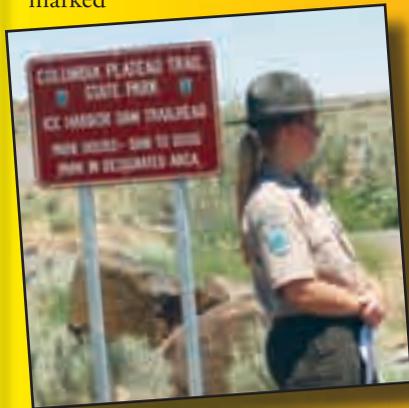


Here's what's new in your state parks

Columbia Plateau opens new trail miles

Hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders can now use the southern stretch of the Columbia Plateau Trail. A June celebration marked



Ranger Melinda McKeen near the Ice Harbor Dam Trailhead of the Columbia Plateau Trail.

completion of a new 14-mile segment from Ice Harbor Dam near Pasco, to Snake River Junction. The northern portion

of the trail already has been in use. Starting at Fish Lake south of Spokane, there's 3.75 miles of blacktop. The trail then continues on crushed rock surface for 19.25 miles southwest to Martin Road. The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, which manages the trail, plans to improve surface, add trailheads and upgrade tunnels and trestles along the entire 130-mile corridor. When completed, the trail will connect Cheney and Tri-cities.

State Parks region office gets recycling kudos

The Washington State Parks Puget Sound Region Office in Auburn has joined companies such as Coca-Cola and IKEA in earning a spot on King County's top 50 "Best Workplaces for Recycling" list. The county's list included large and small companies that demonstrated they make recycling a business priority and run strong recycling programs. The State Parks

and Recreation Commission has a goal of 100 percent of state parks participating in recycling by 2013 as part of its sustainability plan. Currently, approximately 75 percent of parks recycle. Others are exploring ways to participate, and some are expanding their participation by recycling more different types of materials.

Park panels tell story of Ice Age floods

Telling the Ice Age floods story is one of State Parks' 11 Centennial 2013 goals. State Parks developed an interpretive master plan and has placed nearly 30 interpretive panels at Beacon Rock, Dry Falls Visitor Center, Sun Lakes, Ginkgo Petrified Forest, Palouse Falls, Steamboat Rock and Yakima Sportsman state parks. Parks staff develop and run visitor education programs at each location. State Parks Ice Age floods funding serves as a match for a Scenic Byways grant to design renovation and expansion at Dry Falls Visitor Center. A design consultant team will be selected this fall.

Foster families may camp for free in state parks

State-registered foster families camping with children in their care can get free campsites in Washington state parks because of a new law passed last spring.

"We are very excited about getting this program started," Derr said. "We know that many foster families already enjoy their state parks, and we're happy to welcome new families to explore and enjoy."

Foster care providers need to be registered with the state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to qualify. To camp at a reservation park, care providers decide on a date and destination and call 1-888-CAMP-OUT, telling the operator they are registered foster providers. Campers are charged only the \$7 to \$9 reservation fee and no campsite fee – a savings of \$17 to \$32 a night. When arriving

at the park, providers show park staff a valid driver's license and a foster license. Registered relative foster care givers show a driver's license and a relative caregiver ID obtainable through DSHS.

For more information, visit www.parks.wa.gov/passes.asp or call the State Parks Information Center, (360)-902-8844, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

You can help your state parks by supporting the Centennial 2013 Plan. Send an endorsement online today at www.parks.wa.gov/Centennial2013



CENTENNIAL 2013

News

- FIX WHAT WE HAVE
- UPDATE EXISTING PARKS AND TRAILS
- WORK TOWARD NEW PARKS AND TRAILS

Rockport State Park celebrates new barrier-free forest trail

For people in wheelchairs and those with other mobility challenges, a new interpretive trail along the North Cascades Highway offers a unique, up-close experience of old-growth forest.

Park and region staff started with an existing trail and determined that, by making some grade changes and reconstructing three bridges, they could develop a

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Seattle City Light, the U.S. Forest Service and Whatcom County Sheriff's Department joined park visitors in June to celebrate completion of the 1.1-mile, barrier-free interpretive trail at Rockport State Park, 40 miles east of Burlington. The trail is four feet wide in most places and is surfaced with compacted gravel. Bridge decks are made of recycled materials.

The trail takes visitors through the forest and leads them along a series of eight interpretive panels that explain the various characteristics currently used to define old-growth forest.

So far, the trail has received rave reviews, says Park Manager Al Nickerson.

"People are really excited about our trail, saying it's one of the best they've been on," he said. "We had some people on crutches who did the whole thing, and a lady last week had her mother in here on a motorized wheelchair, and she went along the whole trail. People with these kinds of challenges just don't get a chance to be in an old-growth forest like this very often."



Carrie Dalton cuts the ribbon and leads about 30 people into the heart of the old-growth forest for a new interpretive experience at Rockport State Park on the North Cascades Highway.

trail that would meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and include a broad range of users.

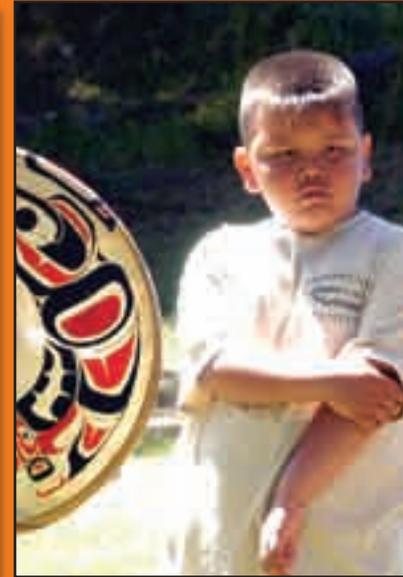
Trail funding was secured by staff of the Mt. Baker Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service, from Seattle City Light, under re-licensing agreements for hydroelectric projects. Grant money paid for a corrections work crew through the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office.

Arts in Parks sponsors 25 events in parks across the state

The Folk and Traditional Arts in the Parks Program celebrated its fourth season of multi-cultural festivals and concerts in state parks in 2008, including:

- Latino fiestas in Eastern Washington
- Russian-Slavic festivals at Paradise Point and Riverside
- A Samish-Swinomish Native American Day at Deception Pass
- An American Roots Music Concert Series at Larrabee and Deception Pass
- The third annual “Hip-Nic” Hip Hop Picnic at Saint Edward
- A new Asian Concert Series at Peace Arch and a Cambodian Festival at Millersylvania

The program is provided in cooperation with the Washington State Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. For information, visit www.parks.wa.gov/events



Left: Festival Sundiata “Unity in the Community” Family Reunion, held in June at Lake Sammamish State Park in Issaquah, celebrated African American culture with live entertainment, vendor booths, food and games.

Right: Isaiah James with the Samish Tribe joined festivities during Native American Culture Day in mid-July at Deception Pass State Park. The free event featured canoe rides, singers, drummers, weaving and a salmon lunch.

“Inside Out” program gets youth outdoors for learning, adventures

Since 2003, State Parks has offered outdoor adventures to more than 600 youth through its Inside Out Youth/Family Camping Program.

The program’s objectives include helping youth develop an understanding and appreciation of nature, broadening representation of communities of color in state parks, mentoring leadership and self-reliance and introducing young people to outdoor recreation and environmental science careers. Programs include camping, fishing, hiking, rafting and snowboarding, as well as safety and environmental

training. Families participate, as well. Koquisa Taylor of Redmond, the mother of two boys who joined the program, said the experience broadened her family’s options.

“The trip was a great intro to camping. It was just like a three-day picnic in the park. My boys were loving it. It seemed as though they were in their natural setting. No toys, just tree branches and dirt and three days of happiness. Camping adds to the quality of life. It gives you something low cost to do all year around and strengthens you as a family and as a person.”

Inside Out Youth/Family Camping is now a joint program of the Washington State Parks Foundation (WSPF) and State Parks and is funded by public and private funds.

Outreach is through a network of partners, including National Youth Congress, SOS Outreach, Metro Parks Tacoma, YMCA of Greater Seattle, City of Seattle Parks and Recreation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound, Lake Washington Girls Middle School, Outside Chances, Yakima Youth and Family YMCA, The Service Board and Washington Department of Health.

Paul Martin, State Parks coordinator, worked with Seattle Parks staff this summer to take a group of 12-to-14-year-olds from Rainier Beach on a camping and rafting trip to Rasar State Park. Martin said it was fun to watch the group pull together as a team as the rafting got tougher.

“The most challenging aspect is convincing young people that if they break out of their comfort zone, they’ll really be okay,” Martin said. “The best of all is seeing that transformative moment, that sudden ‘wow’ on someone’s face.”

Grand opening at Cama Beach



Scenes from a celebration:

About 2,000 people visited Cama Beach State Park on a sunny opening day June 21, to enjoy music, food, displays and boat rides. An afternoon dedication ceremony featured remarks from Tribal members, donors, community partners and elected officials, including Gov. Chris Gregoire. A sign unveiling followed (top photo). The historic resort, a longtime Native gathering place, offers cabin rentals and day use activities, including educational programs with State Parks staff and partners such as the Center for Wooden Boats. For information, call (360) 387-1550.