

# VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Olympic Park Associates

Founded in 1948

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Winter/Spring  
2007



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## Olympic Park Associates Back Park On Queets Road Alternative



By Donna Osseward, OPA President

The Queets Road was undercut by a rockslide at Milepost 8 on March 26, 2005. Olympic National Park was forced to close the road at the Matheny Creek Bridge. The road closure cut off the access to the Queets Campground, several boat launches, some primitive campsites, and two trailheads.

Olympic Park Associates (OPA) favorably responded to the Park's call for comments on their preferred Alternative B. This alternative would provide access from Highway 101 to the area by way of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Forest Service (FS) roads that already exist but are overgrown in some places. Using these roads reduces the potential for harm to the valuable fish and salmon habitat that is possible if they try to repair the current road at the slide. This also reduces the chances that river floods would block access again because they do not run along the river's edge.

While the Park Service has called Alterna-

alternative B an interim solution, OPA feels this is the best long-term solution both for park visitors and for the fish and wildlife of the Queets area of the Park. In our statement, we also requested that the Park Service consider "the decommissioning of a short segment of the current Queets road upstream of the washout to as far as the boat launch. This would allow a short hiking trail for recreationists and bank fisherman. It would also help to restore the natural conditions of a short stretch of the Queets River."

OPA takes the position that removing roads away from close proximity to the riverbanks of Olympic National Park rivers, wherever possible, is a good solution for preserving the fish while still providing access to the park's beauty and wildlife. Rivers naturally tend to change channels in a valley, and trying to maintain roads along river edges increases maintenance costs and the chances that road restoration will damage fish and riparian habitat.

Queets River & Mt. Olympus. Photo by Bob Kaune.

## OPA Board Meetings:

**Next:** March 28, May 23

**Time:** 6:00 p.m..

**Place:** Kingston Community Center

**Please join us.** OPA members are always welcome at Board meetings.

**The regular OPA Board meetings** are in the Kingston Community Center on the 4th Wednesday of odd-numbered months, except for Thanksgiving, and no meeting in July.

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From this number you can reach any member of the US Senate or House of Representatives.

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Fax: 202-224-0238

Seattle: 206-553-5545

E-mail: [Senator\\_Murray@murray.senate.gov](mailto:Senator_Murray@murray.senate.gov)

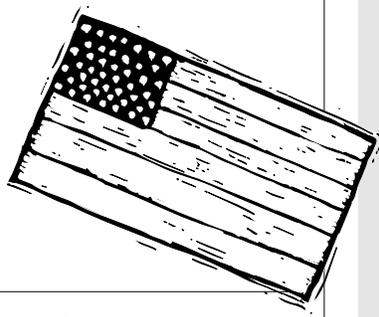
#### Senator Maria Cantwell

Phone (DC): 202-224-3441

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# More Than 500 Respond to Park's Draft General Management Plan

by Tim McNulty, OPA Board

Olympic National Park logged more than 500 responses to its draft general management plan this past fall. The park's preferred alternative received only tepid support, but the majority of respondents sounded off on a host of issues — from boundary expansions and public access to wild rivers and ecosystem restoration.

Among the respondents were 16 local, state and federal agencies, six tribes, 48 organizations and hundreds of individuals. Olympic Park Associates (OPA) coordinated participation from conservation organizations and individuals, and many of the points we raised in our education and outreach efforts received popular support among respondents (see *Olympic National Park General Management Plan Needs Your Help, Voice of the Wild Olympics*, Summer, 2006).

On the other hand, responses from local governments, chambers of commerce, timber companies, and tribes were nearly unanimous in opposing any boundary expansions — either by the park or those proposed by OPA. Even the modest expansions in the park's preferred alternative drew ire from the timber industry and local officials. And a block of responses from the Forks area opposed any additional conservation measures at all. The outcry was reminiscent of one 30 years ago on the peninsula when the bill adding the six-mile coastal area north of Ozette to the park was signed into law. Included in the act were Shi Shi Beach, Point of the Arches, and the eastern shore of Lake Ozette. Congressman Don Bonker, who sponsored the bill in the House, was censured by the Clallam County Democratic Party, and the wrath of local condemnation was visited upon the heads of politicians, park staff, and conservationists alike. But the widespread economic hardship predicted didn't happen then (park visitation shot up by over a million in the intervening years) and it certainly won't happen with this modest proposal.

Fortunately, boundary adjustments to national treasures like Olympic National Park are determined by Congress, which represents all the people of the United States, not the economic aspirations of a few small towns.

## Can Loggers Do It Better?

One objection to park expansions raised by timber companies and their allies deserves discussion. Numerous respondents from the peninsula's West End asserted that there is no need for the park to acquire sensitive watershed lands (from willing sellers) because new heightened logging practices are more than adequate to protect aquatic habitats and restore threatened salmon stocks.

Merrill & Ring Timber Company executive Norm Schaff wrote that boundary expansions are unnecessary because "recent changes to the Forest Practices Act and accompanying Habitat Conservation Plan[s]... are designed to protect water quality and fish habitat to comply with federal Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act requirements."

Although these sentiments were echoed across the board from industry respondents, they miss the mark.

## Flawed Forest and Fish Agreement

The regulation changes Mr. Schaff and others refer to were part of the *Forest and Fish* agreement worked out with state and federal agencies in 1999 and later adopted by the Washington State Legislature. The agreement was decried by conservationists as back-room politics at best, a sellout to timber interests at its worst. At the time, 28 leading scientists wrote then-Governor Gary Locke that the *Forests and Fish* plan was "not a scientifically credible strategy to recover endangered salmon." Their assessment was later confirmed by an independent scientific review.

Scientists generally agree that a forested buffer of 200 to 250 feet is needed to adequately protect salmon streams. The *Forests and Fish* plan requires only 80 to 100 feet, and trees may be removed from much of this area. Even the government's chief science advisor during the negotiations admitted that he didn't know if this questionable approach would work.

Nonetheless, politics ruled the day over science. We citizens of Washington must now live with inadequate protections for federally listed salmon stocks. And a review just released by the Washington Department of Natural Resources documented up to 60 percent noncompliance with even these weak rules. Should this be a reason to stonewall park acquisition of critical habitat areas? It is one more reason such protections are needed.

# Big Floods Heighten Need for Olympic National Forest Road Decommissioning

Excerpted from Olympic Forest Coalition newsletter, December 2006.

By Jim Scarborough, Board Member, Olympic Park Associates and Olympic Forest Coalition

Climate instability quickly comes to mind during extreme weather events and, indeed, the floods of November would appear to support the predictions of scientists who study the effects of fossil fuel use on our weather patterns. Here in the Northwest, as in most other locales, the trend of course will be a warming one. Rain will likely fall less frequently, but more intensely, coupled with less snow falling in the higher elevations to prevent the rain from running off all at once. Our inordinately dry summer, followed by the unusual soggiessness of autumn, may well be a harbinger of what's ahead.

When powerful rainstorms strike, as well as rain-on-snow events which are becoming increasingly common, the vast network of problem roads on Olympic National Forest (ONF) takes a beating. Major washouts, slope failures, and landslides occur on multitudes of forest roads all at once, wreaking havoc on creeks, rivers, and sensitive inhabitants, like salmon that call these remarkable streams home. A very early initial assessment of roads on the ONF, as of November 16, indicates that at least 16 major routes sustained serious damage, spread across the Skokomish, Wynoochee, Satsop, Queets, and Soleduck watersheds....

To be sure, the Forest Service has recognized that many unneeded roads on the ONF need to be closed and permanently put to bed, or "decommissioned", in order to prevent watershed damage in the future. A 2003 *Access & Travel Management Plan* intends to decommission 686 miles (roughly 30%) of the ONF's problem roads. This is a great start, but federal funding in recent years has lagged far behind, to the point that

these road closure goals may take up to 40 years to accomplish – much too late for many depressed salmon runs that presently hang on by a thread.

Ironically, though, the Forest Service itself often gets in the way of its otherwise good work. An institutional stubbornness prevents consideration of decommissioning unraveling roads not previously targeted for closure. The massive Dosewallips road washout is a prime example of this contradiction: Forest Supervisor Dale Hom has announced his desire to log dozens of old-growth trees above the river in which rare Chinook salmon still spawn. Elsewhere, timber sales on the ONF are often rife with so-called "temporary roads", resulting in cumulative watershed damage, one bulldozer blade at a time. The recently approved Bear Creek Saddle sale nears the Soleduck River, which the Olympic Forest Coalition (OFCO) has appealed, is laced with new and reconstructed roads in order to haul the sawlogs out.

OFCO's energies are in large part devoted to ensuring that the Forest Service's road closure priorities are addressed at an acceptable pace, while also educating lawmakers on the importance of adequately funding needed decommissioning and other road stabilization activities. We will also continue pressing the Forest Service to modernize and limit its timber sale program, particularly as it relates to harmful roads, to avoid further jeopardizing the Olympic Peninsula's ecological health. One thing's for certain: The climate isn't likely to take on a gentler demeanor any time soon. Consequently, science (along with common sense) tells us that a less roaded ONF will make for a far more fish-friendly and wildlife-rich Peninsula.

Frost at Barnes Creek.  
Photo by Bob Kaune.



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## Northwest Storm Damage Blog by Conservation Coalition

Sean Smith, Director, NW Region, National Parks Conservation Association, [ssmith@npca.org](mailto:ssmith@npca.org)

This winter, storm damage in northwest parks is estimated as high as \$50 million. A coalition of conservation and outdoors organizations have joined forces to help in the recovery.

The coalition has a web site/blog to provide regular updates on repairs and information. Check it out at: <http://nwstormrecoverycoalition.blogspot.com/>

The coalition includes: National Parks Conservation Association, the Student Conservation Association, the Washington Trails Association, and the Washington National Park Fund with the help of REI.

# Early Winter Storms Cause More Hoh River Road Washouts

by John Woolley, OPA Vice President

The Paradise of Olympic National Park, the Hoh River Rain Forest, is another place you just can't get to anymore: by car, that is. Park officials are hard at work, but it sounds like it will be mid-May before visitors can once again access this sentinel stop on the Olympic Loop drive. Extensive blow-downs and wash-outs characterize the Olympic Mountains once again, and that's without yet being able to seriously check out snow-covered areas within the Park. Talk is of \$6 million just to access the Hoh!

Damage at Twin Creek, a mile east of the Entrance Station, is major, say park officials. An interim repair of the road was necessary this winter to allow stranded vehicles to get out, including that of a rent-a-car user. At the rental agency's reduced rate for daily loss of use, the tab still came to \$2000.

Olympic National Park spokesperson Barb Maynes reports that grading issues at Twin Creek and the acquisition of extra-large culverts will require further study, and a final fix will not be clear until late February. OPA has

contacted Congressman Norm Dicks to encourage support for park repairs and to be especially conscious of the needs of spawning salmon.

Park personnel have already been at work at Taft Creek, which is near the Hoh Visitor Center and campground. Often an area for viewing elk closely, Taft Pond has also become a significant salmon spawning area since construction of the original Hoh Road. Floods of gravel had cut off the pond from the river, so that salmon could no longer reach the pond and its tributaries. In this case, the park's focus on wildlife is admirable, as they were able to re-open channels before salmon runs had started.

OPA encourages Olympic National Park to give priority to salmon enhancement this time, when making major repairs, and we are hopeful that the park's careful study of grading and culvert location will be successful. Only major hiking trails will likely be cleared by repair crews for this summer season. It shouldn't be very difficult to find a wilderness experience in the park this year.

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## Road Repairs Continue:

### Public Comments Invited on Hoh Road Creek Crossing Proposal

*Olympic National Park, Press Release, February 22, 2007 (excerpt)*

Following the severe storm damage of last November and December, Olympic National Park maintenance crews, with help from the Washington Conservation Corps, local county and public utility district crews and National Park Service employees temporarily re-assigned from other parks, have succeeded in restoring access to many areas.

The status of many park trails is still unknown; more information will be gathered this spring as the snow melts and crews are able to make damage assessments. Park visitors may call the recorded hotline for current road conditions, 360-565-3131.

#### Hoh Road Repairs

Extensive progress has been made on the Hoh Road, with a temporary one-lane bridge now crossing West Twin Creek until a permanent repair can be completed. Installation of a permanent two-lane bridge is proposed for later this year or next. The park is currently seeking initial public input on this proposal.

A new culvert was installed last week at Taft Creek and a Port Angeles contractor was recently awarded the contract to place a new oversized culvert at Snyder Creek in March.

Meanwhile, a Washington Conservation Corps crew has been clearing debris from the road shoulders and campground while public utility district crews are restoring power and installing new phone lines. More work awaits park maintenance crews, where 200 trees block the first five miles of the Hoh River Trail trail.

The Hoh Road and campground are scheduled to reopen to the public by May 1.

#### Comments Invited on Creek Crossing

The public is invited to provide input on the proposal to install a permanent two-lane bridge over West Twin Creek along the Hoh Road. Comments will be used to help define the issues to be addressed in an upcoming Environmental Assessment, scheduled for release this spring. Submit comments by March 26, 2007 by mail or email.

*Send comments by March 26 to:*

Superintendent –  
West Twin Bridge  
Crossing  
Olympic Nat'l Park  
600 East Park Ave.  
Port Angeles, WA  
98362  
Fax: 360-565-3015  
Website:  
[parkplanning.nps.gov](http://parkplanning.nps.gov)  
Email:  
[olym\\_ea@nps.gov](mailto:olym_ea@nps.gov)

## Bush Increases Spending on Parks

Six years after promising to plug the gap in spending on national parks, President Bush has come through. His 2008 budget adds \$230 million to the National Park Service allocation, including a \$1.6 million increase for Olympic National Park. The additions bring the total annual budget for parks to \$2.4 billion. A small step in filling the \$6 billion backlog in National Park spending, but a step in the right direction.

Bush's plan would add \$100 million to the parks budget each year between now and the National Park Service centennial in 2016.

But the 2008 budget news coming from the White House wasn't all good. The Forest Service budget was slashed by \$100 million, a 7% drop for an agency already desperate for cash. And Bush once more proposed a barn sale of up to 300,000 acres of national forest land — this time to raise money for rural counties.

Congressman Norm Dicks (D. Bremerton), head of the Appropriations subcommittee that

deals with public lands and the environment, pronounced the President's proposal dead on arrival. "They are just not going to do this," he said. "It's not going to happen." Of the Forest Service cuts, Dicks said they will likely be reversed by the Democratic-controlled Congress.

Dicks pledged to find other means of raising money for rural counties. And he pledged to support the increase in much-needed spending for parks.

Olympic National Park has identified a \$6 million backlog. This year visitor center hours have been curtailed and park staff is woefully reduced. The increase should enable the park to replace full-time staff positions that have gone unfilled over the past few years, and add much-needed seasonal naturalists, rangers and maintenance workers to serve the more than 3 million visitors who come to Olympic National Park each year.

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## God Spares Chalet

As windstorms, floods and heavy snows wreaked havoc throughout Olympic National Park this winter, the forces of nature saw fit to spare Enchanted Valley Chalet.

In 2003, the East Fork Quinault River cut dangerously close to the three-story log building. Later floods brought the river within feet of the aging structure. (See *Clash of the Titans: ONP vs. Quinault River*, *Voice*, Spring 2005.) But a dramatic change in the river's course that some are calling an Act of God — with possibly a little help from his friends — sent the past two years' floodwaters safely down the opposite side of the river channel.

In a front-page story in the Peninsula Daily News in February, a park spokesperson explained that a study crew discovered that trees had fallen into the river, diverting the flow away from the beleaguered chalet. The crew made "some very very minor changes — absolutely nothing major" (which one source described as felling trees into the river) and behold, the hydrologic demons were vanquished.

A 2005 NEPA review process on the chalet, in which OPA requested that no manipulations of a wilderness river be undertaken, has been put on indefinite hold. Pilgrims are advised to use caution at stream crossings.

*Quinault rainforest stream. Photo by Bob Kaune.*



## In Memoriam

### Karen Fant

In the summer of 2006 we lost one of the greatest grassroots conservationist of all time, Karen Fant. She was only 57 years old.

Karen's life was a model for selfless dedication to wilderness. Advocate, adviser, inspiration, coach, friend, strategist, she was the heartbeat of wildland conservation for 35 years.

With Ken Gersten, Karen co-founded the Washington Wilderness Coalition, and led the way through the many conservation campaigns, non-stop, from the '70s until her untimely death: RARE II, the Washington Wilderness Act of 1984, the Endangered Species Act, the Alaska battles (North Slope, Tongass, ANWR) Wild Sky,...

At every step she was reaching out to the grass roots, fostering novice conservation groups and enabling individual conservationists to make a difference. She understood a truth about environmental activism that often is

*Karen had a conviction that the only way to win lasting protection of our endangered wild places was local organizing. Karen never put herself out in front. She always supported the local folks to do the advocacy. Of course, if things were not moving, Karen could push.*

Ken Gersten, Co-Founder of Washington Wilderness Coalition

*Karen distilled the purest essence of personal commitment and steadfastness. When she spoke at strategy meetings (most recently for Wild Sky), we all listened, for Karen invariably got right to the heart of the matter, often reminding the rest of us of our original goals when we had wandered deep into the tall weeds of detail and debate.*

Doug Scott, Policy Director for Campaign for America's Wilderness

overlooked: while staff and fundraising are important to a conservation organization, it is the grassroots volunteers who have the votes and win the day.

Washington Wilderness Coalition has created the Karen M. Fant Founder's Award to recognize individuals whose efforts to preserve Washington's wild lands exemplify the talent and commitment Karen brought to her work.

#### Memorial Gathering

Join in remembering Karen on March 10, 4-10 pm, at the Mountaineers.



### Harvey Manning

Harvey Manning, writer, hiker, and stubborn activist for the wild places, and advocate for public accessibility, died last November at age 81. Rick McGuire, a longtime friend, described Harvey as "a force of nature".

Manning, through his books and his activism, was instrumental in sending the public out into the woods and thereby drawing them into the conservation movement. He knew that, once people had hiked a trail in their own boots, they became committed to preserving it. Manning helped to found The Mountaineers Books, and his book on climbing, ***Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills***, the first book they published, is still popular, now, in the seventh edition. His ***100 Hikes*** series has guided countless millions of hikers, novices to mountaineers, through the wonders of the Cascades and Olympics.

Manning's books have also been a powerful political force. His book, ***The North Cascades***, was influential in achieving the act of Congress that founded North Cascades National Park in 1968. A copy of ***The Alpine Lakes***, by Brock Evans, edited by Manning, was given to every member of the Senate committee considering the Alpine Lakes wilderness bill, inspiring Congress to create the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. And his ***Washington Wilderness: The Unfinished Work***, did likewise for the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984.

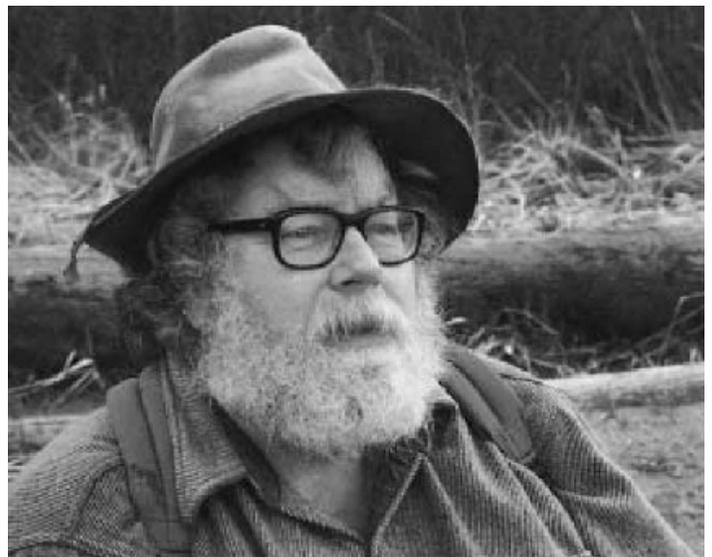


Photo by Ira Spring.

Manning was a founder of the North Cascades Conservation Council and a member of the Middle Fork Outdoor Recreation Coalition. He founded the Issaquah Alps Trail Club, who successfully preserved the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and the West Tiger Mountain Natural Resources Conservation Area.

Rick McGuire said, "He left the Washington Cascades a better place than when he found them." An understatement!

## Ten Essentials? I'll Take Five

By Dan Lieberman, Education Coordinator, Olympic Park Institute

The ten essentials are what we all need to bring with us in our packs in order to be properly prepared to experience nature — or at least that is what I learned in various wilderness and first aid training courses, and what I have often taught as an Interpretive Ranger at Olympic National Park and an educator at Olympic Park Institute. However, this is not what I practice. Please do not get me wrong, I believe in being properly prepared, and I especially believe in the importance of experiencing nature. It's just that the ten essentials are far too cumbersome for me. This is because I travel light. Very light. This is especially true when I am in the backcountry of Olympic National Park. I do not consider myself obsessive about the go-light philosophy. At least not obsessive enough to cut the handle off my toothbrush or leave the toothbrush behind altogether, but I do bring the almost imperceptible dregs from the smallest toothpaste tube I can find into the backcountry. And I definitely leave the floss at home.

In keeping with my go-light philosophy and in searching for a way for people (myself included) to be properly prepared to experience nature, I have come up with five new essentials for people to keep in their packs. I learned of these five essentials through my experiences in Olympic National Park, and I will now share them with you all through the following five anecdotes.

### 1.

A few summers ago I was at Chilean Memorial headed north — but not right away. Actually, if the tide charts were accurate, it was going to be quite a wait. And as usual, the tide charts did prove to be right. Sitting on a beach log beneath a salty Sitka Spruce next to a towering headland under a mottled grey sky I learned that **Patience** is an essential to have in a pack. If you find yourself in a similar situation, I recommend pulling out your patience sit-pad, slowly un-rolling it in a comfortable place, and settling in to enjoy the wait.

### 2.

Believers in Buddhist philosophies speak of **Detachment** as an essential ideal to embody on the path to nirvana. I speak of detachment as an essential in your pack. For me, Dodger Point is nirvana and detachment is the only

way to make it up the ~6,000 foot elevation gain over 15+ miles. The detachment I am specifically referring to is forcing your mind not to focus on the interminable slog that is Long Ridge trail leading up to Dodger Point. If you do ever make this trek, you will probably wish you also had another sort of detachment in your pack for the hike back down — physical detachment of your knees from the rest of your body, as they will certainly be causing you pain.

### 3.

*“Did you see that?”*

*“That thing moving over there.”*

*“Out there in the fog.”*

*“No, I'm not kidding. Oh look, there it is again! I've heard about the creature that lives in there. Ferocious. It's probably hungry right now and plotting to eat us.”*

Picture a thick fog; the kind of fog that allows you to forget that anything farther than 20 feet away even exists. Now picture this fog on Lake Crescent or Irely Lake or Mink Lake. This is the type of fog that can obscure your surroundings just enough to disorient you. It can cause water-bound snags and driftlogs to transmogrify into fabled creatures. It is this fog that allows another essential, your **Imagination** to leap un-checked out of your pack.

### 4.

I'm not one to tell you where you should and shouldn't explore in Olympic National Park. It is your park, after all, to experience as you see fit. That written, I believe that you should NOT hike Six Ridge. But I do believe you should find another hike in ONP through which you show your **Determination** (read: “through which you inflict torture on yourself but survive”). Yes, determination is an essential for your pack. The point here is to find your way out after you have stumbled into a tough situation. I did not expect Six Ridge to be as tough as I found it, and I probably will not go back there, but I survived, and along the way I munched on some plump mountain blueberries to the magic sound of elk bugling in the rugged southern Olympics, an experience I would not have otherwise had. I trust that you will find determination in your pack even if you did not put it there and that it will help you in a difficult situation and show you some wonder

of ONP that few people, if any, have been lucky enough to experience.

### 5.

If you have one handy, open up an Olympic National Park brochure map and look in the lower right quadrant of the map. Notice that the trail following the East Fork of the Quinault River to its headwaters, then continuing along the West fork of the Dosewallips River, is laid out in nearly a straight line. When I see (or hike) straight lines, I tend to wander and stray from them. This comes more than anything else from the final essential I keep in my pack, *Curiosity*. So when I set out hiking this trail (which, by the way, is not exactly a straight line in the reality that the map depicts) I knew I wanted to explore the surroundings away from the trail. Upon arriving at Anderson Pass and seeing a sign that read *Anderson Glacier* with an arrow pointing up a steep ridge, I knew I had to find out what was over the rise. I hiked a distance on an unmaintained trail then scrambled to the highest point I could see on the ridge. I found myself on a moraine overlooking the barren rock amphitheater carved by Anderson Glacier. How mighty was this glacier at its fullest extent? What, if anything, can live in this moonscape? What will this scene be like in 20 years? And how do this glacier and I impact each other? The best part of curiosity is that its reward is more curiosity.

So these are my five essentials:

*Patience,*  
*Detachment,*  
*Imagination,*  
*Determination,*

and

*Curiosity.*

You don't need to go to REI to buy them. You probably already have them hanging around somewhere. I already had

them, but it took extensive searching to locate them, and actually, I cannot even take credit for finding them, it was my experiences in Olympic National Park that revealed them to me.

My hope (and the reason I am sharing my five essentials with you) is that we can all forget our fear of and isolation from nature and remember our connection to the earth. I have shared my essentials. What are your essentials for your adventures in your favorite places? Not only do our essentials help us experience a wilderness wonderland such as Olympic National Park, but they also help us experience our back yards. Whether it is a stroll in the neighborhood or an epic cross-country wilderness backpacking adventure, keep your essentials in your pack (or pocket). Maybe, if we are fortunate, our experiences in nature will illuminate our role here on earth and inspire us to think about where we are going.

One more thought to clarify, on your next trip, accompanying these five or your new essentials in your pack I recommend a pocket knife, some duct tape, and a light-weight flashlight. Happy Trails!

*Mt. Seattle, west side,  
Skyline Trail. Photo by  
Bob Kaune.*





# VOICE of the WILD OLYMPICS

Sally W. Soest, Editor

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## 🕒🕒🕒🕒 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash! 🕒🕒🕒🕒 North Cascades Conservation Council

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