, a restaurant, grocery and gift store, marina, fuel, and
boat rentals. It also offered bus tours of the lower Stehekin Valley, bicycle rentals, car rentals, and a taxi service. It remained open during the winter season as well, but on a more limited scale. Several other small businesses occupied cabins at the landing and were quite successful. These were the House That Jack Built, a local crafts store opened in the late 1970s; the Stehekin Photo Shop, which opened in 1980, selling cards and camera supplies; and the McGregor Mountain Outdoor Supply, which opened in 1984, offering a range of backpacking equipment and hiking supplies. Up the valley there were several successful businesses located on private land. Two of note were the Honey Bear Bakery and the Stehekin Valley Ranch, which offered guests a restaurant, tent cabins, and a variety of outdoor recreation services, from hunting to horse riding. In addition, visitors to the valley could find overnight accommodations in housekeeping cabins and small bed and breakfasts. There were also float trips offered by one company on the Stehekin River, guided horse trips by another, as well as scenic floatplane flights available at the landing.

The most worrisome business for the Park Service continued to be the North Cascades Lodge. The Park Service owns the facility and leases it under a contract to the concessioner. The business has experienced its share of troubles, leading to poor visitor service and financial losses for the operator, Gary Gibson, who took over from Robert Byrd in 1978. (Shortly thereafter Gibson bought out his partner, Randall Dinwiddie.) Gibson engaged in several business ventures that seemed destined to make the lodge a viable business. In 1983, for example, Gibson and some partners formed Lake Chelan Recreation, Inc. The business then purchased the Lake Chelan Boat Company and consolidated the boat company with Chelan Airways and the North Cascades Lodge. Gibson and his partners renovated the lodge and grounds, with Park Service assistance, and added new services, such as canoe and moped rentals. After considerable promotion of the lodge, the business saw its profits increase by 1983. The lodge's operation, however, was unsteady and conflicts arose between Gibson and Park Service officials. Members of the Stehekin community wanted the concession broken up into several separate businesses. In 1986, the concession was sold to Steve Gibson (Gary's brother) and management was changed, but the lodge was retained as a single operation. [32]

Under new management, the lodge's service improved, but old problems, it seems, continued to plague the business. These problems generally concerned the business's inability to offer reasonably priced services -- meals, grocery items, and rooms -- and maintain the lodge facilities. Some of the problems lay in the fact that business could not turn enough profit. The Park Service may have contributed to this situation because it wanted the lodge to provide winter services, a marginal operation. The agency considered selling the lodge building to solve the problem, but then decided to retain ownership and work with the concession owner to improve his business' efficiency and quality control. Part of the solution called for the Park Service to expand some of the lodging facilities (add more units to the motel or housekeeping cabins) so the concession owner could improve his profit margin. This effort was guided by a development concept plan for the landing and carried through in the most recent general management plan. [33]

In 1994, a new concession owner took over North Cascades Lodge, now known as the North Cascades Stehekin Lodge. The previous owner's contract had expired and it was not renewed. The Park Service anticipated a good working relationship with the new owner, Jack Raines. As part of the concession contract, Raines and his associates made considerable repairs to the lodge buildings as well as renovations and landscaping of the lodge grounds. The owner also hired local residents for his management and staff positions, and provided service year-round. One service offered by the lodge was groomed ski trails and transportation for guests to the trails. To ensure that capital improvements continued, the Park Service and lodge owner collaborated on ways to fund this work using special accounts for franchise and building use fees. (One fee was the marina user fee.) The Park Service also funded some of the projects. The concession, though apparently on better financial footing, faced rising operating costs.

Interpretation. Although interpretation was a key factor in the Park Service's planning and development for visitor use, the park complex's interpretive program was still in its developmental stages in the late 1970s. One of the central park programs in conveying the meaning of the North Cascades' wilderness values to the public, interpretation had yet to fully blossom. Certainly, many aspects of the complex's program were in place, ranging from evening programs to self-guided nature walks. But a number of the facilities -- waysides, overlooks, and a visitor center -- were not yet in place. The early emphasis on Roland Point and the Ruby Mountain tram for interpretation was partly responsible for the lack of developments for interpretation. When these projects were delayed and later canceled, it forced agency managers to redirect their efforts, in particular to Highway 20, and it took time for the new developments to materialize.

Interpretation also suffered somewhat from a general lack of sophistication and organization. An interpretive analysis in 1977 concluded that the park complex's interpreters were enthusiastic and dedicated but short on practical experience and training. The information disseminated to the public was not easy to find at the various information centers outside the park complex, and left the average visitor, it seemed, thinking that the North Cascades complex was a rather bewildering place. Even park staffers expressed these views in passing, intimating that they did not necessarily know what was happening in other parts of the complex. The report concluded that these shortcomings typified the growing pains of a young park and program. To correct these deficiencies, the park administration needed to dedicate more funding and devote more time to interpretation. Above all, the program warranted a chief of interpretation, rather than the current staff specialist, to oversee the program and district operations.

In part, this analysis illustrated the general decline in Park Service interpretation during the 1970s, and by the early 1980s, park managers were making strides to advance the interpretive program. Waysides were installed along Highway 20, in particular at the Diablo Overlook, providing a major turnout and site for visitor education, as well as other locations in the complex, such as at Cascade Pass. Interpreters continued with and added to established activities, including evening programs at Colonial Campground and Golden West Lodge, environmental learning programs for children, talks on the Stehekin shuttle bus, and contact with visitors at information centers. In Stehekin, two new nature trails were developed, the Imus Creek and Rainbow Mist trails; park managers decided against adding a spur trail to the Rainbow Mist Trail because it would have been environmentally damaging. The Park Service also began working with the Stehekin School to interpret the history of Stehekin, and began operating a joint information center with the Forest Service in Chelan. At Hozomeen, the amphitheater was relocated closer to the campgrounds to serve more people. Other activities involved interpreters giving short walks and talks at the Diablo Overlook, the Newhalem Campground, and Cascade Pass.

Besides adding new activities, park managers ended others that were unsuccessful. The most notable was the Concrete Information Center. The information center opened in 1974 with the idea that it would serve not only highway travelers but also visitors traveling the Skagit Steam Railway. (Hence, the center's "depot" design.) To serve the railroad, the information center had been established on the northern side of the highway, making it difficult for motorists heading into the park complex to stop. The railroad, however, only operated for one season and the center's visitation plummeted, leading to its closure in 1985. Its services were then transferred to the Marblemount Ranger Station. At the same time, the Park Service opened a joint information center with the Forest Service at the park headquarters in Sedro...
Woolley. Located on Highway 20, the headquarters was a popular stopping point for visitors.

The mid-1980s marked a watershed in the development of the park complex's interpretive program. Completed in 1985, a study identified visitor use patterns and behaviors in the park complex. The visitor use study may have offered few surprises to park managers; it suggested that the majority of visitors traveled by car through the complex over Highway 20 and that few ventured far from their cars. The study was important, however, in the planning effort underway for the new general management plan. It helped support the need for further interpretive developments along the highway corridor and the Cascade River Road. Perhaps the most significant event was the formation of a separate division of interpretation during the park complex's administrative reorganization. The new organization, as envisioned by Superintendent Reynolds and his staff, separated resource management and interpretation into their own divisions with division heads. For the first time, interpretation operated out of a division with its own chief, William Laitner, who oversaw the park complex's interpretive programs in the two districts. The program, it seems, was poised to expand to its fullest.

Superintendent Reynolds offered some examples of the ways in which interpretation should grow in his 1985 statement on park management, "North Cascades 20: Direction to the Future." A visitor center along Highway 20 within the park topped the list. He also stressed the importance of improving interpretation through the use of video programs of the northern Cascades, enhancing the quality of the visitor information centers both in content and interpreter skills, creating a wider variety of publications, and expanding visitor education.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, a period characterized in the park's history by a flurry of planning and development, the park's interpretive program fulfilled many of Reynolds' recommendations. In 1986, the North Cascades Institute formed, modeled after the Yosemite Institute, dedicated to research and education on the North Cascades. The following year, the park's first handbook was published and was popular with visitors. The park complex's newsletter, the "Challenger," first published in 1975, was jointly published with the Forest Service and back in print in 1988 after going unpublished for a time. In 1990, the Mountain School was started through the North Cascades Institute to teach school children about the natural environment, and a year later, the Park Service dedicated the Field's Point Information Center, which it operated with the Forest Service, on Lake Chelan. These different aspects of the park complex's interpretive program demonstrated the varied ways in which the park was growing and conveying the central theme of North Cascades, its wilderness values.

The most significant advance in interpretation -- conveying the wilderness ideal to park visitors -- came with the development of the North Cascades Visitor Center and the Henry M. Jackson Memorial. When the visitor center opened in 1993, the Park Service proudly debuted the center piece of its interpretive program, a sophisticated slide show entitled "A Meditation on Wilderness." In a conceptual sense, the slide show, with its incredible images of the North Cascades environment, provided the element missing from the visit of ordinary people, those for whom planners at one time had envisioned ascending Ruby Mountain by tram. In the slide program, visitors could see the North Cascades and its diverse resources, and carry these images with them as they traveled through the complex. But the slide show's sound track and narration troubled many visitors, for the slide show presented different cultural views of wilderness throughout time. The result was a program that seemed at once to convey traditional Western views of nature and "new age" principles. It expressed ideas of nature from an ecological perspective, emphasizing cycles and renewal, and incorporated spiritual metaphors and insights from Native American cultures, Eastern philosophy, and American nature writers. A steady stream of letters from visitors reached the desk of Superintendent William Paleck and other Park Service leaders, a good many complaining...
about the "new age" religious overtones. Most visitors who considered themselves Christians were offended by this impression; some took their young children out of the theater before the program ended, and others simply asked for the sound to be turned off. Still others complained directly to the director of the National Park Service and Senator Slade Gorton wondering why tax dollars were being spent on such an unconventional program with its "new age" subliminal message. [41]

Park Service leaders knew from the outset that the show was unconventional. At minimum, the slide show challenged people's assumptions about nature and wilderness. In defense of the slide program, developed by the Harpers Ferry Center with assistance from park staff, Superintendent Paleck emphasized that it was intended to show the diversity of the park, give viewers a glimpse of places they would otherwise never see, relate some of the emotional reactions to wilderness, and convey some of the ideas about nature and wild places held by different cultures. Moreover, the Park Service was not trying to advocate any religion but to prompt people to assess how they thought and felt about wilderness. In short, the slide presentation was intended to suggest that "different people have seen and experienced nature and wilderness in different ways." In fact, the agency had received enough letters complimenting the program from people with different world views to convince it to keep the program operating. Nevertheless, the Park Service developed a video program, "Return to Wildness," and debuted it in 1997. Although the show was for some time, it was offered as an alternative to "A Meditation on Wilderness." For all its emphasis on relating the wilderness values of the North Cascades to park visitors, the Park Service realized that wilderness meant different things to different people, and that there was more than one way to convey the park's meaning as a wilderness preserve to people who would never venture into the backcountry. [42]

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Maintenance. Typically, maintenance -- from repairing and constructing backcountry trails and structures to the development of other facilities in frontcountry areas such as campgrounds and bathrooms -- has cast a wide net. Although maintenance is a diverse program, represented in a number of areas of park management, it can best be characterized as a test of endurance: endurance to withstand nature reclaiming roads and trails, and endurance to coordinate a program in the park's imposing geography. Over the years, the pattern of the program has shown a more sophisticated approach to improving the condition of the park's facilities as well as continuing to respond to annual floods and other natural disasters that claim park roads, buildings, and bridges.

In the 1980s, the highlights were as diverse as they were telling of the program's range of involvement in the park's administration. By 1981, for example, park crews had completed the Chilliwack River cable crossing to protect hikers attempting to traverse this wild river. Around this same time, park officials became involved in the controversy over the location of the Pacific Crest Trail through North Cascades. They opposed the routing of the trail from national forest lands -- the Okanogan to the east and the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie to the west -- over Maple Pass. Park managers worried that the trail (and the foot traffic it would attract) would cause too much damage to the area's sensitive subalpine vegetation. In 1982, the issue was resolved when the Pacific Crest Trail Advisory Council agreed to not designate the trail as the mainline of the Pacific Crest Trail but instead as a wayside trail. By the mid-1980s, park maintenance crews were assisting San Juan National Historical Park and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve with maintenance projects. They were also participating in, or overseeing, the construction of a new trail bridge for Thunder Creek, a new floating boat house for Diablo Lake, replacing the Bridge Creek Bridge on the Stehekin Valley Road, reclaiming the Thornton Creek Road cut, and initiating the first stage of restoration of the Meadow Cabin. [43]
By 1989, park maintenance managers were describing the program as varied and complex. The park contained over 384 miles of trail, two recreation areas, boating facilities, as well as frontcountry and backcountry projects. Coordination could be a "nightmare," one official observed. That year's highlights alone attested to this fact. Park crews completed the construction of a boat-in camp on Ross Lake, constructed a boat launch at Hozomeen, participated in the rehabilitation of backcountry camps, completed the restoration of Meadow Cabin, and built a trail at Ebey's Landing. But managers expressed concerns over the most costly and continuous problems: the flood prone Stehekin, Company Creek, and Cascade Pass roads. By the spring of 1990, floods had claimed a major section of the Cascade River Road and the following November, two floods in Skagit and Chelan counties caused them to be declared disaster areas by the federal government. The park received federal disaster funds for repairing these roads, but the emergency repairs were time consuming and competed with other planned projects, such the reconstruction and relocation of trails in the park's backcountry to comply with wilderness management principles. Maintenance, according to park reports, continued to be a nightmare.

In the early 1990s, however, park reports described the maintenance program differently. It was no longer the nightmare it once had been. A new system of long-range planning was in place. The trails program, for example, had a data base for inventorying and monitoring the conditions of the park's trails and thus prioritizing their maintenance. Overall, the maintenance program was being operated under a system that would, at least in theory, prioritize projects to keep up with the park complex's growth as well as its emergencies. In addition to "routine maintenance," some of the more recent projects included the design and construction of the floating boathouse and ranger station at Ross Dam, repairs to the park's four historic lookouts as well as the rehabilitation of other historic structures, construction of the curatorial facility at Marblemount, and oversight of the completion of the North Cascades Visitor Center. [44]
Chapter 14:
WILDERNESS DESIGNATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Park Service made little headway on wilderness designation for North Cascades until the early 1980s. In part, the number of park wilderness proposals before Congress swamped the process, while at the park level the status of mining claims and the issue of High Ross Dam stymied wilderness planning. In 1984, however, the situation began to change. Washington's congressional delegation successfully passed legislation establishing wilderness on the state's national forests, prompting interest in something similar for Washington's national parks. More importantly, once wilderness advocates learned that the High Ross controversy had been resolved that year, they renewed their interest in designating wilderness for North Cascades as well as Olympic and Mount Rainier. Groups like the North Cascades Conservation Council had been reluctant to pursue wilderness legislation for North Cascades until High Ross was settled, primarily because the project would have eliminated any chance to protect the Big Beaver Valley as wilderness.

Park managers recognized the shift in public attitudes and updated the park complex's wilderness plan to reflect recent changes in 1984. Since the 1970s, agency officials had continued to revise the complex's wilderness recommendations, adding lands formerly slated for developments and other uses but deemed inappropriate for current wilderness management practices. Over the years, for example, managers had eliminated plans for numerous backcountry hostels, an access road to Roland Point, a corridor for a tramway up Arctic Creek, and the management buffer along the wilderness boundary. Managers also added to the proposed wilderness by closing spur roads and acquiring mining claims. At the same time, they classified other lands in the Big Beaver Valley and Thunder Creek drainage, as well as patented mining claims, as potential wilderness additions. "Potential wilderness" referred to lands not owned by the federal government but which it planned to acquire, or lands owned by the government on which there was a nonwilderness use that the Park Service anticipated eliminating. Both the Big Beaver and Thunder Creek areas were ineligible for wilderness because they were still largely within the project area for Seattle City Light and needed to remain free for possible power development in the future. If the project's boundaries were revised, these potential additions would be administratively converted to wilderness. By 1988, the wilderness revisions included the corridor for the tramway up Ruby Mountain among other things, bringing the total acreage to approximately 634,600 acres of designated wilderness and some 5,200 acres of potential wilderness -- nearly 120,000 acres more than the original proposal. [1]

This latest proposal became part of the Washington Park Wilderness Bill introduced on March 15, 1988, by Washington Senator Daniel Evans. The legislation (supported by Senator Brock Adams) proposed designating more than 1.7 million acres wilderness within Olympic, Mount Rainier, and the North Cascades complex. Congressman Rod Chandler (along with Congressman Al Swift and John Miller) introduced an identical companion bill in the House of Representatives. The bill was politically popular. Besides fulfilling the mandate of the 1964 Wilderness Act, the legislation represented the "first attempt to designate wilderness in...
national parks on a statewide basis," noted Evans. In doing so, "we can...ensure the permanent protection of one of the Nation's most treasured assets -- its national parks." The bill derived its importance from the long-term affects on the parks. "All of Washington's parks were established and are managed as wilderness parks," the senator observed. "We want the national parks in Washington to remain wilderness parks," and this bill "would prevent development from encroaching further into the wilderness areas of the parks," thereby ensuring that these parks would be managed for their "original purposes." [2] 

The Washington Park Wilderness Act passed virtually unopposed and was signed into law on November 16, 1988. In general, the wilderness legislation for North Cascades was similar to earlier agency proposals with some notable exceptions. First, the wilderness would be named as a tribute to the agency's first director, Stephen Mather, for his contributions to the National Park Service. Superintendent John Reynolds came up with the idea after a conversation with former director Horace Albright. For all of Mather's work, he had not been formally recognized in the designation of any area in the park system, and the remote and isolated wilderness of the North Cascades, Reynolds believed, lent itself well to honoring Mather's legacy. [3] Second, park managers had drawn the boundaries to eliminate a host of potential threats to the park from small hydroelectric projects. The new boundaries embraced the headwaters of several proposed projects, terminating them while not infringing on the authority of the Federal Energy Regulatory Agency (FERC) over such projects in the park complex as prescribed in the North Cascades Act. [4]

Third, the legislation contained several amendments to clarify the park's authority under its enabling legislation. One revision limited FERC's authority over hydroelectric projects to existing and proposed elements of those projects within the complex's recreation areas. Two other revisions specified the use of natural and renewable natural resources within the recreation areas. One provision eliminated mining and mineral leasing in the recreation areas, except for the leasing of rock, sand, and gravel to Stehekin residents in Lake Chelan NRA as long as there was no adverse effects on the recreation area's administration. The other provision authorized the use or disposal of renewable natural resources in the recreation areas, primarily in the form of firewood in Stehekin and the removal of trees within power line rights-of-way in Ross Lake NRA. The legislation stated that such use was only authorized as long as it was compatible with the purposes of the recreation areas. Resource use was also subject to statutory authorities pertaining to the administration of the park system and other statutory authorities governing the conservation and management of natural resources under federal control. In short, agency officials, who maintained that an array of laws and policies applied to the management of the recreation areas, now had unequivocal proof.

These revisions to the North Cascades Act were considered among the most significant by park management. While they did not necessarily erase all of the park complex's problematic issues, they did clarify some long-disputed interpretations of, and vague provisions in, the park act. The legislation also cleaned up some outdated plans for tramways and other developments by drawing the wilderness boundaries to include the sites for these facilities. In this regard, the legislation forced the Park Service to limit future expansion and to abide by a wilderness mandate. The weight of the amendments was felt outside of the park complex, too. The provision covering minerals, for example, averted the need for a separate statute governing the use of mineral resources in the recreation areas; otherwise, a precedent could have been set affecting other recreation areas in the park system with similar language about mineral use in their legislation. [5]

Although the wilderness legislation accomplished a great deal from the perspective of the complex's administration, environmental groups thought that the wilderness legislation did not go far enough, and in some instances reinforced rather than revised management
problems. The North Cascades Conservation Council, the main voice of opposition, objected to a number of provisions, many of which reflected their own vision of the true purpose of the North Cascades complex. The council did not like the use of Stephen Mather's name for the wilderness because people might mistakenly associate it with the Mather Memorial Parkway in Mount Rainier National Park. The council strongly believed that the wilderness boundaries should include Big Beaver Valley and Thunder Creek, as well as other areas slated for future expansion by City Light. The designation of Big Beaver and Thunder Creek as potential wilderness did not accord these areas the recognition and protection they deserved, especially in light of the international treaty resolving High Ross. The Park Service drew the wilderness boundaries at an elevation of 1,725 feet around the lake to allow for the raising of Ross Lake with High Ross, as identified in the treaty. The agency defended its decision by noting that once the treaty expired in 2066 these areas would be administratively added to wilderness. To the council, the agency's decision smacked of political expediency instead of displaying the backbone to protect properly the last vestiges of primitive America. The council viewed allowances for other proposed projects, such as the Copper Creek Dam, in a similar light. [6]

The council voiced other objections to the Park Service's wilderness boundaries. It believed that rather than having the wilderness boundaries two hundred feet from Highway 20 and other park roads, as established by the Park Service, the boundaries should be one hundred feet from the center line, leaving a buffer of fifty feet on either side. Council members also wanted to have the wilderness boundaries cross Park Creek, thereby closing the Stehekin Road at this point, leaving only trail access above there to Cottonwood. The conservation council reasoned that the upper Stehekin Valley could return to its wilderness state and at the same time save the government money because it would no longer have to rebuild this section of road which suffered numerous washouts. Moreover, the recommendation reflected N3C's continuing attempts to include the Cascade River Valley and the scenic section of Highway 20 in Granite Creek within the park. [7]

On other matters, the council found the Park Service's provisions for the international boundary objectionable, noting that the cleared swath along the border was a visual blight and incompatible with a wilderness experience. The wilderness legislation allowed clearing to continue when council members believed that Congress should have used this opportunity to revise clear-cutting practices in wilderness areas and national parks along the boundary. Finally, the agency's revisions to the North Cascades Act covering the use of natural resources in the recreation areas were anathema to the meaning of the park complex; rather than protecting natural resources, the agency was promoting their use. The revisions were administrative "house cleaning" and the agency's way of "shirking responsibility to protect land under its stewardship," the council concluded. [8]

For the most part, these complaints went unaddressed in the final legislation, primarily because the provisions were based on agency policy, because agency managers had the support of the state's congressional delegation, and because many of the proposals would require extensive public review. There were some exceptions. The final legislation omitted plans for a backcountry information center along the highway in Marblemount. Superintendent Reynolds lobbied for the relocation of the backcountry information center from the Marblemount Ranger Station, a mile off the highway, because it was "inconvenient to visitors." The main reason behind Reynolds' plan was the recent approval for the construction of the Newhalem Visitor Center. The long-awaited visitor center would be too far east of the junction of Highway 20 and the road to Cascade Pass to efficiently register backcountry users. [9] In the end, the backcountry information center remained at the ranger station.

Environmental groups were not the only ones to voice their concerns about the wilderness
Some Stehekin residents interpreted the wilderness bill as still another means to shrink the valley community, restrict its way of life further, and possibly eliminate it altogether. The Stehekin Community Council complained that the wilderness boundaries were too close to the valley floor, even though the entire valley floor had been excluded from wilderness. Specifically, the council worried that having designated wilderness so close to Stehekin would create unnecessary conflicts between the two areas -- one managed for pristine nature, the other as an active community in a recreation area. Stehekin, the council predicted, would be treated as an external "impact" on the wilderness area and be subjected to even "tighter governmental controls" by the Park Service in order to protect wilderness values. The community council lobbied for Lake Chelan NRA to be removed from the wilderness legislation, stating that the recreation area was not suitable for wilderness. The Park Service, however, disagreed. Superintendent Reynolds noted that Stehekin residents had nothing to be worried about; wilderness designation would not change existing backcountry uses or community use of natural resources. The boundaries recognized the range of the existing community and possible expansion. Moreover, wilderness designation would help protect the Stehekin way of life in the long term, providing it one more layer of administrative protection from outside influences. [10]

In addition, Stehekin would not serve as a wilderness transition zone and be subject to more regulations. Congress had addressed this issue in other wilderness legislation; the proximity of wilderness boundaries to a highway or community were not intended to get rid of either one. Reynolds cited Yosemite Valley as "an ideal parallel to the Stehekin Valley." The two areas had similar topography and similar wilderness boundaries drawn several hundred feet above the valley floors, which in essence teamed with visitors, park facilities, and concessions. When Yosemite's wilderness was established in 1984, there was "no intent by the NPS or Congress to use the location of the wilderness boundary as a way to eliminate the Yosemite Valley community," noted Reynolds, just as there was no intent to eliminate the Stehekin Valley community with the wilderness proposal for North Cascades. [11]

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The Stephen Mather Wilderness was created nearly twenty years to the day after the establishment of North Cascades. Superintendent John Earnst noted that the legislation gave official recognition to the "wilderness values of the North Cascades," and "strengthens our commitment to long-term preservation of the wilderness character and resources" of the newly designated wilderness. [12] Interestingly, managers viewed the designation as a major change that would largely go unnoticed by most park visitors. Backcountry managers, in short, anticipated little revision in how they had been managing the North Cascades backcountry. Now the program, which was built around regulated use and rehabilitation of damaged terrain, would have the strength of law rather than administrative policy behind it. More importantly, wilderness was given greater credibility as the main management theme of the park complex. Wilderness covered more than 90 percent of the park and adjacent recreation areas. During his reorganization of the park complex's administration in the late 1980s, Superintendent Reynolds had established the wilderness district to acknowledge the administrative importance of wilderness. Reynolds arrived at this decision in part after hiking the trails in the park complex and realizing that backcountry standards differed between the Skagit and Stehekin districts. The standards in the Skagit District were higher, and he wanted to raise the Stehekin District's to the level established by William Lester and Craig Holmquist, then backcountry ranger and trails foreman for the Skagit District, respectively. Reynolds wanted their vision of wilderness management and trail maintenance to become the norm for the entire park complex. Around this same time, the park formed a wilderness committee composed of representatives from all divisions who coordinated wilderness-related activities, reviewed flight requests and minimum tool concerns, and advised the superintendent about wilderness issues. In this way, wilderness management would continue
to intersect with nearly all facets of the park complex's management. [13]

In the late 1980s, Backcountry Area Ranger William (Bill) Lester and Chief of Resource Management Jonathan Jarvis summarized the wilderness management program as "a comprehensive effort to respond to past and present impacts. In order "to apply and refine existing techniques," park managers had developed "a multifaceted wilderness management program" consisting of four major components. The first was education. Park staffers educated visitors about climbing safety and minimum impact techniques primarily through the information center at Marblemount and frequent backcountry and climbing patrols, all of which markedly reduced accidents while climbing activity increased, and at the same time reduced impacts to the fragile subalpine country while increasing the park's credibility with the public. The second component was the application of the "Limits of Acceptable Change" (LAC). North Cascades was the first park in the system to adopt this system of impact monitoring in 1989. It incorporated existing practices as well as new ones as a management tool; it consisted of site monitoring, backcountry permits, party size limitations, and campsite designation. The third aspect of the wilderness program was human waste management through the use of a waste reduction and composting system. The final part of the program was one of the most essential -- the revegetation of damaged sites. [14]

The wilderness management program had its origins in Superintendent Roger Contor's efforts to repair denuded subalpine passes and instill respect for the need to avoid other forms of human-caused damage, such as social trails, uncontrolled camping, and campfire use. By the late 1980s and 1990s, the result was a regulated wilderness experience. The mandatory permit system helped disperse visitors, shifted camping away from sensitive and damaged areas, and promoted minimum impact camping techniques. In short, wilderness users were required to use established camps if they were traveling in the backcountry by trail, thereby concentrating use in selected areas and leaving most of the wild country undisturbed. More than three hundred miles of trails provided access to the park complex's wilderness and some two hundred designated camps, hardened to absorb use, aided in this process. Fires were only permitted where park managers had installed fire grates, generally below 3,500 feet, and no fires were allowed in cross-country areas since fire damage in these areas lasted so long. Backcountry visitors, from hiker to mountain climber, could expect contact with a ranger, instructions on appropriate wilderness camping techniques and the purpose of these techniques; they could expect to use pit or composting toilets, and to keep to a schedule. These and other prescriptive measures were part of the North Cascades wilderness experience. [15]

Although controlling wilderness use might seem antithetical to a true wilderness experience, wilderness managers recognized that in the backcountry, as in any national park area, protecting the resource while ensuring present and future generations the opportunity for a wilderness experience was the central goal. From an administrative perspective, it was essential that the backcountry operation remain flexible enough to address shifting priorities. The park's organization placed all functions having a direct effect on backcountry management under the supervision of the backcountry area ranger, or today's wilderness district ranger. Among these operations were backcountry information, patrols, revegetation and monitoring. Cooperation with other divisions was important as well, particularly with trails maintenance. Maintaining trails was critical to resource protection and visitor experiences in the backcountry, and to this end both divisions worked successfully to meet their common goals.

Lester and Jarvis viewed the wilderness management program at North Cascades as successful. "With continued hard work and innovation, the outlook for the wilderness backcountry of the North Cascades is bright," they wrote. Visitation had increased by 100 percent since in the twenty years since the park's establishment, yet the "backcountry...is less
impacted today and will see continued improvement in the future. Future generations will find in North Cascades an unimpaired wilderness legacy." [16]

Understanding the wilderness management program would be incomplete without understanding the role played by Bill Lester. It happens in the course of a national park's administration that one individual, often with the assistance of others, comes to be associated with a particular program. To be sure, backcountry protection began and was in place before Lester arrived at the park in 1978, but under his direction for fourteen years, wilderness management developed into its current form. Lester's influence touched the entire program, but his attention to several aspects of wilderness management were especially important.

Shortly after he arrived, Lester changed the tours of backcountry rangers. Prior to his arrival, seasonal and permanent backcountry staff were assigned to different areas of the park complex, the idea being that they would gain a broader knowledge of the backcountry. Lester saw this practice as inefficient and in 1979 began assigning rangers to territories. Each ranger would be responsible for areas centered around locations such as Cascade Pass, Whatcom Pass, Copper Ridge, or Junction Camp, where they would have a semi-permanent campsite. The change meant that rangers would have lighter loads during trips to the outside, and lighter loads for trips back in, freeing up space in packs for more food. Finally, rangers would become more intimately acquainted with one area of the wilderness, better serving the public and the resource. [17] Education was an important element in wilderness protection. Information on low-impact camping, the permit system, and ranger patrols proved effective in curbing damage to backcountry areas inflicted by hikers and stock users, but reaching climbers with the message was lagging, Lester believed. Climbers frequented the North Cascades in rapidly growing numbers beginning in the 1970s, and they tended to use fragile alpine areas for base camps, creating problems with human waste and damaging sensitive vegetation. Safety was another issue. To address the problem, Lester formed a climbing team who would be available to consult with climbers in the information office but who would also make contacts with climbers in popular areas. Moreover, all seasonal backcountry staff were trained in climbing techniques during orientation. Climbing rangers had both the skill and knowledge to gain the respect of alpinists who visited the North Cascades and to relate the park's interest in their safety and respect of fragile terrain. [18]

Lester engaged in other ways to inform the public. When funding was available only for the design but not the construction of displays on minimum impact camping, vegetation restoration, and safety for the backcountry information office, he designed and built them himself for a fraction of the estimated cost. He also taught Boy Scout leaders about modern wilderness ethics, summed up in the phrase "touch the wilderness gently," now standard in the park's education program. And in an effort to reach a larger audience, Lester helped start the North Cascades Institute in 1986. The non-profit institute, supported by the Park Service, had as its central theme environmental education with a wilderness related theme for all ages. The institute was particularly important to Superintendent Reynolds, who believed that the "most effective way to pass on an understanding of the value of parks was through education programs, especially those geared toward schools where not only kids could learn, but so could teachers." Forming the institute was one of Reynolds' first proposals after he arrived at the park complex. At it turned out, Saul Wiesberg and Tom Fleishner (two co-founders of the institute) had proposed something similar a few years earlier to Superintendent Keith Miller, who turned them down. Out of this relationship, and the assistance of park staffers like Margie Allen, the institute became a reality. [19]

Human waste presented one of the most urgent problems facing wilderness managers, especially in many subalpine areas of the park. As backcountry use increased in the 1970s and 1980s, the concentration of human waste posed health, aesthetic, and natural resource problems. Old pit toilets at subalpine camps could not handle the volume of waste;
decomposition was slow and new pits were needed. But in the shallow and rocky soil of most subalpine areas, surface water could easily be contaminated with human waste, and there was not enough space to dig new holes. One solution, used before 1981, was to install, and later fly out, fiberglass vault toilets. This method increased helicopter use in the wilderness and came at a high price. To reduce the use of helicopters and to save money, Lester and others developed a composting toilet using peat moss in the early 1980s. The system worked well but it was not perfect, because it reduced rather than decomposed the waste. It also required a strong staff commitment to maintain them. By the late 1990s, backcountry staff and others were working to improve the design using fiberglass in the construction of the new composter toilets. Some of these new fiberglass toilets recently have been installed in the backcountry. [20]

Besides composting toilets, Bill Lester made perhaps his greatest contribution to the park's revegetation program. One of the strongest themes in the history of wilderness management has been healing damaged terrain in order to restore the environment to as near its natural condition as possible. By the late 1970s, the revegetation program was making progress, in particular at Cascade Pass and some popular camping areas in forested zones. Lester infused the program with new energy and direction; he expanded the program by finding enterprising, innovative, and efficient ways to keep the program growing on a limited budget. In many ways, Lester's involvement was personal as well as professional. His wife, Kathy, for example, volunteered to take over managing the plant propagation at Marblemount. And in 1980, without park funding, Lester designed and constructed a greenhouse, using volunteer labor and scrounged materials, to grow plants on the Marblemount compound. [21]

In a few years, through trial and error, the new facility germinated plants from seeds and produced four times the number of plants that had been transplanted at Cascade Pass in the past ten years. With the construction of the greenhouse, the park's revegetation program began to focus more on the off-site propagation of plants from seed rather than natural revegetation in closed areas using cuttings from plants. By 1987, some 55,000 plants had been grown at Marblemount and transplanted at Cascade Pass, and by the 1990s, it was estimated that 100,000 subalpine plants had been successfully transplanted, healing denuded areas like Cascade Pass, Monogram Lake, Whatcom Pass, Park Creek Pass, 10-mile Camp, and other damaged sites. Lester helped promote this transformation from denuded sites to living meadows by soliciting contracts to grow plants for other agencies and parks; he set up a donation fund and formed partnerships with a number of local environmental groups such as the Mountaineers and Washington Native Plant Society. The Student Conservation Association (SCA) and later the Young Adult Conservation Association (YACC) played special roles as partners in preservation, providing numerous resource assistants and tens of thousands of hours of labor to the revegetation program and wilderness program in general. The resource assistants were considered full members of the park staff and were key members of the park's revegetation crew; more than thirty went on to become Park Service employees. [22]

Lester's work did not go unnoticed. In 1985, Superintendent John Reynolds lauded Lester for his "creativity, persistence, [and] commitment to the resources of this park, and in 1987, the North Cascades staff nominated him for the Stephen T. Mather Award, given annually by the National Parks and Conservation Association. Bill Lester's efforts, however, would not have been so successful without the support of dedicated park employees and volunteers, who helped contribute to North Cascades' reputation as a leader in restoring damaged wild lands. Joe and Margaret Miller were key players in developing that reputation. Their work spanned more than twenty-five years and influenced the rehabilitation of lands not only in North Cascades but also in parks and forests throughout the Pacific Northwest. In the early 1990s, park managers constructed a new greenhouse in Marblemount, one larger and more modern than the facility built by Bill Lester. On Memorial Day in 1993, Superintendent William

Paleck dedicated the greenhouse to the Millers and made them honorary rangers in recognition of their long and valuable service to the Park Service. [23]

By the 1990s, the wilderness program was a management model. In 1994, Director Roger Kennedy presented North Cascades with the Outstanding Wilderness Management Award at the sixth national wilderness conference. Nevertheless, program leaders continued to "apply and refine" proven management techniques. The permit system, a cornerstone of the program, was computerized in 1990 and based at the Wilderness Information Center at Marblemount, making the permit system more efficient as called for by a former backcountry ranger. Wilderness managers periodically changed the way they distributed permits. In 1976, they dropped the reservation system and issued permits only on a first-come, first-served basis. Revisiting the idea in 1990, managers experimented with a limited backcountry campsite reservation system, but ended the practice after the 1994 season because it demanded too much staff time, and only a small number of people with reservations ended up following through with permits. The program also continued to emphasize education as one of the most important elements in wilderness preservation through a wide variety of publications and displays. [24]

Wilderness managers revised other practices as well. They attempted to reduce the use of helicopters in the backcountry. In the late 1970s, some managers viewed the use of helicopters as an effective means of carrying out backcountry operations, especially as an alternative to using pack stock which, it was believed, damaged sensitive subalpine terrain and created greater maintenance problems for trails. In the 1990s, modern wilderness managers viewed helicopters as expensive and often intrusive and developed a system to evaluate each non-emergency flight request and to control the periods in which helicopters could fly. At this juncture, managers decided to increase and expand their use of pack stock in order to reduce helicopter use, albeit with some restrictions on where pack animals were allowed. [25]
Chapter 15:
THE PARK AND THE BORDERLAND

The 49th parallel separates the United States and Canada. Like most borders, it represents political rather than geographic realities, including the management of national parks. Two large American national parks lie along the border, North Cascades being one, Glacier the other. The protection of nature in these parks does not stop at the border, but nature protection is subject to matters of international diplomacy, different -- and sometimes similar -- world views and cultural values, and political systems. The creation of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in 1932 recognized the common landscape on either side of the international border, and the common goal of both the United States and Canada in protecting it. [1] North Cascades has not received the same designation, but the border has nevertheless played a significant role in the park's management.

The relationship between Canadian and American officials was mostly friendly and cooperative in the management of North Cascades. The international character of Hozomeen exemplified this cooperative spirit, as did ventures between biologists and park managers from both countries in the management of wildlife and fisheries, and recreational developments. Other aspects of the park's management, however, illustrated that the border sometimes brought together clashing conservation principles. In 1969, Superintendent Roger Contor met with British Columbia parks and forestry officials about the Park Service's desire to provide wilderness protection along the twenty-three miles of boundary shared by the two countries. British Columbia Parks managers understood Contor's desire to have Canadian officials designate some of the adjoining country as national or provincial parks. At bottom, Contor and Park Service leaders hoped that the two countries could manage the borderland for its wilderness values. On the other hand, provincial forestry officials were cool to the proposal. Contor was especially concerned about the province's plans to log the Chilliwack River drainage and provide road access to the area. Logging and road access would scar a beautiful landscape and entrance to the Chilliwack drainage in North Cascades. It would also increase the number of people using this major trail into the park, forcing the agency to post a ranger at the border. Essentially, forestry officials informed Contor that "they planned to log every possible inch of B.C. right up to the international boundary, and that they had no concern for protection of wilderness qualities adjacent to our wilderness. They...had too much, not too little wilderness in B.C. and felt the strength of the province depended upon sustained yield harvest of all resources." [2]

Park Service officials continued to express their desire to preserve the wilderness integrity of the Chilliwack drainage. They urged the provincial government to close the southern end of Chilliwack Lake to logging and other developments, and to expand some of the public parkland it had created on the southern shore of the lake. Superintendent Contor met with some British Columbia conservationists and inspected the southern end of Lake Chilliwack with them in the summer of 1970. His intent was to rally support on the Canadian side of the border for preserving the lake and country between it and the border in its wild state. At the time, provincial forestry officials and the army were planning to log and develop the lake.
area further, leading to the creation of Supper Park. Logging operations also commenced in the Depot Creek drainage next to the park, further worrying Park Service managers. A cooperative venture in wilderness protection seemed to "fizzle" after this, noted Contor. But there were reasons to be hopeful. Interest in ecological protection, sparked by the environmental movement on either side of the border and the High Ross Dam controversy, grew in British Columbia. In the early 1970s, British Columbia park officials were looking to expand protection for the Skagit Valley Recreation Area and were attempting to have Chilliwack Lake set aside as a provincial park. [3]

In his attempt to "do one of the million things" in need of attention for a new national park, Superintendent Contor directed his efforts elsewhere. However, he urged American conservation organizations to take up the issue of joint management of the area lying between Chilliwack Lake and North Cascades. The catalyst for preservation groups to enter this debate was the planned raising of Ross Dam. In 1971, the North Cascades Conservation Council spoke before the International Joint Commission, voicing its opposition to High Ross Dam, and promoted the establishment of the "Canadian Salish National Park contiguous with the North Cascades Complex." The park would have extended as far east as the Pasayten Wilderness, which bordered Manning Provincial Park to the north. The idea of an international park provided one solution to the current crisis, according to the conservation council and other American and Canadian environmental groups. The international park would recognize the need for "bi-national regional land management," and more importantly allow for the Canadian and U.S. Chilliwack Valley and southern end of Lake Chilliwack to be "managed as a single wilderness valley unit," and prevent any "road extension to the southern end of the lake." Similarly, the international park would recognize the need for "unified management of the Skagit, Pasayten, and Ashnola River valleys." [4]

The proposal for an international park, or for some kind of cross-boundary land management, had the ultimate purpose of blocking Seattle City Light's plans for raising Ross Dam. The High Ross issue was not an isolated incident, its opponents argued; it would have profound ecological consequences for both American and Canadian natural resources. A park or protected area along the international border would help stall or eliminate the project and advance a greater awareness of the importance of preserving the natural values shared by the two countries. In 1975, the National Park Service expressed its support for an international park to the Canadian government should one be established, and that an arrangement similar to the one in place for Waterton-Glacier would work for the North Cascades-British Columbia park. Any further work on the park proposal, it seems, went dormant during the protracted struggle over Ross Dam. [5]

Almost a decade later, the international park idea was renewed with the Ross Dam accord, signed in 1984. The park proposal blossomed with the closer ties between British Columbia and U.S. Park Service officials with the international treaty's creation of the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission. The joint commission, composed of Americans and Canadians, administered an endowment fund of $5 million for the enhancement of recreational opportunities in, and the environmental protection of, the upper Skagit drainage above Ross Dam. The establishment of the commission was a way to promote international goodwill after the controversial dam issue was settled, and the projects were meant to aide in the management of Skagit River drainage in both the United States and Canada. It was envisioned that the commission would fund projects for the protection of environmental resources and recreational opportunities, conservation and protection of wilderness and wildlife habitat, development of various studies, and the planning and construction of hiking trails and interpretive displays and signs. The endowment commission had been an important source of funding for projects in the upper Ross Lake area for North Cascades managers. [6]

In 1989, the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission arranged a public meeting in
Seattle, Washington, so British Columbia officials could present their proposal to create a new large park formed by joining Manning Provincial Park with the Skagit Valley and Cascade recreation areas. While the new park, across the border from the park complex, was only one of several possibilities in the region's future, spirited on environmental groups who declared that the new park would be "part of a great international park," including the North Cascades complex. The National Park Service was supportive of the international park idea to the extent that it promoted the agency's larger goal of protecting the North Cascades ecosystem. The 1988 general management plan stated that the park complex would be "managed as an integral part of this regional ecosystem, giving full consideration to potential effects both inside and beyond NPS boundaries." As part of its regional approach to management, the agency had entered into transboundary management with the fire management and grizzly bear recovery programs; it had also begun tentative talks with Canadian officials on the possibility of a jointly managed international park. It was also working with Canadian parks officials, as well as other federal agencies, to determine whether or not a portion of the North Cascades could be designated as a world biosphere reserve. Within this scale of management, the park idea was popular but it seems to have gained little political support within the upper levels of management with these respective agencies. [7]

The idea of an international park was still attractive with environmental organizations. In 1992, a coalition of groups from British Columbia and Washington State formed the Cascades International Alliance. The alliance's goal was to seek full protection for the North Cascades ecosystem with the establishment of a Cascades international park and stewardship area, which would bring parks, recreation areas, wilderness areas, and other protected federal and crown lands to be managed as an ecosystem. The central message was that nature transcended the U.S.-Canadian border and so should its protection. [8]

In March 1994, the international park movement received a legitimate boost with the "Nature Has No Borders" conference held at the University of Washington. Sponsored by the National Parks and Conservation Association, the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, and the National Park Service, the conference brought together political and academic leaders from the U.S. and Canada to discuss international ecosystem protection in the North Cascades as well as the designation of an international park and special management areas. In attendance were Commissioner Stephen Owen, head of the British Columbia Commission of Natural Resources and Environment, United States Senator Bruce Vento, and U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Interior George Frampton. The conference provided a valuable forum for discussion in an academic sense, but it did not produce a consensus for action. There was no general agreement on what constituted a "greater" ecosystem or on how U.S. and Canadian officials should manage an international ecosystem. Moreover, Park Service leaders, represented by Assistant Secretary Frampton and Deputy Director John Reynolds, gave only qualified support for the international park proposal. The Park Service would pursue the international park concept, it seems, only as long as it had strong public support. In the months following the conference, the international park proposal received considerable press time because it had become controversial, especially in Washington. Property rights advocates and members of the nascent "wise-use" movement denounced the idea, while environmental groups continued to speak about protecting a large expanse of territory. [9]

Although the Park Service appeared to be taking a neutral position on the international park proposal, the agency was frequently associated with the controversial topic because it had co-sponsored the "Nature Has No Borders Conference" and because an international park would encompass the park complex. In June 1995, when the Cascades alliance released its proposal for an international park, the Park Service quickly distanced itself from the subject. In its own press release, the agency asserted that the park idea originated with private citizens and not
the Park Service. Superintendent William Paleck appreciated the concern for the future of the North Cascades reflected in the park proposal, but wanted to deflect any criticism leveled at his agency. Essentially, the Park Service would only become actively involved if Congress requested the agency to testify on the matter before Congress. Otherwise, Paleck noted that cross-border cooperation with Canada had been successful in the past and should "continue with or without an international park." [10]

By the early 1990s, the list of cooperative efforts had grown quite long. North Cascades and Canadian park managers had worked together on gray wolf and grizzly bear studies, search and rescue operations, wildland fire suppression and management, planning for facility needs at Hozomeen, trail maintenance, solid waste disposal; they also participated in staff exchanges and providing archaeological consultation as well as technical assistance to the Lower Thompson Tribe. One of the major sources for bringing the two sides together, the Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission, had also grown. As of 1993, the commission had awarded nearly $3.3 million in grants for 125 projects, all of which provided an invaluable source of funding for the protection and enhancement of the upper Skagit drainage. The endowment had helped fund improvements to the Hozomeen area, including campground rehabilitation and shoreline stabilization, as well as other parts of the recreation area, including interpretive facilities at Happy Creek, the rehabilitation of several boat-in campgrounds, a raptor survey, and an archaeological study. [11]

The two countries also joined forces to address one of the more long-standing issues on the borderland, the relaxed condition of the crossing at Hozomeen. The road from Hope, B.C., into the northern end of Ross Lake was one of three border crossing roads in Washington State without a customs check station. In the early 1970s, Superintendent Lowell White had attempted to tighten controls of the border crossing at Hozomeen, but U.S. Customs officials did not share his concerns, it seems, and would not allow park rangers to be deputized to perform customs duties themselves; there was also no money to support such an operation. Hozomeen's reputation as a quiet eddy lost some of its luster in the early 1990s when customs agents targeted the crossing as a place that required closer attention. Evidently, there was some evidence of drug trafficking on Ross Lake. Support for tighter controls soon followed. Beginning in 1990, park rangers worked with U.S. Customs officials as well as other U.S. and Canadian agencies in operation "Lightning Creek" at the Hozomeen crossing as part of a national drug interdiction program. At least six rangers were certified as deputy customs agents and reported any suspicious activity directly to customs agents at the Sumas crossing. Funding from drug enforcement sources augmented the park's law enforcement program, increased the presence of law enforcement officials at the border, and proved to be an effective way to deter "illegal drug and criminal activity in the Hozomeen area." [12]

The border has a physical presence, too. Where the 49th parallel crosses forested country, a wide clearing identifies the boundary between the United States and Canada like a line on a map. The boundary swath, created and maintained by the International Joint Commission, did not make exceptions for pristine landscapes like the North Cascades or other natural preserves. The boundary line was a symbol of international relations of sorts, a clearing that literally separated the U.S. and Canada. Maintaining the clearing sparked controversy. Federal agencies like the Forest Service and Park Service who protected wild and scenic lands along the border balked at the thought of the boundary commission cutting trees and spraying herbicides along the edges of forests or, as in the case of Waterton-Glacier, directly through a park.

In 1976, the Okanogan National Forest challenged the International Boundary Commission's authority to clear the boundary strip that formed the northern border of the Pasayten Wilderness. Citing the Wilderness Act, the Forest Service legal council argued that the 49th parallel was part of the wilderness area and that the act's provisions precluded the "planned
clearing of a strip within the Wilderness by the Commission." The agency lost its protest, however, because the commission asserted that its authority predated that of the Forest Service. The agency should have known the conditions associated with the boundary when it drew the wilderness area's boundary along the border, and been aware that a 1925 international treaty authorized the commission's maintenance of the boundary. The commission also asserted that the Wilderness Act did not prevent its actions. It could commence with routine border maintenance by virtue of the fact that the act made allowances for some use of motorized equipment for administrative purposes. [13]

In 1984, the Park Service addressed the boundary clearing issue in North Cascades. The boundary commission was planning to clear a short section of the Ross Lake NRA border, adjacent to the Pasayten Wilderness. Superintendent Keith Miller decided not to protest the work, based on the legal opinion the Forest Service had received. Although the commission legally had prior rights with which it could enforce its clearing practices, the commission seems to have been open to meeting some of the concerns voiced by both the Forest Service and the Park Service. That year, for instance, the superintendents from Waterton and Glacier national parks met with boundary commission officials to request that the boundary between the two parks no longer be cleared, in part because of the international peace park status. However, the commission held firm to its mission, noting that making one exception to the treaty could lead to more. On a more immediate level, park managers were able to keep herbicides from being used; engineers performing the clearing would only use chainsaws and would burn all slash to avoid insect infestation. The commission would employ similar methods in the northern Cascades. The commission conducted maintenance in approximately twenty to forty year cycles and planned to complete its clearing to the Pacific, across the park complex, in the near future. Although the swath was a visual blight and an affront to wilderness values, according to environmental groups, the Park Service seems to have accepted the legal right of the boundary commission to keep the swath open (approximately twenty feet in width) along the northern edge of the Stephen Mather Wilderness. [14]
CONCLUSION

The establishment of North Cascades placed it squarely within the postwar environmental movement and made it one of that movement's leading accomplishments. The park symbolized the postwar generation's efforts to preserve wilderness for its intrinsic values as well as its values for people's quality of life. The creation of the park, however, was only part of the task. Carrying out its mandate was another matter altogether. Considered by many a flagship park for wilderness preservation, North Cascades bore the marks of political compromise necessary for its creation in the politically divided period. North Cascades was a national park complex containing recreation areas and national park, all which had different purposes and ultimately triggered different expectations from the public. The Park Service has endeavored, often with a great deal of tension, to make wilderness -- as an ideal and a management concept -- the central focus of the park's administration.

Park managers and supporters greeted North Cascades with high hopes for preserving "true wilderness." They saw in this new park a way to shed the traditions of the past, to avert issues surrounding the paradoxical management mission of preservation and use. But traditional concerns often took center stage in the park's operations, for it was hard for the public and for the agency itself to conceive of a national park that did not conform to the Yellowstone and Yosemite models. In those parks, nature was preserved by accommodating tourism and developments that provided Americans access to and some amenities while in them. And so it was at North Cascades. No roads or other developments scarred the park's backcountry, but meanwhile administrators wanted to build up the two recreation areas to provide the basic comforts tourists had come to expect in national parks. In this respect, the park's wilderness, which was eventually protected by federal statute, was not the center of the park's administrative concerns. Rather, managers directed their efforts where the most controversy arose, namely the hydropower issues in Ross Lake National Recreation Area and the land policies and resource consumption issues in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. As one former superintendent observed, these issues, especially those in Stehekin, were the "tail that wagged the park."

Still, wilderness was central to the purpose of North Cascades, no matter the political issues surrounding Stehekin. What the history of the park's administration reveals is that the concept of wilderness -- and for that matter the national park ideal -- are not static but change to suit the needs of society at a particular time. In the politically tempestuous and environmentally conscious 1960s, the preservation of North Cascades was tantamount to saving a section of the world not yet exposed to atomic waste and overpopulation. In the 1990s, the concerns of an earlier generation seem less dramatic but nonetheless important. As the world grows smaller, park visitors have come to use North Cascades as an extension of their daily, urban-centered lives. Some come to run the trails and return home the same day. Others bask in the afterglow of the frontier in Stehekin. And still others find in North Cascades what first attracted calls for its protection as a national park: incomparable beauty. Park administrators face the challenge they always have had before them: to keep the wilderness ideal central to the park complex's purpose while accommodating a variety of uses that seem antithetical to
that purpose.
NOTES

Introduction

1Herman F. Ulrichs, "The Cascade Range in Northern Washington State," Sierra Club Bulletin 22 (February 1937); 72.

2Today's Columbia Cascades Support Office.

Chapter 1


3Luxenberg, 265-302.


5Luxenberg. See also Robert Byrd, ed. Lake Chelan in the 1890s (Stehiken: Robert Byrd, 1972).

6"A Great National Park," Chelan Falls Leader, February 11, 1892.


"Lake Chelan and the Valley of Stehekin," Oregon Native Son, January 1900: "Beautiful Lake Chelan," Walla Walla Union, March 24, 1901. Other magazines that covered the Mazama trip and excursions to Lake Chelan and the North Cascades were The Overland Monthly and Harper's Weekly and National Geographic.


"Unanimous Opposition," Chelan Leader, April 6, 1906; "Against a National Park," Chelan Leader, March 16, 1906. Park opponents were most likely inspired by the recent developments of the Holden Mine located above the west side of Lake Chelan.


Ibid., 74-75. Over the years forest boundaries and names changed in response to political and administrative demands. In 1911, for instance, the Chelan National Forest was divided to create the Okanogan National Forest.

Schmitt, Back to Nature; Runte, 82-97.


Mary Roberts Rinehart, Tenting Tonight (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918), 104, 113. Rinehart also noted: It was a land mostly above timberline composed of rocks, rivers, glaciers -- "more in one county than in all Switzerland, they claim" -- and granite peaks and hair-raising precipices and lakes filled with ice in midsummer." Lake Chelan added a magical trait to the region with its exceptional beauty, so "strangely deep and quiet...at the foot of its enormous cliffs."

John Barton Payne to Senator Reed Smoot, April 22, 1920, Record Group 48, Records of the Secretary of the Interior, Central Files, 1907-1936, file 400, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Other petitions contained in this file called for a park linking the range's chain of volcanic peaks, Mount Adams, Glacier Peak and Baker.

Robert Shankland, Steve Mather of the National Parks (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), 184-185. Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, to Honorable Scott Ferris, Chairman, Committee on Public Lands, House of Representatives, May 15, 1918, RG 48, Central Files, 1907-1936, file 400, NA. Note that the other reason for opposing the Mount Baker proposal was that it allowed natural resource development and economic uses -- mining, irrigation, and railroad rights of way. See other correspondence in this file.

Willard Van Name, Vanishing Forest Reserves: Problems of the National Forests and
North Cascades NP: Contested Terrain: North Cascades National Park Service Complex: An Administrative History (Notes)

National Parks (Boston: Badger Press, 1929), 170-172. Quotation from 172.


25Hal K. Rothman, "A Regular Ding-Dong Fight: Agency Culture and Evolution in the NPS-USFS Dispute," 1916-1937, Western Historical Quarterly 20 (May 1989); 141-161; Shankland, Steve Mather of the National Parks, 179. Stephen T. Mather to Lindley H. Hadley, March 13, 1919, RG95, Acc.#68A1216, FRC#43181, file--5500 Land Classification, National Parks, 1916-1919, FRC-PNR. Mather was referring to Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane's statement on park management, issued on May 13, 1918. This is reprinted in Ise, Our National Park Policy, 194-195.


27Hal Rothman, "A Regular Ding-Dong Fight."


29The Forest Service did not officially designate the Glacier Park Recreation Area until 1938, and at that time it encompassed 275,200 acres. See "Management Plan for the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area, Mount Baker and Wenatchee National Forests," U.S. Forest Service-Region 6, 1965, RG95, Acc.#73A898, FRC#25219, file 2320--Glacier Peak Wilderness Area, 1956-1958, FRC-PNR.

30Some publications state that the date is 1935, the official Secretary of Agriculture approval. See C.J. Buck to Marshall N. Dana, September 20, 1934, Record Group 90, Records of the Washington State Planning Council, box 38, "North Cascades Primitive Area," Washington State Archives.


34National Park Service, "Northern Cascades Area Report," November 1937, 1-3. The North Cascades study was a top priority in park studies, which looked specifically at Forest Service
primitive areas.


35Ibid., 39, 25-26. The report went on to say: "Man's efforts are puny" in such a wild country. Thus, it "seems obvious that, in great expanses of wilderness with such rugged and varied features," that "small areas affected by mining dwindle into insignificance and can never give rise to a serious blemish in the landscape."


38Robert Marshall to Lyle F. Watts, November 6, 1939, RG 95, Acc.#70B825, FRC#7583, file 1: 2320, "Wilderness Areas and Primitive Areas: North Cascades Primitive Area," FRC-PNR.


40Leon F. Kneipp, Assistant Chief, Forest Service, to Chief, Forest Service, September 25, 1939. For accounts of the joint team's interactions, see the above citation and Superintendent Owen A. Tomlinson to Director, National Park Service, September 23, 1939, administrative files, park history files, North Cascades National Park Service Complex Archives; Lyle F. Watts, Regional Forester to Chief, Forest Service, August 29, 1939, RG 95, "Land Classification--Cascade National Park (Proposed)," file 5500, FRC-PNR.


45A.E. Demaray, Acting Director, National Park Service, to Owen A. Tomlinson, Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, August 3, 1940; Harold L. Ickes to R.H. Rutledge, Director of Grazing Service, August 7, 1940, Tomlinson Papers.


47Lyle F. Watts to Irving Clark, September 10, 1940; "Management Plan for the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area."


53Steen, 259-271; Clary, 147.

54Cohen, The History of the Sierra Club, 192-211. McArdle is quoted on 199. See also, Paul W. Hirt, A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests since World War Two (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

55Cohen, 221, for quote.

56See, for example, a report by the Mountaineers entitled, "Recommendations for the Proposed Glacier Peak Wilderness Area," April 1, 1956, and Philip H. Zalesky, "Glacier Peak Wilderness Area," c. 1956, Mountaineers Papers, box 2, Glacier Peak file, University of Washington.


58Grant McConnell to Patrick Goldsworthy, et al., July 10, 1956, and John Seiker (Chief, Forest Service Division of Recreation and Lands) to Edgar Wayburn (Sierra Club), October 18, 1956, Zalesky papers, box 2, unlabeled file, UW. United States Forest Service, "Glacier Peak Land Management Study," February 7, 1957, Warren G. Magnuson Papers, box 92, file 1, University of Washington.
The two most effective weapons in the Dinosaur campaign were the film, "Wilderness River Trail" and the book, This is Dinosaur, written by Wallace Stegner; these were Brower's ideas.

David Brower, "Will We Discover the Northern Cascades in Time?" Sierra Club Bulletin 42 (June 1957): 13-16. Grant McConnell, "Northern Cascades," Sierra Club Bulletin 43 (January 1958): 23-25. Simons' complete statement can be found in David R. Simons to J. Herbert Stone, April 6, 1957, RG 79. Acc.#71A1071, FRC#8639, file L58, North Cascades-Glacier Peak Wilderness, FRC-PNR. McConnell, "The Cascades Wilderness," 31; McConnell, "The Multiple-Use Concept in Forest Service Policy," Sierra Club Bulletin 44 (October 1949): 14. McConnell, who went on to develop this idea into his political critique of multiple use while a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, used his own Stehekin Valley as an example of the failings of multiple use. Under the U Regulations, roads were excluded from wilderness areas, which eliminated Stehekin from the proposed Glacier Peak wilderness, but this fact still did not detract from the valley's unspoiled beauty. The road after all was not attached to the outside world; it led to nowhere. Still, under multiple use management it would lose its integrity as a wilderness threshold, scarred by logging and haphazard development.


David Brower, "Crisis in the Northern Cascades: The Missing Million," Sierra Club Bulletin (February 1959), quoted in The Living Wilderness 24 (Spring 1959): 35. Brower and fellow conservationists decried "sanitation logging" in recreation areas which foresters could carry out at their own discretion, essentially, placing in jeopardy all the scenic forests fringing a wilderness area.


Harvey, Symbol of Wilderness, 258, 288; Runte, National Parks, 171.


Grant McConnell to David Brower, May 15, 1958, RG 79, Acc.#71A1071, FRC#8639, file L58, North Cascades-Glacier Peak Wilderness, FRC-PNR.

David Brower to Grant McConnell, July 16, 1958, ibid.

The Wilderness Society supported full protection, apparently hoping a wilderness area of Marshall's proportions would be established. In principle, it supported a park.

Patrick D. Goldsworthy to Thomas M. Pelly, February 19, 1959, Pelly Papers, box 14, UW. Sierra Club Bulletin.

Thomas M. Pelly to Conrad L. Wirth, March 9, 1959, Mountaineers Papers, box 2, National
Park Proposals, 1961-64, UW. Richard E. McArdle to Thomas M. Pelly, August 24, 1959, Thomas M. Pelly Papers, box 14, no file name, UW. Conrad L. Wirth to Secretary of the Interior, December 11, 1959, RG 79, Acc.#69A1292, FRC#905604, box 16, file L58, FRC-PNR.


Henry M. Jackson and Wayne Morse to Orville L. Freeman, May 4, 1961; Orville L. Freeman to Wayne Morse, Henry M. Jackson, Warren G. Magnuson, and Maurine B. Neuberger, June 7, 1961, Warren G. Magnuson Papers, box 122, file 15, UW. These senators, from Washington and Oregon, had jointly asked the secretary to develop a management plan for the high mountains in their respective states.

John A. Baker, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, to Thomas M. Pelly, September 13, 1962, Magnuson papers, box 122, file 10, UW.

See Hays, Beauty, Health, and Permanence, 54-57. Thomas G. Smith, "John Kennedy, Stewart Udall, and New Frontier Conservation," Pacific Historical Review 64 (August 1995): 335, 351. During Eisenhower's presidency only two national parks were added to the system, Virgin Islands and Haleakala.

A great deal of private meetings and lobbying led to this alliance. After learning about the North Cascades issue from the Sierra Club, North Cascades Conservation Council and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, Udall expressed his support of the park study, and with Douglas worked to mend relations with the Department of Agriculture and win the support of Washington's senators. See, for example, correspondence from November and December 1959 in North Cascades Conservation Council Papers, box 1, Udall Correspondence file, UW. The members were Edward C. Crafts, chairman, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation; George B. Hartzog, Jr., Director, National Park Service; Dr. Owen S. Stratton, Chairman of the Political Science Department, Wellesley College, and consultant to the Secretary of the Interior; Dr. George A. Selke, consultant to Secretary of Agriculture; and Arthur W. Greeley, Deputy Chief of the Forest Service.

Stewart L. Udall and Orville L. Freeman to Edward C. Crafts, March 5, 1963, Stewart L. Udall Papers, box 156, file 5, University of Arizona.


Cohen, 312-313. Cohen suggests that the Prospectus persuaded the Kennedy administration to study the North Cascades. This seems only partly true. The council had drafted legislation for Udall in the early 1960s, but this was the only part of the document ready by 1963 when the study was launched.
81Study Report, 79; 165 for quotation.

82George B. Hartzog, Jr., to Edward C. Crafts, October 19, 1965, RG 79, Acc.#69A1292, FRC#905604, box 16, file L58, FRC-PNR. This letter is reprinted in the Study Report, 139-141.


84Orville L. Freeman to Stewart L. Udall, November 9, 1965, Udall Papers, box 156, file 4, UA.

85George A. Selke and Arthur W. Greeley to Edward C. Crafts, December 3, 1965, RG 95, Acc.#70A109, FRC#129236, file--North Cascades Study Area, FRC-PNR. This letter is reprinted in the Study Report, 147-150. Selke and Greeley went on to say that management of the region would permit some resource extraction, "the virile sport of hunting," water developments, and "incidental harvesting and 'gathering'." In addition, under national recreation area policies, the Forest Service could develop the ranger of winter sports and organization camps."

86Edward C. Crafts to Stewart L. Udall, December 25, 1965, Udall Papers, box 156, file 5, UA.


92U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, North Cascades-Olympic National Park, Hearings on the Study Team Report of the Recreational Opportunities in the State of Washington, February 11 and 12, 1966, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 1966. (Hereafter cited as Hearings on Study Team Report.) It should be noted by the title of the hearings that Jackson's intentions were questioned. Was he joining the North Cascades issue with the volatile subject of adjusting Olympic's boundaries to gain publicity or out of real concern? Was some trade in the works--land exchanges at Olympic for a park in the North Cascades? Certainly, as many preservationists protested, by relating North Cascades with Olympic, Jackson would repeat the problems of the 1930s, when so much anger over the creation of
Olympic led to the successful defeat of the park study for North Cascades. There was so much protest to the Olympic boundary adjustments during the hearings that the proposal was dropped--whatever Jackson's true intent.

93Hearings on Study Team Report, 347-349. See also Allan Sommarstrom, "Wild Land Preservation Crisis," 96-121.

94Memorandum, Orville L. Freeman to President Lyndon B. Johnson, December 28, 1966; Memorandum, Stewart L. Udall to President Lyndon B. Johnson, December 29, 1966, Udall Papers, box 156, file 5, UA.

95Senate Bill 1321, "To Establish the North Cascades National Park and Ross Lake National Recreation Area, to designate the Pasayten Wilderness and to modify the Glacier Peak Wilderness, in the State of Washington, and for other purposes," October 31, 1967, 90th Cong., 1st sess.

96U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, Hearings on S. 1321, A Bill to Establish North Cascades National Park..., 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967, 14-15. (Hereafter cited as Hearings on S. 1321.)

97Hearings on S. 1321, 14-15.

98Hearings on S. 1321, 336-337, 427.

99It should be noted that protecting Granite Creek, even though the highway ran through it was necessary to retain the region's scenic qualities as visitors approached and drove through the park; it was also a way to avoid future, unsightly and destructive, developments in the area for interpretive purposes, in particular a spur road down Bridge Creek. Hence, protecting wilderness through development.

100Hearings on S. 1321, 64-68.

101Hearings on S. 1321, 92.

102Adding Lightning Creek to the Pasayten would prevent any future road construction down the shore of Ross Lake from Canada, even though by the time of the hearings the Park Service had scratched this from its plans as well as the use of helicopters.


104Intentionally left blank.


106As Jackson stated to Nelson during the hearings: "I think the Seattle Light people...deserve great tribute for recognizing the conservation possibilities in the Skagit area...I think what you have done over the years is a good example for others to follow." Moreover, "what you are doing to assist tourists and outdoor recreationists in the area," the senator concluded, was "quite remarkable." The boundaries of Ross Lake Recreation Area had already been drawn to
adjust for the raising of the lake in accordance with plans to raise Ross Dam. This provision was already part of the first version of S. 1321 and was presented as both a necessary addition for power production and as an improvement for recreational opportunities along the lake--from boating to camping and fishing. It should also be noted that the committee left the actual approval of the project up to the Federal Power Commission. Should the project on Thunder Creek be turned down, it was expected, Jackson noted, that this area would be managed as if it were part of the national park. See Hearings, 1967, 59, for quotations.


109 Hearings on S. 1321, 50-51. Evans' statement and state government resolution are on 42-49.

110 Hearings on S. 1321, 51.

111 John A. Biggs to Henry M. Jackson, June 21, 1967, Henry M. Jackson papers, box 338, file 12, University of Washington, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, S. 1321, Report No. 700, October 31, 1967, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 30-31. (Hereafter cited as Report No. 700.) The committee report, 31, notes the improvements that the game department and Chelan PUD were seeking to improve fishing in the lake. This was only a partial concession to the department, which wanted to retain full control of fisheries management within the entire proposed park, and wanted the Park Service to assume all responsibility for wildlife damage on private lands inside or outside the park's boundaries due to the closure of hunting seasons. See Burton J. Lauckhart, Chief, Game Management Division, to John A. Biggs, September 20, 1967, and Thomas O. Wimmer to Sterling Monroe, July 26, 1967, Henry M. Jackson Papers, box 338, file 14, University of Washington.

112 Quote from Hearings on S. 1321, 631. The Park Service also added its newly drafted land and water acquisition policies for natural areas and recreation areas.

113 Members of Congress were referring to the relative explosion of parks, recreation areas, and national seashores during the latter 1960s which caused some overlapping management as well as created jurisdictional rivalries between the two bureaus. The 1963 "Treaty of the Potomac" attempted to resolve some of these issues and disputes--such as Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity NRA.

114 Report No. 700, 11-12.


116 Congressional Record, Senate, November 2, 1967, S15757.

117 Fox, John Muir and His Legacy, 288-289.


122 M. Brock Evans to Dave Payton, June 14, 1958, Evans Papers, [2s-2-358], file--North Cascades, Washington State Archives.


124 Sommarstrom, 137.

125 Sommarstrom, 137-140.


Part II

1 *Spokesman Review*, October 3, 1968. The North Cascades Act created a park complex of the two-unit North Cascades National Park, which embraced nearly 505,000 acres, Ross Lake National Recreation Area of some 105,000 (or 107,000) acres, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area of 62,000 acres. The North Cascades Act also created 520,000-acre Pasayten Wilderness and provided for a 10,000-acre addition to the Glacier Peak Wilderness. Altogether, the act set aside some 1.2 million acres of wild alpine country.


Chapter 2

1Charles A. Connaughton, Regional Forester, to Division Chiefs and Forest Supervisors, Mt. Baker, Okanogan, and Wenatchee National Forests, October 22, 1968, Record Group 95, Acc.#76A715, FRC#124715, file North Cascades National Park, Federal Record Center--Pacific Northwest Region.


3Personal interview with Roger J. Contor, June 25, 1996.


7Gerald W. Pelton, "Cooperation-Mountain Style," Parks and Recreation (November 1971): 34-35. Article attached to Gerald W. Pelton to North Cascades Reconnaissance Task Force, December 1, 1971, administrative files, file A3815, North Cascades National Park Service Complex. Members of the task force were federal officials from the Park Service, Forest Service (the Mount Baker and Okanogan National Forests), Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, and Federal Highway Administration. State agencies were represented by officials from the departments of Commerce and Economic Development, Highways, Game, Interagency Committee on Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources, Planning and Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, and Program Planning and Fiscal Management. County commissioners also served on the task force; they represented Chelan, Okanogan, Skagit, and Whatcom counties, the four counties in which the North Cascades park and forest complex was located.


Ibid.


"Forest Service Supervisors Leave Fire Line to Face Heated Dispute on North Cascades," Seattle Times, July 19, 1970; Harold C. Chriswell to Regional Forester, September 14, 1967, Record Group 95, Acc.#76A2058, FRC#68115, box 7, Federal Records Center--Pacific Northwest Region. Harold C. Chriswell to Regional Forester, April 7, 1971, RG 95, Acc.#76H2058, FRC#68116, file 2150, Special Planning Areas-North Cascades Study, FRC-PNR.

Chapter 3

1 Alfred Runte, Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 202-206.

2 Roger J. Contor to Walt Woodward, October 19, 1968, administrative files, Yellows, NOCA.

3 Seattle Times, September 14, 1969.


6 Hearings on S. 1321, 21-22.

7 Hearings on H.R. 8970, 953, 959.

9Ibid., 23.


12"Mees off on Park Tour; Wants It 'Pro People'," Skagit Valley Herald, August 26, 1969.


14North Cascades Conservation Council to Board Members, May 1, 1970.


16Lloyd Meeds to George Hartzog, Jr., March 14, 1972, box 6, file "North Cascades", Meeds Papers, UW.

17This is not to say that the agency abandoned any hopes of gaining access to the southern end of Ross Lake. As part of its negotiations with City Light over the raising of the dam, the agency required that the utility provide a public access road and lakeshore facilities. See discussion in section on the park's relationship with City Light and the High Ross controversy.


19Lowell White to Regional Director, October 11, 1972, administrative files, file A38, NOCA.

20"Testimony of Lloyd Meeds before the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies," May 12, 1975, box 63, file "North Cascades", Meeds Papers, UW.

21"Testimony of Lloyd Meeds," May 12, 1975. See, for example, superintendent's annual reports for the years 1975-1979.

22White interview.

23White interview.

"North Cascades Task Force Workbook," c. 1968, box 1, file 27, North Cascades National Park Service Complex Archives, NOCA (NOCA Archives).


27 "Cascade Pass Management Plan," 6. Gary J. Kuiper to D.H. Porter, April 24, 1974; Gary J. Kuiper to Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, April 16, 1974, administrative files, file L48, NOCA. See also, "Assessment of the Environmental Impact of Implementation of the Cascade Pass Management Plan," June 1974, ibid. Kuiper, the park's assistant superintendent, noted also that area residents were concerned about who would maintain the road should it be closed. This concern he added, was rooted in the ownership of this Mine-to-Market road, which the county claimed. Kuiper also mentioned pressing forward with a memorandum of understanding between the park and the county regarding the road's maintenance and possible closure; however, the regional director seems to have thought it imprudent to force the issue. Better to work with all parties involved than work against them.

28 A summary of public comments can be found in Kuiper to Regional Director, April 16, 1974. The park's files, cited above, also contain transcripts of the meetings.


30 Roger J. Contor to R.J. Brooks, August 12, 1970, administrative files, A36, NOCA. See also Roger J. Contor to Brock Evans, September 1, 1970, ibid.


32 "Superintendent's Annual Report, North Cascades Park Service Complex, 1973," box 1, file five, NOCA Archives. McConnell, "Five Years of National Park Service Administration," 12. It should be noted that not all park managers were in agreement with improvements to the Stehekin Road. Park biologist Robert Wasem, for example, questioned the "sociological impact of the road paving" on the primitive nature of the valley. C. Robert Wasem to Superintendent Lowell White, September 20, 1972, administrative files, file L74, NOCA.

33 The issue over the transfer of the Stehekin Road, and the Park Service's related jurisdiction over the Company Creek Road, where most of the pressure over snow removal came from, can be found in file 65, NOCA Archives. John A. Rutter to Henry M. Jackson, Henry M. Jackson Papers, box 107, file 19, University of Washington; Contor to Bardsley, June 23, 1970.

34 This summary of the park complex's interpretive program is drawn from Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1972-1978, and park interpretive planning files, administrative files, file K1817, NOCA.

35 Roger J. Contor to Director, Western Service Center, August 12, 1970, administrative files, file K1817, NOCA.

36 National Park Service, Interim Interpretive Plan, Skagit District, Ross Lake National
Chapter 4


3Lowell White to Brock Evans, March 1, 1971, administrative files, file C38, NOCA. Personal interview with Lowell White, July 19, 1996. It should be noted that in the park complex's first decade of management there were a number of other concession operators, or individuals with special use permits, who offered services to the park complex's visitors. These include the Courtney horse packing concession in Stehekin and several river-raffing guide services on the Skagit River below Newhalem and one on the Stehekin River.


5Letter to the Files, Roger J. Contor, November 11, 1970, administrative files, file C38, NOCA. See related memoranda in these files relating to Ross Lake Resort.

6Ibid.

7Lowell White to Wayne Dameron, January 29, 1971, administrative files, file C38, NOCA.


10Lowell White to Director, Pacific Northwest Region, February 28, 1972, administrative files, file C38, NOCA.

11It should be noted that the names of these resorts vary historically. The Golden West Lodge, for example, came to be referred to also as the Stehekin Lodge by the time of the park complex's creation. The Swissmont appears to have also gone by the names of the Stehekin Resort or the Stehekin Landing Resort. There were, at bottom, three resorts or lodges located at the landing.

12Susan E. Georgette to Ann H. Harvey, *Local Influence and the National Interest: Ten Years of National Park Service Administration in the Stehekin Valley, Washington*, Publication No. 4, Environmental Field Program (Santa Cruz: University of California Santa Cruz, 1980), 74.

13Letter to the files, June 24, 1971, administrative files, C38, NOCA.

14Larry Tonge operated the Boatel before Moore.
Lowell White to Files, September 28, 1971, Concessions, box 1, file 4, NOCA Archives. Other information on the concession operations in Stehekin can be found in this file. See, for example, Lowell White to John O.E. Moore, July 5, 1972.

16Williams J. Weaver, Acting Superintendent, to Regional Director, April 2, 1976, Concessions, box 1, file 4, NOCA Archives. See also Stehekin Transportation Plan, April 1976-get full cite. In 1976, park managers proposed a trial operation in which Byrd operated the shuttle service to High Bridge and from there the Park Service would operate the service to Cottonwood. A $1 fee per day would be charged by the concessioner for his bus service. The agency's service would be free to visitors, and would also be free to residents. Park managers believed, based on the Stehekin transportation study that a system of larger buses in the lower valley and smaller buses in the upper valley would cost the same or perhaps less.

17Byrd's views were shared by others of course who felt that the Park Service's presence had altered the valley's character, among other things. It should be noted that Byrd's ideas were tied to being excluded from the Park Service's recent planning efforts in Stehekin. In addition, Byrd seemed to object to a private study of Stehekin's concessions that the Park Service contracted with the Seattle Center for Hotel and Restaurant Administration, located at Washington State University. One of the main reasons for the study was to find a way to handle food and other services for the increased number of visitors the New Lady would bring to the Stehekin Landing. Park managers reported that the report's recommendations were a success; combining box picnic lunches, outdoor barbeque and light food service at the restaurant dispersed the boat's passengers. "Superintendent's Annual Report for North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1976," 12, Administration and Management, box 1, file 8, NOCA Archives. See also John W. McCracken to Lowell White, April 15, 1976, and McCracken's accompanying report, "An Operational Analysis North Cascades Lodge," April 1976, Concessions, box 1, file 4, NOCA Archives. Robert Byrd imparted his views in two key letters. Robert Byrd to Lowell White, May 29, 1976; and Robert Byrd to Lowell White, June 10, 1976, Concessions, box 1, file 4, NOCA Archives.

18The Park Services allowed Byrd to continue operating the shuttle service for the 1976 season, but took over operation officially--the first time since its initiation in 1972--in 1977. "Superintendent's Annual Report for North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1977," Administration and Management, box 1, file 9, NOCA Archives.

19"Superintendent's Annual Report for North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1977" and "Superintendent's Annual Report for North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1978," Administration and Management, box 1, file 4, NOCA Archives. See also letters and contract information from the National Park Service to Gibson and Dinwiddie in concessions files, box 1, file 4. There is, at least in the official record, no mention of how the Park Service and Byrd parted. One letter in the files suggests that Byrd left the business but refused to sell his property--chairs, beds, restaurant equipment-- to the new operators.

Chapter 5


4"Why North Cascades Proposal Needs Revision."

5Most of these shelters for recording measurements belonged to the United States Geological Survey.

6Ibid. See also North Cascades Committee to North Cascades Board Members, May 1, 1970.

7See the above citations. For a complete list of comments on the wilderness plan see Wilderness Recommendations: North Cascades Complex, especially Director Hartzog's letter, 18-20.

8Wilderness Recommendations, 18-20.

9Ibid. It should be noted that there were two other hostels proposed to make up for the loss of the Picket Range hostels. One was located along the Pacific Crest Trail in the park's southern unit, and the other was located in Ross Lake NRA on the Lightning Creek Trail.

10Ibid. Personal interview with Roger J. Contor, June 25, 1996. Contor noted that he explained the situation to Margaret Murie, Olaus Murie's wife, of the Wilderness Society and she agreed to pressure Hartzog to delete the hostels from the wilderness plan. Primed by this pressure and recent events at Glacier, Hartzog, it seems, agreed to remove the hostels. But there were hostels still proposed in Lake Chelan NRA in the Stehekin Valley as part of the master plan's general scheme to relieve some of the pressure from the landing.

11John A. Rutter to Associate Director, Legislation, National Park Service, June 25, 1975, Lands, Water, and Recreation Planning, box 6, file 85, NOCA Archives. Rutter details some of the congressional sequence of events, and suggests that it would not be appropriate at the time, though it was required, to complete an EIS for the wilderness proposal.

12Ibid.


14Sequoia and Kings Canyon present a good comparison for gaining some perspective on the backcountry management practices for North Cascades. Park Service officials completed the
first backcountry management plan for the parks in 1961; it addressed broad issues such as a
definition of wilderness, carrying capacity, and a true wilderness experience. It also launched
a vigorous program of meadow monitoring and closures and trash removal. It also
recommended helicopter use as a way to lessen impacts to high country areas, caused by pack
stock, for supplying trail crews, lookouts, and the like--a point of some controversy in the
North Cascades. Sequoia-Kings also shared similar interagency relations and wilderness
concerns over permits as did North Cascades, specifically with bordering national forests. See
Lary M. Dilsaver and William C. Twed, Challenge of the Big Trees: A Resource History of
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (Three Rivers, Calif.: Sequoia Natural History
Association, 1990), 265-278.


16Ibid. Unless otherwise cited, the following paragraphs are drawn from Contor's report.

17Contor interview.

18National Park Service, "Backcountry Management Plan: North Cascades National Park
Service Complex," March 14, 1974, Lands, Water, and Recreation Planning, box 6, file 85,
NOCA Archives.

19In general, these standards, attached as an appendix to the plan, would conform to other
standards, such as for signs for example, used in national forest wildernesses adjoining the
park complex. They were also intended to contribute to the overall wilderness experience;
posts rather than signs would mark campsites.

20At first, park staffers distribute permits from the main Skagit District office at
Marblemount, but in 1975, the backcountry permit center came into its own when an
"Information Trailer" was moved up from Concrete and the permit center moved its
operations here. See "Superintendent's Annual Report for North Cascades National Park
"Backcountry Management Plan: North Cascades National Park Service Complex," and John
Hays, "Mandatory Backcountry Permits...North Cascades National Park--Summer 1974,"
February 1, 1975, administrative files, file L3419, NOCA.

21Roger J. Contor, "Natural Area Management in Our Wildest National Park," March 12,
1970, Natural and Social Sciences, box 6, file 3, NOCA Archives.

Recreation Planning, box 6, file 85, NOCA Archives.

23The work of the Millers is referenced throughout the park documents and their
contributions are recounted with praise by many park employees. See also "Superintendent's

24John E. Jensen to Superintendent Lowell White, March 9, 1977, Lands, Water, and
Recreation Planning, box 6, file 85, NOCA Archives. See also Superintendent John J.
Reynolds to Regional Director, August 23, 1985, Administration and Management, box 1, file
22, NOCA Archives.

25The park complex's land acquisition program will be discussed more thoroughly in the next
section of this history. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of the park complex's land
acquisition issues came to a climax. See, for example, Jerry W. Hammond to Regional Director, administrative files, file L1425, April 7, 1971, NOCA; John A. Rutter to Lloyd Meeds, December 4, 1975, administrative files, file L2023, NOCA.


28 Taylor, 7; Jensen to White, March 9, 1977.

29 Jensen to White, March 9, 1977.

Chapter 6


2 "Guidelines for Resources Management in the Areas in the Natural Category of the National Park System," attached to memorandum from Assistant Director, Operations, National Park Service, to All Field Offices, October 14, 1965, Henry M. Jackson Papers, box 338, file 20, University of Washington.

3 Superintendent Roger J. Contor to Regional Director, June 20, 1969, administrative files, file N22, North Cascades National Park Service Complex (NOCA).


6 Master Plan, 28.

7 Contor, "Natural Area Management in Our Wildest National Park."

8 The actual approval date for some of the park complex's research natural areas seems to be missing from the record. Of these areas, Ridley Lake was never approved, and over the years several more were added. These are Stetattle Creek RNA and Big Beaver Creek RNA. It should be noted that one of the first research natural areas proposed was Big Beaver Valley, a site recommended from the Forest Service--since their research natural areas were a product of that agency. Big Beaver Valley, of course, got caught in the political web surrounding
High Ross Dam and its designation was postponed. For a list of research natural areas in the park complex, see Robert Wasem to Superintendent Keith Miller, June 12, 1980, administrative files, file N22, North Cascades National Park Service Complex.

9Erwin N. Thompson, *North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area; History Basic Data* (National Park Service: March 1970). Thompson's work as well as several other studies, such as historic structure reports, would serve as the kernel for the development of the park complex's cultural resource management program, which will be covered in greater detail in the following section.

10One would have thought given the severity of the project that the agency would have done more to protect special places like Big Beaver Valley. Roger Contor's reasoning for having it studied was to assess its ecological uniqueness. If it qualified as an irreplaceable natural environment, a laboratory of nature containing precious resources, he might have been able to use this to stall the High Ross project. But Sharpe noted that there were other places in the North Cascades where old growth western red cedar, could be found and thus the Big Beaver Valley was not "one of a kind" or the "last of a kind." On the other hand, Joe and Margaret Miller conducted an ecological survey of the valley and refuted statements such as these in their report. Certainly, there was enough evidence to suggest the valley's ecological value, but constrained by law to not interfere with High Ross, the Park Service waited out the controversy, withholding any aggressive action to protect Ross Lake until the late 1970s and early 1980s. See chapter on High Ross for more discussion.


13Wasem's other studies included inventorying human impacts to backcountry camps, stabilizing the windswept bed of Lake Chelan during winter draw downs using native plants, and rejuvenating woody browse plants on Winter Deer Range by cutting and burning.

14Personal interview with Lowell White, full cite. For a summary of White's policy, see Superintendent Lowell White to Albert L. Odmark, June 6, 1975, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

15Robert Wasem to Superintendent Lowell White, November 3, 1975, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

16See, for example, Albert L. Odmark to Superintendent Lowell White, June 26, 1975, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA. Robert Wasem learned that trout had been introduced into the park's lakes and adjacent lakes on Forest Service land by groups like the Hi-Lakers and Trailblazers but also by various unaffiliated groups and individuals including the Concrete football team--to get in shape--as well as the occasional game department fish hatchery manager without his superiors' knowledge.

17White to Odmark, June 6, 1975.

18Odmark to White, June 26, 1976.
Douglas H. Fletcher to Robert Wasem, May 9, 1974, administrative files, file N1423, May 9, 1974, NOCA. It should be noted that the sport fishing organizations were the main constituents of the game department and thus the main supporters of its fish management program.

Superintendent Lowell White to Regional Director, November 3, 1975, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

Park Biologist Bob Wasem wrote the policy variance for Superintendent White in the spring of 1975.

Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, Russell E. Dickenson to Associate Director, January 15, 1976, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

See, for example, Douglas H. Fletcher to Robert Wasem, August 25, 1976; Douglas H. Fletcher to Superintendent Lowell White, August 16, 1976; and C. Richard Neely to Regional Director, August 27, 1976, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA. Apparently, the variance was approved by telephone and never by written notification by the Washington office.

W.C. Quick, Acting Regional Director to Bruce H. Ransom, Jr., June 22, 1977, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.


Personal interview with Roger Contor. See also Superintendent Roger J. Contor to District Managers, August 4, 1969, administrative files, file N1615, NOCA.


Chapter 7

The most highly visible and disputed of these other projects was the Copper Creek project, which would have dammed Copper Creek near its confluence with the Skagit down river from the Gorge Dam. Proposed around the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Copper Creek project was eventually shelved by Seattle when a formidable opposition of tribes, environmentalists, and government entities arose to stop it. The dam would have been located in a very productive salmon-spawning area of the Skagit, which was also a highly popular spot for wintering bald eagles. Recent environmental legislation and Indian fishing rights weighed heavily in favor of the dam's opponents, and City Light suspended the project as a result. This topic will be covered in more detail in a later section. See Richard Rutz, "Relicensing the Skagit Project: The City of Seattle's Approach," *George Wright Forum* vol. 9, no. 2 (1992): 11-12.

The project would have raised the height of Ross Dam by approximately 125 feet, completing the fourth stage in the dam's design. In addition, High Ross would have raised the level of Ross Lake from an elevation of 1,600 feet above sea level to approximately 1,725 feet above seal level.


8 For an insightful essay on the "persistence of wilderness" around a reservoir, see Jared Farmer, "Field Notes: Glen Canyon and the Persistence of Wilderness," Western Historical Quarterly 27 (Summer 1996): 211-222.

North Cascades NP: Contested Terrain: North Cascades National Park Service Complex: An Administrative History (Notes)

paradox, that the agency's mandate is clearly preservation. Robin Winks, "Dispelling the Myth," National Parks (July/August 1996): 52-53.


11Public Law 90-544.


16This is not to say that the Park Service did not care for the Big Beaver Valley or other natural areas in the flood zone. Reflecting on the issue, Superintendent Roger Contor, for example, noted that he and other Park Service officials knew they had to save Big Beaver. In fact, Contor attempted to have Big Beaver studied for designation as a Research Natural Area, something U.S. Forest Service ecologists had been suggesting prior to the park complex's creation. Later, Superintendent Lowell White testified before the Federal Power Commission that while his agency had not conducted any of its own studies, it had worked closely with researchers investigating the project's environmental consequences for wildlife, fish, and forest ecosystems. The problem with this, and other research into the environmental consequences of the project, was that experts for each side tended to cancel each other out. At the time, the forest ecologist who studied the Big Beaver suggested that there were other places outside the park where similar stands of old growth western red cedar could be found, and thus the uniqueness argument lost some of its strength. In addition, Contor pointed out that there were numerous issues facing the new parkland, High Ross being one of them, and others the Park Service had more control over. Eventually, the High Ross affair would be resolved in the park's favor, he believed, given enough time. For a general overview of arguments by environmental groups during the hearings, see Kidney, "The Ross Dam Controversy."
McCloskey, "Wilderness at the Crossroads," 358-359, and Ernest M. Dickerman, "The National Park Wilderness Reviews: Lost in the Wilderness," The Living Wilderness 34 (Spring 1970): 40-49. Wilderness thresholds were an outgrowth of the Park Service's rather reluctant acceptance of the Wilderness Act in 1964, which the Park Service considered a distraction from its own preservation mission.

U.S. Department of Interior, Administrative Policies for Natural Areas of the National Park System (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1970), 33, 76-83. As Park Service Director George B. Hartzog, Jr., believed, the recreation areas in the North Cascades would help solve the overcrowded and overdeveloped conditions plaguing the nation's great parks. Hartzog's views on the management of North Cascades can be found in the congressional hearings. See, for example, Senate, Hearings on S. 1321, 1967, 22-23.

Robert B. Moore to Gordon Vickery, August 9, 1972, administration files, file A3815, North Cascades National Park (NOCA). The park's High Ross files reveal how park managers and other agency officials came to this position as they worked with City Light on a variety of issues brought on by the new lake level. This tactic emerged out of negotiations agency officials conducted with City Light regarding their plans for recreational developments when the lake level was raised. These developments would replace existing docks, shoreline camps, part of the Hozomeen road, and trails inundated by the rising water.


For an insightful look at the Park Service policies towards recreation areas and threats to natural resources, see John C. Freemuth, Islands Under Siege: National Parks and the Politics of External Threats (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 37-84. An internal document produced by North Cascades park managers traces this evolution in thinking, too. "A Discussion of Laws Affecting the Administration of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, administrative files, L76, NOCA.

Charles H. Odegaard to Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., October 27, 1980, administrative files, file A38, NOCA.

Seattle City Light, The High Ross Treaty.


This statement perhaps overdramatizes the situation, since the nature of power needs and production continually shift, and especially since the recent relicensing of the entire Skagit Project and other events have granted the agency more authority in dealing with City Light. For more coverage of the relicensing issue, see the relevant chapter in the next section of this study. See Jonathan B. Jarvis, "Relicensing the Skagit Project: The USNPS' Approach," George Wright Forum vol. 9, no. 2 (1992): 19-30.
Chapter 8


3Susan E. Georgette and Ann H. Havery, Local Influence and the National Interest: Ten Years of National Park Service Administration in the Stehekin Valley, Washington: A Case Study, Publication No. 4, Environmental Field Program (Santa Cruz: University of California, 1980).

4Georgette and Harvey, Local Influence and the National Interest, 121-126.


6This is not to say that recreation area policies were the only policies that applied to Lake Chelan NRA. National Parks and recreation areas were governed by a number of laws and policies, ranging from those that guided the national park system to specific language pertaining to a particular park site.


8Master Plan, 25.


10For a general overview of the Park Service's early operations in Stehekin, see the 1970 master plan and the "Land Acquisition Priority List, Stehekin Valley," June 1968, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA. More specific information can be found in the correspondence contained in the above file and sections of this history for concessions and road developments. It should be noted here that several of these purchases or changes of ownership that related to the landing and valley road were the subject of controversy, or at the very least were contested. The transfer of the valley road, for example, from Chelan County to the Park Service was contested because the agency poorly maintained the road in 1969 and 1970, and those bringing the suite believed the transfer had been illegal. More important, it seems the source of the lawsuit stemmed from the fact that the agency had not removed snow from the 1.6 miles of the Company Creek Road, which it had not acquired and considered a county road and a county responsibility. Eventually, the lawsuit was settled in favor of the Park Service. On April 30, 1973, the parties agreed to a judgment in which the Stehekin Property Owners Association would drop their suit contesting the legal transfer of the Stehekin Valley Road to the Park Service for an agreement that the agency would reasonably maintain the 1.6 miles of the Company Creek Road. See notes to files, Superintendent Lowell White, April 15, 1971, and Richard G. Jeffers to United States Department of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, May 4, 1973, administrative files, file
Keeping the roadsides scenically attractive had been a main theme in national park history. When the agency took over management of the Stehekin country it noticed that residents had filled in sections of the shoreline and had also excavated alongside the road causing erosion problems and visual scarring. Superintendent Contor, for example, discovered that Chelan County had granted residents a blanket authorization to take fill material from within the road right of way. Eliminating this, as much as possible, underlay the agency's interest in the Washington State Supreme Court's recent decision, *Wilbour v. Gallagher* (1969), which would empower them to protect shorelines--inland lakes and rivers--from "objectionable landfills and structures." See Ratcliffe to Rutter, May 11, 1970, and Superintendent Roger J. Contor to Regional Director John A. Rutter, January 28, 1970, administrative files, file L24, NOCA. See also Superintendent Roger J. Contor to Chelan County Commissioners, December 11, 1969, administrative files, file D30, NOCA.

See footnote ten.


J.K. Blair (Forest Supervisor) to Donald E. Garvik, November 6, 1960, administrative files, file L38, NOCA.

Roger J. Contor to files, May 29, 1969; Roger J. Contor to files, June 20, 1969, administrative files, file L38, NOCA. The agency's position on the airstrip can be followed in the reports of the North Cascades Reconnaissance Task Force meetings, March 16 and April 21, 1971. The Park Service seems to have agreed to continue the special use permit because the airport was an established use in the recreation area and small planes, landing and taking off within a recreation area, were considered compatible with recreation area policies.


Public Law 90-544, which created the park complex, contains language regarding land acquisition policies under Title III, Sections 301-303. Other information relevant to the agency's land acquisition policies can be found in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Authorizing the Establishment of North Cascades National Park, the Ross Lake National Recreation Area, the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area...and for Other Purposes*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967, S. Rept. 700, 3-7. Hartzog's statement can be found in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, *Hearings on S. 1321, A Bill to Establish North Cascades National Park...*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967, 631. This testimony, one of several Hartzog gave, was incorporated into S. Rept. 700, 4.

These policies are set down in S. Rept. 700, 5-6.
21 For the agency's interpretation of land acquisition in the park complex's recreation areas, see Roger W. Pegues to John Rutter, October 14, 1968, administrative files, file L58, NOCA.

22 National Park Service, Division of Lands, A Report by the National Park Service on the Past and Proposed Land Acquisitions in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (Seattle: National Park Service, 1993), 6-19. This document, written in response to a Senate request, is an excellent summary of the Park Service's interpretation of its land acquisition program in Lake Chelan NRA.

23 Ibid. See also, "Land Acquisition Priority List, Stehekin Valley," June 1968, for names associated with the properties.

24 See, for example, Superintendent Roger J. Contor to Chief, Congressional Services (National Park Service), August 15, 1969, administrative files, file A3615, NOCA. Personal interview with Roger J. Contor and Lowell White.

25 Stehekin Newsletter, December 24, 1964, Interpretation and Information, box 4, file 8, North Cascades National Park Service Complex Archives (NOCA Archives).

26 Stehekin Newsletter, November 1970, box 4, file 8, NOCA Archives. In this newsletter Contor welcomes the formation of SPOA. He also addresses some of the tensions with the community, tensions which puzzled him because he believed that relations were good with Stehekin residents. It was apparent, however, that residents did not take a liking to many of the new policies, such as the parking regulations, which provided that overnight parking would have to be on private land away from the landing, a policy later changed.

27 Grant McConnell, "Five Years of National Park Service Administration in the North Cascades," The Wild Cascades (December/January 1973-1974): 9-11. McConnell's correspondence with the park administration was fairly extensive and provides a good record of a preservationist's perspective (as well as a Stehekin landowners' views) of Park Service policies. See, for example, Grant McConnell to Russell Dickenson, August 5, 1978, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

28 McConnell, "Five Years of National Park Service Administration in the North Cascades," 11-12.

29 McConnell, 13-14, quotation from 14.

30 "The Park That Ruffled the Calm Along Stehekin's Shore," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, October 28, 1973. Byrd's problems with the Park Service can be found in the section on concessions.

Chapter 9

Lowell White to Regional Director, December 5, 1973, administrative files, file A80, NOCA.


Doug Williams to J. Rouse, April 10, 1985, (telephone message record), administrative files, file A8027, NOCA; John Reynolds to Regional Director, July 2, 1987, administrative files, file A80, NOCA.

John Reynolds to Acting Regional Director, April 29, 1986, administrative files, file A8027, NOCA.

David Pugh to Regional Director, October 12, 1988; J.D. MacWilliams to Forest Supervisor, March 5, 1990, administrative files, file A8027, NOCA.

John Reynolds to Regional Director, July 2, 1987. In the late 1980s, the park staff consisted of an archaeologist, geologist, aquatic ecologist, and cultural resource management specialist, to name some.

Keith Miller to Regional Director, June 12, 1979, administrative files, file A64, NOCA; "Superintendent's Annual Report, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1979," box 1, file 11, NOCA Archives.

John Reynolds to Regional Director, August 30, 1988, administrative files, file A64, NOCA. Telephone interview with John Reynolds, October 21, 1996.

Jerry Lee to Skagit District Manager, February 5, 1988, administrative files, file A64, NOCA.


"North Cascades 20: Direction to the Future," attached to Memorandum, Superintendent John Reynolds to Park Staff, September 18, 1985, administrative files, file A64, NOCA. (Hereafter cited as "North Cascades 20.")


Ibid.

Ibid., 3.

Ibid.

John Reynolds to Ed [Wayburn], October 11, 1987, administrative files, no file code, NOCA.

Briefing Statement, North Cascades National Park, April 4, 1988, administrative files, file
Chapter 10


3The Conservation Foundation, National Parks for a New Generation, 251.

4Ibid., 252-254.

5Ibid.


7Keith M. Watkins to Regional Director, April 1, 1975, Lloyd Meeds Papers, box 63, file [North Cascades National Park], University of Washington.

8Watkins to Regional Director, April 1, 1975. Widing's visions of profit could be seen in his purchase of the claims on December 18, 1972, several months after the Park Service had completed its appraisals.


11Ibid. I have concluded that the mine owners were interested in the "threat" of mining as a way to force the government's hand from former Superintendent Lowell White. Personal interview with Lowell White, July 19, 1996. "Bid to Log in National Park Will Get Scrutiny," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, October 24, 1975.


D66, NOCA. Reynolds interview, October 21, 1996.

19Ibid.


16 North Cascades National Park Service Complex, "Land Protection Plan: North Cascades National Park," 1983 (draft), 15-16. Lake Anne was an additional parcel lying on the park's boundary; the rest of it lay within national forest. Around ten acres of it was within the park. According to the 1990 land protection plan, the parcel was no longer a factor, apparently having been purchased or acquired in some other way by the Forest Service.


21 See, for example, Dan Allen to David Malsed, May 25, 1984, file Y34, Webster file.


23 James Rouse to Regional Director, July 1, 1985; William J. Briggle to Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, July 9, 1985, file L1415, Webster file.

24 Harlan F. Hobbs to William C. Webster, August 30, 1985, file L1425.


29 Harlan F. Hobbs to John C. Webster, September 14, 1987, file L1425.

30 William C. Webster to Internal Revenue Service, October 22, 1987; Michael J. Montemurro to William C. Webster, May 3, 1988, Webster file.

Although the record is not clear, it seems that the venture failed because it involved satisfying Park Service requirements, especially since this section of the park had been officially designated wilderness in 1988. It also involved meeting the requirements of Skagit County—such as permits for land use and sewage systems.

William C. Webster to Bruce F. Vento, August 10, 1990, Webster file.

William C. Webster to John Earnst, September 18, 1991, Webster files.


Wagner telephone notes.


Ibid.


Harvey Manning, Conservation and Conflict, 144.

Georgette and Harvey, Local Influence and the National Interest, 83-85.


The Conservation Foundation, National Parks for a New Generation: Visions, Realities, Prospects (Washington, D.C.: The Conservation Foundation, 1985), 251-252. See also, Keith E. Miller to Mr. and Mrs. Stuart B. Avery, Jr., October 2, 1978, administrative files, file L14, NOCA.


48The Conservation Foundation, National Parks for a New Generation, 254. See also NPIA material attached to White to Regional Director, May 5, 1978, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.


50Lowell White to [Stehekin Residents], May 1, 1978, administrative files, file L14; "Stehekin Valley, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area: Land Acquisition Discussion," May 1, 1978, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.

51Chelan County Planning Department, "Chelan County Planning Notes," October 12, 1978.

52Quoted from Georgette and Harvey, Local Influence and the National Interest, 97.

53Chelan County Planning Department, Stehekin Plan (Draft), 1979, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.


55"Statement of Russell E. Dickenson, Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, National Park Service, at Chelan County Planning Commission Meeting," October 6, 1979, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.

56Ibid.

57Ibid.

58Ibid.

59Russell E. Dickenson to Michael R. Sherwood, November 2, 1979, administrative files, file A6423, NOCA.

60William S. Curtiss to Russell Dickenson, July 9, 1979, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

61Curtiss to Dickenson, July 9, 1979. Grant McConnell to Russell Dickenson, August 5, 1978; Russell Dickenson to Grant McConnell, September 1, 1978, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

62Curtiss to Dickenson, July 9, 1979.

63Ibid.

64Dickenson to Sherwood, November 2, 1979.

65National Park Service, A Report by the National Park Service on the Past and Proposed Land Acquisitions in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, April 1, 1993, 22.
The GAO offered a more specific reason for selecting Lake Chelan NRA. After its review of the agency's land acquisition program, the GAO discovered that the interpretation of a park's legislation was often the source of conflicts about the Park Service's acquisition practices. The GAO's analysis of legislation for new park areas drew it to the North Cascades complex, "where interpretation of legislation is a valid point of contention." Roy J. Kirk to Russell E. Dickenson, February 21, 1980, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

General Accounting Office, Lands in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area Should Be Returned to Private Ownership, January 22,1981.

Ibid., i-v.


Daniel J. Tobin to Director, National Park Service, October 2, 1980, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA. See attachments to this report.

Tobin to Director, October 2, 1980.

Daniel J. Tobin to Director, National Park Service, March 16, 1981, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.


Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., to Friends of Stehekin, August 6, 1982, file L7617, attached to "Standards for the Compatible Use of Land in the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, Stehekin," administrative files, Lands Division. In same file see correspondence which reveals some pressure on NPS to do new standards. Russell E. Dickenson to Senator Alan Cranston, July 2, 1981, file L1425; Director, National Park Service to Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, September 1, 1981, file L7617.

According to the agency's solicitor, the agency could not enforce its standard.

This is not to say that the Forest Service did not regulate use of the lands under its jurisdiction prior to the establishment of the recreation area. The Forest Service's approach to land management was utilitarian, however, and the Park Service's approach was based on a tradition of scenic preservation, once which sought to exclude resource extraction.

Ray Courtney to Denver Service Center, Stehekin Valley Planning Team, February 13, 1978, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.


Ibid. See also Stehekin in concessions file.
81 Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee, Newsletter, c. January 1985, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.

82 "Claims for Relief, Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee," get full cite.

83 Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee, et al. v. William C. Clark, et al., August 6, 1985. Judge McNichols dismissed Courtney's claim that the Park Service had threatened to condemn his property if he did not sell, because federal law states that an action contesting the government's title to real property should take place within twelve years of the date the title is acquired. According to Judge McNichol's, at this late date Courtney was contending that he was "fraudulently induced to sell." And in such cases, the federal government has "specifically declined to waive sovereign immunity." Courtney's claim does not seem as concrete as he stated. He offered his property to the Park Service first in January 1969, but years later claimed the agency harassed him into selling that summer. It should also be noted that Courtney was not considered an official plaintiff, either, having added his name to the suit too late. See Curt Courtney to Roger J. Contor, January 29, 1969, administrative files, file L1425, Lands Division; "Former Lodge Owner No 'Willing Seller' to Park Service," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, August 4, 1992.

84 News Release, Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee, October 7, 1985; Newsletter, Stehekin Heritage Defense Committee, October 1985, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.

85 Esther Courtney, [form letter], November 28, 1984, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

86 Grant McConnell to William Penn Mott, August 19, 1985, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

87 Ibid. Patrick D. Goldsworthy to Dan Evans, August 31, 1985; Patricia Hammett, August 17, 1985, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

88 John J. Reynolds to Regional Director, March 31, 1987, administrative files, file A6419, NOCA.


92 Manning, Conservation and Conflict, 157-165.

93 John Reynolds to Ed [Wayburn], October 11, 1987, administrative files, no file code, NOCA.

94 Manning, Conservation and Conflict, 165-168. Although the lawsuit was filed on the legal point of lack of compliance with NEPA regulations, a deeper issue was that the Park Service
was not conducting planning with appropriate baseline information. As part of the negotiated consent decree, mentioned below, Resource Management Chief Jonathan Jarvis saw that the collection of baseline information was included as a way to get his own agency to collect date.


96 Quoted in Manning, 167-168.

97 Personal interview with William Paleck, April 17, 1998.


100 Fluharty to Paleck, November 16, 1992.

101 "A Discussion of Laws Affecting the Administration of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area," May 13, 1992, administrative files, file L76, NOCA.


103 Personal interview with William Paleck.


**Chapter 11**

1 Roger J. Contor to John M. Nelson, April 17, 1970, administrative files, file A38; Rod Pegeus to John Rutter, December 21, 1971, administrative files, file A3815, North Cascades National Park Service Complex.

2 City Light's license for the Skagit Project expired on October 27, 1977.
Daniel J. Tobin to Superintendent, April 23, 1984, administrative files, file L30, NOCA.

Daniel J. Tobin to Regional Solicitor, February 22, 1985, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.


Rutz, "Relicensing the Skagit Project," 12.

Rutz, 11-12.


David Fluharty and Patrick Goldsworthy to Randall Hardy, November 29, 1985; Randall W. Hardy to North Cascades Conservation Council, April 28, 1986, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

Richard L. Winters to Associate Director, National Park Service, June 3, 1986, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

John J. Reynolds to Randall W. Hardy, August 31, 1987; Dean L. Shumway to Randall W. Hardy, October 31, 1988, administrative files, file A3815, NOCA.

Jon Jarvis to Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, January 13, 1989, administrative files, file A3815, NOCA.


The fisheries studies funded by Seattle City Light looked primarily at ways to resolve problems with rapid fluctuations in river levels created by discharges from the Gorge Powerhouse.

Charles H. Odegaard to Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, August 20, 1990; "Preliminary Agreement--Skagit River Hydroelectric Project No. 533," September 30, 1990, administrative files, file L7619, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, FERC No. 533, Columbia Cascades Support Office (CCSO). City of Seattle, *Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, FERC No. 533, Offer of Settlement*, April 1, 1991, 1-4. Charles H. Odegaard to Director, National Park Service, May 1, 1991; Seattle City Light News Release, June 3, 1991, administrative files, file H30, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO. The City of Seattle drafted an agreement with the Nlaka'pamux Nation in March 1992 which focused on traditional cultural properties. Ultimately, it seems that the First Nation's presence in the proceedings was more of an advisory role. City Light allowed them to join even though they did not have legal standing as a way to keep the process in motion. Moreover, none of
the federal agencies signed the agreement between the city and the Indian group because it would have constituted an international treaty and required State Department involvement. Personal interview with William Paleck, April 17, 1998. See also Susan K. Driver to Charles Odegaard, March 13, 1992, administrative files, Cultural Resources Division, Columbia Cascades Support Office.

17 Offer of Settlement, 6-19.

18 Personal Interview with Jon Jarvis, July 11, 1996.

19 Keith Kurko to Ron Hyra, January 25, 1991, facsimile transmittal, administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

20 Charles H. Odegaard to Lois Cashell, February 20, 1991, administrative files, file L7619, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

21 "FERC Issues Cumulative Assessments of Skagit, Nooksack Basins," Hydro-Wire, January 13, 1992, in administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

22 Barbara Scott-Brier to Lois D. Cashell, April 19, 1994, administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

23 Seattle City Light, et al., to the Commissioners, May 12, 1995; George T. Frampton, Jr., to Elizabeth Anne Moler, May 15, 1995, administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

24 Elizabeth A. Moler to Norman B. Rice, May 24, 1995, administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

25 William H. Patton to Lois Cashell, June 14, 1995, administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.


28 North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Briefing Statement, January 17, 1995, administrative files, Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

29 Technically, the park got the services of an archaeologist for the archaeological survey and evaluation as part of the mitigation negotiation and agreement. Until the professionalization initiative of the mid-1990s, the archaeologist's position was in the regional office and duty-stationed at the park.

30 Jarvis interview.

32Barbara Scott-Brier to Bill Walters, July 31, 1995, administrative files, Newhalem Creek Hydroelectric Project, CCSO.

33Barbara Scott-Brier to Bill Walters, July 31, 1995.


35Ibid.


38Daniel L. Allen to Superintendent, November 13, 1987, administrative files, file L54, NOCA.


40David A. Watts to Regional Director, July 30, 1981, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

41Allen to Superintendent, November 13, 1987; Keith E. Miller to Regional Director, June 14, 1982, administrative files, file L54, NOCA.

42Richard L. Winters to Keith E. Miller, June 23, 1982, administrative files, file L7617, NOCA.

43Gina Guy to Regional Director, May 12, 1983, attached to Daniel R. Kuehn to Associate Director, May 20, 1983, administrative files, file W1823, NOCA.


45Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, to Director, National Park Service, August 25, 1983, administrative files, file L30, NOCA. David A. Watts to Director, November 4, 1983, administrative files, file L7617, NOCA.

46Watts to Director, November 4, 1983.

47"Proposed FONSI--Thornton and Damnation Creeks," attached to C. Richard Neely to Associate Regional Director, October 7, 1983, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

48C. Richard Neely to Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., June 8, 1994, attached to Regional Director,
Pacific Northwest Region, to Director, National Park Service, June 26, 1984, administrative files, file L7617, NOCA.

Allen to Superintendent, November 13, 1987, and telephone interview January 14, 1998. The Birch Creek Project's license was approved eventually, it seems.

Ibid.

Motions of intervention can be found in administrative files, file L7617, NOCA.

Charles S. Polityka to Kenneth F. Plumb, October 9, 1985; Charles S. Polityka to Kenneth F. Plumb, November 25, 1985, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

C. Richard Neely to Regional Director, September 9, 1986, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

David A. Watts to Director, July 24, 1987, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA. See also, Charles H. Odegaard to Superintendent, September 3, 1987, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.


Charles H. Odegaard to Kenneth Plumb, January 6, 1988, administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

Fred E. Springer to William L. Devine, June 22, 1988 (two letters), administrative files, file L7619, NOCA.

102 Stat. 3961.


When the Chelan County PUD applied for a minor hydropower license with the Federal Power Commission in 1966, the year it was to construct the plant, it withdrew the application and secured a special use permit from the Forest Service instead. Under authority of the power commission, the Forest Service could grant permits for such small projects. Copy of application and FERC ruling on file at North Cascades National Park.

Rod Pegues to John Rutter, December 22, 1971, administrative files, file A3815, NOCA.

Richard L. Winters to Stan Young and Mike Wright, December 4, 1974, administrative files, file L7619, Lake Chelan Hydro Project, FERC No. 637, National Park Service, Columbia Cascades Support Office (CCSO).

Maurice H. Lundy to Director, July 15, 1977, administrative files, file L7619, CCSO.

Gene L. Drais to Files, July 28, 1977, administrative files, file L7619, CCSO.

Drais to Files, July 28, 1977.
Chapter 12

1Richard W. Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 204-266. Sellars, 235, notes in error that the discussions for the first cooperative park study unit emerged out of hearings held on the establishment of North Cascades in 1970. Since the park was established in 1968, it is more likely that the discussion took place during the 1967-68 hearings and that the University of Washington research center was established in 1970.


3Sellars, 267-269.

4In its final form the policy variance permitted periodic trout stocking in naturally fishless lakes if habitat conditions were suitable and the lake had been stocked prior to October 2, 1968. Prior to any stocking, an ecological survey had to be carried out and the lake classified.

5John A. Rutter to Associate Director, National Park Service, November 18, 1975, administrative files, file N1423, North Cascades National Park Service Complex (NOCA). The policy variance was granted on September 13, 1979. See William J. Briggle to Director, National Park Service, November 5, 1985, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

6The recreation area policies were considered adequate at this time.


8David A. Watts to Director, National Park Service, December 13, 1985, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.


10William Penn Mott, Jr., to Acting Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, June 12, 1986, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

11William Penn Mott, Jr., to Acting Regional Director, June 12, 1986.

12William J. Briggle to Jack Wayland, June 27, 1986, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

13Jack S. Wayland to William Mott, Jr., July 15, 1986, administrative files, file N1423, NOCA.

In order to enjoin the state, the park needed the assistant secretary's permission, and hence another reason for his involvement.

William P. Horn to Jerry Neal, April 28, 1988, administrative files, file N1619, NOCA.

The agreement was helped in other ways. The governor replaced Wayland with a more reasonable commissioner in January 1988. The new commissioner sought legal advice and realized the state would lose if they went to court over the issue (see *Kleppe v. New Mexico*), so he sought an agreement.


Unless otherwise noted, the following information comes from a telephone conversation with Reed Glesne, March 5, 1998.

North Cascades National Park Service Complex, *Resource Management Plan: North Cascades National Park Service Complex* (February 15, 1994), 91. Throughout this chapter I have summarized information on the park's resource management programs in this plan which provides a topical summary of each program.

There is some evidence that at least one species of salmon made it through the gorge. Bull trout and other native fish which colonized the upper reaches of the Skagit made it past thousands of years ago.

This point deserves some clarification. It is true that the legislation accommodates Stehekin residents, but the language of the legislation was originally drafted for Ross Lake NRA and adapted for Stehekin once it was decided to make it part of a recreation area and not part of the national park.

Grant McConnell to Lowell White, January 20, 1972, administrative files, file N16, NOCA.

Robert Wasem to Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, December 6, 1978, administrative files, file N16, NOCA.

Keith Miller to Regional Director, February 14, 1979, administrative files, file N16, NOCA.


John J. Reynolds to Tom Courtney, December 31, 1985, administrative files, file Y38, NOCA.
29 John J. Reynolds to Tom Courtney, December 31, 1985; Curt Sauer to Files, January 15, 1986, administrative files, file Y34, NOCA.

30 Director, National Park Service, to Senator Daniel J. Evans, February 3, 1986, draft letter, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.


35 Miller's 1979 decision is recorded in Keith E. Miller to District Ranger, Stehekin District, February 3, 1983, administrative files, file L30, NOCA. Miller's soil borrow management plan can be found in Keith E. Miller to District Ranger, Stehekin District, August 31, 1981, administrative files, file L30, NOCA. An expanded version was produced in 1983.

36 Keith E. Miller to District Ranger, Stehekin District, February 3, 1983; Keith E. Miller to Roberta R. Pitts, October 8, 1981, administrative files, file L30, NOCA.


38 John J. Reynolds to Stehekin Residents and Landowners, June 25, 1987, administrative files, file N16, NOCA.

39 Public Law 100-668; 102 Stat. 3961. The North Cascades legislation pertaining to mineral resources is found in Title II, Section 206, of the law.


44 Richard G. Jeffers to Roger Contor, March 30, 1970, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

45 George Wagner to Roger Contor, April 7, 1979, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.
Richard G. Jeffers to Lowell White, November 2, 1972; Lowell White to Richard G. Jeffers, November 8, 1972; Richard G. Jeffers to Lowell White, November 22, 1972, administrative files, file L1425, NOCA.

Robert B. Moore to Dan Campbell, April 24, 1973, administrative files, file A38, NOCA.

Edward J. Kurtz to Henry M. Jackson, July 6, 1973, administrative files, file A38, NOCA.

Noel R. Poe to Dan Allen, October 13, 1982, administrative files, file D3219, NOCA.

Charles H. Odegaard to Dan C. Campbell, November 28, 1990, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.


Richard Sellars, Preserving Nature in the National Parks, 276.


On air quality in the Park Service, see, for example, David Joseph, "Air...A Natural Resource," Trends 27(4), (1990): 22-23.


67 Ibid.

68 Jonathan Jarvis to Superintendent, May 23, 1988, administrative files, file H18, NOCA; John R. Earnst to Regional Director, October 24, 1988, administrative files, file A2623, NOCA. The current collections facility, with its administrative offices, was evidently preceded by another facility.

69 The fact that there was money from Seattle City Light to conduct archaeological surveys in the drawdown during relicensing was also key.

70 Personal interview with Robert Mierendorf, February 20, 1997.


72 Mierendorf interview.

73 As part of the memorandum of understanding with Seattle City Light to assist in the documentation of cultural resources associated with and affected by the Skagit Project, the regional office cultural resource staff directed the preparation of National Register documentation and Historic American Engineering Record recordation of the Skagit Project. This technical assistance was carried out as part of the federal preservation program responsibilities of the Park Service under the 1996 National Historic Preservation Act.

74 Telephone interview with Jesse Kennedy, May 20, 1998.

Chapter 13

1 Personal interview with John J. Reynolds, October 21, 1996.

2 John J. Reynolds to Regional Director, November 12, 1987, administrative files, file D30, North Cascades National Park Service Complex (NOCA).


5 Ibid.


7 General Management Plan, 1988, 23. Reynolds interview.
8See Superintendent's Annual Reports for North Cascades National Park Service Complex for the years 1989-1992, administrative files, file A2621, NOCA.

9Superintendent's Annual Reports for North Cascades National Park Service Complex for the years 1975-1983.


12Edgar Wayburn to John Reynolds, December 15, 1987, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.

13National Park Service, "Comments Analysis: North Cascades Visitor Center, Environmental Learning Center, and Ross Lake/Happy Flat Overlook," c. 1989, administrative files, file D18, NOCA.

14John J. Reynolds to David Louter, October 29, 1998, administrative files, file H1417, NOCA.


16"Comments Analysis: North Cascades Visitor Center."

17David A. Pugh to Regional Director, October 6, 1988, administrative files, file K18, NOCA. See also, John J. Reynolds to Files, April 11, 1988, administrative files, file D66, NOCA. For a list of earlier proposed sites, see John R. Douglass, "Report of Visitor Center Team Meetings," September 5, 1985, administrative files, file A26, NOCA.

18David A. Pugh to Regional Director, October 6, 1988.

19Charles H. Odegaard to Under Secretary, Department of the Interior, January 25, 1989, administrative files, file D66, NOCA.


24In the text below I summarize and analyze these two documents: National Park Service, **General Management Plan, 1988** and National Park Service, **Final General Management Plan, 1988**.


26Michael J. Tollefson to James N. Hall, June 22, 1993, administrative files, file D30, NOCA. Charles H. Odegaard to Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, August 9, 1993, administrative files, file L7617, NOCA.

27William F. Paleck to Sandy Walker, July 28, 1997, administrative files, file D30, NOCA.

28See Chapter 8.


30John J. Reynolds to William H. Hamilton, March 14, 1985; John J. Reynolds to Regional Director, January 19, 1988, administrative files, file L38, NOCA.


32See, for example, "North Cascades Lodge" file in administrative files, file C38, NOCA. See also "North Cascades Lodge," in the annual concession performance evaluations for 1983-1989 in administrative files, file A2621, NOCA.

33Ibid.


35Hank Warren to Regional Chief of Interpretation, September 2, 1977, administrative files, file K18, NOCA.


38John J. Reynolds, "North Cascades 20: Direction to the Future," (draft) September 18, 1985, administrative files, file A64, NOCA.

39Superintendent's Annual Reports for North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1985-1991, administrative files, file A2621, NOCA. James S. Rouse to Staff Interpretive Specialist, March 31, 1988, administrative files, file K18, NOCA.
Chapter 14


2Congressional Record--Senate, March 15, 1988, S2261.

3Personal interview with John J. Reynolds, October 21, 1996.

4Public Law 100-668; 102 Stat. 3961.

5Personal interview with Jonathan Jarvis, July 11, 1996.


8Ibid. Quotation from 13.

9John J. Reynolds to Sara Schreiner Kendall, April 15, 1988, administrative files, file L48, North Cascades National Park Service Complex (NOCA).

10Lillian Byerly to Sid Morrison, May 2, 1988; John J. Reynolds to Regional Director, May 23, 1988, administrative files, file L48, NOCA.

11Reynolds to Regional Director, May 23, 1988.

12John R. Earnst to Dan Evans, December 16, 1988, administrative files, file L48, NOCA.

13Briefing statement, Stephen Mather Wilderness, c. 1988, administrative files, file L48, NOCA. Reynolds interview. For more information on Reynolds' reorganization, see discussion in the chapter on administration in part three of the document.


16Ibid., 12-13.


18Joseph Miller, "Touch the Wilderness Gently!," 13-14.

19Miller, 14. North Cascades National Park Service Complex, State of the Stephen Mather Wilderness, 1994, chapter 7, 4. John J. Reynolds to David Louter, October 29, 1998, administrative files, file H1417, NOCA. Reynolds believes that the institute is "the best educational association in the NPS...focusing on young people's ability to invent and achieve." Nature and heritage education "based on parks is the best way to let a nation know what exists."


21Miller, 15-16.


25State of the Stephen Mather Wilderness, chapter 6, 4.

Chapter 15


3Roger J. Contor to Director, October 12, 1970, administrative files, file A3817, NOCA; Harry W. Wills to Superintendent, October 6, 1972, administrative files, file A40, NOCA; Edward J. Kurtz to Norman Peterson, July 2, 1975, administrative files, file A3817, NOCA.
4Roger Contor to Patrick Goldsworthy, July 2, 1972; Patrick D. Goldsworthy to John Rutter, June 16, 1971, administrative files, file A3817, NOCA.

5See the chapter on the High Ross issue and the Park Service's response to it for more information on this topic. Edward J. Kurtz to Norman Person, July 2, 1975, administrative files, file A3817, NOCA.

6Briefing Statement, Ross Lake Treaty--Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission, March 7, 1988, administrative files, file A38, NOCA.

7"Canada May Add to North Cascades National Park," Seattle Post-Intelligencer October 5, 1989. General Management Plan, 8. James S. Rouse to Bruce Brydon, June 22, 1989, administrative files, file A38, NOCA. Park Service officials were considering a regional management proposal for the North Cascades called the Greater North Cascades Ecosystem but determined that such a title carried too much baggage, and decided to promote interagency and thus regional park management by simply referring to the area as the North Cascades. See John J. Reynolds to Ivan Miller, April 21, 1987, administrative files, file A64, NOCA.


9Nancy E. Stromsem to Al Swift, October 21, 1994, administrative files, file A38, NOCA.


13Richard L. Fowler to Scott Gudgeon, December 3, 1976; David A. Gantz to Richard L. Fowler, March 3, 1977, Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Acc#84-0006, FRC#37277, file L48, National Archives--Pacific Northwest Region. By 1990, the border clearing and monument marking it were listed in the National Register of Historic Places for their cultural significance and thus suggested the need for their preservation.

14Robert C. Haraden to Regional Director, April 6, 1984, administrative files, file A40, NOCA. Keith E. Miller to Regional Director, February 29, 1984, administrative files, file A3815, NOCA.
Map of North Cascades National Park Complex. (click on image for a PDF version)
The bold outline shows the study area for the "Ice Peaks" national park in the late 1930s, extending for the entire range in Washington State. (click on image for a PDF version)
The bold outline shows the North Cascades Study Team's proposal for a North Cascades National Park, 1965. (click on image for a PDF version)
Three of the most influential political figures in the history of the North Cascades. From left to right are Senator Henry M. Jackson, Representative Lloyd Meeds, and Senator Warren G. Magnuson. (Person in rear is unidentified.) Together they would help shape the park complex as it was known today. In this posed shot, taken around 1967, they survey a map of the proposed route of Highway 20, which they vowed to support. (Courtesy of the University of Washington)
North Cascades National Park Established. President Lyndon B. Johnson shares a lighter moment with Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, far left, and Senator Henry M. Jackson, next to Johnson, and others after signing the North Cascades Act into law on October 2, 1968. (Courtesy of the University of Washington)

First Superintendent. After the signing of the North Cascades Act, Senator Henry M. Jackson poses with Roger J. Contor, the park's first superintendent. Jackson is pointing to Ross Lake National Recreation Area. (Courtesy of the University of Washington)
Appendix A

Superintendents

Roger J. Contor 1968-1970
W. Lowell White 1970-1978
Keith E. Miller 1978-1984
John J. Reynolds 1984-1988
John R. Earnst 1988-1992
William F. Paleck 1992-
Appendix B

Legislation and Treaty Documents

1. An act to establish the North Cascades National Park and Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas, to designate the Pasayten Wilderness and to modify the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area, in the State of Washington, and for other purposes. Approved October 2, 1968.


Public Law 90-544

October 2, 1968
[S. 1321]

AN ACT

To establish the North Cascades National Park and Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas, to designate the Pasayten Wilderness and to modify the Glacier Peak Wilderness, in the State of Washington, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I - NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK

Establishment.

SEC. 101. In order to preserve for the benefit, use, and inspiration of present and future generations certain majestic mountain scenery, snowfields, glaciers, alpine meadows, and other unique natural features in the North Cascade Mountains of the State of Washington, there is hereby established, subject to valid existing rights, the North Cascades National Park (hereinafter referred to in this Act as the "park"). The park shall consist of the lands, waters, and interests therein within the area designated "national park" on the map entitled "Proposed Management Units, North Cascades, Washington," numbered NP-CAS-7002, and dated October 1967. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and in the office of the Chief, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.
TITLE II - ROSS LAKE AND LAKE CHELAN NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS

Establishment. Sec. 201. In order to provide for the public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of portions of the Skagit River and Ross, Diablo, and Gorge Lakes, together with the surrounding lands, and for the conservation of the scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of such lands and waters, there is hereby established, subject to valid existing rights, the Ross Lake National Recreation Area (hereinafter referred to in this Act as the "recreation area"). The recreation area shall consist of the lands and waters within the area designated "Ross Lake National Recreation Area" on the map referred to in section 101 of this Act.

SEC. 202. In order to provide for the public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of portions of the Stehekin River and Lake Chelan, together with the surrounding lands, and for time conservation of the scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of such lands and waters, there is hereby established, subject to valid existing rights, the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (hereinafter referred to in this Act as the "recreation area"). The recreation area shall consist of the lands and waters within the area designated "Lake Chelan National Recreation Area" on the map referred to in section 101 of this Act.

TITLE III - LAND ACQUISITION

SEC. 301. Within the boundaries of the park and recreation areas, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") may acquire lands, waters, and interests therein by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange, except that he may not acquire any such interests within the recreation areas without the consent of the owner, so long as the lands are devoted to uses compatible with the purposes of this Act. Lands owned by the State of Washington or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation. Federal property within the boundaries of the park and recreation areas is hereby transferred to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for administration by him as part of the park and recreation areas. The national forest land within such boundaries is hereby eliminated from the national forests within which it was heretofore located.

SEC. 302. In exercising his authority to acquire property by exchange, the Secretary may accept title to any non-Federal property within the boundaries of the park and recreation areas and in exchange therefor he may convey to the grantor of such property any federally owned property under his jurisdiction in the State of Washington which he classifies as suitable for exchange or other disposal. The values of the properties so exchanged either shall be approximately equal, or if they are not approximately equal the values shall be equalized by the payment of cash to the grantor or to the Secretary as the circumstances require.

SEC. 303. Any owner of property acquired by the Secretary which on the date of acquisition is used for agricultural or single-family residential purposes, or for commercial purposes which he finds are compatible with the use and development of the park or the recreation areas, may, as a
condition of such acquisition, retain the right of use and occupancy of the
property for the same purposes for which it was used on such date, for a
period ending at the death of the owner or the death of his spouse,
whichever occurs later, or for a fixed term of not to exceed twenty-five
years, whichever the owner may elect. Any right so retained may during its
existence be transferred or assigned. Any right so retained may be
terminated by the Secretary at any time after the date upon which any use
of the property occurs which he finds is a use other than one which existed
on the date of acquisition. In the event the Secretary terminates a right of
use and occupancy under this section, he shall pay to the owner of the
right the fair market value of the portion of said right which remains
unexpired on the date of termination.

TITLE IV - ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

SEC. 401. The Secretary shall administer the park in accordance with the
supplemented.

Sec. 402. (a) The Secretary shall administer the recreation areas in a
manner which in his judgment will best provide for (1) public outdoor
recreation benefits; (2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other
values contributing to public enjoyment: and (3) such management,
utilization, and disposal of renewable natural resources and the
continuation of such existing uses and developments as will promote or are
compatible with, or do not significantly impair, public recreation and
conservation of the scenic, scientific, historic, or other values contributing
to public enjoyment. In administering the recreation areas, the Secretary
may utilize such statutory authorities pertaining to the administration of the
national park system, and such statutory authorities otherwise available to
him for the conservation and management of natural resources as he deems
appropriate for recreation and preservation purposes and for resource
development compatible therewith.

(b) The lands within the recreation areas, subject to valid existing rights,
are hereby withdrawn from location, entry, and patent under the United
States mining laws. The Secretary, under such reasonable regulations as he
deems appropriate, may permit the removal of the nonleasable minerals
from lands or interest in lands within the recreation areas in the manner
prescribed by section 10 of the Act of August 4, 1939, as amended (53
Stat. 1196; 43 U.S.C. 387), and he may permit the removal of leasable
minerals from lands or interests in lands within the recreation areas in
accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of February 25, 1920, as
amended (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.), or the Acquired Lands Mineral Leasing
Act of August 7, 1947 (30 U.S.C. 351 et seq.), if he finds that such
disposition would not have significant adverse effects on the administration
of the recreation areas.

(c) All receipts derived from permits and leases issued on lands or interests
in lands within the recreation areas under the Mineral Leasing Act of
February 25, 1920, as amended, or the Acquired Lands Mineral Leasing
Act of August 7, 1947, shall be disposed of as provided in the applicable
Act; and receipts from the disposition of non leasable minerals within the
recreation areas shall be disposed of in the same manner as moneys
received from the sale of public lands.
(d) The Secretary shall permit hunting and fishing on lands and waters under his jurisdiction within the boundaries of the recreation areas in accordance with applicable laws of the United States and of the State of Washington, except that the Secretary may designate zones where, and establish periods when, no hunting or fishing shall be permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, fish and wildlife management, or public use and enjoyment. Except in emergencies, any regulations of the Secretary pursuant to this section shall be put into effect only after consultation with the Department of Game of the State of Washington.

(e) The Secretary shall not permit the construction or use of any road within the park which would provide vehicular access from the North Cross State Highway to the Stehekin Road. Neither shall he permit the construction or use of any permanent road which would provide vehicular access between May Creek and Hozomeen along the east side of Ross Lake.

TITLE V - SPECIAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. The distributive shares of the respective counties of receipts from the national forests from which the national park and recreation areas are created, as paid under the provisions of the Act of May 23, 1908 (35 Stat. 260), as amended (16 U.S.C. 500), shall not be effected by the elimination of lands from such national forests by the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 502. Where any Federal lands included in the park or recreation areas are legally occupied or utilized on the effective date of this Act for any purpose, pursuant to a contract, lease, permit, or license issued or authorized by any department establishment, or agency of the United States, the Secretary shall permit the persons holding such privileges to continue in the exercise thereof, subject to the terms and conditions thereof, for the remainder of the term of the contract, lease, permit, or license or for such longer period of time as the Secretary deems appropriate.

SEC. 503. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect adversely or to authorize any Federal agency to take any action that would affect adversely any rights or privileges of the State of Washington in property within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area which is being utilized for the North Cross State Highway.

SEC. 504. Within two years from the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall agree on the designation of areas within the park or recreation areas or within national forests adjacent to the park and recreation areas needed for public use facilities and for administrative purposes by the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior, respectively. The are as so designated shall be administered in a manner that is mutually agreeable to the two Secretaries, and such public use facilities, including interpretive centers, visitor contact stations, lodges, campsites, and ski lifts, shall be constructed according to a plan agreed upon by the two Secretaries.

SEC. 505. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to supersede, repeal,

SEC. 506. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act, but not more than $3,500,000 shall be appropriated for the acquisition of lands or interest in lands.

TITLE VI - WILDERNESS

SEC. 601. (a) In order to further the purposes of the Wilderness Act, there is hereby designated, subject to valid existing rights, the Pasayten Wilderness within and as a part of the Okanogan National Forest and the Mount Baker National Forest, comprising an area of about five hundred thousand acres lying east of Ross Lake, as generally depicted in the area designated as "Pasayten Wilderness" on the map referred to in section 101 of this Act.

(b) The previous classification of the North Cascades Primitive Area is hereby abolished.

SEC. 602. The boundaries of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, an area classified as such more than thirty days before the effective date of the Wilderness Act and being within and a part of the Wenatchee National Forest and the Mount Baker National Forest, subject to valid existing rights, are hereby extended to include portions of the Suiattle River corridor and the White Chuck River corridor on the western side thereof, comprising areas totaling about ten thousand acres, as depicted in the area designated as "Additions to Glacier Peak Wilderness" on the map referred to in section 101 of this Act.

SEC. 603. (a) As soon as practicable after this Act takes effect, the Secretary of Agriculture shall file a map and legal description of the Pasayten Wilderness and of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, as hereby modified, with the Interior and Insular Affairs Committees of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, and such descriptions shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act: Provided, however, That correction of clerical or typographical errors in such legal descriptions and maps may be made.

(b) Upon the filing of the legal descriptions and maps as provided for in subsection (a) of this section the Pasayten Wilderness and the additions to the Glacier Peak Wilderness shall be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with the provisions of the Wilderness Act and thereafter shall be subject to the provisions of the Wilderness Act governing areas designated by that Act as wilderness areas, except that any reference in such provisions to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the effective date of this Act.

SEC. 604. Within two years from the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall review the area within the North Cascades National Park, including the Picket Range area and the Eldorado Peaks area and shall report to the president, in accordance with subsections 3(c) and 3(d) of the Wilderness Act (78 Stat. 890; 16 U.S.C. 1132 (c) and (d)), his recommendation as to the suitability or nonsuitability of any area.
within the park for preservation as wilderness, and any designation of any such area as a wilderness area shall be accomplished in accordance with said subsections of the Wilderness Act.

Approved October 2, 1968.

Legislative History

House Report No. 1870 accompanying H.R. 8970 (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs).
Senate Report No. 700 (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs).
Congressional Record:
Vol. 113 (1967): No. 2, considers and passed Senate.
Vol. 114 (1958):
Sept. 16, considered and passed House, amended, in lieu of H.R. 8970.
Sept. 19, Senate concurred in House amendment.

Public Law 100-668
100th Congress

PUBLIC LAW 100-668—NOV. 16, 1988

An Act

To designate wilderness within Olympic National Park, Mount Rainier National Park, and North Cascades National Park Service Complex in the State of Washington, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Washington Park Wilderness Act of 1988".

TITLE II—NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX WILDERNESS

SEC. 201. DESIGNATION.

(a) WILDERNESS.—In furtherance of the purposes of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.; 78 Stat. 890), certain lands in the North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, Washington, which—

(1) comprise approximately six hundred and thirty-four thousand six hundred and fourteen acres of wilderness, and approximately five thousand two hundred and twenty-six acres of potential wilderness additions, and

(2) are depicted on a map entitled "Wilderness Boundary, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Washington", 16 USC 1132 note.
numbered 168-60-186 and dated August 1988,

are hereby designated as wilderness and therefore as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Such lands shall be known as the Stephen Mather Wilderness.

SEC. 202. HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS.

Section 505 of the Act of October 2, 1968 (82 Stat. 930; 16 U.S.C. 90d-4) is amended as follows: strike "in the recreation areas", and insert in lieu thereof "in the lands and waters within the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission Project 553, including the proposed Copper Creek, High Ross, and Thunder Creek elements of the project; and the Newhalem Project, Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission Project 2705, within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area, the lands and waters within the Lake Chelan Project, Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission Project 637; the Company Creek small hydroelectric project at Stehekin within the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area; and existing hydrologic monitoring stations necessary for the proper operation of the hydroelectric projects listed herein".

SEC. 203. LAND ACQUISITION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES.

Section 301(a) of the Act of October 2, 1968 (82 Stat. 927; 16 U.S.C. 90b) is hereby amended to add a new subsection as follows:

"(b) The Secretary is hereby authorized to acquire, with the consent of the owner, lands outside of the authorized boundaries of North Cascades National Park Service Complex for the purpose of construction and operation of a backcountry information center not to exceed five acres. The Secretary of the Interior is further authorized to acquire with the consent of the owner, lands for the construction of a headquarters and administrative site or sites, for the North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area not to exceed ten acres. The lands so acquired shall be managed as part of the park.".

SEC. 204. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are hereby authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior such sums as may be necessary to complete the land acquisitions authorized pursuant to section 203 of this Act.

SEC. 205. RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCE USE IN RECREATION AREAS.

Section 402(a) of the Act of October 2, 1968 (82 Stat. 928; 16 U.S.C. 90c-1) is hereby amended to read as follows:

"The Secretary shall administer the recreation areas in a manner which in his judgment will best provide for (1) public outdoor recreation benefits and (2) conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment. Within that portion of the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area which is not designated as wilderness, such management, utilization, and disposal of renewable natural resources and the continuation of existing uses and developments as will promote, or are compatible with,
or do not significantly impair public recreation and conservation of the scenic, scientific, historic, or other values contributing to public enjoyment, are authorized. In administering the recreation areas, the Secretary may utilize such statutory authorities pertaining to the administration of the national park system, and such statutory authorities otherwise available to him for the conservation and management of natural resources as he deems appropriate for recreation and preservation purposes and for resource development compatible therewith. Within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area the removal and disposal of trees within power line rights-of-way are authorized as necessary to protect transmission lines, towers, and equipment; "Provided That to the extent practicable, such removal and disposal of trees shall be conducted in such a manner as to protect scenic viewsheds."

SEC. 206. MINERAL RESOURCE USE IN RECREATION AREAS.

Section 402(b) of the Act of October 2, 1968 (82 Stat. 928; 16 U.S.C. 90c-1b) is hereby amended to read as follows:

"The lands within the recreation areas, subject to valid existing rights, are hereby withdrawn from all forms of appropriation or disposal under the public land laws, including location, entry, and patent under the United States mining laws, and disposition under the United States mineral leasing laws: Provided however, That within that portion of the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area which is not designated as wilderness, sand, rock and gravel may be made available for sale to the residents of Stehekin for local use so long as such sale and disposal does not have significant adverse effects on the administration of the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area."
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