

Autumn 2004

# New Ground

## News of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Gifford Pinchot  
National Forest

### ***Mount St. Helens Enters a New Chapter***

On September 23, an earthquake swarm began under Mount St. Helens. Over the next week the number and intensity of these earthquakes increased. The largest quake measured 3.3 in magnitude. Scientists began to notice that a new feature was beginning to grow south of the 1981-86 lava dome. Shortly after noon on October 1, Mount St. Helens erupted steam and ash for about 25 minutes.



(Photo by Tom Iraci, media trucks at Castle Lake Overlook)

On October 3, the official [Alert Level](#) was raised to its highest, Level 3, and the Johnston Ridge Observatory was evacuated. On October 4 and 5 the mountain had two more steam and ash eruptions. The eruption on October 5 was the most vigorous since the early 1980s. A small dusting of ash from this event was reported in the communities of Packwood and Randle, Wash. A [closure order](#) was issued by the Forest for lands within a 5-mile radius of the volcano's crater, including the Johnston Ridge Observatory.

Seismicity currently remains at a low level compared to that observed early in this unrest. As long as this eruption is in progress, changes in the level of activity can occur over days, weeks, or even months. Increase in the intensity of eruption could occur suddenly or with very little warning and may include explosive events that produce hazardous conditions within several miles of the volcano.

### ***Agriculture Secretary Visits Mount St. Helens and Forest Headquarters***



On October 7, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman received a briefing on current volcanic activity at Mount St. Helens, and got a bird's-eye view of the Volcano during a short flight. That tour was followed by a news conference at the Gifford Pinchot Forest Headquarters in Vancouver. Secretary Veneman also met with Forest leadership and staff at the Mount St. Helens Joint Information Center (JIC) in Vancouver and thanked them for a job well done. More than 75 people from 30 agencies worked at the JIC over a two week period in late September and early October. She

commented on what a great opportunity this is as an educational tool and said that the Forest Service will continue to work closely with US Geological Survey to provide for public safety.

**Mount St. Helens VolcanoCam Captures Recent Events:** Just in time for the public to view Mount St. Helens during its recent activity, the Gifford Pinchot National Forest's live Mount St. Helens Volcano camera is back in business. The camera, mounted at Johnston Ridge Observatory and aimed at the volcano's crater just five miles away, had been off-line since June, 2003 because of hardware and software problems. A new camera, purchased with funds provided by the [Northwest Interpretive Association](#), was installed, and the image became live on September 27. The view of Mount St. Helens is updated every 5 minutes at: [www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/volcanocams/msh/](http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/volcanocams/msh/)



The VolcanoCam, which received more than 36 million hits in a 12-day period this fall, captured several eruptions in early October. A number of those images are available on the VolcanoCam web page.

### ***Forest Supervisor Approves Resource Advisory Committees (RAC) Projects***

Enhancing Wildlife Forage, rehabilitation of dispersed recreation sites, removal of hazardous trees along Forest Roads, and replacement of culverts improving fish passages are among the \$1.8 million in [Resource Advisory Committee](#) projects recently approved by Forest Supervisor Claire Lavendel. These funds are approved for projects across the Forest. The projects are listed on the [Resource Advisory Committee web site](#).

## How to reach us:

### **Gifford Pinchot National Forest**

#### **Forest Headquarters**

10600 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle  
Vancouver, WA 98682  
24-hr. recording (360) 891-5009  
(360) 891-5001  
**FAX:** (360) 891-5045  
**TTY:** (360) 891-5003

### **Cowlitz Valley Ranger District**

10024 U.S. Hwy 12  
P.O. Box 670  
Randle, WA 98377  
(360) 497-1100  
**FAX:** (360) 497-1102  
**TTY:** (360) 497-1101

### **Mt. Adams Ranger District**

2455 Highway 141  
Trout Lake, WA 98650  
(509) 395-3400  
**FAX:** (509) 395-9384  
**TTY:** (509) 395-3422

### **Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument**

42218 NE Yale Bridge Road  
Amboy, WA 98601  
(360) 449-7800  
**FAX:** (360) 449-7809  
**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/)



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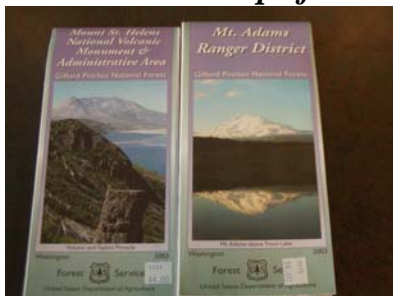
## **Comment Period on Hemlock Dam Draft EIS Now Open**

A public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is open until November 15. The Mt. Adams Ranger District proposes to remove Hemlock Dam and to restore the Trout Creek channel in the area that is now occupied by the dam and reservoir. Trout Creek is a tributary to the Wind River in Southwest Washington and supports Lower Columbia River Steelhead that were listed as Threatened in 1998.



The proposed action is needed to improve upstream and downstream fish passage for all life stages of fish at the Hemlock Dam site and to improve aquatic habitat and water quality in Trout Creek. The public may comment by mail to the Mt. Adams Ranger District in Trout Lake, Wash., Attn: Hemlock Dam DEIS Team; by FAX at 509-395-3424; or by e-mail at: [comments-pacificnorthwest-giffordpinchot-mtadams@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacificnorthwest-giffordpinchot-mtadams@fs.fed.us)

## **New District Maps for the Gifford Pinchot Now Available**



The final two maps in a series of new ranger district maps for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest are now available for sale at locations around the Forest.

The Mt. Adams Ranger District map, which encompasses the former Wind River Ranger District, and the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument map replace older

ranger district maps.

The third map in the series, the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District map, which includes the old Randle and Packwood Ranger Districts, has been available since earlier this year.

## **The Holiday Season is Coming Soon**

This is the time of year to start thinking about the perfect Holiday Christmas tree. Starting Friday, November 12, permits will be available at several locations for cutting a special Christmas tree from the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Permits may be purchased for \$5 per tree. For more information, call any office or visit the Forest web site.



## **Gifford Pinchot Website Gets a New Look**

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest website, one of the oldest and largest Forest Service websites, recently changed to a new national "look and feel." There are a number of features that will be standard on all Forest Service sites. We hope that this new site will continue to provide the same level of service you have always enjoyed from the [Gifford Pinchot National website](http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/).

Return Address:  
Gifford Pinchot National Forest  
10600 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle  
Vancouver, WA 98682