

Autumn 2006

New Ground

News of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Gifford Pinchot
National Forest

Current Mount St. Helens Eruption Marks Second Anniversary



September 23 marked the 2nd anniversary of the current eruptive period at Mount St. Helens. Following 18 years of eruptive quiescence, Mount St. Helens began showing signs of unrest in late September, 2004. The volcano continues to erupt today. Since dome growth began in October of 2004, there have been only two explosive events: one in mid-January, 2005 and the other early March, 2005. Neither event was preceded by precursory activity. Six of the seven spines to date were extruded during the first year of the current eruption. Activity over the past year has been steadily ongoing but with a slower extrusion rate compared to the past year and there have been no explosive events in the past year. On July 21, the Forest reopened the climbing trail to the summit of Mount St. Helens allowing visitors to get a bird's eye view of the activity within the crater.

Invasive Plants Draft EIS Available for Comment

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area are seeking public review and comment on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) entitled "Beyond Prevention: Site-specific Invasive Plant Treatment Project." Approximately 2,700 acres are estimated currently to need treatment. Target invasive species includes knapweeds, hawkweeds, knotweeds, bull thistle, hounds tongue, and reed canary grass, to name a few. The DEIS discloses the effects of treating invasive plants on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The DEIS is available online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/04projects/pinchotprojects/> or to request a hard copy contact Carol Chandler at the Forest Headquarters. Public comments must be postmarked, hand delivered, or e-mailed by Wednesday, November 22, 2006.



Forest Supervisor Approves \$1.9 Million in Forest Projects



Enhancing wildlife forage, improving riparian conditions along Skate Creek near Packwood, WA, replacement of culverts improving fish passages, maintaining Forest roads, improving Huckleberry habitat, and removal of noxious weeds are among the \$1.9 million in projects recently approved by Forest Supervisor Claire Lavendel. These funds are approved for projects across the Forest under the 2000 County Payments law.

Lavendel approved 38 projects recommended by the North and South Gifford Pinchot National Forest Resource Advisory Committees.

Volunteers Key to Eight Annual 'Pick Up the Pinchot' Public Lands Day Events

More than 180 people volunteered to help "Pick Up the Pinchot" during National Public Lands Day events, on September 23 and 30, at four different sites on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. More than six tons of garbage was collected and hauled away as part of the Forest's eight annual Pick Up the Pinchot (P.U.P.) clean-up day.

Volunteers worked picking up trash near Sunset and Panther Creek Campgrounds, the East Fork of the Lewis River, Skate Creek north of Packwood, Wash., and along Forest Road 90 east of Cougar, Wash. A special thanks to everyone who helped.



UN Dignitary Visits the Forest



On September 11, the Pacific Northwest Region of the Forest Service and the Gifford Pinchot National Forest were honored to host Dr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) headquartered in Rome, Italy. In addition to his organization's focus on food security and agriculture, Dr. Diouf also directs FAO's Forestry Department, one of the world's primary sources of forest statistics and forest management technical assistance. Staff from the Forest Service showed him

the natural resource work at Mount St. Helens and a community stewardship project on the Mt. Hood National Forest. Dick Ford and staff at the Weyerhaeuser Forest Learning Center also hosted Dr. Diouf.

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**Mount St. Helens
Visitor Center: Silver Lake**
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Castle Rock, WA 98611
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Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center
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(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/



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St. Helens Chief of Interpretation Receives Regional Award

Gala Miller, Chief of Interpretation at Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, has been selected as the 2006 Pacific Northwest Region Interpreter and Conservation Educator of the Year. Congratulations, Gala! Gala will be honored and a national winner will be announced at the National Association for Interpretation's National Interpreters Workshop in November. Gala has served the Monument and its visitors for almost 15 years, providing interpretive and educational programs. She has served in the capacity of Chief of Interpretation for the past six years.



Sno-Park Permits



Sno-Park permits will soon be required at Sno-Parks on the Forest. Please make sure you have your permit before heading out for your winter adventure. You may purchase these permits at Forest Service offices and from local vendors. For more information, visit the [State Park Sno-Park website](#).

Mount St. Helens Visitor Centers Shift to Winter Schedule

As winter approaches, Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument visitor centers are shifting to seasonal schedules. The Johnston Ridge Observatory closed for the winter season starting Monday, October 30. The Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center will switch to a new winter schedule starting Monday, October 30. The Coldwater center will be open three days a week, Saturday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. until December 31, except Christmas Day. The Coldwater center will close for the month of January when weather conditions are poor and visitation generally low. On February 1, 2007, the Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center will reopen to the public operating five days a week, Thursday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., until May 17 when summer schedules resume.



Christmas Trees



It's time to start thinking about finding that special Christmas tree. Beginning Friday, November 17, permits will be available at several locations for cutting a Christmas tree from the Forest. Permits may be purchased for \$5 per tree at all Ranger District offices, Forest Headquarters in Vancouver, and at local commercial vendors. Please contact your nearest Forest Service office for more details.

Veterans Honored with Free Day at Public Lands Sites

Beginning this year, U.S. veterans, members of the U.S. armed forces, and their families will have the opportunity to visit recreation sites for free across public lands managed by the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture on Veterans Day. On the Forest fees will not be charged at Mount St. Helens visitor centers or at Northwest Forest Pass sites.



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