



Park Service Punts on Jet Ski Ban for Lake Crescent



SUNRISE ON LAKE CRESCENT - WASH.

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Olympic National Park has taken a serious stumble over the biggest management issue it faces on Lake Crescent: whether noisy, high-powered jet skis shall continue to wreak havoc upon the peace and tranquillity of this scenic lake and shoreline. The answer, unfortunately, seems to be "Yes".

In their *Draft Lake Crescent Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* released in October, which will guide management for the next 15 to 20 years, the Park Service opted not to ban these noisy beasts. Instead, the plan offers a range of zoning options for their controlled use on the lake (north, northeast, west, or everywhere). For the thousands of visitors who come to the lake each year to bask in its quiet and its scenic natural beauty, this is like asking where in your house you would permit chainsaws to operate. (Kitchen? Upstairs bedroom? Den?)

The answer should be obvious to everyone. The fast, noisy, and often reckless use of these

high-speed watercraft is antithetical to what most of us value in a national park experience. Jet skis may be appropriate in some recreational areas, but they should have no more place in a national park than quarter-midget race cars or dirt bikes. And the Park Service should make that clear.

Jet skis (or "personal watercraft" as they are innocuously called) are expensive one-passenger "boats" that can operate at speeds in excess of 50 mph and at noise levels ranging from 75 to 90 decibels (a level that can grind the enamel from your teeth). Their use on Lake Crescent has grown over the past few summers from an occasional annoyance to a nearly continuous disruption. In Wisconsin, where they amount to one percent of all watercraft, they are involved in 25 percent of all boating accidents; in Michigan nearly half.

Conflict with boaters, fishers, and other water users is on the increase at Lake Crescent, and the Washington Department of Fish and

(Continued on p. 3)

Cushman Land Exchange: Going Backwards and Forwards

by David Friedman

Olympic National Park's rush last February to "find no significant impact" (FONSI) from the proposed land exchange is now somewhat becalmed. Mere printing of the (flawed) FERC Draft EIS neither settled future dam operating conditions (river flow, reservoir level) nor characterized the resources of the North Fork Skokomish watershed well. Jumping ahead with the FONSI leaves the Park, now, waiting on....

The Park's early proposal, to exchange the Lake Cushman lands for Lilliwaup Swamp (elk now use this nearby woodland, which may face development and logging soon), was spurned as too costly by Tacoma. Tacoma instead offered only the unremarkable, unthreatened but cheaper Soleduck and Quileute parcels, whose exchange was then authorized by PL 102-436, sponsored by Senator Gorton. Now that the Washington State Department of Natural Resources has valued these two parcels, Tacoma is shying away from paying even that price for the Cushman lands.

...Meanwhile, in the licensing before FERC, Tacoma also plays "Hurry up! — No, wait!" Tacoma claimed exemption from the Coastal Zone Management Act (unsuccessfully) and challenged resource agencies' recommendations for river flow, fishways for salmon, and tribal cultural resources, which will bear on final dam license conditions and could even render the land exchange moot.

This hiatus may allow Olympic National Park some time to reconsider what resources it would gain for those which would be deleted from the Park. Without the long-term maintenance of a secured winter range for Staircase elk, might not the tangled forest understory along the Ozette River, where elk vanished in the 1920s, occur here in 70 years or less?

Release of FERC's final EIS on licensing of the Cushman dams is expected this autumn or early winter.

Non-Native Goat News: Final EIS Delayed

The final EIS on non-native mountain goat management in the Park was delayed due to "the unique and uncertain federal budget situation earlier this fiscal year", according to Olympic National Park sources. The final EIS is expected to be released sometime this winter.

The Park Service received more than 1,200 letters commenting on the draft EIS, which was released in March, 1995. The final EIS will address concerns raised in these letters.

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Write to Oppose Jet Skis on Lake Crescent

Continued from p 1.

Wildlife is concerned over the impacts jet skis may be imposing on fish and water birds around the state. Harlequin ducks, buffleheads, canvasbacks, mergansers, and bald eagles are known to use Lake Crescent, and the lake harbors three endemic species of fish. Glacier National Park in Montana has placed a temporary ban on jet skis throughout the park pending its final management plan. Closer to home, Dungeness Spit National Wildlife Refuge has also seen fit to ban jet skis. Olympic National Park's failure to adequately protect the quality of visitors' experience at Lake Crescent is a major flaw in an otherwise sound management plan.

Alternative A: The Park's Preferred Alternative for Lake Crescent

The Park Service's preferred alternative (Alternative A) has much to offer park visitors and goes a long way toward protecting the matchless resources of Lake Crescent. The plan proposes to:

- upgrade the Spruce Railroad trail to accommodate bicycles and extend it to the western park boundary as a safe alternative to Highway 101.
- establish a 100-yard "No wake" zone for motorboats along the shoreline; 300 yards around developed areas.
- increase opportunities to interpret the natural and human history of the lake and lakeshore.
- relocate the Fairholm Store away from Highway 101.
- reconfigure the Fairholm Campground to separate RV sites from tent sites, and pull campsites back from the lakeshore.
- redesign and reconstruct the Log Cabin Resort to conform with historic standards (remove A-frames and replace RV hookups with cabins).
- discontinue overflow overnight camping at La Poel picnic area.
- improve the North Shore picnic area.

In some instances the Park Service had the right intent, but didn't follow through with management actions that adequately address the issues:

- the proposed 50 mph speed limit for motorized boats on the lake is excessive; a 35 mph speed limit would reduce noise and safety hazards yet still prove adequate for water skiing.
- along with a speed limit, there should be a noise decibel limit placed on all motorized craft.

OPA also *opposes* the following recommendations in the Park Service's preferred alternative:

- A 10 percent expansion of Lake Crescent Lodge
We fear this expansion may include a scaled-down

version of a conference center proposed earlier for this historic resort. We feel such a use is inappropriate for a national park. A location for environmental education-related conferences is currently served by nearby Olympic Park Institute

- A new bike-in campground located on the Spruce Railroad Trail.

This historic trail traverses the only undeveloped stretch of shoreline on the lake. Tent sites for bicyclists could easily be added to the Fairholm Campground.

- Unregulated shoreline access by motorized boats. *Boat access to shores should be regulated to protect sensitive, damaged, or recovering areas.*

Letters and Testimony Needed

Olympic National Park *almost* got it right with its Lake Crescent plan. With strong involvement and support from the conservation community, we can help shape a plan that will protect the splendid resources of Lake Crescent *and* insure the quality of visitors' experiences there well into the next century.

Please write in support of the Park Service's preferred alternative (Alternative A)...

... but with these important additions:

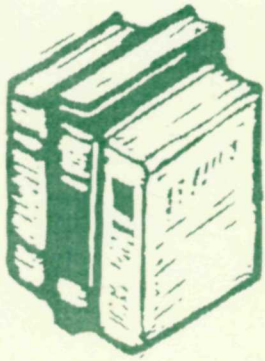
- Prohibit jet skis from all parts of Lake Crescent.
The draft plan proposes several options for zoning jet skis on different parts of the lake.
- Establish a maximum speed limit of 35 mph for motor boats and set a maximum decibel level for engine noise.
The draft plan proposes an excessive 50 mph speed limit, and fails to address the issue of excessive noise.
- Limit the expansion of commercial operations around the lake, including a proposed conference center at historic Lake Crescent Lodge.
The draft plan calls for expansion of Lake Crescent Lodge.



The deadline for written comments
February 3, 1997.

Address your letters to:
**Superintendent David Morris
Olympic National Park
600 East Park Avenue
Port Angeles, WA 98362**

Copies of the
***Draft Lake Crescent Management Plan and
Environmental Impact Statement***
are available for review at National Park Service offices in Port Angeles and the Federal Building in Seattle and at local and regional libraries.



Olympic National Park: A Natural History Guide

by Tim McNulty. Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1996, 265 pages, \$16.95.

Reviewed by Phil Zalesky

Tim McNulty, poet and naturalist, has put together a comprehensive examination of the natural history of the Olympic Peninsula. "The Olympic ecosystem is a living fabric that stretches the movement of tides over storm worn coastlines to wind-blown drifts of snow at heights of mountain peaks. Within this tapestry lies a wealth of interdependent plant and animal communities flourishing in a landscape of timeless beauty." This guide captures the park's history, personality, and distinctive natural features. It includes, as well, a checklist of plants and animals, visitor information, maps, and dozens of photographs.

As the author reminds us, Olympic National Park is like no other national park in the United States. No other of our national parks extends from mountain to sea. Without much dispute, it is the premier wilderness national park, containing elements such as the rain forests with moisture measuring in three figures. Mt. Olympus has over 200 inches of precipitation per year but 34 miles to the northeast and across the mountain crests dwells a rain shadow with only 17 inches. The peninsula has been isolated by Cordilleran ice sheets for at least four periods over 2.5 million years. Thus, an island-like ecosystem evolved, with plants and animals found here and nowhere else on our planet. Further, this is a rare national park in that it supports the habitat needs of the species it contains: the very definition of a complete ecosystem.

To fully appreciate what we have here one must understand the natural history involved. To assist us in this understanding of the natural processes, author Tim McNulty has combined intensive scientific research with his own personal and distinctive narrative. This extensive research presents us with the most current scientific data available. I would suggest that people read through this book once. But for people planning a weekend or a vacation in the Olympics, benefits could be realized from reading once again sections of the book dealing with the place to be visited, whether touring the park by automobile, camping, walking the trails, or even backpacking through the wilderness.

For example, if one were to use this book as a guide for a drive through the Olympics, one could learn of the geological foundation and formation of these mountains along the route. Much of what can now be deciphered in the formation of the Olympic

Mountains was unknown as recently as 25 years ago, for this was when the geological understanding of plate tectonics was born. As the Juan de Fuca ocean plate was being formed and pushed by upwelling of volcanic lava, the plate in turn was being shoved into the continental plate. Much of the ocean floor sedimentary and basalt ridge materials refused to be subducted or pushed under the continental plate. Thus the sedimentary and basalt materials overrode the continental tectonic plate, causing the thrusting up of these jumbled mountains.

So drive the 17 miles from ocean side in Port Angeles and follow the book's geological story to Hurricane Ridge. The text of rock formations will be revealed. We start by observing the undersea lavas and related elements of the Crescent Formation and followed by pillow formations caused by lava cooling quickly beneath the sea. Soon we enter a zone of breccias and shale forming a series of fluted chimneys. Past the tunnels we discover beds of red limestone among the darker basalts. Finally, reaching the top we pass the Hurricane Ridge fault which forms the major juncture between the peripheral rocks of the Crescent formation and the sedimentary rock of the mountainous core. "But once the road swings around Hurricane Ridge and the interior Olympics sweep into perspective, the problems of geology gives way to the grand view. A chisled sea of mountains, crest after ragged crest, leaps into view, a more splendid confusion of ridges, canyons and peaks than a pilgrim could ask for."

While in the subalpine zone of Hurricane Ridge, we should turn to McNulty's chapter on the high country, for "to breath the balsamy scent of supalpine fir is to taste the essence of the high country." The research into the alpine and subalpine high country reveals past and present trends toward global warming and cooling. By studying the high country we obtain a fuller sense of the complexity and diversity of this wilderness park. Other chapters

include the co-evolution of elk and rain forest, demonstrating the ecological complexity of pristine wilderness valleys; the special intricate webs of mutually beneficial interconnections that have evolved within the national park's ancient forests; the various salmon migrations ecologically binding sea and mountains; the symbiotic relationships of life at the edge of sea and land; and the

"A chisled sea of mountains, crest after ragged crest, leaps into view, a more splendid confusion of ridges, canyons and peaks than a pilgrim could ask for."

Tim McNulty

"...to breath the balsamy scent of supalpine fir is to taste the essence of the high country."

critical need for protection of marine life in the Olympic National Marine Sanctuary, which story gives us a fuller sense of the coast's unique place within the ecosystem.

Some of the most fascinating research described in the book concerns the ice sheets that have isolated the peninsula, and the Hypsithermal warming period that followed the last Vashon ice sheet advance. Most of the information comes from the pollen records found in sediments of glacial peat bogs and post glacial lake beds. If global warming comes in our time, as predicted by some climatologists, this Hypsithermal warming may be a forecast of the complex adaptations to come. With a warming period lasting 4,000 to 6,000 years and ending 6,000 to 5,000 years ago, the sea levels rose, periods of summer drought set in, wildfires abounded, prairies extended to the lowlands, and plant communities began to resemble species common to a savannah. Many species and subspecies managed to survive these two periods in mixed-up arrangements. A residue of plants from lowland habitats can be found at subalpine levels and vice versa.

During the period of the Laurentide continental ice sheet, which extended ice to the southern one-third of North America, the alpine glaciers of the Olympics were at their maximum, carving the valleys and peaks of the Olympic peninsula. But these glaciers were well into retreat when the Cordilleran ice sheets from the British Columbia Coast Mountains forced their way south, past the Fraser River canyons and past Vancouver Island, to effectively surround the Olympic peninsula. These glaciers carved Puget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. If today you would stand atop the highest building at the Boeing plant at Paine field and look up at a 777 doing a pass-by 3,000 feet above, you would have your perspective of the immensity of the last of the four Cordilleran ice sheets - the Vashon lobe. By such massive ice the peninsula was cut off, island-like, on four sides for at least 1,500 years: the ocean; the ice of the Strait; the ice within the



Sound; and the oversized, forbidding streams to the south carrying the outwash melt of the glaciers.

This isolation combined with the topography and geological separation of this island-like range was a critical factor in determining patterns of life forms that presently grace the Olympics. Thus, the Olympic mountains served as a biological refuge for plants and animals dating as far back as 5-25 million years ago when the first ice sheets seem to have appeared. Since each ice sheet wipes out much evidence of its predecessor, the Vashon ice sheet of 14,000 to 12,500 years ago gives us most of our knowledge. As a result of this island isolation, there are plants and animals that the Olympics share with the Cascades, but there are other plants not present in the Olympics - such as the noble fir. Eight plants found thus far are endemic to the Olympic mountains: found here and nowhere else on our planet. Two of the most beautiful photographs for the book are the endemic Fletts violet and Piper's bellstar. Disjunct plant species also exist in the Olympics. This means that the plant can be found elsewhere but only at great distances, in some cases as much as 500 miles away.

In addition, there are nine endemic animal species or subspecies - five mammals, three fish, one amphibian. Twelve mammal species common to the Cascades are absent from the Olympics. One Cascade animal species present now - which is not an endangered species in Washington - is the mountain goat. Its introduction by humans in the Olympic Mountains in the first half of the century places at risk the truly unique species that characterize the pristine Olympics. And thus, it has been the source of recent controversy between those wishing to preserve this uniqueness and those who want recreation at any cost.

Some readers should be wary of this book: if you have a mind set against conservation, this is not the book for you. The author leads us step by step from the scientific evidence to the need for preservation and protection. As McNulty says, "...it falls to each of us to assume stewardship for places like Olympic National Park."

Tim McNulty has much to teach us. We feel as we visit places like Olympic National Park that we are aware of our surroundings. But with this work the author helps us to focus even more acutely, and to realize that there is diversity here that is astounding. The author sharpens our awareness skills and teaches us the important ecological and conservation connections, whether we are observing the forces of ice and geology, high mountain meadows, river system ecology, ancient forest communities, rain forest botany and zoology, or life at the edge of sea and land.

"...it falls to each of us to assume stewardship for places like Olympic National Park."

Tim McNulty

The Latest on the Elwha River and Its Destructive Dams



The Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act of 1992 directed the Federal government to purchase and remove the two hydroelectric installations on the Elwha River. Once the dams had been acquired, the Federal government was directed to fully restore the Elwha River, the ecosystem of the river's basin, and the wild native salmon species and other anadromous fish.

The Gorton Amendment

Senator Slade Gorton (R-WA) put forth an amendment (see text, below) to turn over the dams and any restoration of the river, its ecosystem, and its fabled salmon runs, to the State of Washington, once the full \$29,500,000.00 had been appropriated by Congress to purchase the dams from James River, Inc., their owners.

To date, \$4,000,000 per year (an amount sought by Gorton) has been appropriated or, so far, only \$8,000,000. Thus, it would be another 5 or 6 years before the full purchase price for the dams was in place. (An appropriation of \$270,000 was also made for immediate in-river work to attempt to avert the near extinction of one salmon species.)

Conservation Community Opposed Gorton Amendment

Olympic Park Associates, Seattle Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, and Trout Unlimited (the five original intervenors before FERC to seek denial of licensing), the Lower Elwha S'Klallam Tribe, and the later intervenors do not believe the State of Washington will have the resources to meet all the requirements for restoration. The current estimated costs of removing the dams and restoring the ecosystem is in the neighborhood of \$100,000,000, including the \$29,500,000 to purchase the dams.

Further, it is also our opinion that removal of the dams and ecosystem restoration is a responsibility of the Federal government. The Elwha River watershed is the largest pristine watershed on the

Olympic Peninsula, and it is primarily within Olympic National Park; the Glines Canyon Dam is in the Park; and the Elwha Dam, five miles from the river's mouth, prevents wild salmon and other anadromous fish from reaching their ideal, historic spawning areas within the Park.

The dams' electric energy currently goes to the Daishowa mill in Port Angeles, covering about one-third of the power requirements. Replacement power would be provided by the Bonneville Power Administration.

Some of the repealed sections of the 1992 Act affect other issues, including interests of the lower S'Klallam Elwha Tribe.

Efforts to Remove the Gorton Amendment

In spite of major efforts to drop Gorton's amendment, it passed as part of the Fiscal Year 1997 Omnibus Spending Bill. A great deal of work was done in the House of Representatives, the Senate, and The White House to remove the Gorton language. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and her staff did their utmost to have the Gorton language eliminated in the Senate; Congressman Rick White (R-WA) and his staff went all out to have the Gorton amendment deleted by the House, initially with some success. The Council on Environmental Quality's Tom Jensen also worked very hard to remove the amendment. But, with some modifications to the amendment, Senator Gorton had his way.

The Elwha Battle Is Not Over

The conservation community will continue to work on behalf of a completely restored Elwha River, its environs, and its fishery. Each of you can let your Congressional representatives and Washington State officials know that the Elwha belongs to everyone in the nation. It is a national treasure, badly tarnished during the past eighty years, but a treasure that can have its lost heritage restored — for itself, for its wild fish, for Olympic National Park, and for future generations of people to understand and appreciate.



Text of the Gorton Amendment:

Public Law 102-495 is amended by adding the following new section:

"Sec. 10. Washington State Removal Option.

"(a) Upon appropriation of \$29,500,000 for the Federal government to acquire the projects in the State of Washington pursuant to this Act, the State of Washington may, upon the submission to Congress of a binding agreement to remove the projects within a reasonable period of time, purchase the projects from the Federal government for \$2. Such a binding agreement shall provide for the full restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem and native anadromous fisheries, for protection of the existing quality and availability of water from the Elwha River for municipal and industrial uses from possible

adverse impacts of dam removal, and for fulfillment by the State of each of the other obligations of the Secretary [of Interior] under this Act."

"(b) Upon receipt of the payment pursuant to subsection (a), the Federal government shall relinquish ownership and title of the projects to the State of Washington.

"(c) Upon the purchase of the projects by the State of Washington, Section (a), (c), and (d), and Sections 4, 7, and 9 of this Act are hereby repealed, and the remaining sections renumbered accordingly.

Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge Releases Public Use Plan

by Tim McNulty

The Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge is about to release an environmental assessment which addresses the pressing issue of recreational use of Dungeness Spit. In less than a decade, visitation to the spit has increased from 66,000 to 113,000 people per year. During that time, wildlife use of the refuge, including black Brant geese and other waterfowl, as well as harbor seal use, has declined. The refuge provides migratory and nesting habitat for over 250 species of birds, including threatened and endangered species such as peregrine falcons, marbled murrelets, snowy plovers and bald eagles.

To limit impacts on wildlife from increasing recreational use, refuge managers closed the tip of Dungeness Spit and its subsidiary, Graveyard Spit, to human use in 1993. This action somewhat reduced human disturbance to wildlife, but recreational use elsewhere in the refuge continues to impact water birds and shorebirds, and black Brant continue to decline.

The current plan provides for wildlife-dependent recreational and educational uses of the refuge while ensuring that such uses do not negatively affect wildlife. Parts of the refuge would be closed to human use during critical wintering and migration seasons. Recreational beach uses such as horseback riding and jogging will be limited to a small area at the base of the spit, away from important bird habitat. And jet skiing and wind surfing will be banned from the refuge.

OPA supports the Fish and Wildlife Service's

effort to protect wildlife use on Dungeness Spit while allowing for appropriate, wildlife oriented recreational activities, but one part of the proposed plan seriously weakens this effort. Refuge managers propose to allow a 100-yard boat landing zone near the Dungeness Lighthouse at the end of the spit — an area that is otherwise closed year round to public use. This is one of the highest use areas for marbled murrelets (a federal threatened species) on the inside waters of the spit. The nearshore area is also utilized by harlequin ducks (a state sensitive species), and receives high use by nearly all bird species frequenting the refuge. Allowing this boat landing zone, a concession to the US Lighthouse Society which has taken over maintenance of the Dungeness Lighthouse, could displace such nesting shorebirds as snowy plovers (a state endangered species) and black oystercatchers.

OPA finds this use of refuge lands contrary to the stated mission and goals of the refuge system, namely, to "preserve...lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources." and to provide visitors with "enjoyable recreational experiences *oriented toward wildlife, to the extent these activities are compatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established*" (emphasis added).

There has been intense pressure by local officials in Clallam County to open the refuge to unlimited recreational use, even at the expense of wildlife.

The final version of Management of Public Use for Dungeness Nat'l Wildlife Refuge is expected in Dec '96 or Jan '97.

A 30-day comment period will follow.

To obtain a copy, write:

Robert Edens
Refuge Manager
WA Coastal

Refuges Office
33 South Barr Rd
Port Angeles, WA
98362

Anyone interested in the future of this spectacular wildlife refuge should write to express their support of the management plan — *as well as their concerns.*

Jefferson County PUD Finally Gives Up on Dosewallips Dam

The final death knell for the proposed Dosewallips dam sounded on October 14. That's when Jefferson County PUD No. 1 wrote the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) withdrawing its license application for the Elkhorn Hydroelectric Project on the Dosewallips River. Conservationists breathed a long sigh of relief.

Nearly a decade ago, OPA and six other environmental groups filed an intervention in the FERC proceedings for this project requesting that FERC deny the license on both environmental and legal grounds. The proposed dam threatened to impact "at-risk" salmon runs and a declining elk population on the Dosewallips River, and Jefferson County PUD No. 1 had no legal authority to produce or sell hydroelectric energy.

Earlier this year, FERC granted Jefferson County an eleventh-hour extension to attempt to gain voter approval for this ill-conceived project,

but there was little chance that the proposed dam would ever pass voter scrutiny. It met with a resounding two-to-one defeat when it was brought before Jefferson County voters in 1984, and it makes even less economic sense now than then.

Jefferson County PUD's final withdrawal of its application was long overdue. Nonetheless, PUD manager James Parker maintained in his letter to FERC that the Elkhorn project "provides little impact on the environment" and that "the project will some day prove to be feasible." The PUD's enduring attachment to this project underscores the need for National Wild and Scenic River status for the Dosewallips River — and a dozen other free-flowing rivers on the Olympic Peninsula. Including these rivers in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System is the *only* way to permanently protect them from environmentally destructive projects like the Elkhorn dam.





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Sally W. Soest, Editor

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Jan. 16, 7-9 pm, Port Angeles Senior Ctr.

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Please mail to:

Laura Zalesky, Membership Chair
2433 Del Campo Drive, Everett, WA 98208

Park News

Olympic National Park Publishes Statement For Management - 1996

The park's Statement for Management, updated every two to five years, contains information on park management, resources, and facilities. The latest version, just published, is filled with interesting information on management objectives, wilderness use issues, and visitation figures. There are maps of developed areas such as Lake Crescent, the Hoh Rain Forest, and Hurricane Ridge. For a copy of this handsome, 22-page, tabloid-sized document, contact Olympic National Park, 600 East Park Ave., Port Angeles, WA 98362, (360) 452-4501.

Sand Point Restoration

Park staff and volunteers will plant over 15,000 native plants at Sand Point this fall. Sand Point, on the popular Ozette loop trail, is one of the most heavily-used wilderness camping areas in the park, and as a result has developed large patches of bare ground and a network of social trails. Restoration crews will replant bare patches with native plants propagated in the park's greenhouse and will define access trails. This project is funded in part by a grant from the Canon Corporation and the National Park Foundation. (From *Olympic National Park Update*.)

