

2022-2023

Park Priority Projects

Fundraising efforts are now underway





Misty forests. Rugged coasts. Lofty peaks.
Flower-filled meadows. **Our national parks form the
wild heart of Washington.**

Mount Shuksan by Andy Porter

Washington's National Park Fund serves as the primary philanthropic partner to Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic National Parks. Our role – and your opportunity – is adding private support for vital, underfunded projects and programs that advance understanding, safeguard species, and provide access for all.

We support projects across a breadth of park needs in four core areas:



Advancing Science and Research: Protecting and ensuring the safety of precious native flora and fauna through research and citizen science.



Visitors' Experiences: Including trail clean up and maintenance, improved wayfinding signage, and enhanced search and rescue efforts.



Volunteerism and Stewardship: Supporting programs that enable the contribution of thousands of hours of service for our parks by volunteers.



Youth and Family Programs: Helping create opportunities for people from all backgrounds to experience, care for, and protect park resources.



Each year, park superintendents and their staff identify priority projects in need of support. With our community, WNPf raises the funds to make these projects a reality. Together, we sustain between 30 and 40 projects and programs each year, for a total of nearly \$6 million in support over the last decade.

As the years pass, the needs grow – and we need your help to meet them. This booklet contains each park's top eight priority projects for fiscal year 2022 (ending on September 30, 2022) in order of priority, as well as additional needs if more funds are available.

Each year, more park lovers step up to support Washington's natural treasures, ensuring a welcome for new generations of guardians to keep our parks thriving for years to come. We are grateful to our supporters – join us in this important work.



Photo by Amos Almy

MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK

The fifth national park established, this special place hosts more than a million visitors every year and is home to over 280 species of wildlife. Our goal? Opening up accessible and unforgettable experiences in Paradise, Sunrise, and beyond to every visitor of “The Mountain.”

1. Volunteer Program: Supporting Passionate and Productive Park Stewards

Funding needed: \$53,500

Priority areas:    

Mount Rainier’s volunteer program is a powerful force for providing vital project support and creating passionate advocates for the park’s mission. Each year more than 2,400 volunteers donate nearly 70,000 hours to the park – an effort worth an astonishing \$1.8 million in services and a priceless investment in building community connections. Volunteers perform backcountry patrols, wildlife surveys, astronomy and other guest interpretive programs, geologic research, and archaeological work. Funding will help cover the cost of supplies, housing, uniforms, and vehicles, as well as the interns integral to coordinating this key program.



2. Meadow Rovers: Safeguarding and Sharing the Magic of the Meadows

Funding needed: \$42,800

Priority areas:  

The spectacular subalpine meadows above Paradise and Sunrise are some of the premier draws for guests to Mount Rainier. Caring for these fragile ecosystems while providing a safe and memorable visitor experience requires just the right balance of vigilance and education – and the park’s 200 Meadow

Rovers are up to the task! These dedicated volunteers donate nearly 9,000 hours and make close to 200,000 visitor connections annually as they share the story of the meadows and help visitors be good stewards of the park’s sensitive plants and animals. And all this effort has been paying off. Since the Meadow Rover program began 20 years ago, fewer people are venturing off trails, reducing both meadow damage and Search and Rescue incidents. Support for this program will ensure this positive trend continues.



3. Roadside Assistance Volunteers: Help is on the Way!

Funding needed: \$24,503

Priority areas:  

Imagine packing up your family for a much-anticipated adventure to Mount Rainier, only to face the frustration of locking your keys in the car during a visitor center stop or getting a flat tire on the road to Paradise. Thanks to the park’s Roadside Assistance Volunteers, visitors in such situations can get a helping hand and quickly get their fun back

on track. In addition to aiding stranded motorists, the Roadside Assistance team helps with traffic control in emergency and non-emergency situations and provides ranger support during Search and Rescue incidents when appropriate. All of these efforts free up first responders so that they can tend to the most critical calls. Funding will ensure that this vital program continues with five volunteers stationed throughout the park.



4. Access for All: Evaluating Trails Accessibility and Creating Digital Trails Guide

Funding needed: \$57,118

Priority areas: 

Imagine the challenge of planning a trip to Mount Rainier National Park if your mobility is compromised or you have other accessibility needs. Online photos and descriptions are essential for evaluating your options before committing to the time and expense of visiting the park. But there is little information

currently available to identify accessible parking, restrooms, campsites, and trails. Addressing this gap is a park priority. This project will fund the purchase and staffing for a High-Efficiency Trail Assessment Process tool (HETAP) that measures trail distance, grade, substrate, and other information to evaluate the suitability of park trails and facilities for individuals with a range of accessibility needs. The results will be used to develop an online accessibility guide featuring photos and descriptions for recreational options throughout the park as well as information on parking, restrooms, and more. In addition, the HETAP will be shared with Olympic and North Cascades National Parks staff as an important first step to increase access at all parks and help visitors of all abilities gain confidence in their choice to visit.



5. Alpine Gardens Protection Team: Keeping Boots off Blooms and on the Trail

Funding needed: \$28,890

Priority areas:  

In early summer, subalpine areas of the park are at their most vulnerable as snow melts and trails may be difficult to follow. When visitors step off trails to avoid puddles or snow patches or to let others pass, significant damage can occur to the fragile meadow plants just beginning to emerge. In fact,

people walking off-trail in subalpine areas is one of the most consistent sources of erosion and damage to plant communities at Mount Rainier. Lining trails with rope and rebar posts has proven to be an effective method to define trails and remind people to stay on them, but finding consistent staff support to carry out this work has been challenging. Funding will provide a staff member to coordinate volunteers to install and maintain the guide ropes during this critical period. They will also serve as an assistant lead in the Meadow Rover program to provide needed coverage for the primary lead's weekends. Both functions will provide important support to keep the amazing alpine gardens of Paradise and Sunrise blooming for years to come.



6. Preventive Search & Rescue in High Impact Park Areas: Promoting Safer Recreation Habits

Funding needed: \$36,915

Priority areas: 

Each year, Mount Rainier Search and Rescue teams conduct an average of forty-four responses to aid recreational users in trouble. These incidents may result in injuries and fatalities and require significant use of staff time and expensive evacuation equipment, while also putting staff rescuers at risk. With more visitor education, many of these incidents could be prevented or reduced in severity. This project will fund one summer employee to coordinate preventive search and rescue efforts in areas of the park with high visitation, identifying the root causes of visitor distress calls and raising awareness to reduce the likelihood of search and rescue events. The employee will interact with hikers at trailheads and assist education volunteers in sharing safety information with visitors. One position will provide six months of field activity to keep visitors safe throughout the busiest park areas during the high season.



7. Mount Rainier Trails and WTA Partnership: Building Trails and Community

Funded

Funding needed: \$53,500

Priority areas:   

Mount Rainier's extensive trail network is the heart of the park's visitor experience, with partnerships providing the lifeblood that keeps it beating. Through a decades-long association with the Washington Trails Association (WTA), the park benefits from the people power of hundreds of volunteers who dedicate passion, sweat, and muscle to keeping trails safe and maintained while developing a sense of community, connections to the park, and the satisfaction of service. With funding through Washington's National Parks Fund, the park hires skilled WTA trail crew leaders to guide the volunteer teams and provide logistical support for crews. This year's focus is trail improvements in the White River and Sunrise area and tackling some of the maintenance backlog on trails throughout the park. Crews will include single-identity youth teams to provide experiences in the park for volunteers from similar backgrounds and communities, including women, Latinx groups, and the LGBTQ+ community. This partnership will generate 705 individual volunteer days and 5,638 volunteer hours in service of protecting the park and nurturing its legacy of park stewards.



Photo by Rachel Wendling

8. Service & Safety: Visitor Orientation and Trail Information at Paradise

Funding needed: \$30,064

Priority areas:   

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jackson Visitor Center, Mount Rainier's busiest, was forced to close to the public. To continue to serve visitors, the park created two information stations in the outdoor plaza, a move that proved extremely popular. Accordingly, park staff would like to expand on these offerings by reconfiguring the downstairs, indoor

space at the Visitor Center to offer more self-serve materials including eight visitor orientation panels, four double-sided display boards, as well as replacement stands for the outdoor panels. The new displays will quickly and easily provide basic orientation, hiking information, and up-to-date trail safety information instead of forcing all visitors to wait in the long lines to speak with a ranger. As a result, rangers will be more available to visitors with additional questions or who need assistance through in-person interactions. Getting quality information out quickly helps everyone have a safe and enjoyable experience during their time in Paradise.



Additional priority projects if more funding is available:

Visitor Use and Impact Monitoring: Assessing Visitor Impacts Today to Protect Park Lands for Tomorrow

Funding needed: \$93,090

Priority areas:  

Recreational impacts at Mount Rainier in the form of trampled social trails, expansion of backcountry campsites, and crowded hikes disrupt the park ecosystems and detract from the experience of visiting untrodden meadows and tucked away wilderness retreats. As visitation increases and patterns of use

change, identifying and understanding these impacts is critical to trail and restoration planning and wilderness stewardship efforts. This project will fund two seasonal technicians to inventory and monitor visitor use patterns and their impacts in front-country high visitation meadows, backcountry meadows, and 179 wilderness campsites for one year. This work will also employ two Scientist in the Park interns – students and those early in science and wilderness careers – providing training as the next generation of National Park Service stewards. Results from this project will be used to maintain and improve a high-quality visitor experience and safeguard the park landscapes.



Night Skies Internship: Sharing the Awe of the Night Skies

Funding needed: \$6,099

Priority areas:    

Peering through a telescope at the endless array of stars in the nighttime sky above Paradise is an unforgettable Mount Rainier experience. Each summer, thousands of visitors participate in the rapidly growing Night Skies program to discover and marvel at the stars and planets, guided by volunteer interpreters and interns. In addition to providing

an exceptional introduction to astronomy, the program is an ideal way to communicate the importance of limiting light pollution to preserve our dark skies. Funding will grow this program by adding eight weeks to the twelve-week Night Skies internship. This will provide the intern with more training and extend the Night Skies program for five weeks, resulting in more and better programming for the park visitors. This internship has proven instrumental in developing career paths, with past Night Skies Interns – including minorities, women in STEM, and people with learning disabilities – advancing to become Park Service employees, now themselves serving as mentors for new interns.



Meadow Restoration: Reviving Paradise's Wildflowers

Funded

Funding needed: \$38,520

Priority areas:   

The alpine and subalpine wildflower meadows of Paradise are some of Washington's most iconic and breathtaking wonders, awing millions of visitors from all over the world. However, decades of heavy use and off-trail hiking have taken their toll, leaving some areas trampled and bare. This program brings teams of volunteers together to plant 40,000 native seedlings throughout 10,000 square feet of disturbed meadow, in hopes of restoring these sites back into healthy meadow ecosystems. Funding will support the propagation of seedlings, seasonal restoration staff for four weekends of volunteer restoration efforts, and the tools volunteers and park staff will need to conduct this work: planting gloves, ponchos, safety glasses, and additional trowels and knee protection mats. Coupled with the planting effort is a unique educational and stewardship opportunity for student volunteers from local schools and youth work crews, including a high-school age-crew from Northwest Youth Corps. The park's restoration staff will guide their learning in meadow ecology and restoration, providing a special chance for these young volunteers to have a direct hand in reviving the meadows and seeing the fruits of their labor as more blooms spread over the mountain in years to come.





Photo by Mitch Pittman

NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK

Established in 1968, the North Cascades National Park Service Complex boasts over 300 glaciers, making it the most heavily glaciated area in the United States outside of Alaska. Help us protect and preserve this rugged wilderness sanctuary for the future, while enabling recreation and exploration by all.

1. Red Bus Repairs: Getting Park Visitors to Stehekin

Funded

Funding needed: \$32,100

Priority areas:

Accessible by foot, ferry, or floatplane, the Stehekin Valley offers gorgeous waterfalls, historic landscapes, and numerous trails into the Stephen Mather Wilderness. Red Buses provide the means for visitors to access these remarkable places and unforgettable experiences. Visitors to Lake Chelan use the four Red Buses as a shuttle to and from backcountry adventures to the North Cascades and the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. Day-users take the buses to view spectacular Rainbow Falls or visit the historic Buckner Orchard, where they can pick apples during the late fall. The unpaved roads and wide variety of weather conditions have taken their toll on this vital transportation system. Repairs are needed for three buses, including cracked frames, emergency latches for windows, numerous seals, and other safety repairs.



2. Cascades Butterfly Project: Monitoring the Effects of Warming Climates on Subalpine Ecosystems

Funding needed: \$10,700

Priority areas:  

Over the last decade, a team of community science volunteers has dedicated thousands of hours in pursuit of blooms and butterflies as part of the Cascades Butterfly Project's monitoring of the region's high mountain meadows. Once a week each summer, volunteers survey specific areas within the Cascades and record numbers and abundance of butterfly species, the timing of peak butterfly flight periods, and bloom dates of host plants. These data provide critical insight for researchers to compare timing of butterfly emergence and plant flowering over the long term to detect the impacts of climate change. Funding will enable the Cascades Butterfly Project to continue to track butterfly trends and support volunteers as they conduct survey work and talk to visitors about butterfly stewardship and climate change.



3. Bear Essentials Safety Program

Funding needed: \$36,113

Priority areas:  

A bear encounter can be a highlight of a national park visit – as long as it occurs safely. North Cascades rangers prioritize efforts that help visitors know how to recreate properly in bear country, especially in front-country campgrounds where it's all too easy for bears to associate human activity with a free handout. Through the Bear Essentials program, rangers use the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service educational bear trailer to teach visitors about proper food storage and bear stewardship. Their campground programs and one-on-one interactions provide critical information to keep people safe and bears alive in the park. This program is now more important than ever as campground usage rises, especially in numbers of first-time visitors who may be uninformed about proper bear-friendly behavior.



4. Rare Carnivore Research: What's on the Menu? Understanding Diets Through DNA Analysis

Funding needed: \$10,700

Priority areas:  

Rare carnivores, such as wolverine, Canada lynx, and Cascade red fox, faced severe persecution and subsequent declines during the last century but are now slowly recovering in the North Cascades. However, their future remains uncertain in the face of the new threat of a rapidly changing climate - including climate impacts on their prey species. By collecting samples of carnivore scat and conducting fecal DNA analysis to determine who is eating what, park scientists will learn more about the diets of these animals and how they coexist with other carnivores, such as the more common Pacific marten and the recently reintroduced fisher that share similar diets. This work will be undertaken with the help of teams of community scientists, university students, and collaboration with other agency scientists.

5. Wildlife Forensics: Revealing Threats through Lab Analysis

Funding needed: \$3,745

Priority areas: 

One important way scientists monitor the park's wildlife is by performing necropsies on animals that are found dead within the park. North Cascades biologists and National Park Service veterinarians conduct post-mortem exams to determine the animal's cause of death and to collect tissue samples for further study. Funding this project will pay for the laboratory analysis of these samples to reveal emerging diseases and detect the presence of environmental contamination such as microplastics, PCBs, methyl mercury, and lead. Lab analysis will also be done on wildlife scat samples that are suspected to represent rare species, such as wolves, using DNA sequencing to confirm species identity and screen for the presence of disease. Gaining this information will allow park scientists to be proactive in developing management strategies to protect park wildlife.



6. Adopt a Whitebark Pine Project

Funding needed: \$10,700

Priority areas:  

Whitebark pine is a keystone species of the high-elevation Cascade ecosystem where their stands influence snow melt, shape the development of plant communities, and provide food for bears, squirrels, and birds. However, the long-term survival of white pines is threatened by infection from introduced blister rust and subsequent damage by native mountain pine beetles on weakened trees – causing up to 50% mortality in some areas. Fortunately, some trees demonstrate genetic resistance to blister rust. Funding for the “Adopt a Whitebark Pine” project, a collaboration of North Cascades and Mount Rainier National Parks and the USFS Dorena Genetic Research Center, will support community science and student volunteers in locating resistant trees and collecting their cones. The resulting seeds will be used to propagate and restore severely impacted whitebark pine stands in both parks, thus ensuring continued survival of these important trees.



7. Food Sustainability Project: Community Resilience Through Food Sustainability and Native Plant Education

Funding needed: \$156,113

Priority areas:   

This five-year education project will provide educational outdoor experiences, place-based learning, native plant education, food sustainability and gratitude for what we have for 160 youth participants each year. Through partnerships between the North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Lummi Nation, Lummi Natural Resources, Lummi Nation School, Sauk-Suiattle Tribe, Darrington School District, the Glacier Peak Institute and 2,000 to 3,500 volunteer hours, youth and volunteer participants and community partners will: rehabilitate one greenhouse on school grounds; construct one greenhouse and multiple garden beds on school and tribal lands; grow and transplant native plants to park and tribal lands; grow and harvest sustainable, healthy food plants; develop and present education programs that meet Washington State standards; place-based learning through multiple field trips to North Cascades National Park Service Complex; develop, plant and install signs for the ethnobotanical garden at the North Cascades Visitor Center in Newhalem.



8. Park Medic Training: Rangers to the Rescue!

Funding needed: \$26,750

Priority areas: 

As visitation grows in North Cascades National Park, rangers are responding to an increasing number of serious medical incidents. In response to the growing need to provide high quality care quickly, the park developed the Advanced Life Support Program to help visitors and employees during their time of crisis. These specially trained rangers respond to even remote areas of the National Park to provide lifesaving care. With this funding, the park will build on the initial success of this program, sending three more rangers to the National Park Service's Park Medic training to qualify them to join the first responder team.

Additional priority projects if more funding is available:

Provide Public Access to Revegetation & Wilderness Monitoring Photographs

Funding needed: \$23,112

Priority areas:  

This project will build on work initiated in 2020 to create a digital archive gallery of historic photographs using the National Park Service website, NPGallery (npgallery.nps.gov/noca), for public viewing and research access. Two archival interns will be recruited through the National Council for Preservation

Education to catalog, digitize, and add searchable metadata for over 10,000 photographs in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex museum collection documenting wilderness impacts and revegetation efforts in the park. Dating from 1970 to 2004, the photographs document decades of backcountry campsite monitoring and provide a visual history of native plant restoration efforts in high use areas. This project will provide a system of access for researchers studying changing conditions in fragile environments within the park and support the development of a new Wilderness Stewardship Plan. The internship will provide valuable image management skills and mentoring for an emerging museum or archives professional.



Funded

Restoring Big Beaver Valley: Eliminating an Ecosystem Invader

Funding needed: \$17,590

Priority areas:  

The Big Beaver Valley, located within Ross Lake National Recreation Area and North Cascades National Park, is home to the pristine Big Beaver wetlands, a habitat of rich biodiversity. These wetlands support 368 plant species, only 18 of which are non-native, representing an extremely low number of exotic species. This ecosystem also supports 3 species

of rare plants, 5 species of fish including the endangered bull trout, and 6 species of amphibians including state listed and federal endangered species candidates. Unfortunately, reed canarygrass, an aggressive non-native from Eurasia, is invading some areas of the wetlands. If allowed to spread unchecked, reed canarygrass can negatively alter the ecosystem by reducing stream complexity, devastating juvenile salmon habitat, and replacing native plants. Funding will enable the North Coast and Cascades Invasive Plant Management Team to continue canarygrass survey and removal efforts begun in 2017 in ongoing efforts to eliminate the invader and protect this high-quality habitat.



Wilderness Character Mapping Tool: Creating a Dynamic New Tool to Inform Wilderness Planning

Funding needed: \$31,030

Priority areas:  

Managing North Cascades National Park requires a deep understanding of variations in the wilderness character that exist across the landscape. This character – defined by the 1964 Wilderness Act – considers five qualities that relate to the unique natural and cultural features of any given area and the quality

of opportunities for connecting with nature. Wilderness character maps provide a method to visualize the degree of human impact on a wilderness area. Historically, this representation of wilderness character has taken the form of static maps capturing only conditions at a specific time, essentially depicting regions from least to most wild. This project will develop a new and dynamic tool that will allow park planners to model and compare different scenarios to analyze the potential impacts of different management alternatives on the character of the park's Stephen Mather Wilderness. For example, the model could examine the effect that increasing visitor capacity at backcountry camps might have on opportunities for solitude or impacts to sensitive wildlife. Developing this new GIS-based tool will provide easy to read maps and a system for exploring proactive management alternatives to inform the upcoming wilderness planning process, helping both park planners and the public better understand and visualize key issues. Park staff will collaborate with a local university students and faculty to develop this tool.





Photo by Andy Porter

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

At more than 1,400 square miles, this vast wilderness was the ninth most visited National Park in 2020, boasting a diverse variety of terrain for visitors to experience. A top priority is providing new access and opportunities for all, from the Hoh Rain Forest to the Pacific coast and into the peaks of the Olympics.

1. Engaging Tribal Youth in Developing a Native Conservation Corps Program

Funding needed: \$32,091

Priority areas:    

Getting out into the field with park staff is incredibly empowering for students, building confidence and inspiring ideas for nature-related career paths. We'd like to make this opportunity available for native students in communities adjacent to the park, who have inhabited and honored these lands since time immemorial. This project, targeted for summer 2023, will recruit two youth interns (ages 16-18) from the Quileute Tribe to work with an interpretive park ranger to develop a Native Conservation Corps (NCC) program at Olympic National Park. The interns will help develop and test activities and experiences for future NCC participants such as working with resource managers and scientists, communicating with park visitors, participating in conservation projects, and even designing NCC uniforms and selecting participant gear and supplies. After this planning year, in 2024 the



program will expand to welcome 7-10 tribal youth each year. The NCC will be modeled after successful tribal youth engagement programs in other national parks, offering opportunities for interns to share their cultural heritage and perspectives with park staff and park visitors and be exposed to a variety of career opportunities in resource management and conservation, science, and visitor services. This program will be valuable in fostering greater connection and partnerships between the park and local tribal communities.

2. Makah Youth Cultural Resource Monitoring Project: Safeguarding Tribal Heritage Sites

Funding needed: \$21,400

Priority areas:    

Several significant archeological sites containing dozens of petroglyphs and the remains of seasonal villages lie within or adjacent to Olympic National Park and are extremely important to the cultural heritage of the Makah Tribe, whose land abuts the park boundary. These sites are accessible from trails within the park, most notably by hiking the popular Ozette Triangle Loop. As visitation to the area and public knowledge of these cultural resources increases, so comes the possibility of damage to these unique sites. Visitors have etched their names on image panels, causing permanent damage. Seasonal high tides and storm surges that have been exacerbated through rising sea levels have also eroded a number of important archeological sites in the area, leading to incalculable losses. This project will support three youth members of the Makah Tribe in the stewardship of these cultural resources by conducting weekly monitoring of four sites to document changes – both through vandalism and natural erosion. By being an active presence in the area they will also provide education and deter damage when visitation is highest, protecting these at-risk sites for future generations.

3. Middle School Science Program: Scientists in the Making

Funding needed: \$18,939

Priority areas:  

From the Fund's perspective, 7th and 8th graders should be given the chance to test their skills as young scientists. This project provides that opportunity to all middle schoolers from Stevens Middle School in Port Angeles when they take part in the park's science field trips. Seventh graders undertake a Snow Science snowshoeing adventure to Hurricane Ridge to discover plant and animal adaptations, learn how to measure snowpack, and explore climate change questions. The school's eighth graders go on an Elwha Science exploration, collecting data on water quality and river sediments and observing wildlife as they help assess the progress of the river's restoration. Students have been tracking this data for ten years and each year create posters to present their findings to their classmates and the community. This program creates real youth scientists!



4. Transportation Planning for Hurricane Ridge Shuttle: Improving Park Visits by Relieving Congestion

Funding needed: \$14,766

Priority areas: 

The visitor experience at Hurricane Ridge has long suffered from extensive waits at the entrance station on busy summer and winter days – sometimes up to two hours. The park envisions a shuttle system to replace personal car trips and provide convenient, frequent, inexpensive service to Hurricane Ridge,

transforming the visitor experience and relieving frustration for visitors and staff alike. A shuttle would also reduce carbon emissions by lowering the number of vehicles entering the park. Traveling by shuttle would allow visitors to enjoy the scenery and learn from park interpreters during their journey. This project will bring a transportation planner from another park unit on a 120-day assignment to Olympic National Park to prepare a shuttle transportation proposal. The planner will evaluate the specific needs of transportation for Hurricane Ridge and provide recommendations on system costs and funding, visitor parking, shuttle scheduling, and whether the system would be operated by the National Park Service or a private partner. The final report will identify next steps and a clear path to shuttle implementation.



5. The Terminus Glacier Memorial Project: Paying Tribute to Olympic's Glaciers through Art and Education

Funding needed: \$26,750

Priority areas:    

There are approximately 164 glaciers left in Olympic National Park, and some will cease to exist in our lifetime. While we may not be able to spare glacial ice from the ravages of climate change, we can preserve what the Olympic glaciers mean to us. This project will create an Artist-in-Residence program

featuring an "Art Ambassador" and student interns to coordinate art-focused outreach activities to local schools, libraries, with native tribes, and the Port Angeles Fine Arts Center. This team will coordinate a group of volunteer artists, each assigned to memorialize one of the park's glaciers through poetry, painting, song, sculpture, or other medium. The art pieces will be compiled as "The Terminus: A Glacier Memorial StoryMap," an online interactive map of the park honoring each glacier, accompanied by glacier information and historical photos. This effort will provide a visual timeline of each glacier's life and story and draw attention to the impacts of climate change on the park's ecosystems. By connecting with volunteer artists, park visitors, students, and tribal members to create expressions in honor of each glacier, we can ensure their memories will live on.



6. Scientists in the Parks Youth Internships

Funding needed: \$28,398

Priority areas:   

Oh, to be a scientist in Olympic National Park...a young person's dream, right? This project will make dreams come true by funding two intern scientists in the park to assist with interpretation programs in and around Kalaloch, the Elwha, and Port Angeles. The internships last for 20 weeks from May-September, matching college students and recent graduates

with short-term, paid internships with the National Park Service. The Kalaloch intern will focus on interpreting climate change and its impacts on the coastal ecosystem including ocean acidification. The Elwha intern will interpret the ongoing story of the Elwha River Restoration project. Participants will have opportunities to work collaboratively with field science technicians from the park's natural resources division, gaining great experience for future careers in conservation while adding value to the visitor experience.



7. Night Sky Interpretation: The Wonders of the Galaxy

Funding needed: \$19,260

Priority areas:   

From any perch up on Hurricane Ridge, Olympic National Park has the perfect viewpoint and some of the brightest stars on the planet. Help the park bring the skies to the people by funding a seasonal park ranger who will focus entirely on educating visitors and sharing a love for the skies above. Moonlight walks at Hurricane Ridge, dark skies education, and other interpretive programs will be offered all summer long.



Funded

8. Native Plant Nursery: Restoring Trampled Trails & Flooded Lands

Funding needed: \$32,100

Priority areas:    

The Matt Albright Native Plant Nursery is a vital operation for restoration efforts in Olympic National Park. Here, volunteers plant seedlings to revegetate areas of degraded habitat in both front and backcountry areas of the park. The restoration behind what was once the Elwha River Dam is a shining example of the program's tremendous success. More than 44,000 volunteer hours make all of this happen... that PLUS the support of donors. This support will allow the nursery to accommodate drop-in volunteers and incorporate a new team of urban youth from the park's YMCA partnership into the exciting world of service learning and nature stewardship.



Additional priority projects if more funding is available:

Adventures in Your Big Backyard

Funding needed: \$24,808

Priority areas: 

Partnering with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Olympic Peninsula, park rangers from Olympic National Park will facilitate a series of recreational experiences for youth in their summer camp programs. Activities will include hikes of varying difficulty in each of the three main ecosystems of the park, canoeing and kayaking on Lake Crescent, swimming in the Sol Duc Hot Springs, and beach combing and tide pooling along the Pacific coast. All of this will introduce youth from our local communities to the wealth of recreational opportunities available in Olympic National Park... essentially their Big Backyard!



Elk Monitoring: Understanding Wildlife of the Hoh Watershed

Funding needed: \$24,022

Priority areas: 

To better understand the Olympic National Park's elk and deer dynamics, this project will allow biologists to deploy a grid of 35 game cameras in the Hoh River drainage and use a new method of data analysis to estimate populations and track trends over time. Gaining this knowledge is of great importance as elk are considered a key indicator of the overall health of the park and, along with deer, play an essential role in the park's ecosystems, from low-elevation forests to subalpine meadows. In addition, an ulcerative hoof disease is emerging as a concern to elk health, affecting some animals within the park and requiring monitoring of its spread. Using cameras has the added benefit of detecting other key species such as bear, cougar, and coyote and determining if wolf colonization is occurring. Park staff members are seeking additional funding from USGS to expand this project to other areas within the park.

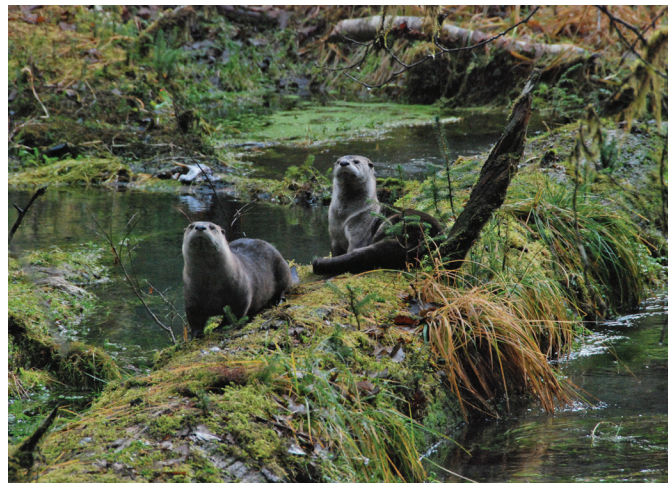


Hoh Stream Gage Cost Share: Maintaining Real-time Monitoring of River Flow

Funding needed: \$67,410

Priority areas:  

Data has been gathered on the flow of the Hoh River since 1960, but the operation of the streamflow gage is now in jeopardy, due to funding shortfalls of the USGS, its managing agency. This project will fund continuing operation of the gage for five years to provide real-time information essential for the safety of recreational users of the river corridor – anglers, boaters, and hikers – and for similar use by Hoh Tribal members and staff. The gage also provides data on high water events to evaluate flood damage and for securing emergency funding for repairs following major storms. It also contributes to understanding the dynamics of water flow from glaciers in the upper Hoh Watershed. Funding will cover 60% of the operational cost of the streamflow gage, with the USGS covering the remaining 40%. It is anticipating that alternative funding can be secured after the five-year project time frame.





WASHINGTON'S
NATIONAL
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Cover photo Mount Rainier by Sheena Shahangian

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