

Dear Friends of North Cascades,

The development of the General Management Plan (GMP) for Ross Lake National Recreation Area (NRA) moves forward.

This newsletter presents the draft alternatives and management zones which outline a full range of proposals for how Ross Lake NRA's resources, programs, recreational activities, and facilities could be managed in the future. These preliminary alternatives, or visions for the future, address the NRA's purpose, resource and visitor use issues, legal mandates, and the public comments received to date.

The development of these preliminary alternatives and management zones is an important step to creating a General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment (GMP/EIS or EA). The GMP will guide the development and management of Ross Lake NRA over the next 15 to 20 years. The GMP is intended to be a useful long-term decision-making tool, providing the NPS managers with a logical and trackable rationale for decisions about the protection, development, and public use of the NRA and its resources.

The National Park Service has begun the second year of a four-year planning process to develop the GMP/EIS or EA for Ross Lake NRA. At the beginning of the planning process, the first newsletter was sent to the public in Fall 2006. It provided information about Ross Lake NRA, a description about GMPs, preliminary GMP issue topics, the draft purpose and significance statements, and a schedule for public scoping workshops. In October 2006, seven public workshops were held in northwest Washington and southern British Columbia to explore the goals, themes, and issues to be addressed in the plan. A postcard was sent to the public in February 2007 that announced the posting of a summary of public scoping comments available on the project's website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/rola>. Please visit this website for background information about the GMP project and to access Newsletter #1 and the summary of public scoping comments.

I hope that you will participate in this step of the planning process.

Sincerely,

Palmer (Chip) Jenkins  
Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex

## You're Invited to a Workshop

- Hear the NPS's preliminary ideas for Ross Lake NRA
- Discuss your ideas, concerns, and thoughts
- Talk with the planning team

We strongly urge you to attend one of these workshops. Your ideas are important for developing a successful plan. Also, please take some time to fill out the comment form enclosed in this newsletter and mail it by March 21, 2008.

### Monday, February 25

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Concrete, WA

Concrete Senior Center Multipurpose Room

45821 Railroad Street

### Tuesday, February 26

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Sedro-Woolley, WA

North Cascades NPS Complex Headquarters

Baker and Shuksan Rooms

810 State Route 20

### Tuesday, March 4

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Bellingham, WA

Bellingham Senior Center Room

16315 Halleck Street

### Wednesday, March 5

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Seattle, WA

Seattle Mountaineers Olympus Room

300 Third Ave West

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National Park Service

**General Management Plan  
Ross Lake National Recreation Area**

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http://parkplanning.nps.gov/rola

If you have questions or would like to contact someone directly about the Ross Lake NRA General Management Plan, please contact Anna Tamura, GMP project manager, by telephone: (206)220-4157; or by e-mail: Anna\_Tamura@nps.gov

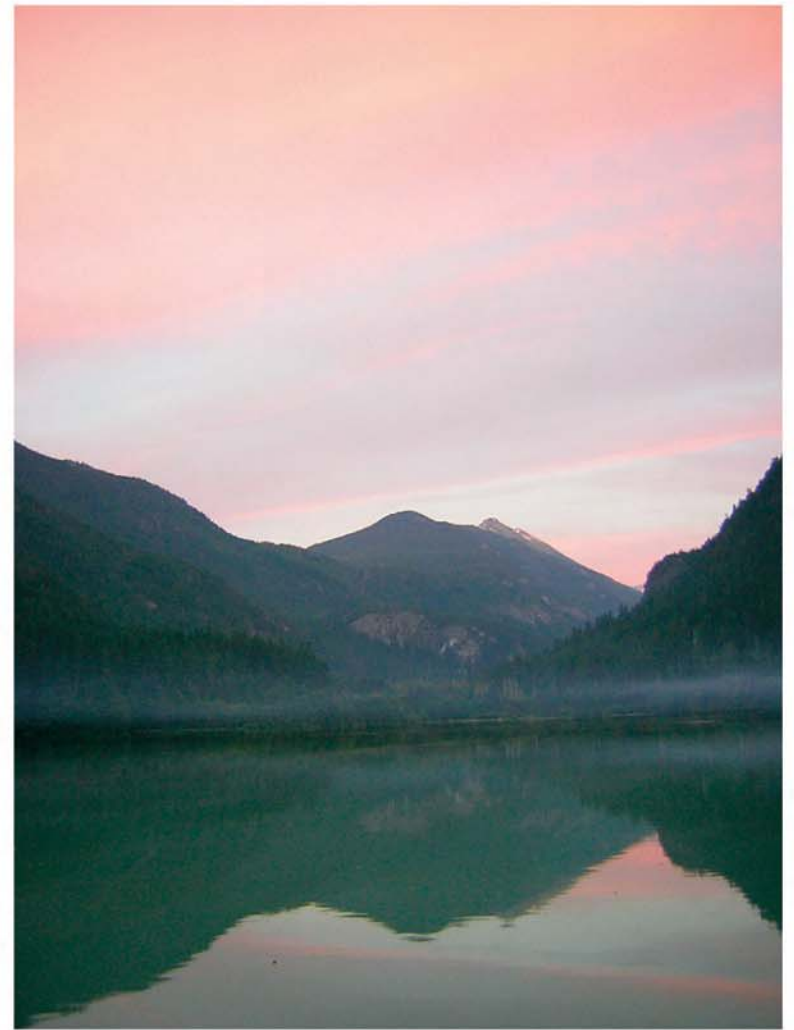
The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

**PURPOSE OF ROSS LAKE NRA**

The purpose of Ross Lake National Recreation Area is to complement North Cascades National Park and conserve the scenic, natural, and cultural values of the Upper Skagit River Valley and surrounding wilderness, including the hydroelectric reservoirs and associated developments, for outdoor recreation and education.

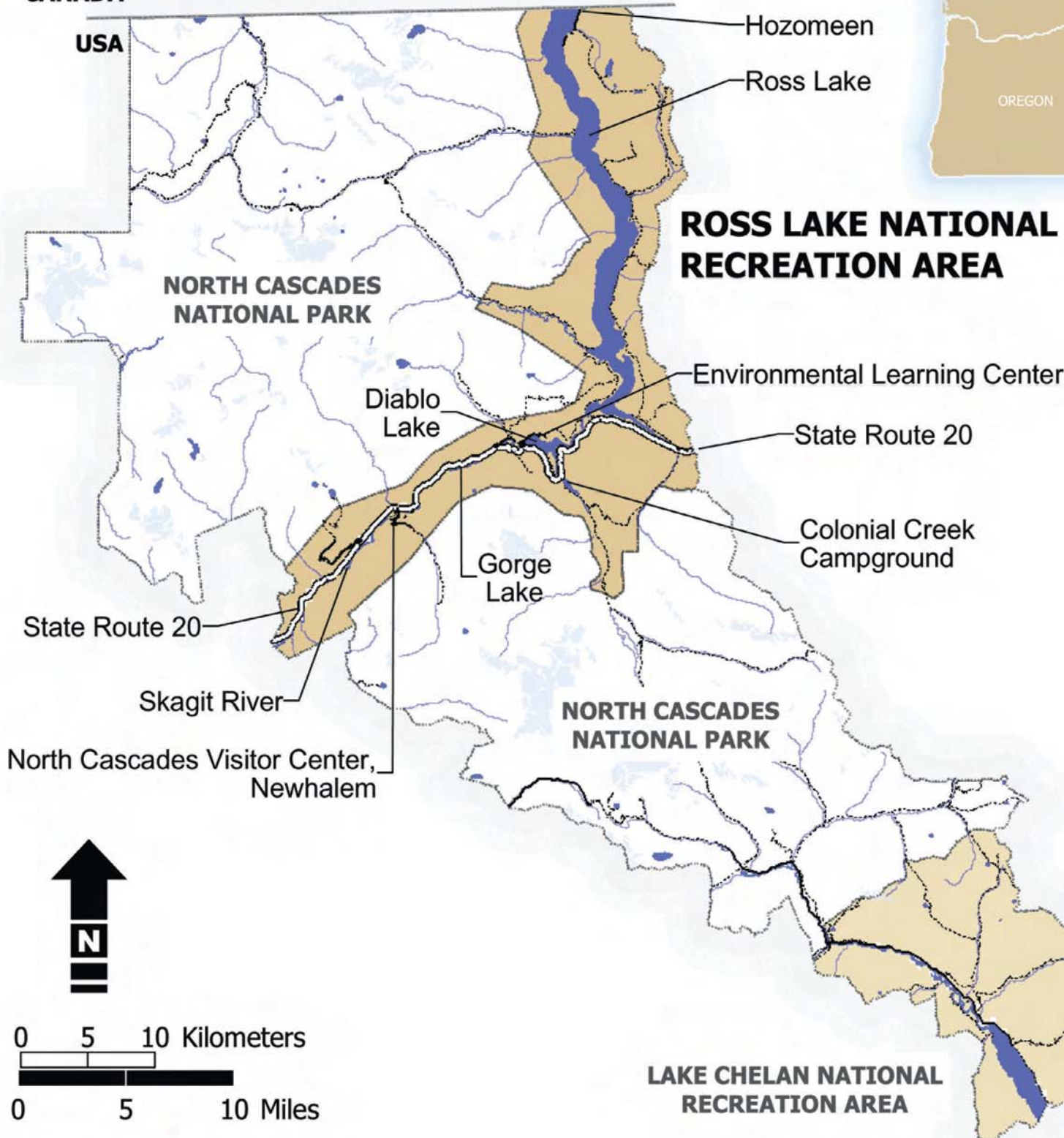
**ROSS LAKE AND NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX**

Ross Lake National Recreation Area is one management unit of the North Cascades National Park Service (NPS) Complex. The North Cascades NPS Complex is comprised of North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area (NRA), and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (NRA), a complementary suite of protected lands, united by a contiguous wilderness overlay. Combining these three distinct units under a single unique administration recognizes their shared purpose of preserving the core of the greater North Cascades ecosystem and wilderness while also advancing their individual purposes.



CANADA

USA



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0 5 10 Miles



# The Planning Process

Park planning is organized around three primary questions: WHY was this park established and what is its overall purpose? WHAT is the vision for the future (what kind of place do we want Ross Lake NRA to be 15 to 20 years from now)? and HOW do we accomplish our future vision or what actions are needed to create this desired future?

Statements of Ross Lake NRA's purpose and significance provide answers to the WHY questions and form the foundation of the General Management Plan. Developing a vision for the park's future (answering the WHAT and HOW questions) is the primary func-

tion of the General Management Plan.

Based on Ross Lake NRA's mission, research data, and your comments, the planning team has developed a range of preliminary alternatives for protecting resources, meeting the needs of our visitors, and addressing the concerns of neighbors and partners. Evaluating a set of alternatives enables us to compare and contrast the advantages and/or disadvantages of one course of action over another and establishes a sound approach to decision-making required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

These preliminary alternatives were developed in response to issues and concerns from the public and NPS staff about Ross Lake NRA. The concepts and components of the alternatives are based upon the public suggestions received during the scoping process and the park and regional staff's professional expertise.



# Management Zoning

One of the tools used in park planning is management zoning. Management zones identify how different areas of the park could be managed to achieve a variety of resource conditions and visitor experiences. Management objectives differ from zone to zone and vary according to the resources and conditions that exist within the NRA and the type of visitor experiences that are desired in each area. The National Park Service would take different actions in specific zones with regard to the types and levels of uses and facilities. The planning team has developed descriptions for five zones (on the next page) that could be appropriate at Ross Lake NRA. Alternatives for future park conditions and management have been developed by arranging these zones in different configurations in the NRA.

## Skagit Hydroelectric Project Zone

Seattle City Light facilities and management areas, including the hydroelectric projects at Ross, Diablo, and Gorge Dams would be located in this zone. Seattle City Light operations would be paramount to resource conditions and visitor experience in this zone.



## Skagit River Zone

The Skagit River and adjacent riparian corridor below Newhalem Powerhouse would be located in this zone. Preservation of the shoreline environment and enhancement of fisheries along the Skagit River. High quality day-use river recreation experiences with modest facilities and limited opportunities for solitude.



## Wilderness-Primeval/Cross Country Zone

Designated wilderness, potential wilderness, and areas that would be managed as wilderness would be located in this zone. Excellent natural and cultural resource conditions and emphasis on resource preservation and restoration. Ultimate wilderness experience, limited primitive visitor facilities, and very few encounters with other visitors.



## Front Country Recreation Zone

The scenic east-west route through the Cascades along Highway 20 and developed areas would be located in this zone. Good natural and cultural resource conditions with some modified resources. A wide variety of high quality recreational and educational visitor opportunities and facilities.



## Back Country Recreation Zone

Ross Lake and areas that are dominated by natural conditions with structured opportunities for visitor recreation. Good natural and cultural resource conditions and emphasis on resource preservation and restoration. High quality visitor experiences and limited visitor facilities, providing a sense of remoteness and immersion in nature within a mountainous wilderness setting.



Bottom right photo by John Mauro.



# Management Zones

	<b>Skagit Hydroelectric Project Zone</b>	<b>Skagit River Zone</b>	<b>Wilderness- Primeval/ Cross Country Zone</b>	<b>Front Country Recreation Zone</b>	<b>Back Country Recreation Zone</b>
<b>Natural Resource Conditions</b>	<p>Natural resources would not be a primary management emphasis. Wildlife habitat, vegetation, and ecological processes could be altered to achieve other management objectives.</p> <p>All fires would be suppressed.</p> <p>Natural resource restoration efforts would occur only as opportunities arise.</p>	<p>Natural resource management would emphasize maintaining ecological integrity of riparian zone and minimizing streamflow impacts from hydroelectric projects and the proximity of Highway 20.</p> <p>All fires would be suppressed.</p> <p>The Skagit River would be managed to mimic natural flows as much as possible.</p> <p>Improved riparian quality could result from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing improved erosion control techniques</li> <li>• Removal of exotic species</li> <li>• Planting native vegetation to screen the highway from the river</li> </ul>	<p>Natural resource preservation, restoration, and ecosystem management would be the primary management emphasis.</p> <p>Ecological processes, including fire, would occur unimpeded as much as possible.</p> <p>Resource management would enhance the quality, protection, and recovery of native vegetation, wildlife and fish.</p> <p>Exotic plant species would be removed when possible and selected areas would be restored with native vegetation.</p> <p>Hazard trees would be managed as wildlife habitat when feasible.</p> <p>Natural sounds and night sky would be dominant.</p> <p>Modern human impact would not interfere with or disrupt natural resources and ecological processes.</p> <p>When management action is needed, minimum tool requirements would be emphasized and implemented.</p>	<p>Natural resource preservation and restoration would be emphasized, but resources could be altered to provide for recreation and visitor experiences. Recreation and management facilities and activities may also be altered or managed to improve the quality of ecological resources and processes.</p> <p>All fires would be suppressed.</p> <p>Resource management would focus on minimizing impacts from infrastructure, concentrated visitor use, and administrative activities.</p> <p>Invasive, exotic plant species would be removed using integrated weed management techniques and extensive areas would be restored with native vegetation.</p> <p>Hazard trees would be managed as wildlife habitat when feasible.</p> <p>Light and noise pollution would be reduced.</p> <p>Protection for wildlife crossing Highway 20 would be improved.</p>	<p>Natural resource preservation and restoration would be emphasized, but resources could be altered to provide for recreation and visitor experiences. Recreation and management facilities and activities may also be altered or managed to improve the quality of ecological resources and processes.</p> <p>Ecological processes would remain unimpeded and restored when possible. Some processes, such as fire, may be suppressed or actively managed.</p> <p>Resource management would enhance the quality, protection, and recovery of native vegetation, wildlife, and fish.</p> <p>Exotic plant species would be actively removed and extensive areas would be restored with native vegetation.</p> <p>Hazard trees would be managed as wildlife habitat when feasible.</p> <p>Signs of modern human impact would be minimal.</p>
<b>Cultural Resource Conditions</b>	<p>Management of cultural resources would be considered in Seattle City Light operations.</p> <p>Cultural resources, including non-sensitive archeological sites, ethnographic sites, historic structures, and cultural landscapes would be identified and evaluated, and nominated to the National Register, as appropriate. Significant cultural resources would be preserved.</p> <p>Historic structures would be maintained and functional through regular use or adaptive use.</p> <p>To the extent possible, cultural resources would be visually accessible and interpreted to the public, recognizing visitor safety, hydroelectric facility security, and residential privacy.</p> <p>SCL would continue its responsibilities to identify, preserve, rehabilitate, and interpret their cultural resources and nominate them to the National Register, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Management of cultural resources would be in concert with management of natural resources.</p> <p>Cultural resources, including non-sensitive archeological sites, ethnographic sites, historic structures, and cultural landscapes would be identified and evaluated, and nominated to the National Register, as appropriate. Significant cultural resources would be preserved.</p> <p>Historic structures would be maintained and functional through regular use or adaptive use.</p> <p>To the extent possible, cultural resources would be visually accessible and interpreted to the public, recognizing visitor safety.</p> <p>Cultural resources would be protected from flood damage and visitor facilities operations.</p>	<p>Management of cultural resources would be in concert with management of natural resources.</p> <p>Cultural resources, including non-sensitive archeological sites, ethnographic sites, historic structures, and cultural landscapes would be identified and evaluated, and nominated to the National Register, as appropriate. Significant cultural resources would be preserved.</p> <p>Non-significant historic resources may be allowed to deteriorate through benign neglect.</p>	<p>Management of cultural resources would be in concert with management of natural resources.</p> <p>Cultural resources, including non-sensitive archeological sites, ethnographic sites, historic structures, and cultural landscapes would be identified and evaluated, and nominated to the National Register, as appropriate. Significant cultural resources would be preserved.</p> <p>Historic structures would be maintained and functional through regular use or adaptive use.</p> <p>To the extent possible, cultural resources would be visually accessible and interpreted to the public, recognizing visitor safety.</p>	<p>Management of cultural resources would be in concert with management of natural resources.</p> <p>Cultural resources, including non-sensitive archeological sites, ethnographic sites, historic structures, and cultural landscapes would be identified and evaluated, and nominated to the National Register, as appropriate. Significant cultural resources would be preserved.</p> <p>Historic structures would be maintained and functional through regular use or adaptive use.</p> <p>To the extent possible, cultural resources would be visually accessible and interpreted to the public, recognizing visitor safety.</p>
<b>Visitor Experience and Use</b>	<p>A variety of educational opportunities to learn about hydroelectricity and associated facilities and operations would be provided through Seattle City Light tours, educational programs, and special events.</p> <p>Visitor services would include the General Store and could include overnight lodging.</p>	<p>River-based recreation would be the focus in this zone, including boating, fishing, nature viewing, and wildlife watching. Additional visitor opportunities would include day hiking, picnicking, and educational opportunities.</p> <p>Visitor services would include commercial guided activities and raft and kayak services.</p>	<p>Outstanding opportunities for wilderness-based recreational activities and non-mechanized recreation would be the focus in this zone. Activities would include on and off-trail hiking, primitive camping, nature viewing, wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, stock use, and access to mountaineering.</p> <p>Visitor services, except for emergency response, would rarely be provided. Ranger staff presence could focus on permit compliance, resource protection compliance, and Leave No Trace education.</p>	<p>A wide variety of high quality day use and overnight recreational opportunities would be provided for a full range of visitor abilities. Activities would include, but not limited to, hiking, picnicking, fishing, swimming, self-propelled and motor boating, bicycling, sport climbing, canyoneering, sightseeing, scenic driving, camping, and lodging.</p> <p>A wide range of visitor services would be provided, including educational services through activities at the visitor center, Environmental Learning Center, and through wayside exhibits, interpretive programs, and personal.</p>	<p>High quality recreational opportunities would focus on the enjoyment and appreciation of nature within a mountainous wilderness setting. Non-mechanized recreation would be the norm. Activities would include, but not limited to, hiking, picnicking, fishing, swimming, self-propelled and motor boating, sightseeing, and camping.</p> <p>Visitor services, except for emergency response, would rarely be provided. Ranger patrols would focus on permit compliance, resource protection compliance, and Leave No Trace education.</p>

# Management Zones

	Skagit Hydroelectric Project Zone	Skagit River Zone	Wilderness- Primeval/ Cross Country Zone	Front Country Recreation Zone	Back Country Recreation Zone
<b>Visitor Experience and Use</b> (continued)		There would be limited opportunities for solitude and connections with the natural world.	Greatest opportunities to experience solitude, remoteness, challenge and risk.  Greatest opportunities to appreciate wilderness and explore connections with the natural world.	services. Concessions operations would complement and augment NPS visitor services  Some opportunities to experience solitude, remoteness, challenge and risk.  Some opportunities to appreciate wilderness and connections with the natural world.  Floatplanes would only be allowed to land in designated areas.  A high level of accessibility would be provided for visitors to see, experience and learn about nature within this zone.	Many opportunities to experience solitude, remoteness, challenge and risk.  Many opportunities to appreciate wilderness and connections with the natural world.  Floatplanes would not be allowed and all low-level overflights would be banned.  Reservoirs in this zone would provide scenic, remote, and serene water recreational experiences in largely undeveloped areas. Primitive overnight camping would be dispersed along the lakeshore at designated sites.
<b>Facilities</b>	A range of facilities and infrastructure accommodate Seattle City Light Operations and visitor services for both daytime and overnight use.  Visitor facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretive trails and signage</li> <li>• Food, supplies, and souvenirs at the General Store</li> <li>• Public Lodging</li> </ul> Facilities associated with Seattle City Light operations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dams</li> <li>• Overhouses</li> <li>• Administrative/office buildings</li> <li>• Employee housing</li> </ul>	Visitor facilities associated with day-use river recreation would be present and accommodated.  Visitor facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boat launch areas</li> <li>• Day use areas</li> <li>• Interpretive information and signage</li> <li>• Trails</li> </ul>	Very limited, primitive facilities could be present and meet accepted wilderness standards.  Visitor facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails, some with limited to no maintenance</li> <li>• Primitive campsites and toilets</li> <li>• Food storage devices in all established campsites</li> </ul> Changes in campsite locations or trail re-routes would be permitted, provided there is no net increase in miles of trails or number of campsites.	A range of facilities and infrastructure accommodate daytime and overnight visitor use as well as park operations. The highest level of development would occur in this zone.  Education, recreation, transportation and administrative facilities could occur in some or all of the zone.  Education facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor Center(s)</li> <li>• Wayside exhibits</li> <li>• Interpretive trails</li> <li>• Environmental Learning Center</li> <li>• Signs</li> </ul> Recreation facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campgrounds</li> <li>• Boat launches and docks</li> <li>• Picnic and day-use areas</li> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Restrooms</li> </ul> Transportation facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads</li> <li>• Parking Lots</li> <li>• Pullouts and overlooks</li> <li>• Bicycle paths</li> <li>• Shuttle services</li> </ul> Administrative facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative offices</li> <li>• Maintenance and storage sites</li> <li>• Staff housing</li> </ul>	Limited visitor facilities accommodate backcountry recreation and park operations. Facilities would be minimally obtrusive on the landscape and designed to be compatible with the northwest backcountry.  Facilities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Primitive campsites and toilets</li> <li>• Food storage devices in all established campsites</li> <li>• Walk-in and boat-in campsites</li> <li>• Boat docks</li> <li>• Pedestrian bridges</li> <li>• Informational and interpretive signage</li> <li>• Fire lookouts</li> </ul>
<b>Access and Transportation</b>	Both public access areas and areas restricted for Seattle City Light operations occur.  Access would be from both motorized and non-motorized transportation.  Opportunities for public transportation and parking may be accommodated.  Helicopter landings may be accommodated for emergency operations and possible commercial use.	Public access is available throughout the zone and most areas are easily accessed by visitors.  Access would be from both motorized and non-motorized transportation.  Commercial and private use of the river would be regulated in accord with a user capacity analysis.	Public access is available throughout the zone, but access to some areas may be extremely challenging.  Access would be by foot or some stock animals.	Both public access areas and areas restricted for park administrative use occur. Most open areas would be easily accessed by visitors.  Access would be from both motorized and non-motorized transportation.  Opportunities for public transportation and parking may be accommodated.  Helicopter landings may be accommodated for emergency operations and operational use.	Public access is available throughout the zone, but access to some areas may be challenging.  Access would be by foot, boat, or some stock animals.



# Draft Alternatives

In the National Park Service planning process we are required to assess alternative management concepts, desired conditions, and prescriptions for Ross Lake NRA. All of the alternatives must be reasonable, viable, and conform to National Park Service (NPS) guiding laws, regulations, and policies. Each alternative is built around an underlying concept that describes a possible “vision” for park management over the next 15 to 20 years.

The NPS has not yet designated a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative will be designated in the Ross Lake NRA Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement or

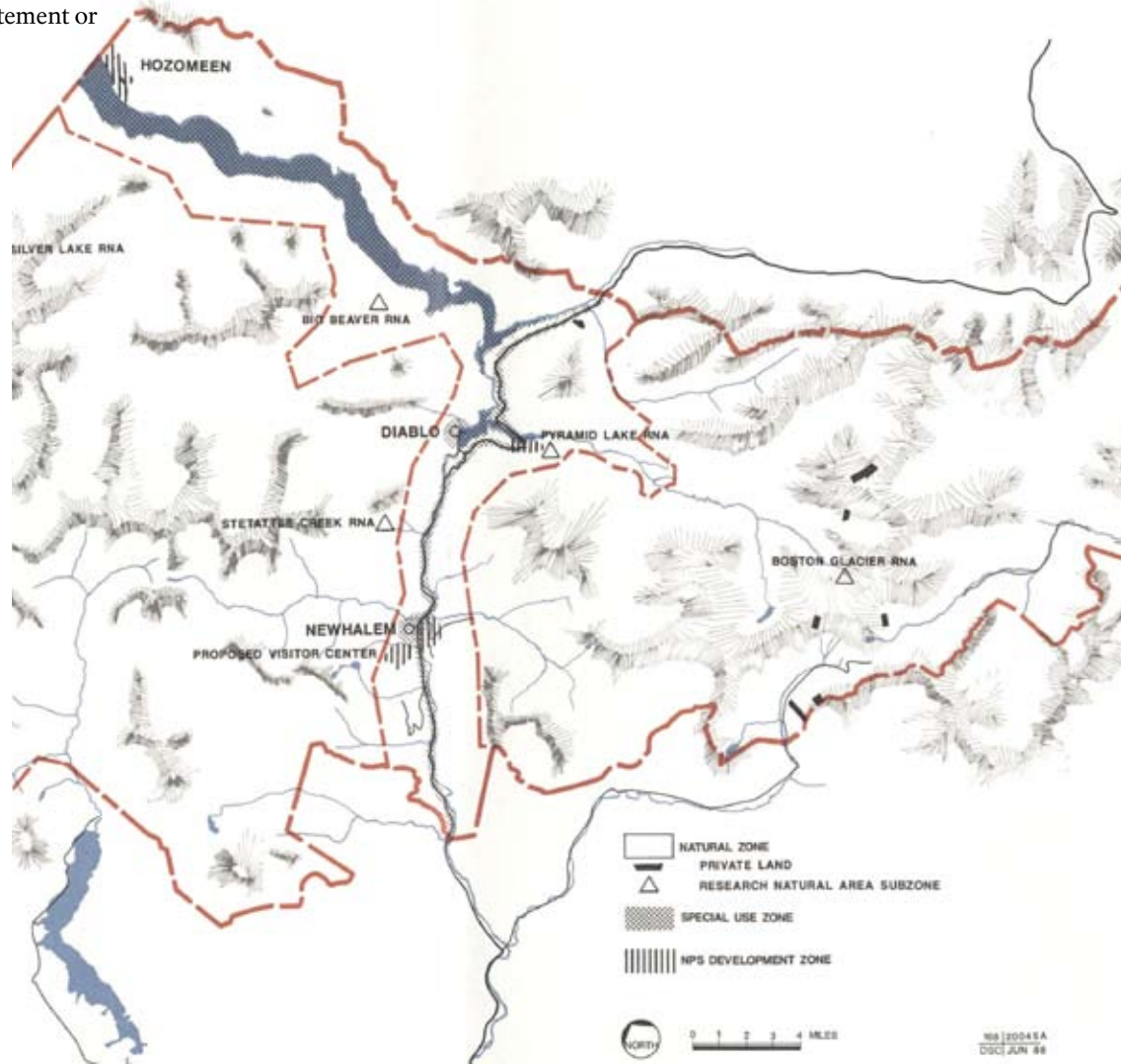
Environmental Assessment. It could be one of the preliminary alternatives or it could be made up of parts of the alternatives. Your comments and ideas on the preliminary alternatives will assist the NPS in selecting a preferred alternative.

The table beginning on page 6 outlines preliminary concepts, prescriptions, and conditions for the future of Ross Lake NRA. Please review the table and provide your comments on the comment form, in person at one of the public workshops, or online at <http://park-planning.nps.gov/rola>.

## Alternative A Current Management

The “No Action” Alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act and provides the baseline from which to compare the other alternatives. Under this alternative, current management practices would continue, as funding allows. The emphasis in this alternative would be to protect the values of the park without substantially increasing staff, programs, funding support or facilities.

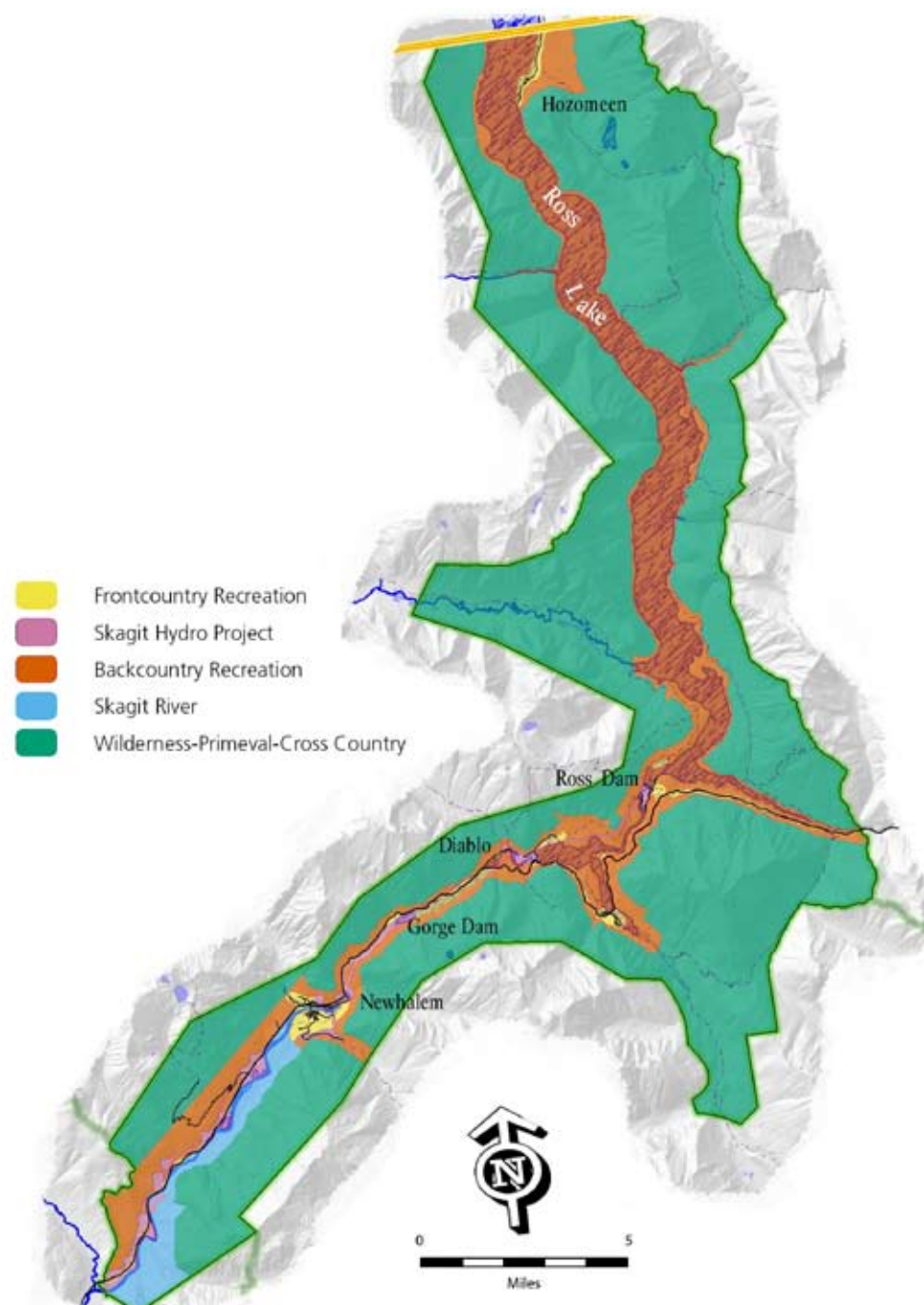
This alternative uses the management zones from the 1988 General Management Plan.



## Alternative B Preservation of the North Cascades Ecosystem

This alternative takes a broader look at the role of Ross Lake NRA in preserving the greater North Cascades ecosystem, which includes two additional national park units, two national forests, and provincial parks and protected areas across the Canadian border. The emphasis of park management and education efforts would focus on ecosystem preservation and enhancement through coordinated regional and international environmental stewardship. The focus of visitor experiences would be linked to solitude, tranquility, natural soundscapes, and scenery through traditional outdoor activities.

This alternative has the most back country zoned areas, including Diablo Lake. Only high use areas are zoned front country.

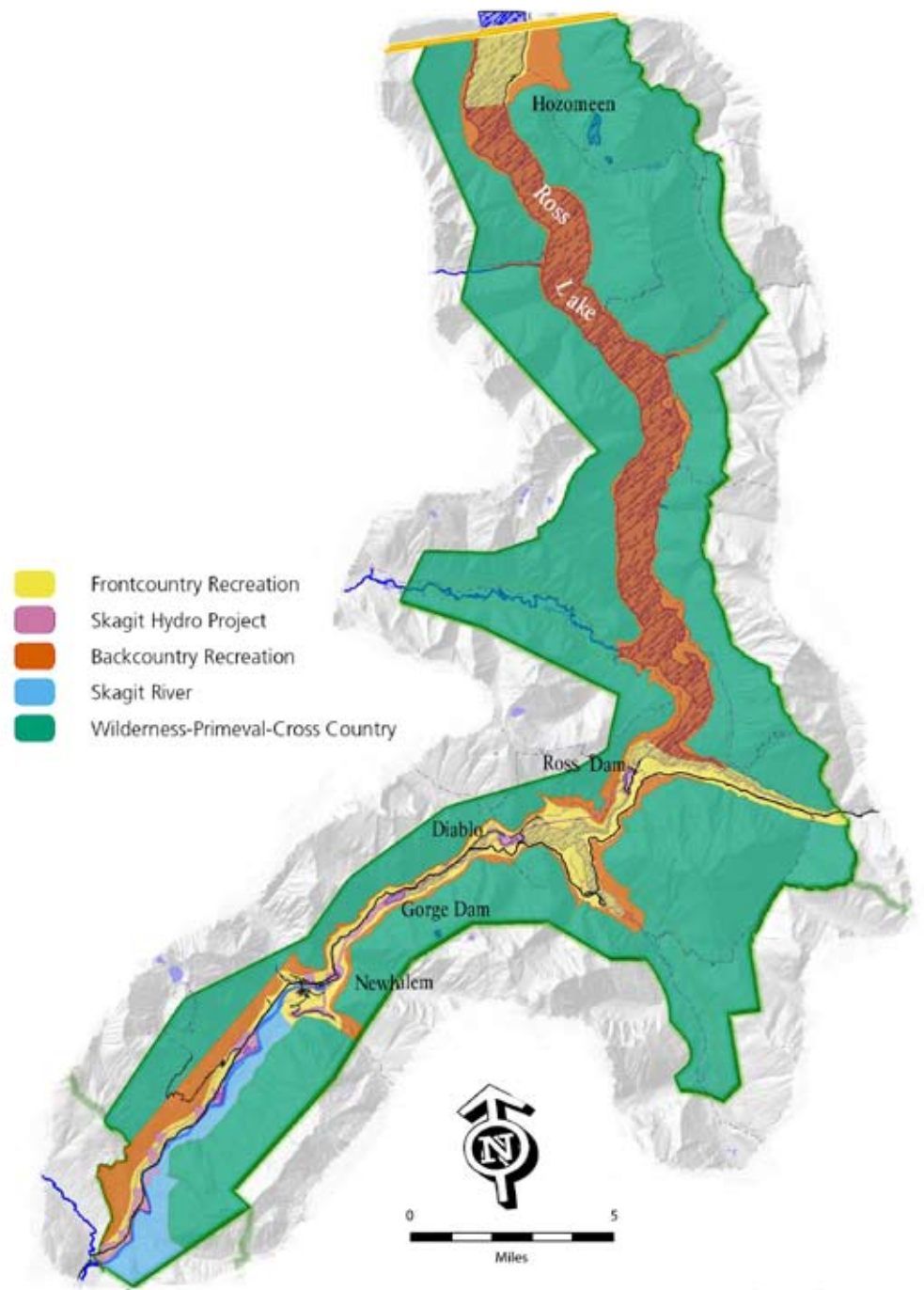




**Alternative C**  
**Linking People to Nature**

This alternative focuses on improving connections between visitors and the outdoors through a variety of enhanced recreation and learning opportunities. The emphasis of park management would be to diversify the NRA’s visitor base and build stewardship through more hands-on/experiential recreation and education opportunities. The park would strive to increase seasonal use by gearing programs and facilities to students through curriculum based education programs during spring and fall and to families and recreationists during summer.

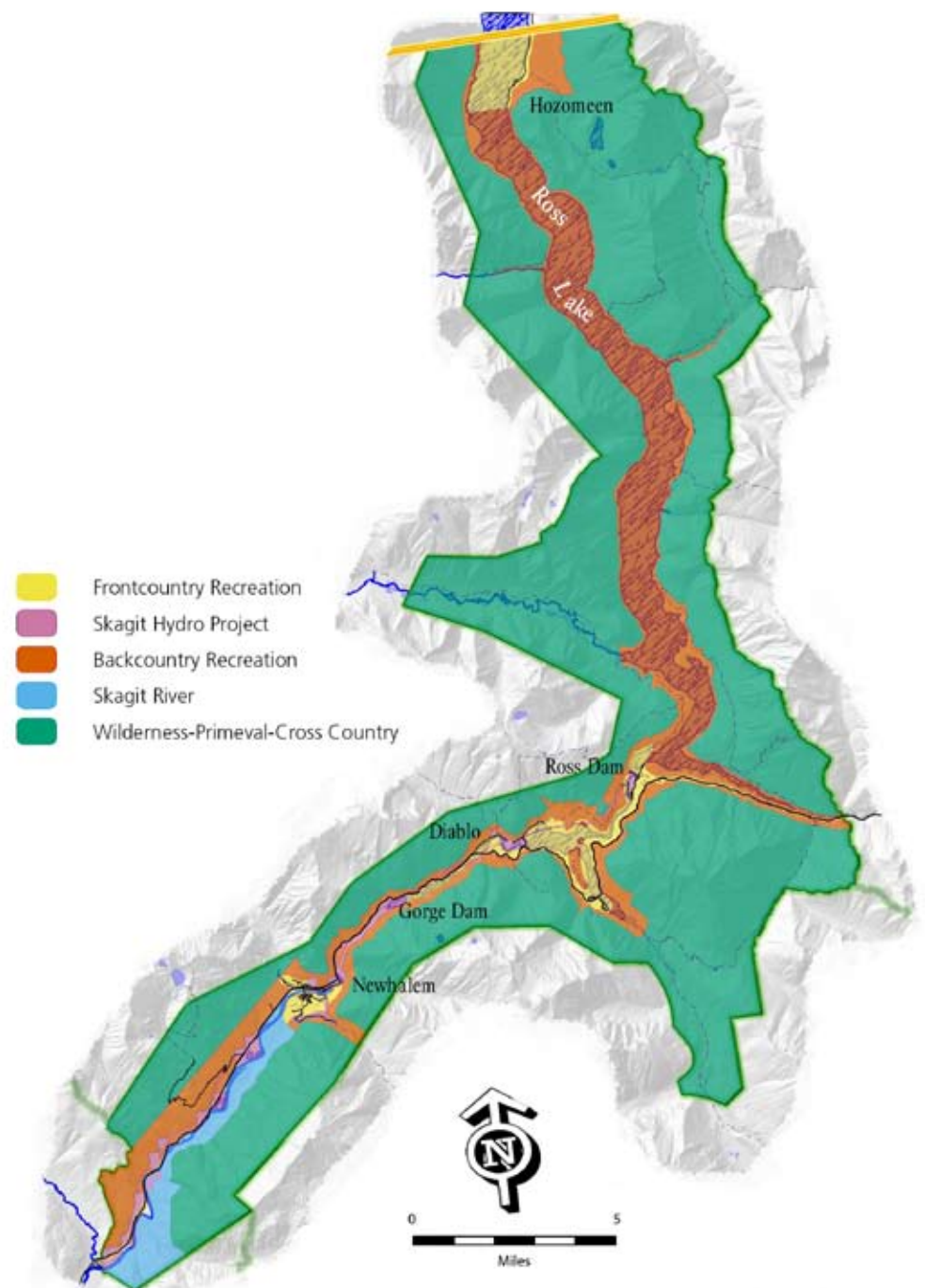
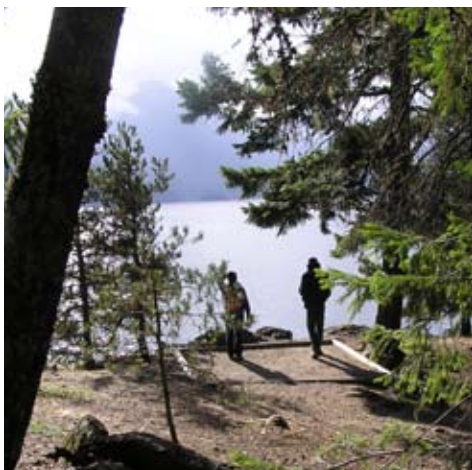
This alternative has the most front country zoned areas, including the entire SR 20 corridor, Diablo Lake, Hozomeen, and near Ross Dam.



**Alternative D**  
**Gateway to the Wilderness**

This alternative captures the notion that Ross Lake NRA serves as a gateway to millions of acres of wilderness. It recognizes the importance of leadership in resource preservation and high quality visitor opportunities. Park management efforts would focus on resource and wilderness protection. Management efforts would also focus on enhancing recreation and learning opportunities through providing opportunities for a range of visitor experiences along the highway corridor.

This alternative has front country zoned areas along SR 20, Diablo Lake, Hozomeen, and near Ross Dam. Undeveloped areas beyond the SR 20 road prism would be zoned back country recreation.



# Summary of Alternatives

	<b>Alternative A: No Action</b>	<b>Alternative B: Preservation of the North Cascades Ecosystem</b>	<b>Alternative C: Connecting People to the Outdoors</b>	<b>Alternative D: Gateway to the Wilderness</b>
<b>Natural Resources</b>				
	Continue existing natural resource programs and projects	Focus on inventory, monitoring and preservation	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Allow natural fires to burn, where possible	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Remove invasive exotic species, where possible	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Reduce noise and light pollution	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Rehabilitate and restore habitats for fish and wildlife		Same as Alternative B
		Restore areas to natural conditions		Same as Alternative B
<b>Climate Change</b>				
	Continue to interpret climate change in existing educational and interpretive programs	Be a leader in interpreting climate change	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
	Engage in the climate friendly parks program	Same as Alternative A PLUS Lead regional efforts for North Coast Cascades Network on climate change research and planning	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
	Continue monitoring programs to understand the effects of climate change on park resources	Support, encourage, and conduct scientific research related to climate change.	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
	Continue to purchase "green power" for all facilities along Highway 20 corridor. Continue use of four-stroke motorboat engines. Continue to run photovoltaics at select facilities and use biodeisel fuel. Maintain hybrid vehicles in the park's vehicle fleet.	Same as Alternative A PLUS Reduce carbon emissions and increase energy and fuel efficiency	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Implement green facility design, whenever possible	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Prioritize contractors and concessioners that use sustainable practices	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Cultural Resources</b>				
	Continue existing cultural resource programs	Focus on documentation and research of significant cultural sites, landscapes, structures, and collections	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
	Continue cooperation with tribes	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A
	Treatments focus on protection and preservation	Same as Alternative A	Treatments focus on interpretation, education, and visitor use, where feasible	Same as Alternative C
<b>Interpretation and Education</b>				
	Continue existing education, outreach, and interpretive programs	Focus on education about appropriate recreational uses	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Increase outreach for interpretation and education	Substantially increase on-site NPS led programs	Same as Alternative C
		Increase self-guided and off-site opportunities	Increase cooperation with partners	Same as Alternative C
			Emphasize seasonal use- shoulder seasons for curriculum based education, summer for families	Same as Alternative C
<b>Recreation</b>				
<b>Hunting</b>	Maintain existing hunting opportunities	Increase safety zones in front country, most notably around the Environmental Learning Center	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Climbing</b>	Maintain existing climbing opportunities	Establish Climbing Management Areas	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Develop a permit-based system to monitor and evaluate new routes	Conduct an annual meeting with the climbing community to evaluate proposals for new routes. Encourage stewardship of climbing areas, such as an Adopt-a-Crag program and Leave No Trace climbing principles	Same as Alternative C
<b>Group sizes</b>	Group sizes would continue at existing levels for various activities	Regulate group sizes for visitor experience and resource protection	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Reservation system</b>	Maintain existing reservation and permit system	Frontcountry and backcountry reservations for a portion of campsites and permits could be implemented. A portion of sites and permits would be held for walk ins.	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Fees</b>	Consider user fees for specialized services and advanced permit processing	Evaluate user fees for specialized services and advanced permit processing	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Lake Recreation</b>				
<b>Motor boats</b>	Current motorboat use on Gorge, Diablo and Ross Lakes would continue	Manage motor boat use to conserve soundscapes, water quality, safety, visitor experience and to prevent shoreline erosion	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
	Continue to manage motorboat use primarily by maintaining limits set by existing infrastructure	Manage number of boats by maintaining limits set by existing infrastructure and reconfigure Hozomeen boat launch area	Same as Alternative B PLUS Consider allowing a second water taxi	Same as Alternative C
		Establish no wake zones along undeveloped shorelines, near developed sites, dams, and log booms, and in proximity to other boaters	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Consider establishing speed limits. Provisions for emergency, law enforcement and operational requirements could be allowed.	Consider establishing speed limits on Ross Lake and in the Diablo canyon. Provisions for emergency, law enforcement and operational requirements could be allowed.	Same as Alternative C
	Continue to allow towing of people for recreational use (water-skiing, etc.)	Prohibit towing of people for recreational use (water-skiing, etc.)	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative B
	Continue to allow two-stroke and four-stroke engines	Require exclusive use of four-stroke engines, the new direct injection two-stroke engines, or equivalent, for all motorized vessels in Ross Lake NRA by 2020	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B



## Summary of Alternatives

	<b>Alternative A: No Action</b>	<b>Alternative B: Preservation of the North Cascades Ecosystem</b>	<b>Alternative C: Connecting People to the Outdoors</b>	<b>Alternative D: Gateway to the Wilderness</b>
<b>Self-propelled boats</b>	Encourage use of self propelled boats	Encourage use of self propelled boats, and seek measures to provide for the safety of self propelled boats	Same as Alternative B PLUS explore expansion of rentals of self-propelled boats on Ross Lake and explore rentals of self-propelled boats on Diablo Lake	Same as Alternative B
<b>Facilities</b>				
<b>Wilderness Center</b>	Maintain existing wilderness center	Rehabilitate and remodel the existing wilderness center at its current location	Move wilderness center public functions to a more accessible location in Marblemount on Highway 20	Construct a new upgraded and expanded wilderness facility
<b>Employee Housing</b>	Expand the RV sites at Newhalem	Same as Alternative A PLUS Explore opportunities to partner with SCL for housing at Diablo and Newhalem NPS and NCI housing	Same as Alternative B PLUS Explore opportunities to develop additional staff housing in Newhalem	Same as Alternative B
	Continue to lease housing in Marblemount and Newhalem for seasonal and other staff on case-by-case basis	Same as Alternative A	Build a permanent group housing structure at Marblemount for seasonal and volunteer employees	Build tent cabins at Marblemount
<b>Campgrounds</b>	Maintain Hozomeen Campground	Reconfigure Hozomeen Campground	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
			New camping facilities could be considered at Newhalem Creek Campground, Buster Brown Flats to the east of the Environmental Learning Center, and in the Diablo Gorge near Ross Dam. In cooperation with SCL, new camping facilities could be considered in the Copper Creek vicinity, Pinky's Homestead/Jennings Siding, Bacon Creek, and the aggregate ponds.	Same as Alternative C
			Explore additional overnight opportunities in existing campgrounds, such as tent cabins	Same as Alternative C
			Evaluate a range of facilities at select campgrounds, or portions of campgrounds, such as showers or electrical hookups	Evaluate a range of facilities at select campgrounds, or portions of campgrounds, such as electrical hookups
<b>Park entrances</b>	Existing park entrances would be maintained	Develop a traditional park entrance to improve awareness of entering ROLA	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Trails</b>	Current number of trails, existing trail alignments, and trail uses would be maintained. Evaluate new trails and closing trails on a case-by-case basis.	No net increase in trails. Remove and actively restore select trails and camps for resource or other concerns	Several new trails would be considered to encourage visitors to explore beyond the highway corridor	Several new trails. Close select trails and camps for resource or other concerns
<b>North Cascades Environmental Learning Center</b>	Finish construction of remaining facilities-dorm, staff housing, and boathouse. NCI would provide all funding for construction	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A, PLUS construct additional outdoor learning shelters. Consider new camping areas at Buster Brown and in the Diablo Gorge for seasonal NCI use and public use. NCI would contribute funding to new camping areas	Same as Alternative C
<b>Severe Weather Events</b>	Continue to be reactive following severe weather events. Develop alternatives on a case by case basis in the event that facilities are destroyed in geohazard areas.	If facilities are destroyed by severe weather events, those facilities would be closed and abandoned. Visitors would be directed to other existing facilities and new facilities could be built. Some net loss of facilities and visitor opportunities could occur.	Implement proactive measures to reduce potential impacts of severe weather. If facilities are destroyed by severe weather events, those facilities could be closed and abandoned. New facilities would be constructed to ensure that no net loss of facilities and visitor opportunities.	If facilities are destroyed by severe weather events, those facilities could be rebuilt and/or new facilities could be constructed to ensure no net loss of facilities and visitor opportunities in the vicinity.
<b>Severe Weather Events - Colonial Creek Campground</b>	The entrance road would be cleared and damage would be repaired as needed	Affected portions of the campground would be closed as necessary. Visitors would be directed to other existing camping locations.	Same as Alternative B PLUS To ensure no net loss of camp sites, new or expanded camping facilities would be considered at other identified locations.	A proactive management strategy for Rhode Creek would be implemented that could involve periodic dredging to maintain a defined channel in order to prevent Colonial Creek Campground from being impacted by flooding, debris flow, and erosion.
<b>Severe Weather Events - Goddell Creek Campground</b>	The campground would be repaired and damage would be addressed on a case-by-case basis. To ensure that that Goodell Creek continues to flow under SR20, the channel could be dredged above and below the SR20.	Affected portions of the campground would be abandoned and additional sites could be built to the west of the Goodell Creek Lower Group Campground or sites could be expanded in the Upper Goodell Group Campground	Affected portions of the campground would be abandoned. To ensure no net loss of camping opportunities, new or expanded camping facilities would be considered at other identified locations.	Same as Alternative B PLUS To ensure that that Goodell Creek continues to flow under SR20, the channel could be dredged above and below the SR20
<b>Access and Transportation</b>				
		Conduct a public transportation study to explore and analyze alternative transportation, including shuttles and staging areas.	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>State Route 20</b>	Continue motorized and non-motorized wintertime use on closed portion of SR 20	Work with WA DOT to regulate snowmobile use on the closed portion of SR 20 within the NRA	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A
	Intermittent excessive noise along SR 20 could continue	Reduce excessive noise resulting from motor vehicle use on SR 20 through education and enforcement of existing motor vehicle noise law	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Thornton Lakes Road</b>	Maintenance of Thornton Lakes road could be in violation of the wilderness designation	Close Thornton Lakes road at wilderness boundary (Damnation Creek Road junction) Parking lot would be limited in size to generally disturbed area	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Parking</b>	Maintain existing parking areas within the NRA	Reconfigure Ross Dam trailhead parking lot with a turn lane, single point of ingress and egress, and maximum capacity of 54 passenger vehicles.	Reconfigure Ross Dam trailhead parking lot with a turn lane, single point of ingress and egress, and maximum capacity of 65 passenger vehicles.	Same as Alt B
			Parking areas at the Diablo Ferry dock, Upper Goodell group campsite, Goodell Creek raft area, Copper Creek, and between Newhalem and Gorge Lake will be reconfigured, formalized, or developed.	Same as Alternative C
<b>Bridge to Newhalem Visitor Center</b>			Replace existing bridge with an expanded bridge that accommodates 2-way vehicle traffic, bicycle and pedestrian access, and interpretive platforms	Same as Alternative C



## Summary of Alternatives

	<b>Alternative A: No Action</b>	<b>Alternative B: Preservation of the North Cascades Ecosystem</b>	<b>Alternative C: Connecting People to the Outdoors</b>	<b>Alternative D: Gateway to the Wilderness</b>
<b>Concessions and Commercial Uses</b>				
	No permanent concession services would be added	Same as Alternative A	Explore expansion of water taxi and non-motorized boat rentals on Ross Lake; explore non-motorized boat rentals on Diablo Lake; explore firewood sales at campgrounds	Same as Alternative C
<b>Overnight Lodging</b>	Maintain existing overnight lodging opportunities and consider additional overnight lodging opportunities on a case-by-case basis	Work with gateway communities to provide additional lodging and concession services outside the park	Work with Seattle City Light to explore the feasibility of additional overnight opportunities in Newhalem and Diablo through adaptive reuse and/or compatible new construction	Same as Alternative C
<b>Ross Lake Resort</b>	Ross Lake Resort would not be expanded. Any replacement facilities would follow LEED and NOCA architectural design guidelines	Same as Alternative A	Ross Lake Resort would be minimally expanded by 10% of existing capacity. New and replacement facilities would follow LEED and NOCA architectural design guidelines.	Same as Alternative C
<b>Diablo Townsite and Newhalem</b>				
	Continue to provide cultural resource management technical assistance to SCL	Explore opportunities with SCL to adaptively reuse National Register Hollywood House and other National Register eligible properties for potential visitor opportunities, overnight lodging opportunities, and staff and volunteer housing for NPS and NCI	Same as Alternative B Plus If surplus to the needs of SCL, evaluate the suitability of converting a portion of the Hollywood housing to camping while retaining current infrastructure to support that function	Same as Alternative B
			Work with SCL to restore the incline lift to accommodate visitor tours and provide access to the ELC in the event of disaster	
	Continue working with Seattle City Light to provide NPS and NCI employee housing	Explore feasibility of adaptively reusing existing facilities for NPS, NCI or volunteer housing and/or for visitor lodging.	Same as Alternative A and B PLUS create a seamless visitor experience among the NPS and SCL facilities in Newhalem. This includes improvements to visitor information and signage to encourage visitors to park their cars and use existing infrastructure in Newhalem (NPS and SCL visitor center, trails, picnic areas and campgrounds.)	Same as Alternative C
			Explore expansion of SCL businesses to provide visitor food services at least during peak summer months.	Same as Alternative C
	Continue working with Seattle City Light to coordinate emergency response in Newhalem	Same as Alternative A	Enhance emergency services to support NPS and SCL operations	Same as Alternative C
<b>International Cooperation and Hozomeen</b>				
	Continue to work cooperatively with SEEC to develop projects and conduct programs for international benefit at Hozomeen. These include resource protection, visitor use, and educational projects and programs.	Enhance international cooperation and collaboration for resource protection, visitor use, and educational projects and programs.	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Hozomeen Ranger Station/Visitor Center</b>	Continue to maintain interpretive shelter at International Point	Establish a joint NPS/Canadian ranger station	Same as Alternative B PLUS provide shoulder season staffing	Same as Alternative C
<b>Hozomeen Campground</b>	Maintain existing campground	Delineate camp sites and reconfigure Hozomeen Campground	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Hozomeen Interpretive Programs</b>	Continue existing joint programs	Enhance joint NPS/Canadian interpretive programs	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Fire Management</b>		Work with Canadian land and fire managers to consider cross-boundary ecosystem fire issues, including considering the potential to allow lightning-caused fires and management-ignited prescribed fires to burn across the international boundary.		Same as Alternative B
		The park would work with Canadian biologists and land managers on research and monitoring efforts to understand the habitat needs of these wolves, wolverines, and grizzly bears in order to protect them on both sides of the boundary, as well as monitor individual animals of these species.		Same as Alternative B
<b>Interagency Management</b>				
		Collaborate with the USFS for enhanced education and interpretation at Washington and Rainy Pass.	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
		Develop a formal agreement with SCL to define management roles and responsibilities within ROLA	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
<b>Lands</b>				
<b>Marblemount US National Forest Service boundary adjustment</b>	Continue cooperative agreement between the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service for use of the Marblemount property	Request a formal transfer of the US Forest Service Marblemount compound, approximately 45 acres, to the National Park Service to continue park operations	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B



# What Happens Next?

The next step will be the selection of a preferred alternative. The selection process is based on analyses of the impacts and advantages of the alternatives and public comments. The NPS's preferred alternative will be designated in the Ross Lake NRA Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment. Once the Draft GMP is complete, the document and summary newsletters will be mailed to the public and available for review and comment. At that time, we will also hold a final round of public workshops to present the contents of the draft GMP and provide opportunities to discuss the draft plan with NPS staff. The draft GMP will then be revised and a final GMP will be published and available. Park management will then begin to implement the GMP over the next 15 to 20 years.




## Ross Lake NRA GMP Schedule

Planning Steps	Date	Public Involvement Opportunities
<b>1 Identify the Planning Context</b> Reaffirm the purpose and significance of Ross Lake NRA. Determine issues and concerns, and gather and analyze information.	2005 to 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend a public workshop and provide comments.</li> <li>Read newsletter and send us your comments.</li> </ul>
<b>2 Develop and Evaluate Preliminary Alternatives</b> <i>*We are currently in this step</i> Identify a reasonable range of alternative future conditions and management actions, assess their potential effects, analyze public reactions, and select a preferred alternative.	Winter 2007 to Spring 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read newsletter and send us your comments.</li> </ul>
<b>3 Prepare and Publish a Draft General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment GMP/ EIS or EA</b> Prepare draft plan describing the planning context, management alternatives, and impacts. Distribute to the public.	Summer 2008 to Spring 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend a public workshop to learn more about the draft plan and provide comments.</li> <li>Read draft plan and send us your comments.</li> </ul>
<b>4 Revise and Publish the Final GMP/EIS or EA</b> Analyze comments, revise draft document, and distribute to the public.	Summer 2009 to Fall 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the final plan.</li> </ul>
<b>5 Implement the Approved Plan</b>	Fall 2009 and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay involved throughout the implementation of the approved plan.</li> <li>Check park website for updates.</li> </ul>

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