



Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Olympic National Park Public Scoping Meetings February – March 2013

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Olympic National Park

Presentation Overview

- Summary of applicable laws & policies
- Discussion of why we are planning for the Olympic National Park Wilderness
- How you can be involved – how to comment and the planning timeline





NPS Organic Act

“to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and...provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

(16 U.S. Code 1, the National Park Service Organic Act)



Olympic National Park Enabling Legislation, 1938

The enabling legislation of Olympic National Park (June 29, 1938, 35 Stat. 2247) states that Olympic National Park is “set apart as a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.”

House Report 2247 (April 28, 1938) states that the purpose of Olympic National Park is to:

“preserve for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the people, the finest sample of primeval forests of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, Douglas fir, and western red cedar in the entire United States; to provide suitable winter range and permanent protection for the herds of native Roosevelt elk and other wildlife indigenous to the area; to conserve and render available to the people, for recreational use, this outstanding mountainous country, containing numerous glaciers and perpetual snow fields, and a portion of the surrounding verdant forests together with a narrow strip along the beautiful Washington coast.”

Wilderness Act of 1964

The Wilderness Act of 1964 (Public Law [PL] 88-577, 16 United States Code [USC] 1131 et seq.) establishes a policy for the enduring protection of wilderness resources for public use and enjoyment. The act defines wilderness as,

A tract of undeveloped federal land of primeval character without permanent improvements or human habitation; an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain; where the forces of nature predominate and the imprint of man's work is substantially unnoticeable; which provides outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

This act established the National Wilderness Preservation System, and set forth management directives that specify the preservation of wilderness character. Section 4 of the act identifies appropriate uses and prohibited uses in wilderness areas.



Olympic Wilderness Legislation



On November 16, 1988, President Reagan signed the Washington Park Wilderness Act into law, establishing the "Olympic Wilderness" and thus ensuring the preservation and protection of the exceptional qualities of this wilderness area.

The congressionally designated Wilderness boundaries were estimated to include 876,669 acres (354,788 hectares), approximately 95% of the park.



General Management Plan: *Our Guiding Document*

- A public process and approved in 2008
- Establishes the park's vision, identifies values, and defines the park's significance
- Determines the appropriate amounts of visitation, types of experiences, and facilities
- Establishes desired conditions for natural and cultural resources
- Provides management framework for the next 15 to 20 years
- **Provides conceptual guidance for wilderness and calls for the development of a Wilderness Stewardship Plan (WSP)**



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The purpose of NEPA is “to encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between human beings and the physical environment for present and future generations.”

NEPA mandates that every federal agency prepare an in-depth study of the impacts of “major federal actions having a significant effect on the environment.”

- It helps public officials make decisions that are based on understanding the impacts and take actions that protect, restore and enhance the environment.
- It ensures that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and actions are taken.





NEPA Process

- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Process
- Public and internal scoping period (Now)
- Development of alternatives
- Analysis of data and preparation of Draft EIS
- Public review of Draft EIS
- Analysis of public comment
- Preparation of decision document and Final EIS
- Public release of Final EIS
- Announcement of decision on proposal



Purpose and Need for the WSP

Purpose

The purpose of a wilderness stewardship plan is to guide the preservation, management, and use of the park's wilderness area as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964. The overarching goal of the plan is to restore, protect, and enhance overall wilderness character of the Olympic Wilderness.

Need

- National Park Service policy directs wilderness stewardship plans to include “desired future conditions, as well as establish indicators, standards, conditions, and thresholds beyond which management actions will be taken to reduce human impacts to wilderness resources.”
- The 1980 Olympic National Park Backcountry Management Plan is now outdated and does not adequately address protection of the area's wilderness qualities that are essential to effective wilderness management.
- The WSP is needed to replace the Backcountry Management Plan, while ensuring consistency with the existing General Management Plan of the park (2008).



What Will Be in the WSP?

The WSP will provide detailed guidance on a variety of issues including, but not limited to:

- Day and overnight use
- Wilderness permitting
- Traditional use
- Use of campfires
- Proper food storage
- Group size
- Camping and campsites
- Human waste management
- Stock use
- Research activities
- Wildlife management in wilderness
- Cultural resources management in wilderness
- Maintenance of trails, bridges, or other existing or necessary infrastructure
- Commercial services in wilderness



What Will Be in the WSP? (continued)

- Detailed guidance on the “minimum requirement” for the administration of areas as wilderness
- An “extent necessary determination” to determine which commercial services are necessary to fulfill the recreational and other purpose of the park’s Congressionally designated wilderness area (per Sec. 4(d)(5) of the Wilderness Act)
- Eligibility studies for the areas identified in the park’s 2008 GMP that are already within the boundary of Olympic National Park
- Current interagency policies regarding the preservation of the qualities wilderness character will be addressed (Untrammeled, Undeveloped, Natural, Solitude and Primitive or Unconfined Recreation, and Other Features of Value)



Wilderness Character (The Foundation for Wilderness Planning)

- Describing the wilderness character of an area is central to meeting the goals and objectives of a wilderness stewardship plan.
- “Keeping it Wild: An Interagency Strategy to Monitor Trends in Wilderness Character Across the National Wilderness Preservation System” defines wilderness character as “the combination of biophysical, experiential, and symbolic ideals that distinguishes wilderness from other lands.”



Questions to Consider

- What makes the Olympic National Park wilderness area special to you and why?
- When you visit the Olympic National park wilderness area, what activities and experiences are most important to you?
- What do you think the issues are in the Olympic National Park wilderness area?
- Imagine you are visiting the Olympic National Park wilderness area 20 years from now. What conditions, experiences, visitor services, and facilities would you like to see?



Tentative Planning Timeline

Planning Phase	Tentative Dates	Opportunities for Public Input
Public Scoping (WE ARE HERE)	Winter/Spring 2013	Review information provided in this newsletter, attend a public meeting and/or submit your comments online.
Alternatives Development	Spring/Summer 2013	Stay up-to-date on the planning process by visiting the website at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/olywild or provide your email address for updates.
Public Comment on Preliminary Alternatives	Summer/Fall 2013	Review the preliminary alternatives, attend a public meeting and/or submit your comments online.
Prepare Draft WSP/EIS	Fall/Winter 2013	Stay up-to-date on the planning process by visiting the website at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/olywild
Public Comment on Draft WSP/EIS	Spring 2014	Review the draft WSP/EIS, attend a public meeting and/or submit your comments online.
Prepare Final WSP/EIS	Spring/Summer 2014	Stay up-to-date on the planning process by visiting the website at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/olywild
Release of Final WSP/EIS	Summer/Fall 2014	
Record of Decision	Fall 2014	
Implementation of WSP	Fall/Winter 2014 Onward	



How You Can Get Involved

There are several ways to provide comments:

- Submit a completed comment form here at the public meeting.
- Submit comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/OLYMWildNews1>

- Mail comments to:

Sarah Creachbaum, Superintendent
ATTN: Wilderness Stewardship Plan
Olympic National Park
600 E. Park Avenue
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Note: The comment period for scoping began on January 23rd and is currently set to end on March 23rd. However, the end date will be extended to 60 days after publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register.



Thank You

We look forward to hearing from you.

For more information and links to the project and other documents:
<http://www.nps.gov/olym/parkmgmt/planning.htm>