

2014 Project Update

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lake Chelan National Recreation Area



Public Meeting

A public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 22 from 7 pm to 9 pm at the Stehekin Community Hall to discuss the proposed alternatives to close the Shooting Range. Staff will also be present to answer questions about any of the projects listed below or other park related issues.

Shooting Range Closure

The Stehekin River Corridor Implementation Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (2012) determined that the Stehekin shooting range would be closed to accommodate relocation of the Stehekin Valley Road. To proceed with closure, the park is conducting a non-time-critical removal action in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) to minimize the potential for lead impacts to human health and the environment. Soil lead concentrations were sampled throughout the shooting range in September 2013 and will be used to determine the extent of cleanup required to comply with regulatory cleanup levels set by the State of Washington Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The park is in the process of establishing an administrative record and expects to make that record available to the public at the Golden West Visitor Center and on the NPS Planning, Environment & Public Comment (PEPC) website in late July. A public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 22 from 7 pm to 9 pm at the Stehekin Community Hall to discuss proposed removal alternatives. For more information about this project, please contact Kerri Cook, North Cascades National Park (NOCA) Facilities Operations Specialist (Kerri_Cook@nps.gov).

Preservation Maintenance of the Buckner Homestead Main Residence

A preservation maintenance project began in spring 2014 to repair deteriorating conditions of the foundation and flooring of the main house while still preserving the character of this unique historic building. Work this season is focused on repairing the log and stone-masonry foundation and floor framing which includes preserving, repairing, and if necessary, replacing sections of the house foundation and floor framing. Once the repairs have been completed (fall 2015), the house will again be used for NPS staff housing. For more information about this project, please contact Dana Barton, NOCA Historic Preservationist (Dana_Barton@nps.gov) or Don Mann, NOCA Trails Foreman (Donald_Mann@nps.gov).

Replacement of Stehekin Maintenance and Housing Facilities

This project includes the replacement and relocation of the National Park Service Maintenance and Fire Management facilities and one house out of the Stehekin River Channel Migration Zone. Planning continues, with the release of the Environmental Assessment scheduled for the fall of this year. In addition, public meetings will be scheduled in Stehekin, Wenatchee and Seattle during the public comment period. For more information about this project, please contact Roy Zipp, NOCA Environmental Protection Specialist (Roy_Zipp@nps.gov) or Vicki Gempko, Stehekin District Natural Resource Manager (Vicki_Gempko@nps.gov).

Stehekin River Corridor Implementation Plan Road Reroute

This project consists of culvert replacement and paving of the existing Stehekin Valley road from the Landing to Mile 9.2 (just past the Stehekin Valley Ranch) and also includes construction of a 1.9 mile reroute around McGregor Meadows. Construction will take approximately two seasons (May-Nov construction schedule), with an expected start date of May 2015. If funding is delayed, the schedule will be moved back accordingly. A schedule update will be forwarded once it is finalized. For more information about this project, please contact Mike Torkelson, Stehekin District Maintenance Foreman (Michael_Torkelson@nps.gov) or Vicki Gempko (Vicki_Gempko@nps.gov).

Head of Lake Riparian Restoration: FERC Relicensing



Much of the riparian wildlife habitat along the shoreline at the head of Lake Chelan was lost as a result of historic human activity and the construction of Chelan Dam. The FERC relicensing agreement identified a need to enhance riparian habitat at the head of the lake and to provide connectivity to the surrounding forested areas for wildlife. Actions identified to accomplish this include the control of reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and the establishment of native grasses, sedges, shrubs, willows and trees as necessary to create a diverse, multi storied riparian habitat. Rather than tackling the entire 10 acre site all at once, the area will be sectioned into smaller plots and the restoration work staggered over a period of three or more years. The work includes seed and cutting collection for propagation, native plant salvage, herbicide treatment of reed canarygrass, and planting each plot with the propagated plants. Plots will be monitored to determine effectiveness of the methods and, if needed, will be modified to increase success of the restoration. For more information about this project, please contact Mignonne Bivin, NOCA Plant Ecologist (Mignonne_Bivin@nps.gov) or Vicki Gempko (Vicki_Gempko@nps.gov).

Fire Management Plan Revision

The NOCA Fire Management team is revising the park Fire Management Plan. The majority of the revision involves defining and implementing ecological objectives within the Forest Fuel Reduction Areas (FFRAs) in Stehekin. Although hazard fuel reduction objectives have been met in the majority of the FFRAs that have been thinned and burned, the trees are more evenly spaced and less size-diverse than typical dry east-side forests of the North Cascades. National Park and Forest Service specialists recommend additional thinning in the FFRAs to produce small canopy openings that mimic the mosaic (patchiness) typical of low severity fire regimes, encourage pine regeneration, and increase the stand's resilience to insect outbreaks and larger and higher intensity wildfires. The fire management team held a workshop during the first week of June to bring resource specialists together to discuss where and to what extent additional thinning will occur in the FFRAs. The team also worked together to develop a treatment strategy to protect and promote wildlife habitat in the remaining (untreated) FFRAs while not compromising fire protection in the valley. The park is working closely with resource staff in Stehekin to coordinate the thinning of select trees with the collection of firewood. For more information about this project, please contact Karen Kopper, NOCA Fire Ecologist (Karen_Kopper@nps.gov).

Kettling Lake Fish Removal



Cutthroat trout are making a comeback in the Stehekin River. The Stehekin River and its tributaries used to support one of the largest populations of native wild cutthroat trout in Washington State. Unfortunately, over fishing, poor hatchery management practices, and the introduction of non-native rainbow trout have greatly diminished the renowned wild cutthroat of the Stehekin River. But this is a comeback story, and efforts conducted over the past several years have been showing promising results and the fishing for cutthroat in the Stehekin has been improving. To reduce the threats from competition and interbreeding, North Cascades National Park will be using a piscicide called rotenone to remove a population of non-native rainbow/cutthroat hybrids from Kettling Lake which is located in the headwaters of the Stehekin River. Rotenone is a natural substance derived from a plant in the bean family that breaks down very quickly in the environment. Not only will this project protect native cutthroat trout it will also help to restore the natural community of zooplankton, insects, and amphibians in Kettling Lake. For more information about this project, please contact Ashley Rawhouser NOCA Aquatics Ecologist (Ashley_Rawhouser@nps.gov).