

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

Northwest Parks Deserve Twice the Love!

By Wally Long

The wild landscapes, diverse wildlife and rich cultural heritage of the Pacific Northwest come alive in the national parks of Washington and Oregon.

Recently, a very generous, long-time donor to NPCA offered a \$50,000 matching gift in support of our work to protect the national parks of the Northwest. This opportunity will double the impact of your gift. This generous donor will match your gift, dollar-for-dollar, if you are a new donor, a lapsed donor looking to renew your support, or a current donor interested in increasing your ongoing support.

Please join me today in making a gift—our parks need your support now more than ever. Standing together is the only way to ensure a vibrant future for the parks, and everyone at NPCA is counting on you to help us put forth our best pro-parks efforts in the months ahead.

You can give online today by
visiting www.npca.org/giveNW

Great American Outdoors Act Passed!

By Graham Taylor

NPCA is overjoyed to announce the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, which provides permanent and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and billions more for backlogged repair projects in national parks and other federal lands.

Above: Gorgeous Crater Lake on a summer day
©Dendron | Dreamstime

With your help, we met with elected officials, snapped photos of needed park repairs, and wrote countless letters in support of park facilities and urgently needed investments in outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities. Park funding has lagged for years, but finally our calls were answered! Every member of the Oregon and Washington congressional delegations (save one) supported funding our national parks and

continued on page 3

NORTHWEST CORNER BY REGIONAL DIRECTOR ROB SMITH

What the Doctor Ordered

By Rob Smith,
Northwest Regional Director

Passage of the Great American Outdoors Act may have surprised some because it provides billions of dollars for parks and outdoor recreation during a time of economic distress caused by the current pandemic. But I would say it's just what the doctor ordered.

In the Northwest, big crowds are visiting all outdoor spaces, including the national parks, with many coming for the first time. The demand for more green space and for safe, updated park facilities is clearly there. People are getting outside as a healthy way



to spend time during the COVID crisis. Funds provided by the Great American Outdoors Act will also create much-needed jobs, from seasonal trail work by youth crews to major skilled construction projects.

Every member of our Oregon and Washington congressional delegation (save one) voted for

passage of the act, so please give them your thanks. Fixing the roads, trails, buildings and water systems in our national parks will provide more healthy access and enjoyment to visitors for years to come.

Above: Northwest Regional Director, Rob Smith
©Rob Smith

FIELD REPORT

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Trump Administration Abandons North Cascades Grizzly Recovery Efforts

By Graham Taylor

NPCA was disappointed by the Trump administration's July decision to abandon the formal process guiding grizzly bear recovery in Washington's North Cascades, a process legally required by the Endangered Species Act. The multi-year effort attracted overwhelming community support. In fact, our coalition, Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly, learned through a Freedom of Information Act request that 90% of the more than 126,000 comments sent to the federal agencies supported recovery efforts. Unfortunately, the administration refused to hear the avalanche of voices speaking up for the North Cascades and its ancient inhabitant, the grizzly.

Despite the setback, NPCA is grateful for our many supporters who persevere, dedicating themselves anew to this vital project. We praise the local National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff who held numerous public meetings, tribal consultations and more than 70 stakeholder briefings. Agency experts clearly outlined the legal and scientific case for grizzly bear recovery as they developed potential recovery plans.

The fight for the grizzly is a marathon and will not end with this most recent decision. NPCA is redoubling our efforts to perform more local outreach and consider ways the process may be reconsidered in the future.

Below: A male coastal brown bear sleeps alongside a small river in Hallo Bay, located in Katmai National Park in Alaska. ©Lawrence Weslowski Jr | Walleyelj | Dreamstime



National Parks Virtual Yoga

By Joshua Jenkins

One of the Northwest team's 2020 program goals was to expand our work with military veterans by emphasizing the myriad health benefits of spending time outdoors in parks. Through a collaboration with the regional office of Veterans Yoga Project (VYP), we originally planned to host a series of in-person yoga classes at local and national parks in Washington for our veterans partners this summer. Unfortunately, we had to cancel all our in-person events due to the pandemic.

In lieu of the live classes, NPCA and VYP partnered to create a 12-part virtual yoga series. Using safe protocols and social-distancing methods, VYP leaders traveled to national parks near them this summer and fall to film instructor-only yoga classes in a dozen different destinations, including Olympic and North Cascades national parks.

The recordings of these yoga sessions will be made available to our veteran allies, bringing the mental, physical and spiritual health benefits of yoga and our parks to a broader, national audience in a safe and socially distanced manner.



Right: VYP instructor and Regional Director of the Northwest, Monica Thorne, demonstrates a high lunge during her virtual yoga class at North Cascades National Park. ©Monica Thorne



Navy Jet Noise Covers Olympics

By Rob Smith

Military aircraft are the source of 88% of all aircraft noise over Olympic National Park, according to data gathered over the past three years as part of a study led by University of Washington research scientist Lauren Kuehne. That noise is typically twice as loud as natural background noise, and the effect is even more pronounced in some of the quietest places, such as the Hoh Rain Forest.

The west side of the Olympic Peninsula, including the wild coastlines and rain forests of Olympic National Park, lies beneath military airspace that is seeing increased use by EA-18G “Growler” jets based at the U.S. Navy airfield on Whidbey Island. That means some of the world’s loudest aircraft

are flying over some of the nation’s quietest places and the most visited national park in the Northwest.

We hope the study results can inform new sound studies being conducted by the Navy on their jet noise across Puget Sound and the Olympics. Meanwhile, the Navy is planning a 40% increase in Growler numbers at Whidbey.

NPCA is urging the Navy to accurately and fully measure the noise impacts of the Growlers on Olympic National Park, a World Heritage Site, and to consider alternative sites for Growler training that don’t degrade national parks.

Above: Hoh Rainforest in Olympic National Park, Washington ©Joe Sohm | Dreamstime

Great American Outdoors Act Passed!

continued from page 1

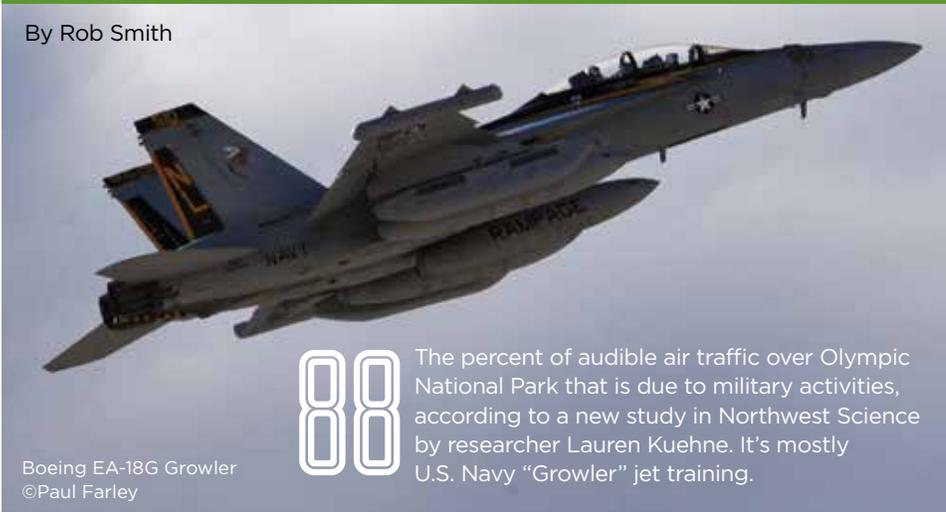
green spaces. While Congress’s investment will create more local green space and help countless Americans enjoy their public lands, there is opportunity to consider how these funds can serve environmental justice purposes. NPCA plans to encourage administrators of these resources to consider racial equity and historic underinvestment in black, indigenous and communities of color when prioritizing distribution of funds. In addition, we are actively planning community dialogues to educate communities about this investment and how it can contribute to a stronger and more equitable America and a National Park System that serves us all.



Above: Military vets and NPCA volunteers fix buildings at Mount Rainier. ©Kevin Bacher

BY THE NUMBERS

By Rob Smith



Boeing EA-18G Growler ©Paul Farley

88

The percent of audible air traffic over Olympic National Park that is due to military activities, according to a new study in Northwest Science by researcher Lauren Kuehne. It’s mostly U.S. Navy “Growler” jet training.



6.5

The amount of dollars (in billions) that will go towards much needed repairs to national park buildings, trails, roads and water systems thanks to the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act in August.

Left: Young woman kayaking on beautiful blue Lake Crescent in Olympic National Park. ©Blueenayim | Dreamstime

6 The number of virtual Park Talks we hosted after COVID-19 restrictions temporarily closed the parks. Special thanks to regional council member presenters Clarence Moriwaki (“Let It Not Happen Again” for Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial) and Jackie Peterson (“The Atomic Frontier and Black Life at Hanford” for Manhattan Project) and to the Northwest Student Leadership Council for co-managing the online events. Watch recordings of past Park Talks or register for upcoming ones at npca.org/parktalks.

Below: Elwha River in Olympic National Park ©Dendron | Dreamstime





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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Clean Air for Parks and Our Communities

By Joshua Jenkins

Ninety-six percent of our national parks are degraded by significant air pollution. Thankfully, a federal tool called the Regional Haze Rule was specifically designed to address pollution in our national parks and wilderness areas. This rule requires states to put forth plans to the Environmental Protection Agency that lays out how they will minimize the haze and air pollutants over these special places.

Not only does NPCA view the Regional Haze Rule (RHR) as a powerful tool for national park protection in all parks, including those in Oregon and Washington, we also recognize how the tool can directly benefit those communities that suffer the most from poor air quality. Park protection and environmental justice are intertwined.

The same pollutants that impair the beautiful scenic views in parks such as Mount Rainier lead to disproportionate health impacts in our most marginalized communities. The Duwamish Valley in Seattle, for example, is home to two regional haze producing facilities as well as some of the most vulnerable communities in the city. In the valley, childhood asthma hospitalization rates are the highest in the city, heart disease death rates are 1.5 times higher than the rest of the city and county, and the average life expectancy of valley residents is eight years shorter than the city average.

By looking at our clean air work through an environmental justice lens, working with Duwamish Valley community members, organizations and allies and engaging in RHR stakeholder processes we can reduce pollution and improve air quality in our parks and the communities where we live, work and play.



Mt. Rainier seen up close from Paradise ©NPS Photo



Student Leadership in the Northwest

By McKenzie Carlson and Rhyannon Hayes

Fresh out of a University of Washington class focused on national park issues, we were looking for opportunities to continue park advocacy. This opportunity came when we met with Northwest staff members Graham Taylor, who had given a Civic Voice Workshop to our class, and Joshua Jenkins. We brainstormed how we could engage more of our peers with the parks and empower the next generation of conservationists.

Thus, in February, the Student Leadership Council (SLC) was born. Of course, everyone knows what happened next: COVID-19. Countless plans were scrapped, but Graham came up with the idea to do online Park Talks, moderated by student leaders, and set a precedent for how to Keep Calm and Conserve On in a pandemic.

When the pandemic eventually subsides, we hope to bring future conservationists out to the national parks to develop a lasting bond with our public lands. Until then, the SLC is alive and well and coming to a computer screen near you!

Above: NPCA student leaders and staff chatting with students at the UW Environmental Career and Internship Fair. ©Graham Taylor