



# Olympic *national park*



General Management Plan • Newsletter • Summer 2001

Dear Friends,

This year, the National Park Service, together with our visitors, neighbors and partners, is beginning the process of crafting a vision for Olympic National Park. This vision will be contained within the form of a General Management Plan (GMP). The GMP will be a broad-based plan that articulates a vision and charts a course for park management for the next 15-20 years. We hope to have your participation in this process.

Olympic protects 922,651 acres of three distinctly different ecosystems – glacier-capped mountains, over 60 miles of wild Pacific coast and magnificent stands of ancient forest, including temperate rain forest. This diversity of ecosystems has led to an astonishing array of plants and animals, some of them unique to the Olympic Peninsula. Often referred to as "three parks in one", Olympic National Park has the additional attribute of being predominantly wilderness.

The National Park Service strives to protect Olympic's diverse resources and to provide today's visitors and future generations with the opportunity to enjoy those resources. To succeed, we must first have a vision for the future and then plan and act to ensure that our vision is achieved. Towards that goal, we will together explore the following questions, among others.

- How can we ensure that the outstanding natural and cultural resources of Olympic National Park are adequately protected for the future?
- What should we do to make sure that each visitor has the opportunity to learn and understand the purpose, mission and significance of the park?
- How much, and what kinds of visitor use are appropriate at Olympic?
- How can we best work with our partners to protect park resources and increase support for the park?

I invite you to share in the process of crafting a vision for Olympic National Park by completing and mailing the enclosed comment form.

Thank you for your help in planning for the future of Olympic National Park.

Sincerely,

David K. Morris  
Superintendent, Olympic National Park

# The Planning Process . . .



General management plans (GMPs) focus on why national parks are established and what resource conditions and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time. These management plans take a long-range, broad, conceptual view. Planning is conducted by multidisciplinary teams, including park staff and technical experts, who consult with other knowledgeable people inside and outside the National Park Service and with the general public. In reaching decisions concerning future management of the area, planning teams seek to reach agreement among park staff, NPS leaders, other agencies, park neighbors, and other members of the public. The management plan is built firmly on the reasons for the park's establishment – its purpose, significance, and mission.

Public input during Olympic's general management planning process will help decision-makers learn about the concerns, issues, expectations, and values of visitors, neighbors, people with traditional cultural ties to the park, interest groups, scientists, scholars, and other governmental agencies. Through newsletters, public meetings, media releases and other means, the National Park Service will share information about the planning process and seek to foster consensus for implementing the approved plan among local publics, visitors, Congress, and others.

The GMP for the Olympic National Park will not resolve all issues or guarantee funding for the park. Rather it will describe the general path that the National Park Service intends to follow in managing the area during the next 10 to 15 years.

This plan will be combined with an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will analyze the effects of implementing alternative ideas. The EIS process has several requirements, including specified public review and comment periods. These requirements affect both the scope and timing of the management plan.

# Where are We in the Process?

The GMP for Olympic National Park was initiated in the winter of 2000. Park staff and technical specialists from National Park Service (NPS) offices at the Denver Service Center in Denver, Colorado, form the planning team for the GMP. The planning team has developed draft purpose, significance, and mission statements and an initial list of issue topics for Olympic National Park. We would like your comments on these statements and issues, as well as any additional concerns, issues or ideas that you might have.

## Planning Steps

- 1 Project Startup.** Assemble planning team and design the process for carrying out the project
- 2 Identify the Planning Context.** We are currently in this step. Reaffirm the purpose, significance and mission of the park, determine issues and concerns, and gather and analyze information.  
**YOU CAN:**
  - Read newsletter and send us your comments.
  - Attend an Open House.
- 3 Develop and Evaluate Alternatives.** Develop a reasonable range of alternative future conditions and management.  
**YOU CAN:**
  - Read newsletter and send us your comments.
- 4 Prepare and Publish the Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS).** The draft document will be distributed for public review. It will describe the planning context, management alternatives, and impacts.  
**YOU CAN:**
  - Read draft plan and send us your comments.
  - Attend an Open House.
- 5 Revise and Publish the Final GMP/EIS.** Appropriate changes will be made to the draft document based on public comments, environmental analysis, and other information. The final GMP/EIS will be distributed.
- 6 Approve Record of Decision.**
- 7 Implement the Plan.** After a record of decision is issued, the management directions in the plan will be carried out as funding allows.



## Purpose . . .

Purpose statements provide the foundation for an area's management and use and reaffirm the reasons why an area was established as a unit of the national park system. Purpose statements provide the foundation for and are central to the decisions about how the area will be managed and used. They provide a rationale against which alternatives for managing the area can be measured. Finally, they help neighbors, visitors, and other users understand the framework in which managers make decisions.

The following draft purpose statement for Olympic National Park is based on the language Congress used in establishing the park, and on laws and policies governing the management of all National Park System units. The purpose of Olympic National Park is to preserve, unimpaired, the resources of the park, specifically 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 forest together with a narrow strip along the beautiful Washington coast."

*U.S. House of Representatives: House Report 2247,  
April 28, 1938*

## Significance . . .

Significance statements identify the resources and values that are central to managing the area and express the importance of the park to our natural and cultural heritage. Significance statements do not inventory site resources; rather they describe the park's distinctiveness and help place it in regional and international contexts. Understanding the site's significance helps managers make decisions that preserve the resources and values necessary to accomplish the site's purposes.

The following are draft significance statements for Olympic National Park.

- ◆ Olympic National Park protects three distinctly different and relatively pristine ecosystems, ranging from over 60 miles of wild Pacific coast to densely forested lowlands to the glacier-crowned Olympic Mountains.
- ◆ The ecosystems protected within Olympic National Park contain a unique array of habitats and life forms resulting from thousands of years of geograph-



ic isolation, along with extreme gradients of elevation, temperature and precipitation. Fifteen kinds of animals and eight kinds of plants live only on the Olympic Peninsula, existing nowhere else in the world.

- ◆ Olympic National Park protects one of the largest wilderness areas in the contiguous United States – 95% of the park (876,669 acres) is designated wilderness.
- ◆ Olympic National Park protects some of the finest remaining stands of old growth Douglas fir forest and temperate rain forest in the United States. These forests of ancient and immense trees provide habitat for dozens of smaller plants and animals, including important habitat for a number of threatened species.
- ◆ Olympic National Park protects over 3000 miles of rivers and streams within 11 major systems and provides the largest remaining tract of pristine spawning and rearing habitat in the lower 48 states. These waters are used by nine species of salmon, trout and char, plus many other native fish.
- ◆ Olympic National Park and the neighboring Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary protect almost 5,000 square miles of intertidal, island and ocean habitats.
- ◆ Olympic National Park supports the largest protected Roosevelt elk population in the world.
- ◆ Over 650 archeological sites documenting 10,000 years of human occupation are protected within Olympic National Park lands. Eight peninsula tribes retain their ongoing connection between community and traditional lands.
- ◆ The Olympic Peninsula was one of the last areas in the lower 48 states to be explored by Euro-Americans. Olympic National Park protects cultural resources that reveal and document the 200-year history of discovery, exploration, homesteading and community development in the region, as well as the evolution of the Federal preservation ethic.
- ◆ Olympic National Park provides a wide range of outstanding recreational opportunities, allowing visitors a variety of ways to enjoy and experience the natural and cultural values the park was established to protect.



# Mission . . .

A park's mission is essentially a vision for the future and articulates, in broad terms, the ideals that the National Park Service strives to attain. The following is the draft mission statement for Olympic National Park:

The mission of Olympic National Park is to preserve and protect, unimpaired, the park's diverse natural and cultural resources and provide for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of present and future generations.

To fulfill this mission, we must understand and protect the natural processes, habitats and life forms found within the park – from the glacier-capped Olympic Mountains, to the ancient forests, to the beaches and headlands of the wilderness coast. In addition, we must protect the park's cultural resources, which document 10,000 years of human occupation and reveal the region's history of discovery, exploration, homesteading and community development, as well as the history of the park itself.

While protecting these resources for future generations, our mission includes providing today's visitors with the access, facilities, information and education they need to fully experience, enjoy and learn from the park.

## GMP Issue Topics . . .

General Management Plan issues are problems, concerns, and questions that need to be addressed and resolved within the GMP in order to accomplish the park purpose and mission, and to maintain what is significant about the park. Since GMPs take a long-range, broad, conceptual view, the issues will be addressed in a broad, conceptual way. The following are some major issue categories.

- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Education and Interpretation
- Visitor Experience
- Visitor Use
- Safety
- Access and Roads
- Visitor Facilities
- Relationship of the Park with Tribes and Local Communities

Examples of issues are:

- ◆ In 1988, 95% of the park was legislatively established as wilderness. There is no approved Wilderness Management Plan that addresses this change.
- ◆ There are 11 major river systems flowing out of Olympic National Park, all of which are, or have the potential to be, nationally significant rivers for anadromous fish. Guidance is needed in many areas of protecting, restoring, and managing the park's fishery resources.
- ◆ Many important cultural features have disappeared or are being compromised by neglect or improper use. The GMP needs to give direction in the protection, use, and restoration of cultural features in the park, including those within the legislated wilderness.
- ◆ Visitor use of Olympic National Park rose 32% between 1986 and 1996, has more than doubled since the approval of the last Master Plan in 1977, and will continue to increase in the future. Direction is needed in how to deal with increasing visitation, as well as changes in visitor demographics and evolving types of use.
- ◆ There is a need for guidance in initiating, continuing, and refining partnerships with tribes, organizations, agencies, and other groups to enhance the future of the park.
- ◆ There are private and tribal interests within the park boundary (e.g., mining claims, various other property rights, traditional cultural uses, etc.) which affect the future of the park. Guidance is needed in how to address these interests.
- ◆ The GMP can make recommendations for needed boundary adjustments.
- ◆ The GMP needs to examine how Olympic National Park protects natural and cultural resources and provides for visitor use in a way that considers local and regional interests.

There are other and more specific issues and concerns that will be addressed in subsequent planning documents. Scoping for this GMP provides an opportunity for the public to identify the broader issues that the park must address over the next 10 to 20 years.



# Open Houses and Newsletters . . .



Developing a vision for the future of Olympic National Park is the primary function of the general management plan. Your comments are important for identifying issues and desired visitor experiences and will be used to build on the draft purpose, significance, and mission statements and initial issues list. A series of open houses to gather input from the public will take place. These open houses will be held at the locations listed on the back page of this newsletter. Additional meetings are planned for the communities of Amanda Park, Neah Bay, and Clallam Bay. Times and venues to be announced.

We strongly urge you to attend one of these. Your input is important for developing a successful plan. Please take your time to fill out the comment form between pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter. Then, simply cut out the form along the dotted line, fold with Business Reply Label on the outside, tape shut, and mail within 30 days.

Also please be aware that due to the requirements of public disclosure (318 **Department Manual** 4 App.2.11), the National Park Service must make the names and addresses of commenters public if requested. Individual respondents, however, may request that this information not be released. The National Park Service will then determine whether the information may be withheld under the Freedom of Information Act, and will honor your request to the extent allowed by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection if requested.

Future newsletters will provide you with information on planning for the park, and will keep you updated on the general management plan.

## What Happens Next?

The next step will be development of possible visions for the future (called alternatives). Evaluating a set of alternatives enables us to compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of one course of action over another and provides a sound approach to decision making, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. We will distribute these alternative concepts for public review and comment. Based on the analysis of impacts of the alternatives and the comments received, a preferred alternative will be selected. You will also have an opportunity to comment on the preferred alternative, and the other alternatives in the draft GMP/EIS.

To be placed on our mailing list or to receive additional copies of this newsletter, complete the attached form or write to: Superintendent, Olympic National Park, 600 East Park Avenue, Port Angeles, Washington 8362-9798.

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# Olympic National Park

## Public Open Houses

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Port Angeles, WA

Vern Burton Memorial Community Center  
308 E. 4th Street

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Forks, WA

Olympic Natural Resources Center  
1455 S. Forks Avenue

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Aberdeen, WA

Rotary Log Pavilion in Morrison Riverfront Park  
Located just off Highway 12  
on eastern edge of Aberdeen

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Silverdale, WA

West Coast Silverdale Hotel  
3073 NW Bucklin Hill Road

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Seattle, WA

Jackson Federal Building  
915 Second Ave  
enter through 2nd Avenue Plaza

General Management Plan  
Newsletter 1  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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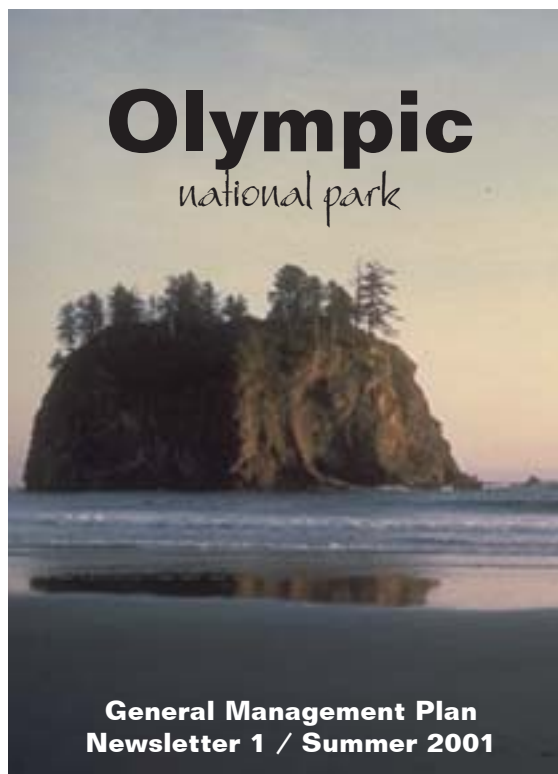
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**Olympic**  
national park



# Comment / Response

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We would like to have your comments and thoughts on the draft purpose, significance, and mission statements and for Olympic National Park, and the issues facing it. After completing your comments, please fold this form in the middle, tape, and return it to the National Park Service. Additional sheets may be attached.

Do you agree with the purpose, significance, and mission statements for the park? How would you improve them? Any additional comments?

What do you think are issues facing Olympic National Park?

Imagine you are visiting the park 20 years from now; describe what you would like to experience or not experience.

What is your greatest concern about the future of the park?

Do you want to be on the mailing list for the GMP? We will send you future newsletters and information dealing with the general management plan for Olympic National Park. Also, if the mailing label is incorrect, please indicate the corrections below.

☐ Please remove my name from the mailing list.

☐ The name or address you have is incorrect. Please change as following:

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Please cut this form out at the dotted line, fold the response form in half so the mailing address is visible, tape it (no staples, please), and drop it in the mail. Thank you.