

Olympic National Park
 600 E. Park Avenue
 Port Angeles, WA 98362
 June 22, 2016 (**Updated July 7, 2016**)



Dear Friends,

The National Park Service (NPS) is requesting your input in developing an environmental assessment (EA) for the final disposition of the Enchanted Valley Chalet (EVC) for Olympic National Park (ONP). Your participation is vital to our planning process. There are many ways to be involved, including attending one of the in-person public scoping meetings and submitting electronic or written comments.

Public Scoping Open House Schedule

<p>Port Angeles June 27, 2016 5-7 p.m. Senior Center Main Hall 328 E. 7th Street 360-457-7004</p>	<p>Amanda Park June 28, 2016 5-7 p.m. Amanda Park Timberland Regional Library 6118 U.S. Highway 101 360-288-2725</p>	<p>Aberdeen June 29, 2016 4-6 p.m. Aberdeen Timberland Regional Library 121 E. Market St. 360-533-2360</p>
<p>Amanda Park July 12, 2016 5-7 p.m. Amanda Park Timberland Regional Library 6118 U.S. Highway 101 360-288-2725</p>	<p>Aberdeen July 18, 2016 5-7 p.m. Aberdeen Timberland Regional Library 121 E. Market St. 360-533-2360</p>	<p>Port Angeles July 19, 2016 5-7 p.m. Port Angeles Public Library 2210 S. Peabody St. 360-417-8500</p>

Background

The Enchanted Valley Chalet is located 13 miles up the East Fork Quinault River from the Graves Creek Trailhead, at an approximate elevation of 2030 feet (619 meters), within the Congressionally-designated Olympic Wilderness (designated in 1988). The two and a half story, 42' x 28' structure was built in 1930-31 by the Olympic Recreation Company, operated as a commercial business until the early 1940s, and was purchased by the National Park Service (NPS) in 1951. In 2007 the chalet was added to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) due to its local significance.

The chalet is located on the active floodplain of the East Fork Quinault River. The floodplain is comprised of unconsolidated sediment and channel migration across the floodplain is frequent and unpredictable. Air photos from the 1990s show the river about 400 feet from the chalet. In 2003, river avulsion (i.e., catastrophic channel shifting) began due to massive sediment loading up valley following heavy rains. By 2005, the river was within 10 feet of the chalet. Minor channel work and vegetation manipulation was done by park staff in fall 2005, this work

included moving downed logs into more strategic positions, moving gravel and cobble material into banks or dispersing some material to create a more level surface, cutting of some larger downed trees in the river bed into smaller sections enabling their movement with high flows, cabling of a couple downed logs together to slow current and encourage gravel deposition, and removal of some small trees. The channel had migrated away from the chalet by 2006.

In October 2013, park staff on-site noted that the river channel was 9 feet from the northwest corner of the chalet. In early January 2014, photographs and visitor reports revealed that the East Fork Quinault River had migrated to within 18 inches of the building. Subsequent monitoring and aerial photos show that the river had undercut the chalet by approximately six to eight feet and a small portion of the foundation had fallen into the river. In winter of 2013/2014, the area experienced rainfall that was above average, storm events, and high flows that resulted in the Quinault River's main channel shifting by at least 15 feet since the initial report of river movement in October 2013. Expert analysis shows that the cause of the recent river channel movement is different than what occurred in 2005 (river incision rather than river aggradation).

Park staff hiked to the chalet in mid-March 2014 to assess and document the chalet's condition and remove equipment, supplies, hazardous materials (i.e., fuel) that were considered a threat to environmental conditions should they fall into the river. The crew also removed the building's windows to prevent glass from impacting the river and downstream natural resources and to preserve elements of the historic building in case the structure was to collapse and fall into the river.

In July 2014 the NPS released the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the "Emergency Action to Temporarily Relocate the Enchanted Valley Chalet for the Protection of the East Fork Quinault River/Concise Environmental Assessment." The selected alternative was to move the chalet 50-100 feet from the bank of the river in an effort to protect the river and its associated natural resources from imminent environmental harm. In September 2014, the NPS hired a local contractor, and the chalet was moved approximately 100 feet from the East Fork Quinault River. The concise EA stated that the NPS would embark on a separate planning process to assess options for the final disposition of the chalet.

Purpose and Need for Taking Action

The park's purpose in taking action is to determine the final disposition of the Enchanted Valley Chalet in accordance with the 2014 concise EA. The need for taking action is to have a plan in place that guides management decisions should the chalet be threatened again by natural processes.

Preliminary Alternative Concepts

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to:

- Consider a range of alternatives, and
- Fully evaluate all reasonable alternatives that address the purpose of and need for the action, including a No Action alternative.

No Action Alternative – The chalet would remain in its current location on top of the steel I-beams that were used to move it in 2014, closed to the public and administrative use. Natural processes would prevail (e.g., no action would occur to protect the structure from the river). *Stipulation V within the Memorandum of Agreement from the concise EA would continue to be in effect. The structure may eventually lose its listing status on the National Register of Historic Places.

Set Structure in Place – A new foundation would be constructed under the chalet and the steel I-beams and cribbing would be removed. The new foundation would be one made of natural materials that could be reabsorbed into the environment (such as cedar blocks). The structure would remain closed to the public and administrative use. *Stipulation V within the Memorandum of Agreement from the concise EA would continue to be in effect. Periodic stabilization activities may occur. Natural processes would prevail. The structure may eventually lose its listing status on the National Register of Historic Places.

Dismantling and Potential Removal – The chalet would be dismantled and potentially removed from the Enchanted Valley. The structure would lose its listing status on the National Register of Historic Places.

Option A - Disassemble the building down to the sill logs (removing the flooring and leaving the frame). Leaving a portion of the building would provide visitors an opportunity to see the remains until natural processes prevail.

Option B - Dismantle the chalet and stage it in sorted piles for removal. Some materials (such as dimensional lumber, metal, etc.) could potentially be reused.

Relocate to Another Location in the Valley – The chalet would be relocated to another location within the Enchanted Valley.

*Stipulation 5 from the Memorandum of Agreement in the 2014 Concise EA for the Emergency Action to Temporarily Relocate the Enchanted Valley Chalet for the Protection of the East Fork Quinalt River is a stipulation for historic fabric protection/salvage. It states the following:

- a. NPS/OLYM will salvage and protect as much historic fabric as possible during the move and at its new temporary location. It is anticipated that the building would be intact except for the window sashes that were removed and stored in March 2014 both for their protection and so, if in the event the structure should collapse into the river, there would not be broken glass in the river.
- b. If the river were to further undercut the chalet causing its collapse into the river NPS/OLYM will attempt to salvage as much historic material as possible while acknowledging that some fabric would be lost in an unplanned collapse. At a minimum, NPS/OLYM would attempt to salvage as much of the following items:
 - i. Window frames and shutters
 - ii. Exterior doors and door frames
 - iii. Tongue and groove floor boards
 - iv. Original wall logs and rafter poles
 - v. Newel posts from the stairs
 - vi. Stair railing with carved initials
 - vii. Stair stringer with carved initials
 - viii. Pieces of beadboard from the second floor hall and rooms
 - ix. Bricks and metal cleanout from the chimney

NEPA and Where We Are in the Process

Steps of the Planning Process	Tentative Timeline	How you can be involved
Internal scoping, define purpose and need, and develop preliminary alternatives	Summer 2015- Spring 2016	
*Conduct external scoping	Summer 2016	Attend public meetings and provide your comments and ideas about the preliminary alternatives.
Analysis of public comment	Summer-Fall 2016	
Refine alternatives	Fall 2016- Winter 2017	
Identify environmental impacts and select/develop preferred alternative	Winter-Spring 2017	
Prepare draft plan/environmental document	Spring-Summer 2017	
Public review of draft plan/environmental document	Summer-Fall 2017	Attend public meetings and provide your comments about the Draft EA.
Analysis of public comment	Fall 2017	
Prepare final plan/decision document	Winter 2018	
Release final plan/decision document to the public	Spring 2018	

*Current step in the planning process.

How to Comment

1. Submit comments electronically at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/EVCscoping>
2. Submit comments at an in-person public meeting.
3. Submit written comments by mail:
 Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum
 Olympic National Park – EVC Scoping
 600 East Park Avenue
 Port Angeles, WA 98362

You should be aware that your entire comment – including personal identifying information such as your address, phone number, and email address – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Comments submitted by individuals or organizations on behalf of other individuals or organizations will not be accepted.