

# Park Passion

THE DIFFERENCE YOU'RE MAKING IN YOUR NATIONAL PARKS • SUMMER 2022



You're about to read some stories centered on seedlings, plantings, growth, and blooming. Inch by inch, row by row...gardens at this time of year really DO grow.

So does Washington's National Park Fund. The fact that we've been on a steady stream of growth especially over these past few years is now a common mantra. We continue bringing donors and friends together for the parks. Our asks are subtle and respectful. We simply invite people to step up and in, and they do. This year is – ONCE AGAIN – shaping up to be our best year ever.

The groundwork for bringing people together for the parks is now on a very solid foundation. We continue to build so our parks can thrive even stronger. While these parks are yours... the gratitude is all ours. Thank you!

**LAURIE WARD**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*Your donations helped us fund eight priority projects in North Cascades National Park in 2021. Photo captured by Scott Kranz, with aerial support provided by LightHawk.*

## You're Helping to Grow the Seeds of Community Resilience

By Jen Semsak, WNPF Board of Directors

More sunshine, warmer temperatures, longer days, and birdsong at dawn build our excitement for spring. And no one is more joyous than a gardener. Or in this case, the gardeners at the Darrington School Greenhouse in northwestern Washington state.

A warm day in late February helped these gardeners raise new bed frames and prepare existing ones for the students' spring planting. These beds will build more than native plants and young minds; they will build community, too.

The Food Sustainability and Native Plant Education pilot program at North Cascades National Park began as a dialogue several years ago on how to reach populations the park doesn't serve as much as it would like – including local gateway communities, underserved youth, and



*Darrington Elementary School students learned the importance of protecting native plants in the North Cascades on a fall field trip made possible by WNPF donors. Photo by NPS.*

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## PARK PERSON OF INTEREST

# Don Striker, Superintendent of North Cascades National Park



Don Striker joined the team at North Cascades National Park in November, and he has hit the ground running as its new Superintendent. A 28-year veteran of the National Park Service, he came to us from Alaska's Denali National Park and Preserve.

We hosted Don for a Virtual Field Trip where he shared his perspective on the greatest needs facing North Cascades National Park – and its greatest opportunities, from Stehekin's remoteness and red buses to partnerships with local tribes and school groups.

Find our conversation with Don – along with a host of informative videos on all things North Cascades – in our Virtual Field Trips playlist on YouTube.



## Your Gifts Make a Difference

From aquatic restoration efforts in Mount Rainier to rare carnivore research in the North Cascades, transformational field trips to Olympic for local middle schoolers, and more, see all the good you did in our parks in 2021. Read our Annual Report online at [wnpf.org/report](https://wnpf.org/report).



## YOUR IMPACT IN THE PARKS

**"The legislation that created the National Park Service required us to leave parks unimpaired for future generations, and revegetation is a crucial way of achieving that. Without revegetation, we lose community types, we lose species, we lose human landscape connections – not just with visitors, but with the original peoples who lived here for thousands of years."**

– Janet Coles, Supervisory Botanist at Olympic National Park



Learn more about the park's revegetation efforts – and how your support makes them possible through the Matt Albright Native Plant Nursery – in our video at [www.wnpf.org/meadows](https://www.wnpf.org/meadows) (or by scanning the QR code).



## OUR FLAT HAT SALUTE

goes out to Scott Kranz, incredible author, photographer and good friend of Washington's National Park Fund. He shot our cover photo, joining LightHawk for a flight over the North Cascades.

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## You're Helping to Grow the Seeds of Community Resilience

tribes. In discussion with local partners, it was discovered that food security was an issue of concern in the community, as well as a lack of knowledge of traditional foods and uses. Thus, this program was developed to build a hands-on project to learn skills to contribute to and maintain gardens for food sustainability and sovereignty.

Launched in 2020 with funding from Washington's National Park Fund donors, the project aims to provide educational outdoor experiences, place-based learning, native plant education, and food sustainability for adult and youth participants. It brings North Cascades National Park together with local organizations, including the Lummi Nation, Lummi Natural Resources, Lummi Nation School, Sauk-Suiattle Tribe, Darrington School District, and the Glacier Peak Institute.

### Preparing to Bloom

As with all fruitful gardens, it is the careful preparations that lay the groundwork. So far, park staff have given over 200 hours engaging partners, purchasing materials, designing the gardens, managing the project, and developing the pilot 5th-grade curriculum, which is aligned with Next Generation Science Standards and Since Time Immemorial Standards.

At Darrington Elementary School in early October, park rangers introduced students to the concept of food systems and gave an overview of the Community Resilience project. Students were given buckets to begin composting by collecting food waste in their classrooms and transferring it to the compost by the school greenhouse. They have continued actively composting ever since.

Later in October students took a field trip to the park to learn about native plants and natural food systems. There, they were introduced to the mission of the National Park



*Thanks to you, Darrington Elementary School students learned about forest ecosystems in the park. Photo by NPS.*

Service and got to explore the forest ecosystem through a scavenger hunt activity and a hike centered around native plants and the salmon spawning in the river.

### Future Stewards

While native plants germinate and grow at Darrington Elementary and fifth-graders build bonds with their park, a high school version of the curriculum is in development as well. Botany and Environmental Literacy courses will engage students in composting, assisting with the growth of food crops at their school and on Sauk-Suiattle land, as well as providing a service-learning project to create an ethnobotanical demonstration garden at the North Cascades Visitor Center.

North Cascades National Park is eager to grow this program and continue it for many years. In fact, the park is already fielding interest from other potential community partners who want to replicate the work for other local populations.

For Washington's National Park Fund, providing for youth and family programs that create opportunities for people from all backgrounds to experience, learn to care for, and protect park resources is an important priority. It's thanks to supporters like you that projects like this one can continue.

### MEET THE WNPf BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fred Hammerquist (Chair) • Tom Dugan • Beth Glosten • Cynthia Hartwig • Tony Hoskins • Jillian Kosic • Kelly Lake • John Meyer • Kirk Myers • Vineet Parkhe • Mitch Pittman • Karen Povey • Antonio Rufin • Jen Semsak • Bruce Tecklenburg • Joel VandenBrink • Marjorie Walter

Welcome to our newest Board members, **Jane Eckels** and **Teresa Hagerty**! Get to know them at [wnpf.org/about-us/leadership](https://wnpf.org/about-us/leadership)





WASHINGTON'S  
NATIONAL  
PARK FUND

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## The Parks Need Your Support

Summer means time spent backpacking, hiking, biking, paddling, and exploring the wilderness within our incredible state. As you're spending time in Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic National Parks this summer, we hope you'll remember that they need your help to keep thriving into the future.

From donating your used boat, car, truck, or motorcycle to giving a gift of stock, there are many ways to give and ensure we can continue providing for the projects and programs that keep our parks magnificent. Please consider giving a gift by completing the enclosed gift envelope or explore all the ways to give back at [wnpf.org/giving](https://wnpf.org/giving).

*Your gifts help us preserve Mount Rainier National Park for future generations. Photo by Karen Povey.*

## EVENTS

FOR A FULL LIST OF EVENTS,  
VISIT [WNPF.ORG](https://wnpf.org)

THURSDAY  
AUG  
4

### ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT (FEE FREE DAY)

Get outside! Entrance fees to all National Park Service sites will be waived to celebrate the anniversary of this landmark legislation which supports the maintenance backlog for critical facilities and infrastructure in national parks.

SUNDAY  
AUG  
7

### RIDE THE HURRICANE IN OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

Ride your bike up to Hurricane Ridge on one special day when the road is closed to all motor vehicles. A portion of your registration fee is donated to Washington's National Park Fund in support of the park. Learn more: [ridethehurricane.org](https://ridethehurricane.org)

THURSDAY  
AUG  
25

### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S BIRTHDAY (FEE FREE DAY)

Another great opportunity to get outside and explore our national parks! The National Park Service will be celebrating its 106th birthday by waiving entrance fees to all NPS sites.

SATURDAY  
SEPT  
10

### PACIFIC RUNDERLAND 5K & KIDS RUN IN AUBURN

Run or walk through Roegner Park to support Washington's national parks! This family-friendly event is a chance to come together with a community of park lovers who especially love giving back. Sign up at [pacificrunderlandevents.com](https://pacificrunderlandevents.com).

SATURDAY  
SEPT  
24

### NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY (FEE FREE DAY)

A signature event of the National Environmental Education Foundation, National Public Lands Day is the nation's largest single-day volunteer effort, promoting both popular enjoyment and volunteer conservation of public lands.

SUNDAY  
OCT  
12

### NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK'S BIRTHDAY

President Lyndon Johnson signed North Cascades National Park into being 54 years ago, protecting its majestic mountains, alpine meadows, and unique glaciated features for generations to come. Celebrate by sharing a park memory on social media with #ForTheParks.

**OUR MISSION** is to raise private support to deepen everyone's love for, understanding of, and experiences in Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic National Parks. **OUR VISION** is for our three parks to be strong and vibrant, youthful and everlasting.