



FIELDREPORT

Northwest Region | Spring 2014

America the Beautiful Our National Parks

By Congressman Dave Reichert, WA-8

Growing up beneath the towering shadow of Mt. Rainier, I have a deep appreciation for our nation's natural beauty. Washington State has more than its fair share of beautiful landscape; we have abundant blue waterways and craggy, snowy mountains that stretch beyond the clouds. These are sights and surroundings that I have enjoyed throughout my lifetime and now, as a father and grandfather, sights that I enjoy sharing with my children and grandchildren.

America's national park system allows us to preserve and curate these national treasures for years to come. Because of their preservation, I know that future generations will be able to create some of the same memories with their children and grandchildren that I was able to make with my own, and it's a big reason why I've been so proud to support our national parks in the past and why I will keep fighting to do so.

It's important that we work to make sure our parks are supported and sustained into the future. Without adequate attention, the National Park Service cannot continue the amazing conservation work it's done for the past 98 years.

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Top: Cascade Pass in North Cascades National Park in Washington state ©Inge Johnsson | Alamy

50 Years of Experiencing Untrammelled Places

Gazing at an Olympic marmot that's sun-bathing near Bogachiel Peak in Olympic National Park. Wading through hidden fields of wildflowers along Frying Pan Creek in Mount Rainier National Park. Or spotting a black bear grazing on berries from Cascade Pass in North Cascades National Park. These experiences and many more are due in part to the Wilderness Act of 1964.

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. This remarkable act has protected millions of acres of the most pristine natural areas the country has to offer—*“an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”* Washington and Oregon are fortunate to have greatly benefited from the protection of this act as the following numbers illustrate:

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7
million

Acres of designated wilderness in Oregon and Washington, out of roughly 106 million acres between the two states.

Percentage of Crater Lake National Park already managed as wilderness, but not yet designated as such in legislation. That amounts to a little more than 170,000 acres

93

Percentage of national park landscapes designated as wilderness thanks to the Washington Parks Wilderness Act of 1988

93%
Mount
Rainier

95%
Olympic

97%
North
Cascades

126,000

Acres proposed for wilderness protection adjacent to Olympic National Park, in the Wild Olympic Wilderness & Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 2014 sponsored by Representative Derek Kilmer and Senator Patty Murray



19

Rivers on the Olympic Peninsula, including the Elwha River, which would be designated as Wild and Scenic, forever preventing future dams, if the Wilderness & Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 2014 becomes law.

Above: Olympic Marmot in Olympic National Park ©Marcopolo9442 | Istockphoto.com

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, ROB SMITH

Hope and Opportunity for National Parks in 2014

After failed budget negotiations led to a 16-day shutdown of the federal government—including all of our national parks—Congressional budget leader Senator Patty Murray crafted a deal with the House of Representatives to avoid another such fiscal showdown, at least well into 2016. That allows much-needed projects to move ahead and some stability in park ranger staffing. NPCA worked hard to demonstrate the importance of national parks to visitors, communities, and businesses alike – and support for parks was felt on Capitol Hill.

The Obama Administration has proposed a budget for the next fiscal year which not only stops the erosion of national park funding, but begins a crucial reinvestment in our National Park System in advance of the agency's 100-year anniversary in 2016. NPCA is building broad support for a national recommitment to the national park system into its second century.

Two additions to the park system in the Northwest are ready for final Congressional approval—expanding the boundary of Oregon Caves National Monument (sponsored by Senator Ron Wyden and Representative Peter DeFazio) and establishment of a unit of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park in eastern Washington, a great legacy opportunity for Representative Doc Hastings before he retires and steps down as chair of



the House Natural Resources Committee. Both are top lobbying priorities for NPCA.

Soon we expect to see workers remove the last few feet of the Glines Canyon Dam on the Elwha River, an effort NPCA has been a part of for nearly a decade. This will let

the Elwha—the largest watershed in Olympic National Park—flow freely once again. As the largest river restoration project in United States history, it provides hope that we can restore what was once degraded. Stay tuned for a celebration of a river reborn, plus opportunities to help bring the newly exposed river banks back to life.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the landmark 1964 Wilderness Act, which allows Congress to permanently preserve public natural areas. Much of the Northwest's remaining wild country is centered within one of our large national parks, yet the parks alone are not big enough to protect the important habitat, recreation and scenic grandeur of these remarkable landscapes. That's why we encouraged Representative Derek Kilmer and Senator Patty Murray to introduce their Wild Olympics bill to protect forests and rivers surrounding Olympic National Park.

This year offers hope and opportunity for our national parks in so many ways. Thank you for your continued support and advocacy!

Below: Oregon Caves National Monument ©David Graves



Please thank the members of our Northwest Congressional delegation who voted against HR 1459, an attack on the President's authority to designate national monuments.

Oregon Caves National Monument and the precursor to Olympic National Park were protected this way. Voting against HR 1459 were Representatives Blumenauer, Bonamici, DeFazio, Heck, Kilmer, Larsen, McDermott, Reichert, Schrader, Smith.

America the Beautiful

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I am proud to be a co-chair of the Congressional National Parks Caucus which is made up of members of Congress who are dedicated to preserving our parks and enabling greater access for our constituents as well as visitors who have come to experience all that our natural heritage has to offer. More than 91 percent of Americans have visited a national park site; and the parks host more than 300 million visitors each year—a significant number, especially considering our nation has a population of roughly 312 million. Our parks must be ready and waiting to accommodate such high rates of visitation.

With major parts of both North Cascades and Mount Rainier National Parks within my district, I have a great appreciation for

and interest in protecting these anchors of outdoor recreation that are so treasured by residents and visitors alike. This year, I hope to see my legislation to designate Alpine Lakes wilderness additions passed into law, and I am also the lead sponsor on a bill to establish the Mountains to Sound Greenway as a National Heritage Area. Both of these measures protect recreational landscapes and wildlife habitat on both sides of the Cascades. Last year I was especially pleased to receive NPCA's Friend of the National Parks award at a gathering in the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in downtown Seattle.



In 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate its centennial anniversary. Last year I joined with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and both houses of Congress, as a lead signer on a letter to the President to ensure that we celebrate this extraordinary landmark accordingly. As part of this, I have also supported a proposal to create a commemorative coin to raise awareness of America's natural splendor and raise money to protect it. We should never stop fighting to keep the words "America the beautiful" ringing true. I look forward to working with each of you and NPCA as we move towards the second century of our National Park System.



Olympic National Park ©Scott Kirkwood | NPCA

Member Spotlight – Polly Dyer

Longtime NPCA member Polly Dyer is quite possibly the best known environmental champion to ever call the Northwest home. Her tireless efforts to protect national parks and other wild places allow millions of fellow citizens to enjoy and experience untouched and untrammeled wilderness. In fact, the word "untrammeled" appears in the Wilderness Act due to Polly's use of it in describing a beach in Olympic National Park.

In 1958 Polly organized a hike along the coast of Olympic National Park with U.S. Supreme Court justice William O. Douglas. This hike led to the successful defeat of a planned portion of Highway 101 that would have destroyed the park's wild coast. As one of the founders of the North Cascades Conservation Council, Polly was instrumental in the creation of North Cascades National Park in 1968.

As president of Olympic Park Associates, she was one of the drivers behind the largest dam removal in U.S. history, on the Elwha River.

Polly was awarded NPCA's Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award in 1989. This award was established to honor individuals who go to great lengths to advocate and fight for the protection of the National Park System.



Among the many, many other organizations that have had the benefit of Polly Dyer's leadership and intense involvement over the years are The Mountaineers, the Washington Wilderness Coalition, the Alaska Conservation Foundation, the Alpine Lakes Conservation Coalition, the Washington chapter of the Nature Conservancy, the King County League

of Conservation Voters, and the Washington Environmental Political Action Committee.

On February 13, 2010, Dyer's 90th birthday, Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn proclaimed it Polly Dyer Day. King County Executive Dow Constantine issued a proclamation honoring Polly. Friends and well-wishers gathered at the Seattle headquarters of The Mountaineers to celebrate the birth of the one of the most stalwart supporters of the preservation of wilderness in the Pacific Northwest.

Vice President of Olympic Park Associates Tim McNulty summed up the enormous contribution Polly has made to the wilderness of the Northwest. "For more than a half-century Polly has been at the center of wilderness preservation in the Northwest," he says. "From consulting with Howard Zahniser on the 1964 Wilderness Act to working for congressional designation of hundreds of thousands of acres of wilderness in the Cascades and Olympic Mountains, Polly's tireless advocacy has created a wilderness legacy that is nothing short of stunning."



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EVENT CALENDAR

Join us to learn about and enjoy your Northwest national parks!

Climate Action Ride May 17-20, 2014

NPCA will be sending a team to ride from San Francisco to Sacramento to raise funds and awareness for climate change action. To sponsor a rider, contact Shannon Brundle at sbrundle@npca.org.

National Trails Day Saturday, June 7, 2014

Join NPCA for our annual trail maintenance volunteer event at North Cascades National Park. For more information, contact Shannon Brundle at sbrundle@npca.org or (206) 903-1457.

Revegetation for the Elwha River—Olympic Greenhouse June 20 & 21, 2014

NPCA will work with a small group of volunteers in the Olympic greenhouse transplanting starts that will eventually be planted along the Elwha River. Volunteers should come prepared with water, lunch, warm layers and a readiness to get dirty! To sign up or for more information, contact David Graves at dgraves@npca.org or (206) 903-1645.

National Public Lands Day Saturday, September 27, 2014

NPCA will be working at Mount Rainier on a variety of projects such as trail maintenance, re-vegetation and campground cleanup. For more information, contact Shannon Brundle at sbrundle@npca.org or (206) 903-1457.

For details and more information on these events, visit www.npcap.org/nwevents

50 Years of Experiencing Untrammelled Places

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While Wilderness within national parks provides the highest level of protection available, it also provides opportunities for hiking, fishing, horseback riding, camping, bird watching, photography and a host of other uses. In fact, wilderness areas are protected specifically to enhance these

types of activities, which may not be as enjoyable or possible in areas where motorized activities are allowed. NPCA will continue to support appropriate wilderness designation and work with the National Park Service as the agency aims to balance visitor use with the protection of great natural landscapes for future generations.



Your Support for NPCA Goes a Long Way



The Seattle Foundation

"I love national parks! And I have since I was a child. So when I decided to give back, I chose to work with a group that has immediate and lasting impact. As a volunteer and member of NPCA, I see first-hand how effective they are in protecting our national parks locally and across the country. That is why I hope you will join me on May 6th and make a gift to NPCA through the **Seattle Foundations GiveBIG**—a one-day, online charitable giving event—that will match a portion of all donations to NPCA that day. This special fundraising effort can make a meaningful difference in helping this regional office protect our own Pacific Northwest national parks." — Heather Lowe

Visit www.seattlefoundation.org/givebig to learn more.



Heather Lowe (far right) with her family on a national park trip in 1956.

Want to see your support go even further?

Thanks to the Keneda Fund, any new or upgraded gifts of \$1,000 or more will be matched dollar for dollar. To learn more or to make a gift, please visit: npca.org/keneda.