

Conservation History of the Alpine Lakes Part I

Bill Beyers & Don Parks¹

While 2016 marks the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Alpine Lakes Management Act, proposals for preservation of the region date back almost another 40 years. In fact, events critical to conservation in the Alpine Lakes Region date back to 1864 with the authorization of the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPR) to build a transcontinental railroad that could receive a federal land grant. The resulting land ownership pattern, coupled with the extremely high environmental values, have measurably added to the challenge of efforts to protect the area.

Northern Pacific Land Grant (1864-1941)

The NPR expected to receive title to every other square mile (odd numbered sections) 40 miles north and south from the track route that crossed the Cascades at Stampede Pass, as well as along track that went through the Columbia River Gorge and north to Tacoma and Seattle. Consequently, the checkerboard ownership pattern generated by the land grant in the Alpine Lakes region could potentially have extended from Grizzly Peak (north of Stevens Pass) south to near White Pass.

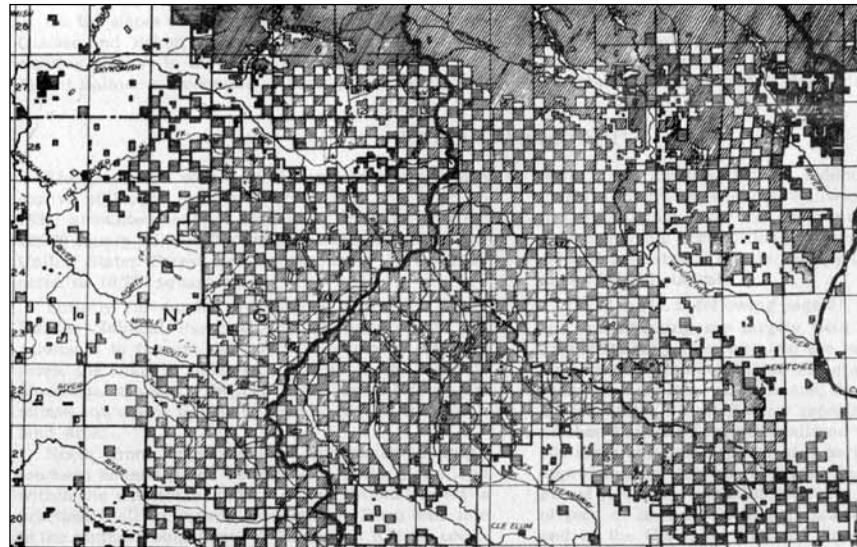


Figure 1 Land Ownership Classification Pattern Prior to Settlement of NPR Land Claims in 1940.

SOURCE: CASCADE MOUNTAINS STUDY, BY WASHINGTON STATE PLANNING COUNCIL, DATED MAY 1940. THE LAND OWNERSHIPS DEPICTED ARE AS OF 1937.

This pattern included all of the Alpine Lakes region (Figure 1; uncolored sections promised to NPR).

In order to acquire the deeds to all this land the NPR was required to complete several steps including surveying. The Secretary of Interior would then grant a patent (deed). However, due to litigation over mineralized lands and other issues, the Secretary did not issue patents in certain areas, including a significant amount of land within what became the Alpine Lakes

Wilderness. There were several variations in the selection procedures that evolved over

Continued on page 2

Also in this issue:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Ben Hayes, an ALPS founder dies.. | 9 |
| North Fork Snoqualmie hydro stopped, Sunset project still a threat..... | 10 |
| New Index-Galena road to be built? | 12 |
| Fate of Wallace Falls and Singletary Timber Sale now uncertain | 13 |
| Mountains to Sound Greenway begins major initiative..... | 14 |

¹The authors would like to acknowledge the comments received from Dave Knibb, Charlie Raines, Doug Scott, Ron Eber, Dave Redman (USFS), and Gary Paull (USFS) on the text of this article.

History *continued from page 1*

time. The details of some of these variations are beyond the scope of the Alpine Lakes discussion. In 1941 a settlement of all outstanding land claims was reached between the federal government and DPR with the result that the grants in the core of the Alpine Lakes were withdrawn and those lands were retained by the federal government as part of the national forest. Except for a few land exchanges (e.g., Teanaway and Whitepine Creek), landownership patterns in the area remained stable until after the Alpine Lakes Area legislation of 1976. (*See Appendix on page 9 for further discussion of land grant process.*)

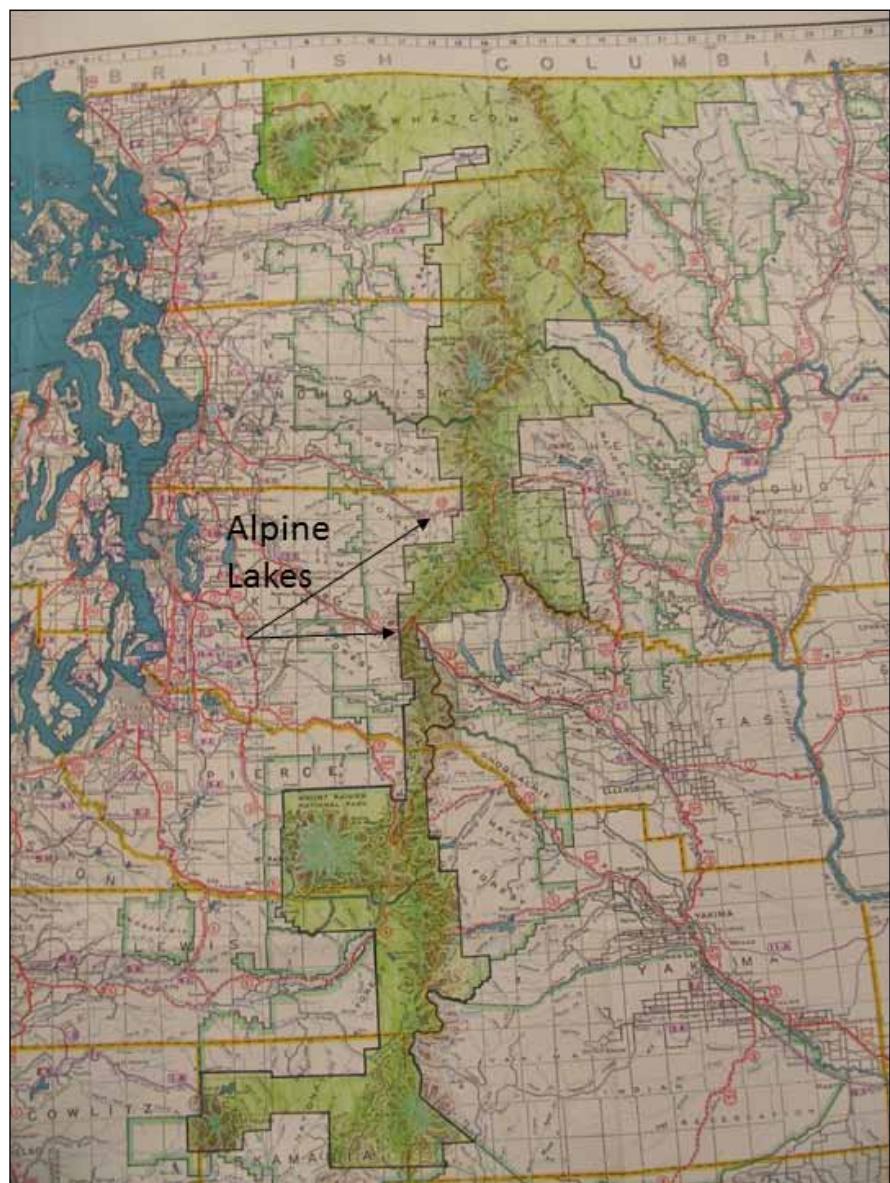
Ice Peaks National Park Proposal (1937) and the Forest Service “Limited Area” Designation (1946)

In 1937 a National Park Service committee led by O.A. Tomlinson proposed an Ice Peaks National Park, as depicted in Figure 2 at right. Tomlinson was Superintendent of Mt. Rainier National Park, and he and a committee surveyed the Cascade Range from Mt. St. Helens to the Canadian border. This study, predicated by one year the establishment of Olympic National Park, was not the subject of Congressional action, and was strongly opposed by the Forest Service and the timber industry. The proposal was for a fairly narrow swath of parkland, hugging the main stem of the Cascade Mountains plus all the volcanoes in the range.

In the Alpine Lakes region, the Ice Peaks National Park proposal was quite narrow at Snoqualmie and Stevens Pass, as shown in Figure 3 on next page. However, the proposal encompassed the area between the two passes that overlaid most of the lands proposed nearly forty years later

for preservation as Wilderness by the North Cascades Study Team. Note that this proposal included the Enchantments and Mt. Stuart as well as the upper Middle Fork Snoqualmie.

Figure 2 Proposed Ice Peaks National Park



Source: O.A. Tomlinson, R. M. Bond, E.A. Davidson, J.V. Lewis, and F.J. Overly. *Report of Committee Northern Cascades Investigation*. National Park Service, August-September 1937.

Figure 3 Ice Peaks National Park proposal in the Alpine Lakes Region



Source: O.A. Tomlinson, R. M. Bond, E.A. Davidson, J.V. Lewis, and F.J. Overly. *Report of Committee Northern Cascades Investigation*. National Park Service, August-September 1937.

The Forest Service (FS) strongly opposed the 1937 National Park Service proposal, and in apparent response established an Alpine Lakes Limited Area in 1946. The Limited Area—a land classification unique to the northwest region of the FS—encompassed 256,000 acres astride the Cascade Crest that extended in the north from Cady Pass (near Fortune Mountain) where it met the Glacier Peak Limited Area south to Snoqualmie Pass. Figure 4 shows the portion of this Limited Area south of US2

Even before the North Cascade region was provided some protection when it was designated a Forest Reserve in 1897, activists argued that the region should be afforded greater protection as a national park. Not all locals supported the idea of a national park, as they felt that such a designation would negatively

impact their economic situation. The FS was also not in favor of a park as that would mean they would have to relinquish control over the land, an event that was not uncommon since many parks that were being established

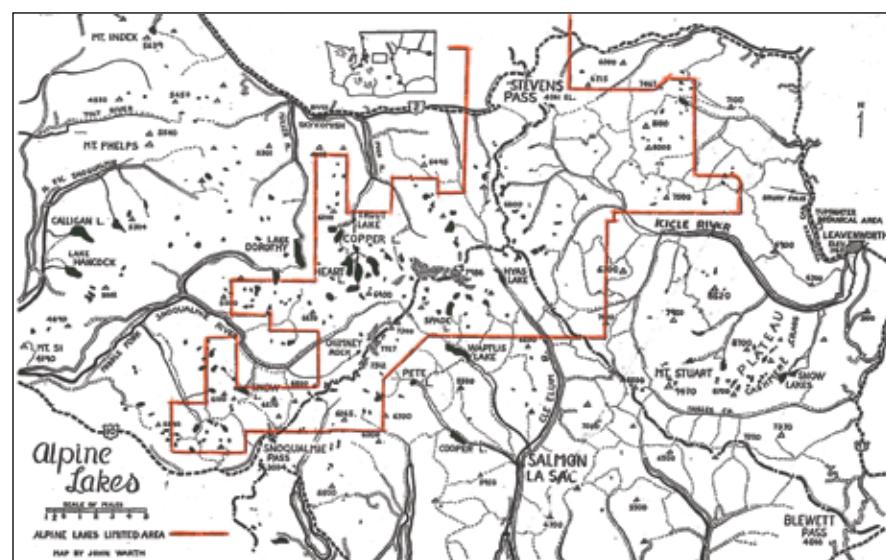
were originally managed by the FS. In an effort to appease their detractors, the FS designated Primitive Areas that would provide increased protections to some of the most pristine regions they managed. By the mid-1930s, forester Bob Marshall argued that this region should be set aside as wilderness, as that would keep the National Park Service out since their mandate would force them to construct roads and build “improvements” for the sake of tourism. Rival interests continued to argue over whether the lands should remain under the management of the FS or the National Park Service but by the 1960s, the environmentalist argument advocating for a national park prevailed. All this had implications for the Alpine Lakes area just to the south.

North Cascade Study (1963-1965)

The National Park Service and the FS continued their long history of contending over which agency would administer wild lands in the West. In the years after World War II, the U.S. FS gradually

Figure 4 (below)
Alpine Lakes Limited Area

Source: Wilderness Society, *The Living Wilderness*. Spring 1960. Inter-agency Competition (1930s-1950s)



became a more active player in timber harvest activity, building roads into de-facto-wilderness valleys in the North Cascades. This led to strong opposition to these timber-driven developments from environmental organizations such as the North Cascades Conservation Council, the Sierra Club, and the Mountaineers. In 1963 President Kennedy played a key role in establishing a joint agency study to identify areas suitable for wilderness and potential National Park protection in the Cascade Mountains between Mt. Rainier and the Canadian border. The resulting North Cascades Study team, composed of National Park Service and FS personnel, was tasked to develop a joint recommendation for the North Cascades. The Team was composed of the Director of the National Park Service, a consultant to the Secretary of Interior, the Deputy Chief of the FS, a consultant to the Secretary of Agriculture, and a fifth member jointly selected by the other four members of the study team.

Prior to the initiation of the North Cascades Study, conservation groups sought protection for the area and developed several wilderness proposals for the Alpine Lakes Region, including a 1963 proposal totaling 334,000 acres to replace the Limited area and also to protect additional areas. This was a single unit proposal that included checkerboard lands in the Chiwaukum Mountains, Waptus River, Snow Creek, Mt Cashmere and the Pratt River areas.

In 1965 the North Cascades Study Team made its report that focused on the establishment of the National Park in the North Cascades. The report also proposed two small Wilderness Areas in the Alpine Lakes (194,691 acres), as shown below in Figure 5. Senator Henry M. Jackson took leadership in bringing the

recommendations of the North Cascades Study Team for a national park proposal before Congress in 1967, culminating in the establishment of North Cascades National Park and a number of other classifications (Pasayten Wilderness, and additions to Glacier Peak Wilderness). However, there was controversy over Wilderness recommendations in the Alpine Lakes region since the National Park Service had proposed a much larger Wilderness Area than the FS (See Figure 6), as had the conservationists as well. Given that the establishment of North Cascades National Park involved transfer of a large amount of land from the FS to the National Park Service, and pressures from the forest products industry to maintain timber supplies for the industry from lands in the Alpine Lakes, Congress did not take

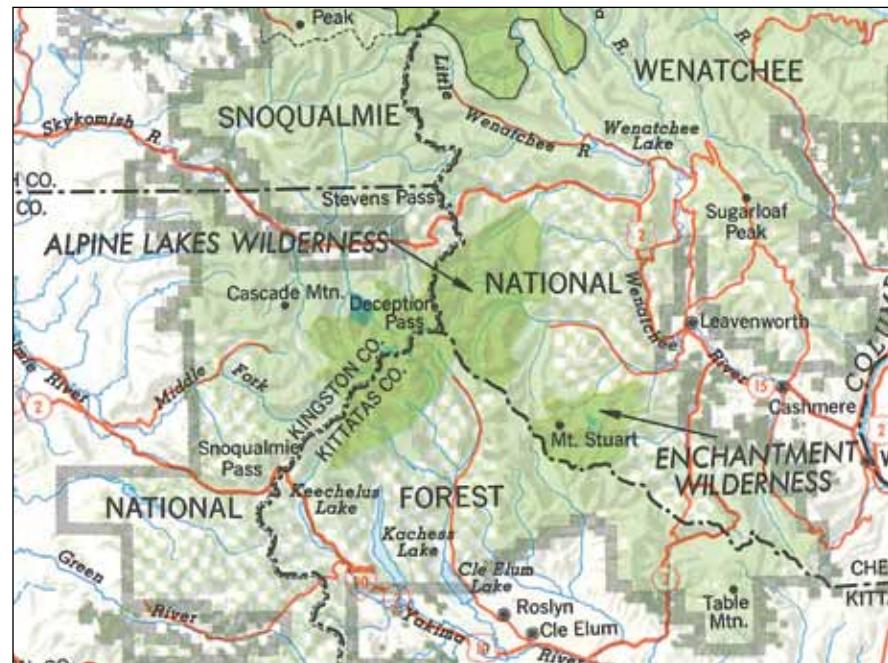
action with regard to the Alpine Lakes in 1967.

Environmentalists were disappointed with the lack of action on Wilderness status for the Alpine Lakes, and in 1968 the Alpine Lakes Protection Society (ALPS) was founded with the primary purpose of seeking permanent protection for the values of the region. Almost immediately, the forest products industry and motorized recreation interests established a competing organization—the Central Washington Cascades Study Team (CW CST)—to oppose a large wilderness area in the Alpine Lakes Region.

Alpine Lakes Area Study (1972-1975)

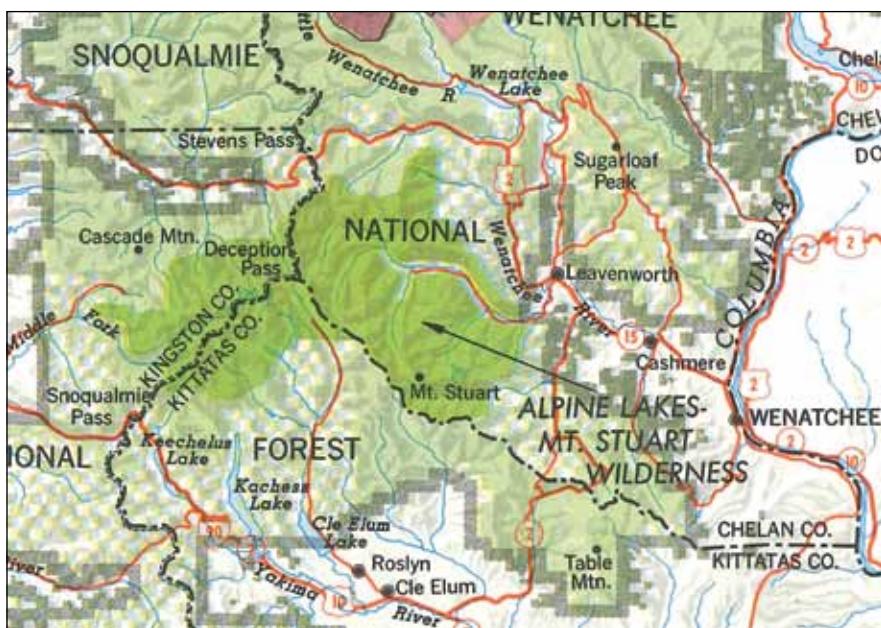
After the North Cascades National Park designation in 1968, interest turned to the Alpine Lakes Region. Conservationists were dissatisfied with the

Figure 5. Final Wilderness Recommendation for the Alpine Lakes Region in the North Cascades Study Team Report



Source: The North Cascades Study Team, *The North Cascades*. U.S. Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Agriculture, October 1965.

Figure 6 North Cascades Study Team National Park Service recommendations for Wilderness in the Alpine Lakes



Source: The North Cascades Study Team, *The North Cascades*. U.S. Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Agriculture. October 1965.

North Cascades study and its Alpine Lakes recommendation. ALPS and other environmental organizations pressured the Forest Service to revisit its wilderness recommendation in the Alpine Lakes, and in response the Forest Service undertook a formal and focused study of the area, forming a dedicated study-team in 1972. This was one of the first land use studies conducted pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This act required, among other things, a study that included the development of alternative courses of action, analyses of the impacts of these actions, and prepared with full public involvement.

During the early 1970s the FS also completed a national study of roadless areas, the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE), pursuant to the Wilderness Act of 1964. That study identified those roadless areas most suitable for wilderness and 'committed' these areas to further study. The commercial forestlands within these Wilderness Study Areas

(WSA) were withdrawn from the FS's cut base to eliminate pressure to enter and log these areas before wilderness studies were complete. Six WSAs were identified in the Alpine Lakes Area totaling 401,880 acres. While a significant recognition of the wilderness values of the region, these WSAs excluded checkerboard lands. The Alpine Lakes Area study was one of the 'committed' studies and it started with the evaluation of these WSAs.

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was completed in July 1973 that included a preferred alternative. The FS scrapped the two-unit recommendation of 1965 and proposed a single unit wilderness of 285,193 acres. Public hearings were held on both sides of the Cascades where the proposal proved highly controversial. Over 1,200 people attended the hearings and 2,750 written comments were submitted in the subsequent comment period. Although a step in the right direction, the proposal left out too many places, often with trees, and

contained no checkerboard lands.

After reviewing the substantial public input, the formal Alpine Lakes Area Study was completed in 1975 and included a recommendation to Congress. The Final EIS recommended 292,192 acres of Wilderness on federal lands and plus an additional 82,150 acres of checkerboard lands as 'Potential Wilderness.' Public input had paved the way for a substantial increase in Wilderness, almost twice the size of the proposal of the North Cascades Study Team report (See Figure 7) ten years earlier.

The Congressional Process and the Alpine Lakes Area Management Act of 1976 (1975-1976)

Meanwhile, ALPS joined other environmental organizations in 1975 to seek maximum protection of lands as Wilderness, and to surround the Wilderness with a National Recreation Area. National Recreation Areas are a multiple-use concept, consistent with the USFS Multiple-Use and Sustained Yield Act (Public Law 86-517), but define recreational activity as the superior multiple use.

In 1975 Congressman Lloyd Meeds took leadership in introducing alternative legislative proposals in Congress and in holding hearings before the House Interior Committee on the Alpine Lakes legislation. Hearings were held in Washington D.C., Seattle, and Wenatchee. Figure 7 below documents the proposals considered by Congress. CWCST supported what was essentially the 1965 North Cascades Study Team Proposal. The dotted line shows the proposal by the FS (HR7792), the recommendation from their 1972-1975 study (checkerboard lands not shown). ALPS joined with other environmental organizations to support HR3977, the dashed line inside the boundary of a proposal National

Recreation Area (about 563,000 acres).

The hearings in 1975 were strongly divided between environmentalists and timber/motorized recreation interests, with little support for the USFS proposal. There was strong co-sponsorship and bi-partisan involvement from the Washington congressional delegation including Congressmen Brock Adams (D), Floyd Hicks (R), Joel Prichard (R), Mike McCormack (D) and Tom Foley (D). Congressman Meeds staff in the winter of 1975 began a process of brokering a compromise Wilderness boundary and management unit language, starting with the FS proposal as the mark-up vehicle, and then considering lands outside it proposed by environmental organizations. Timber industry interests opposed including any lands larger than those proposed by the FS.

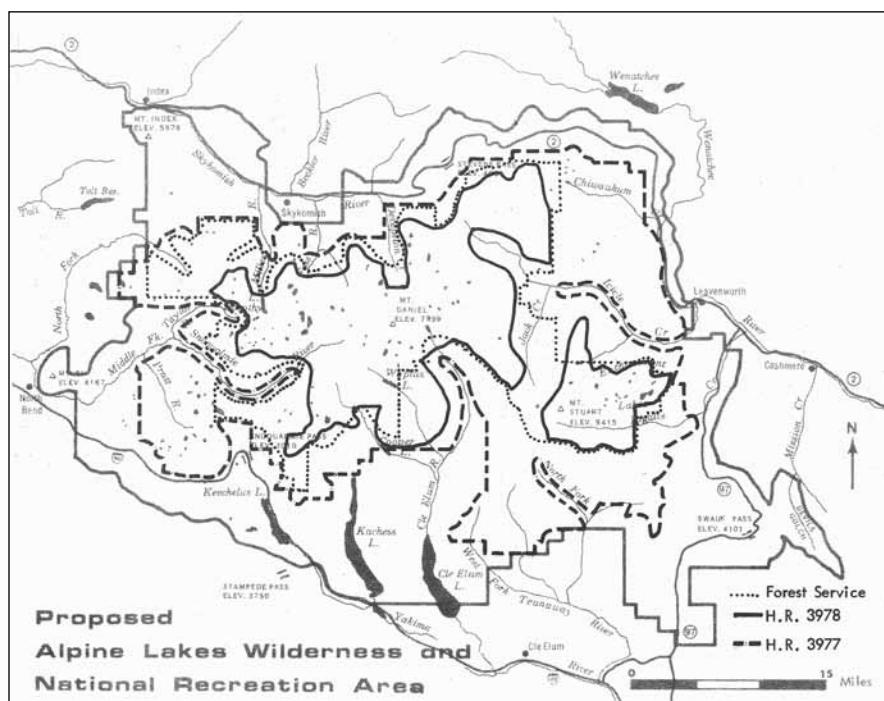
Timber had always been the central issue surrounding the

question of the ultimate size of an Alpine Lakes Wilderness. The FS FEIS estimated that the Forest Service proposal would reduce the national forest cut in the Alpine Lakes Region by 10.8 million-board feet/year (mmbf/yr) including the wilderness proposal, 'scenic areas' and other deferrals. The timber industry challenged the FS volume reduction estimates as being too low. ALPS addressed these issues also, and part of our strategy in dealing with the timber question was to ensure that decision makers understood the context of any theoretical reductions in cutting volume and to stress the importance of recreation. It should be noted that during this period (1970-1974) the annual average cut volume in the three-counties of the Alpine Lakes (King, Kittitas, and Chelan) was 697 mmbf. Consequently, the entire FS proposal was theoretically impacting 1.5% of the local timber supply.

When environmental organizations learned that CWCST consultants (UW College of Forestry faculty) had calculated the impacts of to the allowable cut on lands proposed by environmentalists as Wilderness outside the FS boundary proposals, there was a need to respond. Don Parks and Bill Beyers undertook an analysis of these parcels, based on timber suitability data and methodology from the FS, and calculated the allowable cut implications of each of the parcels shown on Figure 8 below. Data from this analysis showed that timber supplies in the region could be impacted by an additional 37.9 mmbf (29.7 mmbf federal & 8.1 mmbf private) over the Forest Service proposal. This figure included the RARE WSAs which had already been withdrawn from the cut by the FS in 1974. In any event, 37.9 mmbf represented about 5.4% of the current timber supply in the three-county region. Even if the largest Wilderness were to be adopted, the regional timber supply would not be impacted in a significant way. The ALPS analyses helped reduce hysteria the timber industry had hoped to create with its own timber report.

The net result of House Interior Committee decisions between October 1975 and May 1976 was the deletion of a few areas from the Forest Service recommendation, but many more areas were added. This process was completed in the spring of 1976 when the Alpine Lakes Coalition proposed about 9,000 acres of Wilderness additions in exchange for the elimination of management unit language they felt would reduce timber cutting in the perimeter. The ensuing negotiations led to the addition of about 10,000 acres to the Wilderness package. At final passage the Wilderness and Intended Wilderness was expanded by 19,018 acres beyond the FS's recommended starting

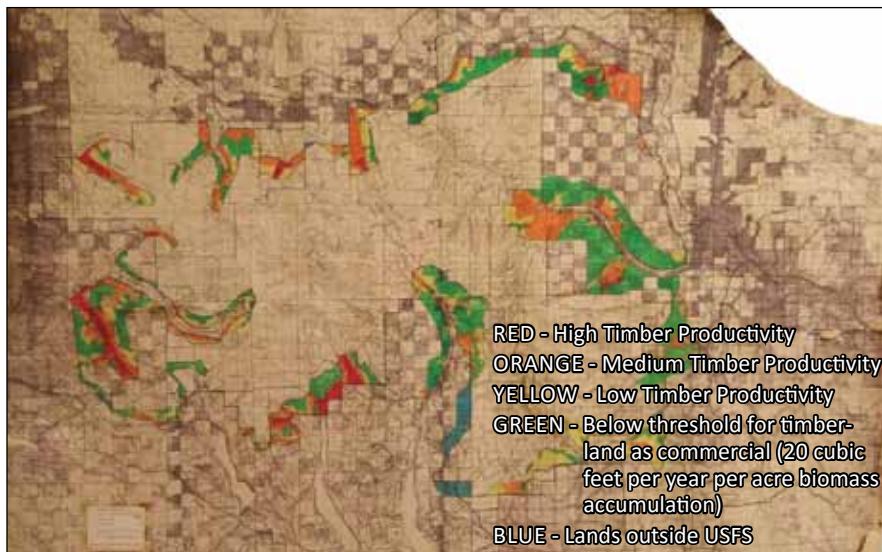
Figure 7 Alternative Wilderness Proposals 1975



Source: Alpine Lakes Protection Society. *An Alpine Lakes Wilderness and National Recreation Area: A Legislative Analysis of H.R. 3972*. June 1975.

point. The FS opposed the legislation in its final form largely because of the mechanisms that dealt with private land acquisition and the possibility of setting new precedents.

Figure 8 Parcels of timberland located between boundary of HR 7792 and HR3977



However, the final bill was signed into law (PL 94-357) on July 12, 1976 after Governor Dan Evans personally lobbied President Ford for its passage.

The Alpine Lakes Wilderness legislation included several novel provisions, articulated by ALPS lawyers and Mark Houser of Lloyd Meeds staff. Given the large amount of checkerboard land left over from the Northern Pacific Railroad land grants from the 19th century that was still technically classifiable as Wilderness, several provisions were inserted in the legislation to ensure that these lands would become part of the Wilderness system. They were designated as "Intended Wilderness," and a provision was written into the legislation to allow "inverse condemnation," meaning that the three principle land owners (Weyerhaeuser, Burlington Northern, and Pack River) could sue the US government to have their lands taken from them if they were not acquired within

three years. The legislation also included a provision protecting the landowners from any decline in the value of their standing timber during the acquisition period.

4. direction to the Forest Service to prepare a single management plan encompassing both national forests to address the newly established Alpine Lakes Management Unit.

In the final map that defined the eventual extent of the Wilderness there were nine blocks of "Intended Wilderness." that included 40,690 acres of non-federal land, 99.8% of which was owned by the three principal land owners. These lands are depicted on Figure 9. Congress authorized \$57 million in the Alpine Lakes legislation to cover the cost of acquisition should inverse condemnation be required for all the Intended Wilderness lands. The Intended Wilderness lands were added to the Wilderness when the intermingled private lands were acquired, the last parcels being added to the Wilderness by the mid-1980's. Funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund helped to acquire these Intended Wilderness lands. The total package of permanently protected lands was 393,360 acres.

In its final form, the Alpine Lakes law incorporated these major features:

1. an instant Wilderness of 306,934 acres (solid federal ownership);
2. an Intended Wilderness (checkerboard land including both national forest and private lands) of 86,426 acres with a mechanism for acquiring the private lands and adding them to the Wilderness without further Congressional action, plus provisions requested by private owners;
3. a "Management Unit" surrounding the wilderness of about 547,155 acres. The Management Unit concept evolved out of the ALPS proposal to surround the wilderness core with a National Recreation Area where recreation was recognized as an important value and;

Final Timber Accounting (1974-1976)

The claims and counters claims by the timber industry on Alpine Lakes Wilderness cut impacts were ultimately played out when the FS updated it formal timber management plans as directed in both the RARE study and then finally adjusted after the final boundaries were defined. In the end, the FS cut reductions from the 1960s timber management plans totaled 14.2 mmbf, including a giveback (increase) on the Wenatchee National Forest of 1.9 mmbf when that forest apparently over estimated the cut reduction initially. Accounting for the best contemporary estimate of private land cut volume reductions (probably over estimated), the impact to the three-county local

timber supply may have been as much as 2.5%. All the heated discussion over the FS cut calculation was really over ~1% of the local timber supply.

Alpine Lakes Area Management Plan (1981)

Congress directed the FS to develop a single management plan for the region on both sides of the Cascade Mountains. In 1981 this management plan was articulated, and it included a number of administrative actions of significance.

These places were named and included the Mt Index Scenic Area, Nason Ridge Recreation Area, Teanaway Recreation Area, Tumwater Canyon Scenic and Botanical Areas, and Annette Lake Recreation Area. Additional specific administrative protection through the land allocation of "Dispersed Recreation" was applied to specific, mapped areas that were also unroaded, many being contiguous to the wilderness. This land management allocation was applied to a many places such as Kachess Ridge,

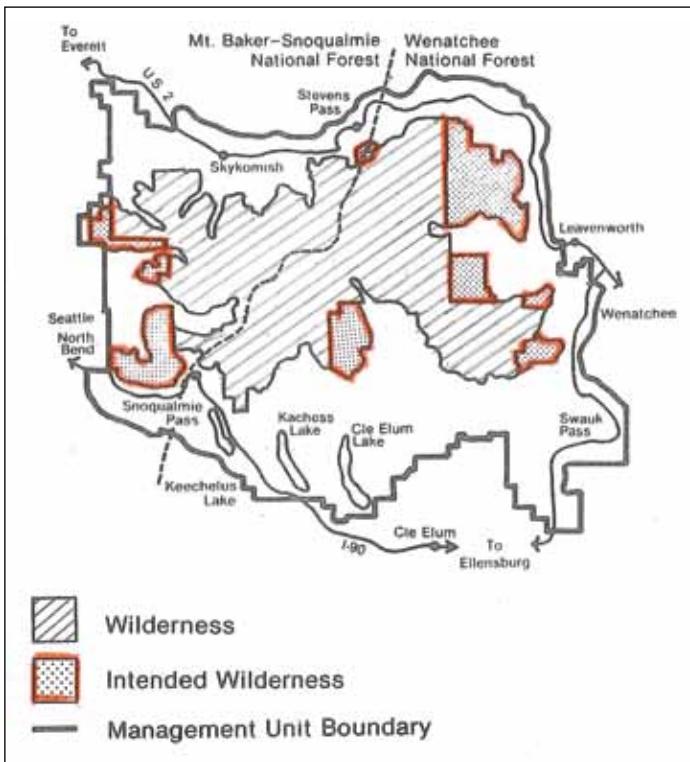
and "Dispersed Recreation" were added to the above total as other private lands outside the Intended Wilderness were acquired in succeeding years.

Another important feature of the management plan was to establish criteria for a long-term land ownership pattern. The land acquisitions within the Intended Wilderness only addressed part of the need to consolidate ownerships since about one third of the area of the management unit (outside of the Wilderness and Intended Wilderness) in 1976 remained in private hands. This plan recognized the need for adjustments in these land ownership patterns.

Once the controversy of Wilderness designation had passed, more realistic assessments of timber capability were developed in the 1981 management plan. The 1981 study showed that 38% of the management unit area was unproductive forest land, while nearly one third of the commercial forest land was low productivity. In 1981, the 10-year actual annual average cut volume on national forest land in the region was measured at 39 mmbf/year. This figure could be compared to the planned short-term programmed cut in the plan's preferred alternative of 30.1 mmbf that included 150,000 acres of administrative protections. The above estimates are a far cry from the somewhat misleading figures documented in DEIS of 1973 of 81.9 mmbf (long-term potential yield without wilderness). In 1985-89 the three-county cut was still averaging 659 mmbf with the national forest component being 10% greater than 1970-74. This would change as the story unfolds.

The management plan recognized recreation and the value of undeveloped lands outside of the Wilderness. The plan established management direction (through land management allocations) for "Special Areas." These areas were generally unroaded and many were contiguous to the wilderness.

Figure 9 Intended Wilderness



Source: U.S. Forest Service, *Final Environmental Impact Statement Alpine Lakes Area Management Plan*, 1981

McClain Peaks, Maloney Ridge, and Davis Peak. These two land allocations totaled 149,516 acres of unroaded lands in 1981. Timber cutting was not scheduled and new road construction was to be avoided. For the purposes of timber planning, these lands were virtually equivalent to Wilderness. Additional acres of "Special Areas"

by environmental organizations legislatively in 1975/1976!

Look for Part 2 of the Conservation History of the Alpine Lakes in the next issue of *The Alpine*.

Appendix

In 1864 the Federal government authorized the construction of a transcontinental railroad (RR) across the northern tier of the U.S. This act of Congress offered a grant of 40 sections of land for each mile of track built (in alternate odd numbered sections 40 miles north and south of the track) in territories and 20 sections, 20 miles north and south of track in states (Oregon and Minnesota); plus the track right of way (200 feet wide) and for depot/maintenance sites. The railroad was to carry mail and support military movements. It was intended that the RR sell the acquired checkerboard lands to settlers, thereby raising cash to support RR construction. It was not intended that mineralized lands be part of the grant. The RR was to be completed by 1876. Congress granted multiple extensions to the completion deadlines.

The RR would develop a proposed route and submit the proposal to the Department of Interior for approval. When approved, the RR was given the right of way, and when a particular section of track was built, RR would submit a map showing the lands to be granted. When approved by the General Land Office (predecessor to the Bureau of Land Management), the RR was issued a "patent" as legal title. However, before the RR

Continued on page 15

Ben Hayes: ALPS' First President

By Dave Knibb



HAL AND GLORIA LINDSTROM

Ben Hayes hiking at Indian Heaven, 1977.

faded more than we knew, but we were still wondering if we could persuade Ben to write something for the 40th anniversary of ALPS. Ben had retired and moved away, but his early influence is still part of ALPS's DNA.

I met Ben Hayes in the summer of 1968. We were both part of a loose-knit group that was trying to start something on behalf of the Alpine Lakes, regarded at the time as the stepchild of the North Cascades. Ben was a pipe-smoking, seemingly jovial, university administrator – one of a half dozen unaffiliated but concerned folks worried for the future of the Alpine Lakes.

Brock Evans, who was Northwest Conservation representative for a number of groups, was urging us on. He phoned me early in October 1968 to suggest that I join a Sunday hike to Hyas Lake. Members of our little

**August 17,
2016, the
day Ben
Hayes died,
marks the
end of an
era.**

Ben had long since passed the torch, but we still looked to him as the co-founder and inspiration for Alpine Lakes Protection Society. In the last two months of his life he had

group planned to meet members of the Yakima River Conservancy for a hike and organizing meeting. Brock could not attend but thought I should.

It was raining so I stayed home. But Ben Hayes and others from our little westside group met Hal and Gloria Lindstrom, Jeb Baldi, and others from the eastside. The most keen of them sloshed together to Hyas Lake and then they all retreated to a shelter and campfire at Salmon La Sac to conduct some business.

On that rainy afternoon of October 6, 1968, this little group of wet hikers signed articles of incorporation for ALPS and selected Ben Hayes as its first president. He held that critical position for the next five years and left his imprimatur on the organization for many more.

It was a wise choice. Raised in Spokane, Ben's roots were in eastern Washington. He had hunted and fished, and thus related to sportsmen. A former Frederick & Nelson's furniture buyer, he had contacts in the business community. He held a masters degree in retailing and understood merchandising. As a University of Washington administrator, he knew academicians. Finally, he was a climber, backpacker, and hiker – strong credentials in the environmental community. ALPS was indeed lucky to have Ben Hayes as its first president.

Always mindful of appearances, Ben insisted that ALPS maintain strong eastern Washington ties. He understood the east side's sensitivity to west-siders telling

Continued on page 11

North Fork Snoqualmie hydro stopped, Sunset Falls project still a threat



KEVIN GRAGHTY

The threat of damming and diverting the North Fork Snoqualmie out of "Ernie's Canyon" at the northwest foot of Mt. Si appears to be over. Black Canyon Hydro LLC has withdrawn its application to send the waters of the North Fork through pipes rather than the river bed.

It is hard not to wonder what the real purpose of this project was. The North Fork Snoqualmie is designated a protected river reach by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. The project would also have dewatered the North Fork where it flows through the Mt. Si Natural Resource Conservation Area, the state of Washington's near-equivalent

of Wilderness. It also drew tremendous local opposition.

Perhaps the backers of the project did achieve their goals. Likely we will never know. The project flew right in the face of just about every environmental law and regulation, yet backers persisted in pushing it over the course of a decade, seemingly unperturbed by the enormous obstacles facing it.

Meanwhile, the Snohomish P.U.D. continues pushing its even more destructive and costly hydro project at Sunset Falls on the South Fork Skykomish river between Index and Skykomish. It too is within a NW Power and Conservation Council protected river reach. Some observers have

Low snowline on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie.

concluded that the P.U.D.'s real goal isn't even to get the project built but to keep its legions of managers, engineers and consultants fully employed. In this respect, the project has been a success.

Supposedly a hydro project has to demonstrate "extraordinary environmental benefits" in order to be built in a NWPCC protected river reach. The P.U.D. is pinning its hopes on continuing the operation of a trap and haul facility that moves salmon above a series of falls on the South Fork

Skykomish as its extraordinary benefit. Backers of the North Fork Snoqualmie project never even claimed any sort of environmental benefits.

Canyon, Eagle and Sunset falls were always natural barriers to anadromous fish on the South Fork Skykomish river. The Washington Dept. of Fisheries tried to build a fish ladder at Sunset Falls during the 1950's but gave up on it after deciding that it was cheaper to operate a trap and haul. The useless fish ladder can still be seen there. The state now says it cannot afford to operate the trap and haul any longer and the P.U.D. is hinting they might keep it going if they can build their hydro project. It's debatable whether the trap

and haul offers any environmental benefits, let alone "extraordinary" ones, since it introduced salmon into waters where they naturally never went, and displaced native resident fish.

What isn't debatable is that this hydro project would produce very expensive power for which there is no need. No private, profit making entity has ever wanted to build a hydro project at Sunset Falls. But the "public" utility district doesn't need to make any profit. The public power movement was a progressive cause during the 1940's, and it did deliver cheaper electricity for some years. But like so many public agencies, most P.U.D.'s have now been captured by their bureaucracies

and are now operated to provide maximum benefit to them instead of the public. P.U.D. managers and employees often move into highly paid positions at consultant companies after leaving the P.U.D., the same consultants who work on projects such as Sunset Falls.

The Sunset Falls project is a sad example of the decline of the once-proud public power movement. It really doesn't matter to the P.U.D. whether the project ever actually gets built. Even if it is ultimately abandoned, it will have served its purpose by providing years of lucrative employment to P.U.D. managers and a veritable army of consultants and "experts." Let's hope the damage stops there. ■

Ben Hayes *continued from page 9*

them what to do. Thus, while Ben was president and for years thereafter, ALPS maintained its permanent address and bank account in eastern Washington. With chapters in Ellensburg and Wenatchee, as well as Seattle, in those early years ALPS sought a balance in the number of trustees from each side of the Cascades. While Ben was president and for some time thereafter, ALPS trustees held meetings at Snoqualmie Pass every snow-free month so that east and west-side trustees could gather, and in winter they held weekend sessions in the different chapters, often with a potluck dinner to meet local members. They met with Forest Service rangers and supervisors, and also held annual meetings, where Ben insisted that ALPS invite hunters, horsemen, and other users of the Alpine Lakes to participate. He favored Inclusiveness.

Ben recruited high-powered people to the cause – university

professors and administrators, Boeing scientists, lawyers, teachers, an architect, a banker, and a professional photographer. Not only did he seek the best, but he urged them to do their best.

"If there is one trait that I recall about Ben," says Bill Beyers, "it was that he always wanted positions taken by ALPS to be based on sound analysis, with evidence about why those positions were right."

These policies paid big dividends. When the congressional crunch came, the credibility that ALPS had built over the years brought bipartisan support from most of the Washington congressional delegation, and the critical support of Washington's Republican Governor Dan Evans.

Ben and I worked together in ALPS, but oddly, never hiked together. Perhaps we never found the time, but it was more likely because of our one attempt jointly to paddle a canoe. We were part of a "paddle-in" designed to highlight concerns over Little Lake

Kachess. As others in that group can attest, there was a great deal of shouting between Ben and me, an erratic course across the lake that included an unplanned 360 degree turn, and finally a crash into the shore. Canoes do not react well to headstrong men, but we remained solid friends despite it.

Ben and an honor roll of tireless trustees worked together to build ALPS and set its direction. They held countless meetings, wrote articles, letters, and press releases, pounded the halls of Congress, and testified in congressional hearings. The culmination of that effort came on July 12, 1976 when President Gerald Ford ignored the Forest Service request for a veto, and signed the Alpine Lakes Area Management Act of 1976.

We can thank Ben Hayes for much of that success. Sadly, an era has ended, but ALPS and the Alpine Lakes Area Management Act are Ben's legacy, and they both live on. ■

New Index-Galena road to be built?



JOHN ROPER

Ten years after a 2006 flood washed away about a half mile of the North Fork Skykomish, or "Index-Galena" road as it is also called, Snohomish County appears to want to proceed with constructing a new road to replace the missing segment.

ALPS has raised questions about the cost of the project, and whether it is the right course to take to the upper North Fork. The pricetag for this segment of road less than a mile long has ballooned over the years to something around 30 million dollars. Snohomish County appears to be planning on getting Federal emergency road repair money for the project. Questions have been raised as to whether the project qualifies as an "emergency" ten years after the washout.

ALPS is asking whether the North Fork road is the best way to permanently maintain motorized access to the upper North Fork valley. The Beckler River road also leads to the upper North Fork, and has been serving as the motorized access route for the past decade. The North Fork road has a long history of washouts, slides and failures. Much of it follows a precarious course near the river, through a narrow canyon near and above Troublesome Creek, and across steep, unstable slopes above Garland Mineral Springs, a section of road subjected to rockfall bombardment almost every day. ALPS has asked that some sort of study be done to compare the long term viability of the North Fork road versus the Beckler road, before \$30 million dollars is spent on this project.

North Fork Skykomish Valley with mounts Index and Persis.

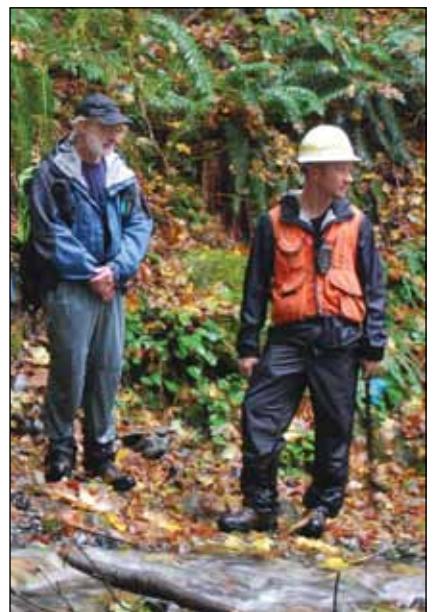
The Beckler route may offer a better long term solution. It does not thread its way through canyons and across such badly eroding slopes as the North Fork road does. It does not cross as many streams. It is positioned farther east in the Cascades and has a greater extent of mountains to its west than the lower North Fork Skykomish, which to some extent shield it from the worst of the intense storms that hit the lower North Fork valley. The forests in the Beckler drainage are less brushy and more open than those of the lower North Fork, reflecting its somewhat drier climate.

ALPS believes that Snohomish County needs to step back and take a better look at what it is really trying to accomplish before spending \$30 million for this small piece of a road with such a history of failures. There are a couple dozen or so cabins at Galena, a few miles above the washout, whose owners must now drive to them via the Beckler route. It is possible that a main motive for rebuilding the North Fork road is to provide quicker, easier access for these cabin owners. If so, it will be a colossal subsidy for a handful of people, at a time when there are innumerable road problems in the parts of Snohomish County where large populations of people actually live.

There are also engineering problems and short cuts being taken with the road rebuild project, even with its \$30 million pricetag. No provisions are being made to deal with runoff, even though the road sits right above a salmon bearing river, and such provisions are made on practically every other road project in the county. The road rebuild also skirts the toeslopes of some very high mountains, and the county is proposing to anchor it to these mountainsides by drilling into them horizontally. This carries with it a significant danger of punching into a pressurized aquifer, which could send huge amounts of debris into the North Fork Skykomish.

ALPS hopes that Snohomish County will take a hard look at the real “purpose and need” of this short but breathtakingly expensive segment of road. If the purpose is to provide recreational access to the upper North Fork valley, all the alternatives, including upgrading the Beckler route, should be looked at before committing such a large sum of money to such a failure prone road. ■

Fate of Wallace Falls and Singletary Timber Sale now uncertain



ALPS Board Member Thom Peters and DNR Planner David Way look at proposed route of road to Singletary timber sale.

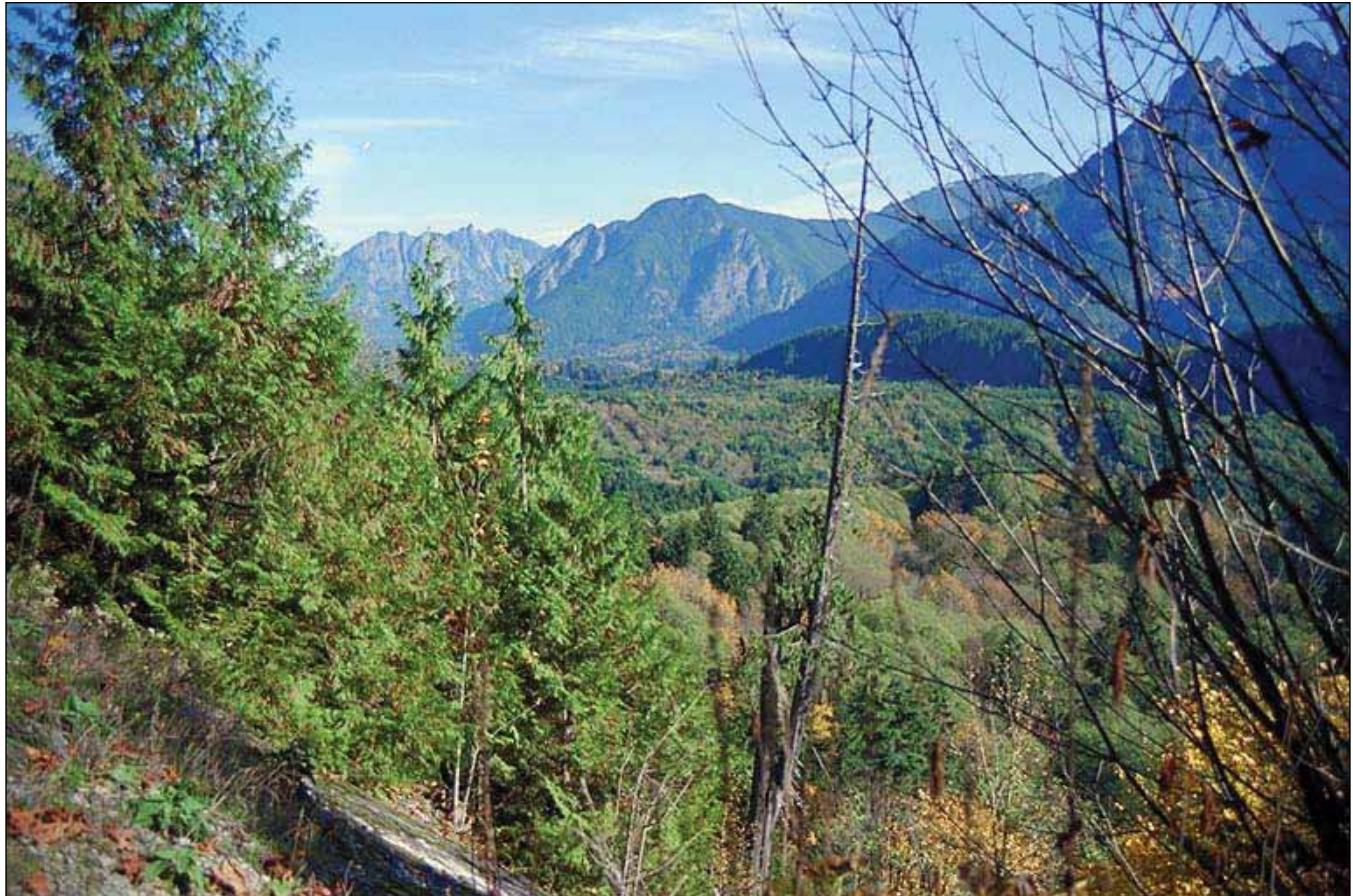
The fate of the controversial Singletary timber sale, in the Skykomish valley on state Department of Natural Resources lands (Reiter Forest) immediately bordering Wallace Falls State Park to the east, is yet to be decided. The timber sale would log directly over a planned and partially completed trail system on the east side of the State Park. This non-motorized trail system resulted from our advocacy to protect most of Reiter Forest from the negative impacts of motorized recreation.

ALPS and members of other groups have met several times with Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers, who has been very supportive and tried to reduce the size of the timber sale by means of the county giving up its share of revenue from it. So far, Somers has not been able to find a practical way to do this, although he is continuing to explore options.

A new Commissioner of Public Lands, Hilary Franz, will be taking office in early January 2017. Franz ran a campaign oriented toward protecting the environment, and finding new ways of doing business at DNR. The Singletary sale came close to gaining final approval for sale in November, but this was narrowly averted. DNR has temporarily suspended final approval of the sale to allow more time for efforts to lessen its effects on the Park.

ALPS and other groups will continue working to find a solution. It is hoped that Franz, the new Public Lands Commissioner, will take an interest in it and help efforts to preserve the critical areas not only near Wallace Falls but all across the state. ■

Mountains to Sound Greenway begins major initiative for Middle Fork Snoqualmie Valley



MARK BOYAR

The Mountains to Sound Greenway has begun a major initiative to promote, enhance and manage public use in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie valley near North Bend.

The Middle Fork valley has been a top ALPS priority for decades. Starting with opposition to a large proposed timber sale in the Pratt River valley in the 1980's, ALPS has been continually involved in all Middle Fork issues ever since. It has now been almost two years since the Pratt valley, the largest tributary of the Middle Fork, was added to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

For many years the Middle Fork had a reputation as a place to avoid, plagued by reckless

shooting, dumping and vandalism. ALPS and other groups worked to reverse that, and consolidate nearly all the valley in public ownership. Now a new and possibly more difficult threat has emerged with skyrocketing levels of public use in the valley. As the road system on Forest Service lands crumbles away, and increasing traffic makes it ever more difficult to reach other outdoor destinations, more and more use will be focused on the Middle Fork.

The Middle Fork road is now paved up to Taylor River. The project was successful in keeping the drive a forest experience. Initial proposals for the road were for a wide, high speed road with

View of Middle Fork Valley from CCC Road.

large clear zones on either side, cutting a huge swath up the valley. ALPS and other groups lobbied successfully to make the road match the valley. Trees still grow together over the road in many spots.

The Middle Fork's proximity to Seattle now means exploding levels of use. New trails and recreation facilities are planned and under construction. The main threat to the valley is now the ever increasing number of private vehicles on the road. Nobody has

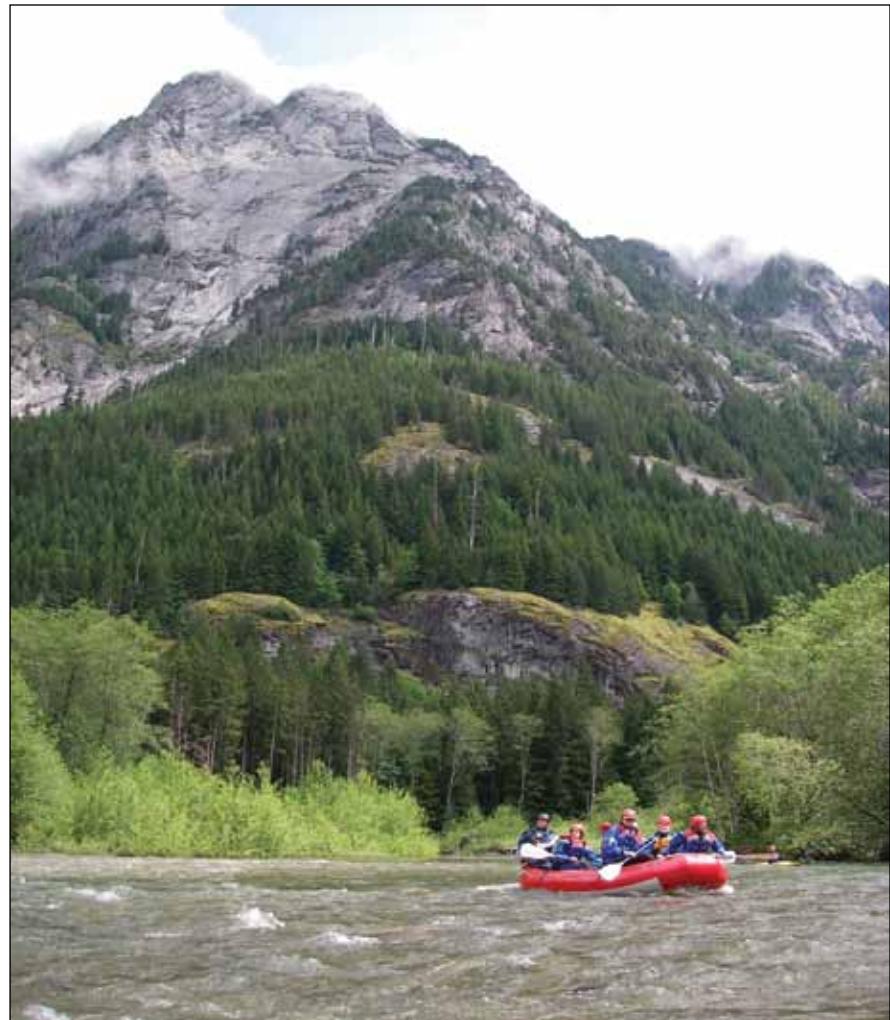
wanted to pave over big parts of the valley just to create enough parking to accommodate peak use levels.

It has been estimated that there is enough parking space in the valley to accommodate about 500 vehicles. There have already been days with more than 1500 vehicles going up the valley, a figure likely to grow much, much larger.

It seems unavoidable that the limited number of parking spaces will be quickly overwhelmed. Although the road will be signed "No Parking," and most of it is too narrow to park along, it is inevitable that people will park on and block the road's travelway, probably in large numbers. This may leave one lane open for travel. What will happen when cars going up and down valley meet, with no place to turn around? What will happen when dozens of other cars come up behind them and become immobilized? It could produce traffic lockup on an epic scale. Vehicles could be trapped in the valley for a long period of time. There will be no access for emergency vehicles.

Clearly, some other way needs to be found to get people in and out of the Middle Fork valley, such as a shuttle service. The number of private vehicles allowed in will need to be limited in some fashion, as has happened in Yosemite valley, Zion National Park, and other heavily used places.

The Mountains to Sound Greenway has convened a large number of people to tackle this and every other issue facing the valley. Twenty years ago, when initial planning efforts for the valley were underway, no one ever imagined that use levels would reach such stratospheric levels. It will require creative thinking to allow the valley to best serve the most people, and to avoid traffic lockup on the Middle Fork road. ■



Tom O'Keefe

Rafting the Middle Fork below Mt. Garfield

ALPS history

Continued from page 9

could gain title, the land had to be surveyed. Once the RR received the patent, it had legal title and could then sell the land. Sale to another party was through the transfer of a "deed."

If the selected land was considered mineralized, or had been previously homesteaded or reserved for some other purpose, the RR could select "in-lieu land" in a strip ten miles wide on either side of their existing grant area. In practice, there was limited 'on the ground' review of the land

for mineral potential. There were several variations in the selection procedures that evolved over time. The details of some of these variations are beyond the scope of the Alpine Lakes discussion.

This process lasted until the 1920s for some of the mountainous areas in the west. Controversies developed over this land transfer process by the 1930s and resulted in massive litigation over a variety of issues. The litigation was resolved in 1941, in which the NPR gave up their claim to over 300,000 acres, a large portion of which was in the Alpine Lakes region. ■



alps

alpine lakes protection society
PO Box 27646
Seattle, WA 98165

Non Profit
US Postage
PAID
Seattle WA
Permit 1244

ALPS Officers & Trustees:

President: Karl Forsgaard
Vice President: Rick McGuire
Secretary: Natalie Williams
Treasurer: Frank Swart

2013-2016

Natalie Williams
Gus Bekker
Frank Swart

2014-2017

Art Day
Thom Peters
Karl Forsgaard
Don Parks

2015-2018

Bill Beyers
James Chapman
Kevin Geraghty
Charlie Raymond



ALPINE

The newsletter of the Alpine Lakes Protection Society (ALPS). ALPS is dedicated to protection of the Alpine Lakes area in Washington's Cascades.

Editor: Rick McGuire

Layout: Pat Hutson

To join ALPS or renew membership, send \$15 to:

Natalie Williams
5627 – 47th Ave. SW
Seattle, WA 98136

For information, send email to:
alpinelakes.info@gmail.com

Remembering the "old Middle Fork." The Middle Fork campground now occupies the spot where this car sat for several years.