

The Moose Call

The Newsletter of the Friends of
Mt. Spokane State Park

February 2003

Report from the President

Cris M. Currie

The long awaited final version of the new Mt. Spokane State Park brochure was finally completed last spring just in time for the start of the summer season and the Park's 75th anniversary. The Friends Group had worked on this project, including the trail mapping, for nearly five years. After substantial input from Friends Group volunteers, the final map and layout were completed by the Parks Commission Public Affairs Department staff, and the printing was done by the Washington State Department of Printing. The best news is that we now have a product we can be very proud of! Not only does the brochure contain an accurate, detailed trail map and 6 loop trail descriptions, but 9 photographs of the Park grace its 11" X 17" format. Five corporate sponsors, whose names are on the back along with information about the Friends Group, generously contributed to the costs. The brochure was particularly useful this summer since once again, the main park road was closed for reconstruction, and visitors needed to be directed to alternate access points. Another very important aspect of the brochure is that it outlines the rules for all trail users and clearly identifies the Natural Forest Areas and the Natural Area Preserve within

the Park. Coupled with the Friends Group trail courtesy signs that are now posted at various trail heads, this will make it easier for the rangers to educate visitors to the Park's rules and better protect it's natural and cultural resources from abuse.

The Friends Group also made significant progress in eradicating Spotted Knapweed from the Natural Area Preserve on Ragged Ridge. Since this noxious weed propagates both by seed and by underground rhizomes that remain viable even after the plant is pulled, Parks Commission staff authorized the use of a new herbicide called Redeem, donated by the Wilbur-Ellis Company. Thanks to **Bill Birk** and his llamas, enough water could be hauled out to Ragged Ridge to mix with the herbicide concentrate to cover all of the affected areas. Volunteers then went back two more times over the summer to spray what came up after the initial treatment. The kill rate was quite impressive, with very little damage to surrounding flora. Since the seeds last several years, the project will continue indefinitely until the plant no longer germinates. Summer trail access to the ridge from outside the Park has been nearly eliminated, so the dispersal of new seeds is now expected to be minimal.

The third project for the year involved

The Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park
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enhancing the safety for summer users of Trail 110 by modifying the layout of its switchbacks. Trail 110 is a very heavily used, mostly single track, multi-use trail that connects the upper Kit Carson Loop Road with the lower Kit Carson Loop Road. Friends Group volunteers, including **Mike Brixey** (representing the mountain bikers), **Phil Bolich** (representing the equestrians), and **Bill Birk** (representing nature based recreation) assisted Park staff in laying out the modifications that were recommended by the International Mountain Biking Association Trail Crew last summer. After a few weeks of Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) grant funded work by members of the Washington Conservation Corps, the DNR prison crew, and Park staff, the result is a trail with a much more gradual overall decent and improved drainage, and a trail that is much easier to maintain and safer to ride and hike.

One additional set of trail improvements over the summer involved erecting more trail junction signs. Friends Group volunteers determined that 9 different trail junctions still posed confusing choices for trail users, so the appropriate signs were ordered by Park staff and then installed by the volunteers.

New Board Members

Two new members of the Advisory Committee and Friends Group were elected at the January, 2003 meeting. **Jeff Gibson**, an engineer and VP at Telect was elected to the business representative position. **Aaron Trainor**, a construction worker whose family has lived next to the park since 1945 and who now owns property quite near the park, was elected to the neighboring property owners position.

Friends Group and Advisory Committee Roster for 2003

Mark Augenstine, Motorized Winter Recreation
Bill Birk, Nature Based Recreation
Phil Bolich, Passive Summer Recreation
Anita Boyden, Treasurer

Mike Brixey, Mountain Biking
Ken Carmichael, Equestrians
Cris Currie, President
Tom Frost, Non-motorized Winter Recreation
Gino Lisiecki, Active Summer Recreation

Jeff Gibson, Business Community
Barbee Scheibner, At Large
Aaron Spurway, Secretary
Aaron Trainor, Neighboring Property Owner

Positions are still available!!

Lookout Project Moves Ahead

Final permitting for moving the former DNR fire lookout from its temporary resting place to the summit of Quartz Mountain should be completed this spring. Work on constructing the 12-15 foot tower is expected to start this summer. Once the site is prepared and toilet facilities installed, the Friends Group hopes to arrange for a Chinook Army helicopter to airlift the cabin to the tower. Volunteers will then restore the structure as an historic fire lookout and make it suitable for overnight accommodations. The Friends Group would like to provide some matching funds to the Park for this project. Anyone wishing to contribute is welcome to send a check (earmarked for the lookout restoration) to the Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park.

Recent Contributors

Thanks to **Parviz Partovi**, **Dale Gill**, **Jean Patrouch**, **Sheila & Jim Harless**, **Fitness Fanatics**, **KXLY Broadcast Group**, **Rich Landers**, **Eric Sahlin**, **Spokane Powersports**, and **Exchange Publishing** for your generous contributions over the past year!!





Park Manager Steve Christensen making it all happen!

New Ranger

Patrick Henry is the newest ranger at Mt. Spokane State Park. He has eleven years of experience with state parks and is a former machinist and pipe fitter. It's reported that he can fix anything! Patrick joined Park Manager Steve Christensen and Ranger Dennis Lotts last spring.

Park Improvements

Mt. Spokane State Park is looking better, and what a relief! Park visitors in search of relief will now find five new CXT vault toilets at strategic locations. They have been installed at the park entrance, the CCC cabin, the snowmobile parking lot, outside the Selkirk Lodge, and near the NOVA Hut on the nordic ski trails. Park Manager Steve Christensen requested these just as soon as the ink was dry on the state legislature's \$4 million maintenance backlog allocation of last year.



A big relief!

Another very noticeable and long overdue improvement completed this fall was the \$151,000 Vista House renovation. State historic preservation funds were used to put on a new roof of hand-cut

cedar shakes, repair the failing masonry, install copper flashing, replace broken windows, re-paint the trim, and repair the door. The interior of this 1934, CCC constructed stone structure was also spruced up by the alpine ski area concessionaire for weekend use, complete with knotty pine furniture

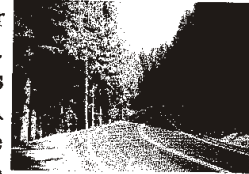


The new look!

and plenty of wood for the fireplace. Skiers now have a place on the summit to take a break from the cold and order a cup of hot chocolate and a

bowl of chili. State preservation funds were also used to stabilize the historic Cook's Cabin stone latrine.

The most noticeable summer improvement was of course the reconstruction of the lower part of the main park road. The old road was completely gutted. A proper bed was laid for the first time, curves were straightened, portions were elevated to make a gentler grade, drainage, barriers, and landscaping were added, and even a new view point parking area was created. Already, the rangers have reported significantly fewer traffic accidents for the winter season, especially at infamous Cadillac Corner!



Smooth sailing

Joining the Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park

Individual Membership: \$25 or 5 hours of volunteer service per year.

Family Membership: \$40 or 10 hours of volunteer service per year.

Corporate Membership: \$100 per year or more! All contributions are tax deductible.

Name: _____

I would like to volunteer: _____

Address: _____

I have enclosed \$ _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Mail to: The Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park
621 W. Mallon, Suite 509, Spokane, WA 99201

Thank you!!

Message phone: 509-467-9343

Web site: www.mtspokane.org.

Nordic skiers in the Park are benefiting from the purchase of a new \$96,000 Bombardier grooming machine. Funding was provided through the Sno-Park program. A small pull behind Ginzugroomer was also purchased with matching funds provided by the Selkirk Nordic Ski Education Foundation. It will be used to set middle tracks and to groom during the shoulder



Operator Will Smith in the old nordic groomer

seasons. Skiers and snowmobilers have also warmed up to new wood stoves in the Selkirk Lodge and the CCC cabin, purchased by the Winter Knights Snowmobile Club. A new wood stove was installed last year in the NOVA Hut by the nordic club.

Parking Fees

And now for the bad news. Due to severe budget cuts, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission reluctantly decided last September to institute a \$5.00 day use vehicle parking fee at most state parks. Mt. Spokane rangers will collect this fee only during the summer and fall between May 15 and the start of nordic grooming, which usually begins in the middle of November. All visitors who want to park their cars inside the park will be required to deposit \$5.00 in a self-serve collection box or have a \$50 annual pass that is valid for all state parks in Washington. Volunteers who work a minimum of 20 hours per year in state parks are eligible for a free annual pass. The program will begin this year.

Friends on the Web

Don't forget to visit the Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park web site at www.mtspokane.org for the new trail map and lots more information about Mt. Spokane!

Volunteers Needed

The Friends Group is still looking for additional people to help collate the full history of Mt. Spokane State Park. If you like to dig up interesting facts and put puzzles together, this could be the job for you!

Volunteers will also be needed to help with the fire lookout restoration as well as the usual summer trail clearing. Contact Ranger Dennis Lotts (238-4258), the volunteer coordinator, if you would like to help out.

If you would like to serve on the Advisory Committee and Friends Group Board, call Cris Currie, President, at 466-9540.



Trail Courtesy

The following guidelines were adopted by the Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park in order to help provide a better experience for all park users.

All Trail Users

Don't cut switchbacks. Avoid muddy areas. Leave no trace. Pets on leashes at all times. Protect stream quality. No ORVs in the park!

Hikers

Yield and announce presence when approaching livestock. Step to downhill side for livestock to pass. Tread lightly off trail.

Cyclists

Yield to livestock and hikers. Announce your presence when approaching others. Step to downhill side for livestock to pass. Maintain control. Stay on trail.

Livestock Users

Stay on trail. Maintain control of livestock. Warning: Llamas must yield to horses.

Snowmobilers

Ride in designated areas only. Stay on groomed trail. Respect park hours. Use caution around others. Slow down in unsafe conditions.