



ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Olympic National Park

2. Project Description:

Project Name: East Fork Quinault River Trail and Enchanted Valley Overcrowding

Prepared by: Elizabeth Horton **Date Prepared:** 03/07/2024 **Telephone:** (307) 344-2290

PEPC Project Number: 122416

Locations:

County, State: Jefferson, WA

Describe project:

Issue: In many of Olympic National Park's popular wilderness locations, overnight use is subject to an established limitation regarding the maximum number of daily permits issued. This is due to a variety of reasons to include, but not limited to, an area may be able to contain only a certain number of established camp areas based on the type of resources present; there may be sensitive natural or cultural resources within the area; or there may have been past damage to natural or cultural resources from overuse and quotas were issued to alleviate damage and allow these resources to recover naturally. The remaining park wilderness areas remain unrestricted, and some of these areas experience negative impacts to park resources, wilderness character, and visitor experience due to the frequent large number of permitted users.

These impacts include campsite overcrowding, trailhead congestion and limited parking, insufficient holding capacity for human waste in pit toilets, decreased opportunities for visitor solitude, and the expansion of current established, or the creation of new, camp areas by visitors. While bears are frequently in the Enchanted Valley area, to date there have been no issues with human-wildlife interactions and wildlife, in general, obtaining food rewards.

This project's primary focus is the loss of solitude along the East Fork Quinault River Trail and in the Enchanted Valley. Olympic National Park currently does not limit the number of overnight groups or people there, and the wilderness character, specifically opportunities for solitude, may be negatively impacted by the quantity of use that occurs.

Every person that uses the Daniel J. Evans Wilderness overnight is required to obtain a permit. Daily camper nights are tracked through the park's reservation system and indicates the total number of permitted users. Overnight use within the East Fork Quinault River Trail and in the Enchanted Valley has greatly increased in recent years. See table on page 2 of the MRA.

Daily camper nights for Enchanted Valley alone exceeded 300 people on one occasion in 2022, and twice in 2023. Camper nights in the valley, ranging between 100 and 299 people, occurred 31 times in 2022, and 34 times in 2023. This level of nightly use results in frequent overcrowding of campsites and a degradation of wilderness character. Parties are forced to camp close to, or within close sight of, numerous other campers. The crowding can be like that of a front-country campground. This contrasts wilderness values of:

- "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable"
- "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation"

Need: Although park management has been identifying many of these issues during the scoping process of a Wilderness Stewardship Plan, immediate changes may be necessary to reduce ongoing resource degradation and improve the wilderness experience in the East Fork Quinault River Trail and in the Enchanted Valley.

Preferred alternative (alternative 4 in the MRA): Establish limitations on the number of permits issued and overnight users.

o This alternative would establish a limitation dependent upon the number of permits issued or overnight users within the East Fork Quinault River Trail and Enchanted Valley, whichever was first reached. Current ONP compendium limits party size in this area to no more than twelve individuals per permit. Overcrowding at these sites could occur if the maximum number of permits were issued with 12 people in each party.

There would be a maximum of 30 permits allowed and up to 208 overnight users per night, whichever number is reached first; however, each site is limited to the below:

- o Pony Bridge = 3 permits or 18 overnight users
- o Fire Creek = 2 permits or 12 overnight users
- o O'Neil = 6 permits or 36 overnight users
- o Pyrites = 7 permits or 42 overnight users
- o Enchanted Valley = 12 permits or 100 overnight users

o Reservations for the 2024 summer season open on April 15, 2024; the action would start this calendar year (2024) and could be piloted for up to 3 years, at which point it would be revisited and determined whether the number of permits needs to be adjusted.

o Monitoring of the action would take place during regular and routine foot patrols of the East Fork Quinault River Trail and the Enchanted Valley. Wilderness camping occurs by park rangers and wilderness information assistants as a regular part of their job duties. Rangers patrol this area independently or as a pair, and typically for 1-2 nights each trip. Rangers do not patrol with stock, therefore there would be no overnight stock use with ranger patrol staff.

Area of potential effects (as defined in 36 CFR 800.16[d])

East Fork Quinault River Trail and Enchanted Valley, Campsites.

3. Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify historic properties?

☐ No
☒ Yes

Source or reference:

4. Potentially Affected Resource(s):

Archeological Resources Present: No

Archeological Resources Notes: Project establishes a limitation of regarding the number of maximum daily permits issued. Therefore, this project is anticipated to potentially reduce visitor use impacts to existing resources.

Historical Structures/Resources Present: Yes

Property Name: Enchanted Valley Chalet **LCS:** 30112 **Asset:** 20993

Location: DISTRICT Quinault E 10 N 470875 ZONE 5279659

Cultural Landscapes Present: No

Ethnographic Resources Present: No

5. The proposed action will: (check as many as apply)

- ☐ No Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure
- ☐ No Replace historic features/elements in kind
- ☐ No Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure
- ☐ No Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment (inc. terrain)
- ☐ No Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric) to a historic setting or cultural landscape
- ☐ No Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible
- ☐ No Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible>
- ☐ No Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources
- ☐ No Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic features, terrain, setting, landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources
- ☐ No Involve a real property transaction (exchange, sale, or lease of land or structures)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

6. Supporting Study Data:

(Attach if feasible; if action is in a plan, EA or EIS, give name and project or page number.)

B. REVIEWS BY CULTURAL RESOURCE SPECIALISTS

The park 106 coordinator requested review by the park's cultural resource specialist/advisors as indicated by check-off boxes or as follows:

No Reviews From: Curator, Archeologist, Historical Architect, Historian, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor, Anthropologist, Historical Landscape Architect

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

- ☐ No Potential to Cause Effects
- ☐ No Historic Properties Affected
- ☒ No Adverse Effect
- ☐ Adverse Effect

2. Documentation Method:

☐ A. Standard 36 CFR Part 800 Consultation

Further consultation under 36 CFR Part 800 is needed.

☒ B. Streamlined Review Under the 2008 Servicewide Programmatic Agreement (PA)

The above action meets all conditions for a streamlined review under section III of the 2008 Servicewide PA for Section 106 compliance.

Applicable Streamlined Review Criteria

(Specify 1-16 of the list of streamlined review criteria.)

1. Preservation Maintenance and Repair of Historic Properties.

[] C. Undertaking Related to Park Specific or Another Agreement

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under another document such as a park, region or statewide agreement established in accord with 36 CFR 800.7 or 36 CFR 800.14.

[] D. Combined NEPA/NHPA Process

Process and documentation required for the preparation of an EA/FONSI or an EIS/ROD to comply with Section 106 is in accord with 36 CFR 800.8.c.

[] E. Memo to Project File

3. Consultation Information

SHPO Required:

SHPO Sent:

SHPO Received:

THPO Required:

THPO Sent:

THPO Received:

SHPO/THPO Notes:

Advisory Council Participating: No

Advisory Council Notes:

Additional Consulting Parties: No

4. Stipulations and Conditions: Following are listed any stipulations or conditions necessary to ensure that the assessment of effect above is consistent with 36 CFR Part 800 criteria of effect or to avoid or reduce potential adverse effects.

5. Mitigations/Treatment Measures: Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties: (Remember that setting, location, and use may be relevant.)

No Assessment of Effect mitigations identified.

6. Assessment of Effect Notes:

D. RECOMMENDED BY PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR:

Compliance Specialist:

NHPA Specialist

Elizabeth Horton _____ **Date:** _____

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL

The proposed work conforms to the NPS *Management Policies* and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, and I have reviewed and approve the recommendations, stipulations, or conditions noted in Section C of this form.

Signature

Superintendent: _____ **Date:** _____



Sula Jacobs

