

the Quileute and Makah, are now well underway among other peninsula tribes. And potlaches and tribal gatherings remain vibrant with traditional songs and dances.

Perhaps the most visible expression of this rebirth of Native American culture on the peninsula has been the resurgence of the redcedar canoe. To commemorate the centennial of Washington's statehood in 1989, 16 Washington tribes took part in a celebratory "Paddle to Seacule." Several tribes carved traditional canoes from redcedar logs for the occasion. At a welcome celebration hosted by the Suguamish Tribe, the paddlers were invited to participate in a much more ambitious international effort, a Paddle to Bella Bella on British Columbia's northern coast.

Four years of planning, carving, and training led up to the event, and in the summer of 1993, six Washington tribes and an international group pointed their cedar canoes north for the 650-mile journey and began singing their paddling songs. The Quinault, Quileute, Makah, and all three S'Klallam tribes mounted traditional canoes, crews, and support boats. The enthusiasm and dedication of the paddlers and the spirit of intertribal cooperation proved infectious. Whole families of supporters, from elders to small children, went along in cars, trucks, and vans. At each stop along the way, paddlers and guests were ceremonially welcomed and hosted by local tribes. Singing, dancing, and feasting filled traditional longhouses along the northern coast as nations celebrated their diversity as well as their common cultural bonds.

Many Native Americans on the peninsula see the Paddle to Bella Bella as a turning point in cultural awareness for tribal members of all ages. Elwha S'Klallam carver and head paddler Al Charles Jr. was 21 at the time of the paddle. "To be able to see our culture and beliefs put into practice on a daily basis really brought the culture alive for young people," he said later. "The farther we paddled toward Bella Bella, the more people came out of their shells, joining in the singing and drumming. By the north end of Vancouver Island, we were singing our tribal songs for crowds of 300 to 400 people as we pulled into the beaches."

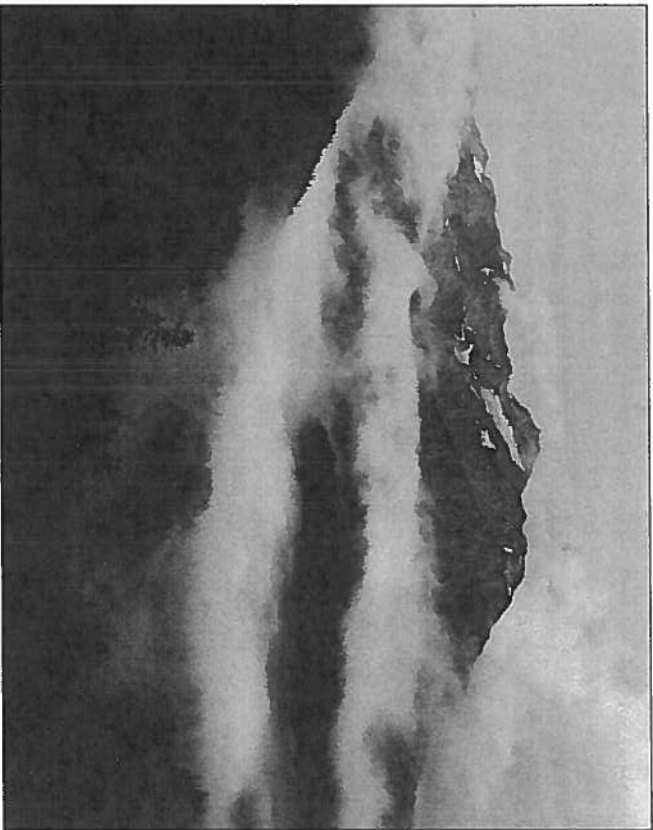
For Al Charles Jr. and for tribal members across the peninsula and Puget Sound, the change was lasting. "I hear young people on the reservation just break into a song now, something they'd be afraid to do before the paddle," he told me. "And the experience has put a twinkle back into the eyes of our elders."

10

Protection for Olympic's Wildlands

In 1890, the same year the U.S. census pronounced the American frontier closed, a "rush" of exploration hit the Olympic Mountains. Two of the Olympics' most noteworthy explorers met in July of that year at a forest camp in the Skokomish Valley. Judge James Wickersham was an inveterate explorer and mountaineer who had traveled widely in the Northwest. A year earlier he and a companion explored the upper reaches of the Skokomish Valley; he returned this year with a larger party to pioneer a route north across the mountains to Port Angeles.

Sharing a campfire with Wickersham was Lieutenant Joseph P. O'Neil. Also a seasoned wilderness traveler, O'Neil had led an exploratory expedition into the northern Olympic high country five years earlier, eventually reaching the Dosewallips headwaters and the northern flanks of Mount Anderson. "The travel was difficult," he confessed in his report, "but the adventures, the beauty of the scenery, and the magnificent hunting and fishing amply repaid all hardships." Now he returned with a large party of enlisted men and members of the Oregon Alpine Club, a pack train, and mountains of supplies. They were building trail as they advanced up the Skokomish River, and progress was slow.



Janis Burger

Mount Carrie and the Cat Basin. Though the interior mountains had been traversed by Native Americans for millennia, they were terra incognita for Euroamericans until the latter part of the 19th century.

Though members of O'Neil's party would explore sections of the Duckabush and Dosewallips rivers to Hood Canal and descend the East Fork Quinalt River to the Pacific that summer, O'Neil's men were not the first to cross the range. A small party led by Melbourne Watkinson is reported to have crossed by a route similar to O'Neil's in 1878, but the glory of "first Olympic crossing" went to a well-publicized expedition sponsored by the *Seattle Press*. Its ragtag members emerged from the rain forests of the Quinalt, battered, foosore, and hungry, only weeks before Wickersham and O'Neil's meeting. The Press party had started across the Olympics from the north the previous December, largely in an effort to scoop Wickersham and O'Neil (few were then aware of the Watkinson expedition) and ran headlong into one of the worst Olympic winters on record. The travels and travails of the Press party's ill-timed adventure are delightfully told in Robert L. Wood's *Across the Olympic Mountains*. No record remains of the conversation that Wickersham and O'Neil

shared around the fire that July afternoon. They undoubtedly discussed their previous routes and the nature of the country they had crossed. It's also quite likely that there, as afternoon breezes wafted their smoke through the valley forest, the seed for the creation of Olympic National Park was planted.

By the late 1800s, the wholesale destruction of the virgin pine forests of the Great Lakes states by large timber companies sparked a nationwide movement to protect American forest lands. In 1864, a federal grant allowed the State of California to designate Yosemite as a park. In 1872, President Grant signed the act creating Yellowstone National Park, and by 1885, nearly three quarters of a million acres were set aside as a forest preserve in the Adirondacks in New York. The popular writings of John Muir extolled the majesty of western mountains and forests and demanded government protection for them. In 1891, Congress responded to growing popular sentiment and gave the president power to create forest preserves by proclamation, withdrawing land from the public domain and closing it to homesteading and private speculation. Judge Wickersham knew that Major John Wesley Powell, head of the U.S. Geological Survey, was preparing a list of forest reserve recommendations for the president's signature. Wickersham sent Powell his unpublished report and urged that Olympic be recommended as a national park:

In all the great commonwealths of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Alaska, there is not a national park. The forests are being felled, and destroyed, the game slaughtered, and the very mountains washed away, and the beauties of nature destroyed or fenced for private gain. . . . The heaviest growth in North America lies within the limits of [the Olympic] region, untouched by fire or axe, and far enough from tidewater that its reservation by the government could not possibly cripple private enterprise in the new state, and by all means it should be reserved for future use. The reservation of this area as a national park will thus serve the twofold purpose of a great pleasure ground for the Nation, and a means of securing and protecting the finest forests in America.

O'Neil was equally struck by the beauty of the peninsula's mountains, forests, and streams, and the abundance of wildlife he found there. He concluded his report, written in 1890 and published six years later, by noting that while the area was unfit for settlement, it would "serve admirably as a national park."

But the commercial wealth of the Olympics' forests did not go unrecognized by powerful timber interests. It would take nearly half a century — and one of the most bitterly fought conservation battles in American history — before Wickersham and O'Neil's vision of a national park in the Olympics would become a reality.

Early Protection for the Olympics

Following the passage of the 1891 Forest Reserve Act, President Cleveland appointed a committee to make recommendations regarding proper management of the forest reserves. Two key figures in American conservation were involved in the committee's deliberations: John Muir, an eloquent and impassioned advocate of forest and wildland preservation and founder of the Sierra Club, and a young millionaire named Gifford Pinchot, a leading proponent for the utilization of public forests. Muir envisioned a system of reserves protected from logging, grazing, mining, and dams, in the manner of Yosemite and Yellowstone. Pinchot, with his background in European forest management, saw the reserves quite differently. Thus began a national debate over the use of public forest lands that still rages in the Pacific Northwest a century later, a debate in which the Olympic Peninsula has served as center stage.

Though Pinchot's influence held sway over the committee's recommendations, its final report recommended the establishment of Mount Rainier and Grand Canyon national parks. The committee also recommended a large forest reserve for the Olympics. Established by President Cleveland on February 22, 1897, the 2,188,800-acre Olympic Forest Reserve encompassed all of the mountains, foothills, and lowland valleys of the peninsula, along with the rich, productive forests of the western slope out to the Pacific coast. It was by far the largest as well as the most valuable forest reserve in the nation, and timber interests in Washington state lost no time mounting a campaign to wrest it from public hands.

It took three years to complete the considerable task of surveying the new reserve and assessing its forest resources. That was all the time commercial interests needed. Thomas Aldwell, a Port Angeles real estate speculator who would later become the developer of the Elwha Dam, petitioned Congress to eliminate the most valuable timber lands from the reserve. He predicted economic ruin for the peninsula, going so far as to invoke the indebtedness of "many widows and orphans in the East who had been persuaded to buy securities" in Clallam County. Congressman William Jones fanned the flames with rhetoric, crowing that the reserve's establishment was "the most despotic act that has ever marred our history." Local officials maintained that the peninsula's rain-drenched coastal plain, remote from population centers and crowded with some of the largest trees in the world, was too valuable as agricultural land to be locked up in a forest reserve. They pointed to the public law stating that parts of any reserves "better adapted for mining or agricultural purposes than for forest usage may be restored to the public domain." Demands by local politicians, chambers of commerce, and industrialists were well received in Washington D.C., particularly after a timber company executive was installed in the United States Senate.

In 1900, a proclamation by President William McKinley reduced the reserve by more than a quarter-million acres; the following year he cut it by nearly a half million more. By the time the government survey of the Olympic Forest Reserve was complete — a report specifying that soils, rainfall, and the size of the forest made the area completely unsuitable for agriculture — three-fourths of the richest forest lands in the reserve had been opened to claims by settlers.

Chris Morgenroth homesteaded in the Bogachiel Valley a decade earlier and developed many of the first trails on the western peninsula. After McKinley's deletions, he watched in dismay as "homesteaders" made fraudulent claims to the best tracts of forest, then turned them over to timber company agents for a tidy profit. Contrary to the claims of Aldwell and company, this mass transfer of public forest land into the hands of a few private timber companies dashed the hopes of Morgenroth and other early settlers for rural development of the area. Among the new "settlers" in the Olympic rain forest valleys were the Milwaukee Land Company, Weyerhaeuser, Simpson Logging Company, Merrill and Ring, and others. More than a half-million acres of some of

the peninsula's finest forest lands passed, in the words of Gifford Pinchot, "promptly and fraudulently into the hands of lumbermen."

While this first great land grab was underway, another sort of trade was devastating the Peninsula's elk herds. Elk carcasses were found scattered across the western valleys stripped of their hides and incisor teeth. The teeth were popular among members of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks as watch fobs, and commercial hunters killed elk indiscriminately. By the turn of the century, the elk population for the peninsula had been reduced to less than 2,000 animals. The *Seattle Mail and Herald* published a lengthy exposé on the situation, and conservationists around the state clamored for protection. In 1905, the Washington state legislature passed a stopgap 10-year moratorium on elk hunting on the peninsula, a measure legislators hoped was a "first step in what will ultimately be Olympic National Park."

In 1906 Congress passed the Antiquities Act, giving the president the

The Queen Fir in Olympic National Park. More than three-quarters of a million acres of some of the most productive low-elevation forests on the Olympic Peninsula were fraudulently removed from the Olympic Forest Reserve in 1900 and 1901. Nearly all of it has since been logged.

Olympic National Park



power to preserve objects of historic or scientific interest by designating national monuments by proclamation. Conservationists saw this as an opportunity to bypass a Congress heavily influenced by timber interests and gain federal protection for the Olympics. The following year, the Mountaineers, a Seattle hiking and climbing club, organized a large outing into the heart of the reserve. Its members, moved by the beauty of the forests and glacier-clad peaks, enthusiastically took up the cause of a national park. During the last days of his presidential administration Theodore Roosevelt, an early champion of conservation causes, was asked by Congressman W. E. Humphrey of Tacoma to create a national monument in the Olympics. Roosevelt (for whom the Olympics' elk were later named) was agreeable, and on March 3, 1909, he designated the 600,000-acre Mount Olympus National Monument.

The monument protected only the upper portions of the rain forest valleys remaining in the forest reserve and virtually none of the winter habitat critical to elk, but it was a start. Together with the coastal wildlife refuges Roosevelt had established two years earlier, the groundwork for the protection of the Olympic ecosystem was in place.

The Battle for a National Park

In his excellent book, *Olympic Battleground*, Carsten Lien traces the long campaign for a national park in the Olympics. In one sense, it was a competition between two youthful land management agencies—the forest service and the park service—for the same lands. Gifford Pinchot had been appointed to head the Department of Agriculture's Division of Forestry. After the timber giveaways and other abuses of the forest reserves in the early 1900s, he succeeded in having the reserves transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture in 1905. And so the Olympic Forest Reserve became Olympic National Forest.

Pinchot imbued his agency with an ethic of commercial utilization and responsiveness to the needs of local resource industries. John Muir and the growing number of preservationists of the day had no illusions that the reserves would be managed for anything but timber under Pinchot's new agency; they pressed even harder for the creation of new

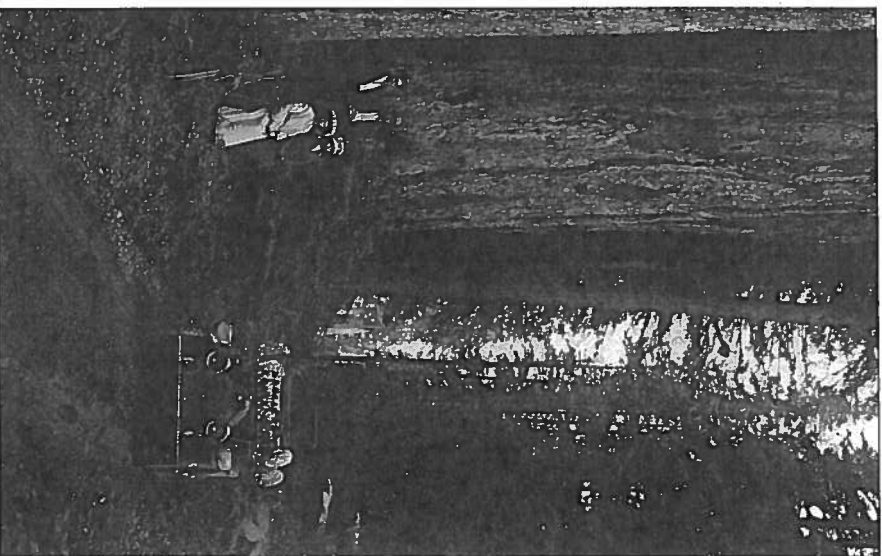
national parks. Since many of these parks were carved out of existing national forests, the fundamental dichotomy within the American conservation movement was cast in stone. The National Park Service, created at the urging of preservationists in 1916, was directed to manage its lands "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of future generations." In order to build a constituency for national parks by increasing their popularity, the park service's first director, Stephen Mather, emphasized the "enjoyment" clause in his mandate. The roads, resorts, golf courses, and entertainments he brought to Mount Rainier and other newly designated parks increased their popularity but lost critical preservationist support in the Northwest at a time when Olympic needed it most.

By 1912, a coalition of Washington timber and business interests recommended removing all stands of commercially valuable timber from Mt. Olympus National Monument, then designating the remaining high country a national park—albeit one that would allow logging, mining, and dams. This was a strategy that timber companies as well as the U.S. Forest Service would pursue throughout the ensuing quarter-century-long battle for a national park. With the election of President Woodrow Wilson, the timber companies got their wish. In 1915, Wilson slashed 170,000 acres of forest from the monument, eliminating all that was left of the rain forest valleys and virtually all of the heavily timbered southern Olympics. Park bills in 1911 and 1916 were also defeated in Congress. But local and regional sentiment for a national park continued to build, and the Mountaineers and other conservation and outdoor groups continued to press for a park.

During World War I, the Army mounted a major effort to harvest the dense stands of Sitka spruce on the west side of the peninsula; the clear, lightweight wood was needed for the construction of warplanes. The Army's Spruce Production Division took on the massive undertaking of building a 36-mile railroad to deliver spruce logs to Port Angeles. The railroad was the fastest (and most expensive) ever constructed in the United States, but the Armistice was signed a few weeks before the railway was complete. It did, however, provide a means for timber companies to log the western rain forests. Lumbering now began in earnest. By the late 1920s, much of the forests deleted from the original

Olympic Forest Reserve were gone, and mill owners turned their gaze to the trees in the national forest. The forest service was happy to accommodate, and cutting levels on Olympic shot from around 12 million board feet in 1915 to 175 million by 1928. In its 1926 timber harvest plan, the forest service went so far as to include forests inside the national monument in its cutting circles. Around this time, citizen efforts for a national park took on a nationwide scope.

Continuing concern over the fate of Roosevelt elk in the Olympics prompted the Izaak Walton League to become involved in the park



Lake Crescent circa 1912. As roads we opened into the Peninsula's lowland forests and visitors encountered Olympic magnificent old-growth trees, sentiment for preserving a part of heritage as a national park began to grow.

Bert Kellogg Collection, North Olympic Library System

issue. And in New York, an assistant curator of the American Museum of Natural History named Willard Van Name emerged as a key player. Respected among the scientific and conservation communities, Van Name was a sharp and widely published critic of both forest service and park service management of public lands. In 1930, Van Name joined forces with Irving Brant, a Saint Louis newspaper editor, and Rosalie Edge, an outspoken New York conservationist active with the Audubon Society. They formed the Emergency Conservation Committee (ECC), and protection of the Olympics' magnificent old-growth forests was high on their list of priorities. In 1932, Van Name traveled to the Olympic Peninsula to investigate the situation. He reported that none of the lands within Olympic National Forest offered secure protection for either forests or wildlife, nor were roads or summer homes prohibited in the national monument. He also learned that the recently completed Olympic Highway would allow the forest service to intensify its cutting of the national forest. Van Name was particularly struck by the grandeur — and vulnerability — of the western rain forests, and he returned to the East determined to fight for their protection. Van Name and the ECC proposed a large park, which would include portions of the forested valleys of the Sol Duc, Bogachiel, Hoh, Queets, and Quinalt, as well as Lake Crescent and the north shore of Quinalt Lake.

Through its publication and wide distribution of pamphlets and papers, the ECC was successful in galvanizing members of national conservation organizations, scientific societies, universities, and natural history museums into an informed and effective broad-based coalition. Through letters to newspapers, agencies, congressmen, and the White House, citizens expressed overwhelming support for an Olympic National Park. With the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, the campaign for a park hit high gear. Van Name started his case forcefully:

The Peninsula affords the last opportunity for preserving any adequate large remnants of the wonderful primeval forests of Douglas fir, hemlock, cedar, and spruce which were not so many years ago one of the grandest and the most unique features of our two northwestern-most States, but which everywhere have been or are being logged off to the very last stick.

With the movement for a park reaching a boiling point, the park service now conducted its own study into the feasibility of making Olympic a national park. Cowed by the forest service, the park service rejected the ECC's proposal, claiming it included "much available timber on lands that are not of national park caliber" in the proposed park. It recommended instead a much smaller park devoid of commercially valuable timber.

When the park service distributed a copy of its draft report to a timber industry lobbying group, Van Name went directly to Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes. At Ickes's direction, the park service revised its recommendations to agree with the conservationists' proposal. The resulting bill was opposed, of course, by the forest service and the timber industry, and failed to pass. Pressure ran high, and the two sides were deadlocked. It was then that President Roosevelt entered the discussion, determined to resolve the issue. He traveled to the Olympic Peninsula to look into the matter for himself.

When Roosevelt arrived in Port Angeles on a drizzly day in September 1937, he was met by more than 3,000 schoolchildren from around the peninsula, who turned out in front of the Callam County Courthouse beneath a banner that read, "Please Mr. President, we children need your help. Give us our Olympic National Park." Popular support for a park was at its peak on the peninsula at that time, and Roosevelt told the children and an assembled crowd of about 10,000 adults that they could count on his help in getting a park for the Olympics.

That evening, in his cabin at Lake Crescent Lodge, Roosevelt made it clear to representatives of the park service, the forest service, and the congressional delegation that he wanted a large park, with "more large timber" than either agency had proposed. Roosevelt concluded his visit with an auto tour of the western peninsula, stopping at Forks and Lake Quinalt Lodge. In a comically futile gesture, the forest service — clearly the loser in the president's visit — had moved the sign marking the southern boundary of the forest two miles north in an attempt to disown a large fire-blackened clearcut.

FDR's trip crystallized national attention on the park, deflected forest service opposition, and at least temporarily silenced the timber industry. On June 29, 1938, Roosevelt signed the bill creating Olympic National Park. The park encompassed 638,280 acres, with the provision that the

president could expand it by proclamation up to 898,292 acres. In order to insure protection for the peninsula's coastal strip, the Bogachiel rain forest, and a corridor along the Queets River within the allowed acreage (all were high priorities for FDR), conservationists reluctantly agreed to eliminate the the middle Dosewallips Valley and much of the upper Dungeness watershed in the northeast Olympics.

At long last, the battle to create Olympic National park was won. Some of the finest examples of old-growth forest and wildlife populations in the Pacific Northwest were preserved for future generations. It had been a long and contentious struggle. A powerful industry, one that had controlled the political life of the region for nearly a century, and a timber-oriented government agency had been overcome by widespread citizen activism and the vision of a handful of dedicated leaders. At a celebratory banquet in Seattle, Secretary Ickes reaffirmed that Olympic would remain a wilderness park. But any savoring of the victory on the part of conservationists would prove short-lived. Though the park was established, the battle to preserve its irreplaceable old-growth forests was far from finished.

Attacks on the West-Side Forest

With the onset of World War II, the timber industry redoubled its efforts to remove valuable west-side forests from the park. In 1944, to the horror of the environmental community, the park service recommended deleting from the park much of the lower Bogachiel as well as lowland rain forests in the Quinault Valley. When these recommendations were introduced as a bill in 1947, the same environmental coalition that brought about the creation of the park rose to its defense. Letters poured in to congressional offices and to the park service condemning the bill. The public won this battle, but conservationists realized that protection of Olympic's forests would require continued vigilance. Irving Clark of the Mountaineers organized the Olympic Park Associates as a "watch-dog" group dedicated to preserving the wilderness integrity of the park. OPA and other conservation organizations had their work cut out for them as assaults on the newly created park continued.

In the meantime, lumbering interests on the peninsula found a way

to quietly move old-growth trees out of the park and into local mills by means of "salvage" contracts. The 1916 Organic Act creating the National Park Service allowed for the removal of insect-damaged trees to preserve forest health. At Olympic, this directive was broadened to include the salvage logging of downed and damaged trees as well as any *potential* insect trees. Beginning in 1941 and continuing until it was stopped by a national outcry from environmental organizations in 1958, more than 100 million board feet of timber, both standing and down, was removed from the park and trucked to area mills.

Other threats to the park, including several proposed roads that would have cut through fragile alpine meadows and opened the wilderness coast to traffic, were soundly defeated. A final effort to delete the Bogachiel River valley from the park was mounted as part of a "boundary adjustment bill." Ingeniously, it was packaged with legislation that would create North Cascades National Park in Washington. Again it was defeated by citizen conservationists. The history of preservation in the Olympics has been one of concerned citizens making their voices heard.

It wasn't long after these episodes that I unwittingly strolled into this citizens' campaign. On a hike along Shi Shi Beach in the early 1970s, I followed the sound of chainsaws up a creek and stumbled into a clearcut that seemed to extend for hundreds of acres. This northern reach of coastline was not included in the park at that time. Climbing past stumps and logging slash to the top of a rise, I looked down on timber fallers working a stand of spruce in a shallow draw. Trees dropped like matchsticks. It stunned me to discover logging like this no more than a 20-minute walk from one of the most startlingly beautiful beaches I had ever seen.

Not long after that I found myself working with OPA and other environmental groups to secure protection for the splendid northern coast. Protection came in 1976 when Congress added Shi Shi, Point of the Arches, and the east shore of Lake Ozette to Olympic National Park. By that time, virtually all of the Ozette basin had been logged, and forest service and Washington Department of Natural Resources clearcuts were chewing back the old-growth forests flush with the park boundary. The loss of cover for elk, spawning areas for salmon, and lowland old-growth habitat were affecting park resources. It became clear to me and other conservationists that if Olympic National Park was to remain eco-

logically viable, some means of protecting critical ecosystem functions on lands outside the park would be needed.

Protection for the Olympic Ecosystem

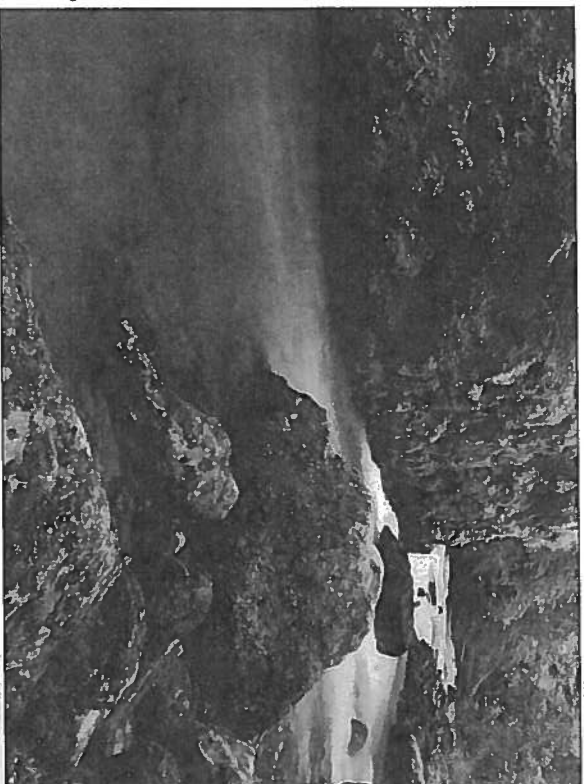
Nowhere has the inadequacy of Olympic National Park's boundaries proved more apparent than in the high rugged country of the east Olympics. Here the park boundary cuts randomly across alpine areas, migration routes, and the upper portions of six river drainages. Calving and wintering areas for east-side elk herds remain unprotected, and critical habitat for stocks of native anadromous fish have been lost to logging and development. As clearcutting accelerated on the national forest in the decades following World War II, roads were punched into upper watersheds, and steep mountainsides wholly unsuitable for timber management were clearcut, often with disastrous results.

Following passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act, national forests were directed to inventory remaining roadless lands and make recommendations for wilderness designation. Much of the high scenic country adjoining the east side of the park was recommended by the agency, including most of the botanically rich alpine areas of the Dungeness rain-shadow. But few of the lower forested valleys were recommended, and very little of the heavily timbered west side of the forest. Out of approximately 53,000 acres of roadless lands inventoried on the two west-side districts of Olympic National Forest, only part of one area, a 12,000-acre ridge above Quinault Lake, was recommended for wilderness.

In the early 1970s, local conservationists began a grassroots campaign to rally support for protection of ecologically important forest service lands surrounding the park. A decade-long effort culminated with the passage of the 1984 Washington Wilderness Act. The Buckhorn, Brothers, Mount Skokomish, Wonder Mountain, and Colonel Bob wilderness areas were designated by Congress, protecting some 90,000 acres of outstanding wildlands. Important migratory and calving areas for east-side elk and critical salmon habitat along the lower Gray Wolf and the middle Dosewallips and Duckabush river valleys were included.

Congressional designation of forest service wilderness areas was an important step in establishing an interagency network of protected habi-

Janis Burger



rats on the peninsula. But as overcutting on federal, state, and private lands accelerated during the 1980s throughout the region — leading eventually to legal action mandating protection for the spotted owl — scientists and conservationists sought new ways to address habitat needs on an ecosystem scale. When a bill was introduced in 1988 to include 95 percent of Olympic National Park's lands within the national wilderness system (fulfilling the promise of Secretary Ickes a half-century earlier), it contained a section calling for an ecological study of all three of the Northwest's national parks. The five-year study would have assessed the parks' abilities to preserve ecosystems and "maintain healthy populations of all species native to the parks." The wilderness bill passed; it added the intertidal area to Olympic's coastal strip, including the wildlife refuges of the offshore rocks and islands. But the ecosystem study was seen as a threat by timber interests and was dropped from the bill.

A central issue facing protected natural areas worldwide is their long-term viability. The dynamics of natural change in a system are compounded by the effects of human activities. Though humans have

One of the last unprotected treasures of the Olympics, the lower Gray Wolf River canyon was among some 90,000 acres of national forest land surrounding the park that Congress added to the national wilderness system in 1984.

lived in the Olympics for the past 12,000 years, the ecosystem has only recently been subjected to the impacts of multinational timber operations and unchecked urban growth. Conservation biologists question whether our natural areas and preserves can continue to provide viable habitat under these pressures. Most feel this is possible only with sensitive interagency management of the larger ecosystems that surround protected areas.

Ecosystem management means managing large areas to insure that all plants and animals are maintained at viable levels in their natural habitats and that basic ecosystem processes are perpetuated over time. The ecological history of the peninsula since the retreat of the Yashon ice shows that this isolated, "islandlike" landform was not only adequate to provide viable habitat for a range of plant and animal species, it supported an exceptionally high level of biological diversity for an area its size. But the last 100 years of intensive human use of the peninsula has effectively shrunk that habitat island for many species to the confines of the park and protected areas within the national forest. The wolf is gone from the peninsula, and we may have lost the fisher as well. Native fish stocks continue to decline in some peninsula rivers, and concern over the fate of the spotted owl and other species dependent upon old growth continues. Though the peninsula's forest communities are incredibly resilient, the pressures now facing them are without ecological precedent.

A preliminary attempt to address ecosystem issues on the peninsula came with the president's Forest Plan. Released by federal agencies in 1994 in response to the biodiversity crisis in Pacific Northwest forests, the plan aims to provide critical habitat for old-growth-related species such as the northern spotted owl and to offer protection to streams and fish. The plan established a series of late successional forest reserves (old-growth and near-old-growth forest areas) and a network of riparian reserves and identified key watersheds on national forest lands for analysis and further planning. It reduced timber cutting on federal lands by about a third, but it failed to insure the survival of the region's old-growth-associated wildlife species. More than a third of these species have less than an 80 percent probability of survival under the plan.

Ultimately, the diverse natural systems of the Olympic Peninsula are parts of a single ecosystem sharing the same rich genetic reserves and

biological processes. We are fortunate in the Olympics that many of the most sensitive and crucial parts of the ecosystem have been protected. Generations of Americans touched by the beauty and power of the Olympics have spoken up for its protection. But protection for the Olympic ecosystem is far from complete.

Continued deforestation of the peninsula's lowlands, degradation of salmon streams, loss of forestlands to residential development, and increasing hunting pressure on all sides of the park call for new approaches to conservation. In the face of such pressures, the island ecology that gave rise to much of the uniqueness of the Olympic ecosystem becomes its biggest liability. Genetic isolation places threatened species like the northern spotted owl in a particularly vulnerable position, and extirpated species like the gray wolf are not able to naturally recolonize the area as they have in the northern Rockies and North Cascades.

Keeping Olympic Wilderness Safe

If Americans are to complete the century-long process of protecting the Olympic wilderness for future generations, a number of tasks remain. Key lands need to be added to park and forest service wilderness areas, but such additions alone will not secure ecosystem protection. Removing the illegal dams on the Elwha River and restoring native salmon runs to this largest of the peninsula's watersheds should be a top priority. It is also essential that protection be extended to portions of existing free-flowing rivers that lie outside the park's boundaries. Several Olympic streams have been targeted for small-scale hydroelectric development, and logging and development continues within riparian areas. At present, not one of the peninsula's many wild rivers is included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system. The forest service has recommended portions of three rivers for designation; conservationists have proposed several more. It remains for Congress to take necessary action to complete this vital link in ecosystem conservation.

Another necessary step is restoring the Olympic's top predator, the wolf, to its former range. Wolf reintroduction is proving successful in the Yellowstone and northern Rocky Mountain ecosystems. Restoring

volves to the park would rekindle this predator's evolutionary relationship with Roosevelt elk, and return its haunting music to these coastal valleys and ridges.

With an eye toward the next century and beyond, scientists and resource managers will have to look beyond existing administrative boundaries. Managers will need to seek new and untried avenues of cooperation between administrative agencies, state, tribal, and local governments, as well as commercial developers, timber companies, and private landowners. As both the local population and the number of visitors to the peninsula continue to increase, it will be essential to establish cooperative measures and partnerships to secure seasonal wildlife easements through private lands, protected migration corridors, networks of integrated old-growth habitats, wetlands conservation strategies, and site-specific hunting and fishing regulations. Interagency efforts focusing on endangered species elsewhere in the West may provide working frameworks, but over the long term, specific legislation keyed to ecosystem management is needed.

For this approach to succeed, there is an immediate and pressing need for adequate research. An ecosystem study such as that proposed in 1988 would provide a comprehensive inventory of baseline species and habitat needs on the peninsula. Ecosystem process studies would determine how various wildlife species react to changes in forest composition, and ongoing research would feed information back to land managers, allowing the fine-tuning of resource management and restoration activities.

The world scientific community has twice recognized the importance of Olympic National Park on a planetary scale. In 1976 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated Olympic as part of its international system of Biosphere Reserves. The Man in the Biosphere program, of which the reserves are a part, identified representative examples of the world's major ecosystems in 72 countries. The reserves are intended to safeguard genetic diversity worldwide. They also serve as research centers and as benchmarks against which to measure human impacts on surrounding areas.

In 1982, Olympic National Park was selected by UNESCO as a World Heritage site. As such, Olympic takes its place among some of our planet's most treasured natural and cultural sites: the Grand Can-

yon, the pyramids of Egypt, the cathedral at Chartres. Such places are part of our common human heritage. UNESCO recognizes that these and other World Heritage sites are "older than the nation where they happen to be located. They belong in a way to the entire world."

The Estuary

Winter fog hugged the shoreline and spilled over the road as I wound my way south along Hood Canal in the early predawn light. As I dropped into the Dosewallips River floodplain and approached the narrow two-lane bridge, dark shapes rose through the fog, danced across the roadway, and slipped off into the mist. I killed the engine and rolled to a stop on the gravel shoulder. Stepping out of the car, I watched a herd of 30 or 40 elk bound off through stiff winter marsh grass, then spread over the estuary and begin to feed.

A few weeks earlier my wife, Mary, and I had wandered across this estuary and found side channels of the river full of spawning chum salmon. Their iridescent shapes rippled beneath the surface. Now, as the morning lightened and the fog began to lift, the blond rump patches of elk ranged out toward the slack blue-gray waters of the canal—mountain gods come to drink at the sea's edge. The summer before, I had watched what may have been these same elk browsing the high meadows below Hayden Pass in the long shadows of evening. The shrill calls of the bulls echoed off surrounding peaks. The rut now over, they had followed their old trails down the steep mountain valley, through open bottom lands and dense patches of second growth, fenced pastures and scattered farms, to slip past the small sleeping town and cross the highway into the deep growth of the estuary. It must have been an ancient route for them, carved when winter herds dappled the shores of these inland waters and salmon swelled the streams. We've left few valleys wild enough for these grand migrations. Still, the elk manage to return, their large hooves clacking across the blacktop.

An empty log truck rumbling by brought me back to myself. The lowlands had cleared, and clouds were rising against the steep forested ridges up valley. Mount Constance, one of my favorite winter views, stayed hidden. Snows deepened over the summer ranges of elk and deer,

heather vole and marmot. Ivy water churned over the deep redds of salmon and mergansers wintered.

It occurred to me that the seasonal pulse at the heart of these mountains was not unlike the beat of our own hearts. It infuses the land with vitality, beauty, and grace. Maybe that is why human hearts have responded to this place so passionately. Maybe its future and our own are deeply joined.

General Information

Visitor Centers

The **Olympic Park Visitor Center** is located at 3002 Mt. Angeles Road in Port Angeles. It offers interpretive exhibits, along with a small theater/auditorium, a children's activity room, and a nature trail. The **Hoh Visitor Center** is located in the heart of the Hoh Rain Forest. It has exhibits and three short nature trails. Both offer a wide selection of publications, as well as maps and information. Both are open all year, although the Hoh Visitor Center is staffed only from late spring to early fall.

The joint U.S. Forest Service/Park Service **Hood Canal Ranger Station** in Hoodport offers information on the east side of the Olympic Peninsula; the **Solduck Ranger Station** in Forks provides visitor information for the west side. Summer information centers are also located at **Storm King** on Lake Crescent and at **Kalaloch** on the ocean coast. The **Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center** is located in scenic subalpine meadowlands 17 miles south of Port Angeles. It is open from late April to the end of October as well as weekends and holidays in winter and features an information desk, exhibits, and publications. A free park newspaper, *The Bugler*, is distributed at visitor centers and entrance stations; it lists services, seasonal schedules, campfire talks and guided nature walks. There is also a

Junior Ranger program for young people. Schedules for interpretive programs are posted at visitor centers and campgrounds.

For information, write to Superintendent, Olympic National Park, 600 P Avenue, Port Angeles, WA 98362. (360) 452-0330.

Seasons and Entrance Fees

Olympic National Park is open all year. Some roads and facilities are closed in winter. The summer season begins around Memorial Day and extends through Labor Day. Entrance fees are collected from May through September and at some locations in winter. As of 1995, fees are \$5 for vehicles and \$3 for individuals entering on foot, bike, or motorcycle, and are good for seven days. Annual passes are \$15. Golden Eagle Passes, good for all national parks for one year, are \$25. Golden Age Passes, which provide lifetime access to all national parks for those over 62 years old, are \$10. Golden Access Passport for people with disabilities, are free.

Transportation

Ferries operate regularly across Puget Sound with connections to the Hood Canal floating bridge and Bremerton. Schedules are available from Washington State Ferries, at 1-800-843-3779. Ferries are also available most of the year between Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, and Port Angeles. Schedules

VISITOR'S INFORMATION

228 OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

available from Black Ball Transport, (360) 457-4491.

Sightseeing by Car

U.S. 101 is the main scenic route around the peninsula, with numerous spur roads providing access into the interior and coastal areas of the park. No roads pass through the rugged heart of the Olympics. Temperate rain forests may be seen along the Hoh, Queets, and Quinault valley roads; old-growth Douglas-fir forests along the Sol Duc and Elwha roads. The road to Hurricane Ridge offers splendid views from low-land forest to subalpine meadows. Hurricane Ridge offers stunning views into the wilderness heart of the Olympics. Forest roads also access the Deer Park, Dosewallips, and Staircase areas of the park during the summer. The Pacific coastal strip is accessible from U.S. 101 at Kalaloch, or by spur roads to Oil City at the mouth of Hoh, La Push, and Rialto Beach.

Camping and Lodges

The park has 16 established campgrounds. Most consist of individual campsites with tables and fireplaces. Water and toilet facilities are nearby. No showers, laundry, or utility connections are provided in park campgrounds; a few have dump stations. Additional campgrounds are located in Olympic National Forest. Overnight accommodations in the park are available at

Kalaloch Lodge, (360) 962-2271; Lake Crescent Lodge, (360) 928-3211; Log Cabin Resort, (360) 928-3245; and Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort, (360) 928-3245. Kalaloch Lodge is open year-round; the others operate only in summer. Meals and accommodations are also available at numerous locations outside the park.

The Olympic Park Institute, an environmental education facility, is housed at historic Rosemary Inn on Lake Crescent. It offers a variety of field seminars and Elderhostel programs for adults, as well as environmental education programs for youth and mixed-generation programs. The institute can be reached at (360) 928-3720.

Hiking

Olympic is a wilderness park, best experienced by leaving roads and cars behind and venturing out on park trails. Short, easy loop trails are located close to most campgrounds and visitor centers. The lower Hurricane Hill trail and Meadow Loop trail at Hurricane Ridge, and the first one-half mile of the Marymere Falls trail at Lake Crescent are wheelchair accessible with assistance. The Madison Falls trail on the Elwha, the Hoh Visitor Center loop trail, the Barnes Point nature trail on Lake Crescent, and the Maple Glades nature trail at Quinault are fully accessible. More than 500 miles of backcountry trails provide access to the interior

mountains of the park. Backcountry rangers are stationed throughout the park in summer months. Some trails are suitable for horseback riding as well as hiking, but pets, bikes, and weapons are prohibited on all park trails. Hikers should be prepared for bad weather at any time of year; stoves, tents, and warm clothing are advised. Permits are required for all overnight backpackers and climbing parties. Permits are free and are available at ranger stations. Limits and reservation systems have been established for some heavily used wilderness areas; hikers are advised to check ahead.

Where to See Wildflowers

With its abundant rainfall and mild maritime climate, the Olympic Peninsula harbors a wide variety of wildflowers. Diverse habitats support more than 1,400 species of vascular plants. After the peninsula's heavy winter rains, the first warm days of spring bring coastal areas and lowland valleys into bloom, and the lowland trails of the park become lined with blossoms. The wildflower season extends into late summer as cool, north-facing slopes of the mountains melt free of winter snow. Charles Stewart's *Wildflowers of the Olympics and Cascades* is a handy and easy-to-use trail-side identification guide tailored to Northwest flora.

Lowland Forest Wildflower Walks

The **Peabody Creek trail**, beginning at the Olympic National Park Visitor Center, is an excellent place to sample the spring bloom. From mid-April through May, trailsides are dotted with pioneer violet, trillium, false Solomon seal, twisted stalk, twinflower, fringe cup, and wild ginger. The **Marymere Falls trail** at Lake Crescent hosts similar wildflower displays, and the nearby **Spruce Railroad trail**, with gravel silt and rocky outcrops, adds paintbrush, sedum, spotted saxifrage, spirea, and chocolate lilies to the lowland display.

In the western rain forest, the **Hall Mosses trail** at the Hoh Visitor Center meanders through sprays of white foam flower and slender boykinia and thick beds of oxalis, as well as pioneer violet beardruby, springbeauty, and trillium.

Mountain Forest Wildflower Walks

In late May and June, the wildflower of the mountain forests are at their peak. The **Hurricane Ridge and Deer Park roads** pass through this zone, and trail at **Heart of the Hills, Elwha, Staircase Dosewallips, Sol Duc**, and other locations provide access to the montane forest. Pipsissewa, pyrola, bunchberry, and delicate fairy slippers bloom in this shady realm. These middle-elevation forests are also home to shade-loving plants that lack green chlorophyll: pinetrops, pin saps, and ghostly Indian-pipes.