

Summer 2007

New Ground

News of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Gifford Pinchot
National Forest

Mount St. Helens Visitor Center at Silver Lake Transferred to Washington State Parks



The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission recently celebrated the transfer of ownership of the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center at Silver Lake to State Parks, with a "turning over" ceremony on June 26, at the Visitor Center. The Center is adjacent to Seaquest State Park, on State Route 504, five miles east of Interstate 5. The Mount St. Helens Visitor Center at Silver Lake is one of three centers built by the USFS to interpret the cataclysmic eruption and regeneration of Mount St. Helens. The center was built in 1986 on the border of Seaquest State Park and was operated by the Forest for 14 years. Washington State Parks took over the operation of the center under a permit with USFS, using a portion of the fees collected from Visitor Center visitors to

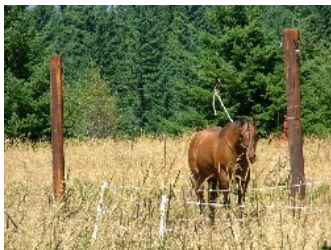
cover the cost of operations. "In an effort to concentrate on our investments at Coldwater Visitor Center and Johnston Ridge Observatory we believe this just makes good business sense to transfer the facility to a partner that supports our mission of serving people," commented Tom Mulder, Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument Manager. "This transfer strengthens our relationship with the State and we look forward to continuing to provide a showcase experience for visitors traveling the SR 504 corridor."

Mount St. Helens VolcanoCam goes High Definition!

A second "live camera" picture of Mount St. Helens from the Johnston Ridge Observatory has now been added to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest's Web site. This new High Definition camera allows visitors to get a sharper and closer view of the current growing lava dome and displaced glacier in the crater of Mount St. Helens. The camera also provides visitors with current real time weather data, which will help visitors, prepare for their trip to the mountain. This new camera was made possible through [donations to the Northwest Interpretive Association](#) (NWIA). "It is exciting for us to be a part of providing this new camera," said NWIA Director Jim Adams. Since the original camera was installed at Mount St. Helens 10 years ago, it has remained the most visited website in the Forest Service. Since the volcano entered its current eruptive phase in the fall of 2004, the VolcanoCam has taken on a life of its own with more than a million visits each month from people around the world who log on to watch the re-growth of this northwest icon.



Weed-Free Feed Required in Northwest Wilderness



As part of a larger effort to reduce invasive species on national forest lands the US Forest Service now requires the use of weed-free feed within all Pacific Northwest Congressionally designated wilderness areas and trailheads leading into designated wilderness areas, including several [Horse Camps](#) located at Wilderness Trailheads (Walupt, Keenes, Stagman Ridge, Little Goose). Weed-free feed includes commercially processed pellets, steamed and rolled grains, or state certified weed-free feed. The weed-free feed requirement will be extended to the entire Forest in 2009.

Restoration of Red Mountain Fire Lookout



The "Red Mountain Lookout Rescue" Passport in Time (PIT) Project involves repair and rehabilitation of the historic 1950s Red Mountain Fire Lookout. The lookout was severely damaged in the December 2006 windstorm. Gifford Pinchot National Forest's Heritage and Fire programs joined up to work on the project. Gail Bouchard, Mt. Adams Assistant Fire Management Officer helped recruit ten volunteers who contributed 230 hours of labor to the project. Three volunteers, from the building and contracting trades, secured donations of all of the lumber and materials from Parr Lumber, WKO, Inc., and Carson Builders.

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Mount St. Helens

Visitor Center: Silver Lake

3029 Spirit Lake Highway
Castle Rock, WA 98611
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Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center

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FAX: (360) 274-2129
TTY: (360) 274-2102

Johnston Ridge Observatory

Located at MP 52
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TTY: (360) 274-2102

Internet:

www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/



"USDA Forest Service is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

White Pass Ski Area Final EIS Released

The Okanogan-Wenatchee and Gifford Pinchot National Forests recently released the [Final Environmental Impact Statement](#) for expanding and improving the White Pass Ski Area. The selected alternative authorizes a set of improvements at the existing ski area. "The selected alternative would authorize a new Master Development Plan for the resort, adding about 767 acres to the current special use permit area. The expansion would accommodate two additional chairlifts, 18 ski trails, and a 2,000-square-foot mid-mountain lodge," said Randall Shepard, Naches District Ranger. "It would also add key improvements to the existing ski area, including a new parking lot, improved skier circulation, and a new ticket booth," he added. Hard copies or CDs of the final environmental impact statement and record of decision are available on request from the Naches Ranger Station or [online](#) at the Forest website. A 45-day appeal period within which objections to the decision may be filed began July 18, 2007.

Mount St. Helens Volunteers Make a Difference!



This is the second year for the Conservation Corps and Volcano Volunteers programs, and the very first for the Mountain Stewards program hosted by the Mount St. Helens Institute (MSHI). The Volcano Volunteers will also be assisting in the implementation of the [More Kids in the Woods program](#), serving urban youth by providing support for education field trips to the Monument. The Conservation Corps has been busy with many volunteer stewardship events, removing noxious weeds, maintaining trails, restoring campsites, and assisting with ongoing scientific research projects. On Earth Day and National Trails Day more than 100 volunteers worked on several sections of Hummocks and Boundary Trails, readied Ape's Headquarters for summer visitors, and did trail maintenance. A weed rodeo in June brought 33 volunteers out into the blast zone to remove scotch broom from ecologically sensitive areas. A recent weekend work party in the blast zone repaired an enclosure to keep elk from browsing the recovering plants so that biologists can study the regeneration of the blast zone. The Mountain Stewards program is the newest addition. This MSHI program has four volunteers who assist the Forest Service Climbing Rangers with tasks such as maintenance of the climbing route, and providing safety information to climbers. This summer's [Field Seminars](#) will provide a number of outdoor educational excursions led by professionals in the fields of geology, biology, and recreation. Please visit the calendar of events on www.mshinstitute.org to find out what is coming up next and how you can get involved!

Remember You Can Prevent Wildfires!

During the past couple of weeks, the Forest has witnessed some record temperatures and a number of small fires. Fire danger is currently high across the Northwest. Continued hot and dry weather along with strong east winds should be reminders that we all need to be very careful this time of year. For more information and updates on fire, conditions please call ahead to one of the Ranger District offices or visit the [Forest website](#).



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