

Spring 2003

# New Ground

## News of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest



### **County Payments Projects for 2004 Being Considered**

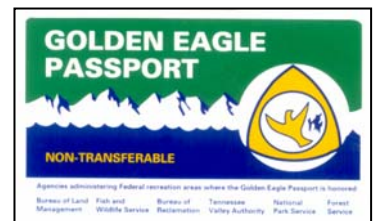


The Forest's two Resource Advisory Committees (RACs) will be considering a new round of grant requests to allocate an expected \$1.6 million in new Forest improvement projects. Under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, counties receive federal funds in lieu of taxes for federal lands.

The Forest is reviewing 68 project proposals totaling \$4.4 million for Title II grants. The two RACs will meet this summer to make their recommendations. Forest Supervisor Claire Lavendel makes the final decision on projects. For more information on the County Payments program, visit [www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/forest-administration/county-payments/](http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/forest-administration/county-payments/) (Photo: *Inspecting a culvert to be replaced*)

### **Golden Passports Now Accepted at More Forest Sites**

On April 18, as part of a move to simplify recreation fees across the nation, the Pacific Northwest Region began honoring the [Golden Eagle Passport](#) at most Forest Service recreation fee sites in Oregon and Washington. Visitors can now use one pass -- the Golden Eagle Passport -- for most day-use recreation sites nationwide operated by the Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



"We've heard that the public wants ease and consistency when it comes to using recreation areas," said Linda Goodman, Pacific Northwest Regional Forester. "By widely accepting the Golden Eagle Passport, the Forest Service is offering visitors a new option for conveniently visiting all federally managed recreation sites." Prior to this change, visitors would have spent \$30 for an annual [Northwest Forest Pass](#) in addition to the \$50 National Parks Pass. Now only one pass is required for a savings of \$15. Local passes, such as the Northwest Forest Pass, will continue to be sold and honored alongside the Golden Eagle Passport. The Golden Age and Golden Access Passports provide similar benefits to cardholders.

### **Washington's Largest Wildfire! Yacolt Burn Centennial Exhibit Opens in Stevenson**



A grand opening for the new Yacolt Burn exhibit will be held at the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center, in Stevenson, Wash., on Saturday, May 3, from 11:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will be a fun-filled family event with activities for all ages. A panel of experts will also talk about the history of the Yacolt Burn and fire ecology, and a living history character will bring the story of the burn to life.

Children can meet Smokey Bear and get a picture taken with him, make a fire prevention button to take home, play a campfire bean-bag toss game, get free comic books and other prizes and maybe win a Smokey Bear doll. The exhibit is designed to inform people about fire, the history of the Yacolt Burn and show them ways to [protect their home](#) in the event of a wildfire. The 1902 Yacolt Burn was the largest recorded wildfire in the history of the state of Washington. This exhibit will be open to the public at the [Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center](#) from May 3 through November 1, 2003.

### **Mt. Adams To Get New District Ranger**

The Mt. Adams Ranger District of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest has a new acting Ranger. Diane Rubiaco, acting recreation staff officer on the Hood Canal District of the Olympic National Forest in Olympia, took over as acting Mt. Adams District Ranger on April 21. Rubiaco, a 25-year Forest Service employee with experience in recreation, timber, fire and special uses, said she's looking forward to the opportunity. She came to the Olympic National Forest last June after serving as assistant public uses officer on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in northern California. Current Ranger Greg Cox has taken on a new assignment implementing a strategic recreation plan for the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument.



**How to reach us:**

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**Cowlitz Valley Ranger District**  
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**Mt. Adams Ranger District**  
2455 Highway 141  
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(509) 395-3400  
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**Wind River Work and  
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**Mount St. Helens National  
Volcanic Monument**  
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Amboy, WA 98601  
(360) 449-7800  
**FAX:** (360) 449-7801  
**TTY:** (360) 449-7802

**Mount St. Helens  
Visitor Center: Silver Lake**  
3029 Spirit Lake Highway  
Castle Rock, WA 98611  
24-hr. recording (360) 274-2103  
(360) 274-2100  
**FAX:** (360) 274-2101  
**TTY:** (360) 274-2102

**Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center**  
Located at MP 43  
(360) 274-2114  
**FAX:** (360) 274-2129  
**TTY:** (360) 274-2102

**Johnston Ridge Observatory**  
Located at MP 52  
(360) 274-2140  
**TTY:** (360) 274-2102

**Internet:**

[www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/](http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/)

## ***Your Fee Dollars at Work***

Last year, [your recreation fee dollars helped pay for](#) more than \$1,026,000 worth of services and improvements on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. In 2002, fee dollars provided 32% of the operating funds to maintain and improve forest recreation facilities on the Forest. Along with appropriated funds, partner contributions, grants and volunteer time, revenue from fees is a critical piece of the funding mix. Fees provided maintenance of Forest trails, kept the doors open at Mount St. Helens visitor centers, provided camping opportunities, operated cabin rentals on the Forest, and provided for climbing services at Mt. Adams and Mount St. Helens.



## ***Volunteer Crew Cleans Woods Creek Watchable Wildlife Trail***



Recently a group of 18 volunteers spent the day raking leaves and brushing the entire 1.5-mile trail. A small group of locals teamed up with 7 Americorps members. Though the weather was gray and damp, spirits were high and laughter could be heard throughout the day. To volunteer for future trail projects, at Cowlitz Valley, contact Steve Hoecker, at 360-497-1157.

## ***Wilderness Stewards Wanted***



The Gifford Pinchot National Forest is looking for volunteers to work as Wilderness Stewards. Would you enjoy spending weekends hiking in a Wilderness Area, talking to the public, helping people learn more about their Wilderness Areas and how to take care of them? If you answered yes, for more information call Dave Olson at 360-891-5154, Steve Hoecker 360-891-1157, or Jon Nakae 509-395-3480.

## ***Gotchen Draft EIS Available in June***

A draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Gotchen area southeast of Mt. Adams will be available in June for comment. The Forest proposes to take several actions to reduce the risk of stand-replacing fire in the Gotchen area that has been affected by spruce budworm, resulting in a build-up of fuels. The proposed actions include creating fuelbreaks, prescribed burning and a timber sale of between 3 and 5 million board feet. For more information, contact Julie Knutson at 509-427-3410 or Cindy Henschell at 509-395-3411.

## ***Upcoming Events***

**[CCC 70th Anniversary Celebration:](#)** Thursday, May 29, 7 p.m. at the [Water Resources Center](#) in Vancouver, Wash. Watch for more information on the [Forest web site](#) or in local newspapers. This is a joint program with the National Park Service and the Center For Columbia River History.

## **Summer Hours at Mount St. Helens Visitor Centers:**

The Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center begins a daily schedule on May 1, and the Johnston Ridge Observatory opens on May 5, for the summer season. [Summer schedules](#) will continue until late October. Both centers are open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.



**Featured Web Page** <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/heritage/>

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