



The Moose Call

*The Newsletter of the Friends of
Mt. Spokane State Park*

March 2006

From the President

by Cris M. Currie

The combined Mt. Spokane State Park Friends Group and Advisory Committee had eight meetings during 2005. The same two principal projects as last year dominated the group's work for this year. The group assisted in final preparations for the July 1 opening of the Quartz Mountain fire lookout to overnight rentals, and it made substantial progress toward completion of a draft comprehensive Park trail plan. Additional details are available in this newsletter.

The group's newly formed history committee was also very active through 2005. Members have created an outline for the history project and have interviewed several individuals with knowledge of various historical events at Mt. Spokane. They have also met with local history writer Tony Bamonte, who offered a great deal of assistance for writing a historical book.

Volunteers are still needed to serve on the Advisory Committee and Friends Board. Specifically we have openings for representatives from the environmental community (environmental organization member, environmental expert, etc.), for nature based recreation (nature photographer, bird watcher, harvester, etc.), for passive summer recreation (camper, hiker, sightseer, etc.), and from the local business community.

If you would like to get involved, please contact the Friends!

Web Site Address Change

The old Friends Group web site address was hijacked and has been changed to: **www.mountspokane.org**. At the new address you can still find great photos, a trail guide, maps, Park history, annual reports, information about joining and more.

The Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park
621 W. Mallon, Suite 509
Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 467-9343

Fire Lookout Open

The Quartz Mountain Fire Lookout is now available to rent for summer overnights! The season runs roughly from June 15 until October 15, and the cost is only \$50 per night. The 14' X14' cabin sits on an 11' wood tower on the 5160' summit of Quartz Mountain in Mt. Spokane State Park. There is a 360 degree view including Spokane and Spokane Valley, the north Idaho panhandle, and northeastern Washington. Furnishings include a propane cook stove, two single beds with two additional foam mattresses on the laminate floor, drinking water, non-potable water for washing, four chairs and a table, a cabinet and counter, washing tubs, a cutting board, a fire extinguisher, and an emergency lantern. Outside are deck chairs, a picnic table and fire ring with cut firewood, and a new CXT vault toilet. Visitors need only bring their sleeping bags, food, warm clothes and a few other minor articles for a very comfortable stay.

It's a 2.2 mile hike with a 620' elevation gain from the Selkirk Lodge parking area to the lookout. The trail is wide and easy to follow and there are several other trails in the vicinity for endless wandering. At this point, reservations can only be made through the Park office by calling (509) 238-4258 or by writing to Mt. Spokane State Park, 26107 N. Mt. Spokane Park Drive, Mead, WA 99021. Park personnel begin taking reservations on March 1 for the upcoming season. Once confirmed, guests receive a copy of the rental agreement, a receipt, a trail map, and a combination to the lookout key box which is outside the Park office door.

For further information, contact the Park, go to the Friends web site, or check out the beautiful photos in the August/September 2005 issue of Inland NW Homes & Lifestyles, a supplement to the Spokane Journal of Business.

Volunteers Finish Fire Lookout

By the end of 2004, park staff had moved the old DN R fire lookout to the summit of Quartz Mountain and volunteers had fully enclosed it for the winter. During the late spring of 2005, park staff finished the interior by installing a door and a new laminate floor, completing the ceiling and the window trim, painting, and installing the propane cook stove, donated by the Winter Knights Snowmobile Club. New exterior shutters were designed and built by a local teen volunteer as his Eagle Scout project. They were custom designed with hinges on both the top and in the middle so that they fold up and hang from the roof when not needed. This turned out to be a much more complicated project than originally imagined, and the Friends Group is extremely grateful to Drew Schlieder and his dad Sam for taking it on! The Friends Group covered the costs of all of the furnishings and shutter materials which amounted to over \$3600.



Trail Plan Progress

The Advisory Committee/Friends Group is continuing to work on a draft comprehensive trail plan for the Park. At the October 2005 meeting, a 17 page rough draft, based on the previous discussions and specific input from the Park Manager, was presented to the group for a detailed critique. The rough draft includes a trail inventory matrix listing 101 trail segments and associated data, including a revised numbering and naming system. Also included in the plan are summer and winter sections concerning trail construction and maintenance standards, trail improvement projects, new trail development, user information and education, cultural and natural resource protection, monitoring trail use and resource impact, a limits of acceptable change (LAC) matrix with listings of management options for when those limits are exceeded, and trail policy enforcement strategies.

So far, ideas for new single track trails include: 1) a connector between the bottom of Trail 115 and Trail 110 so a loop can be made on the north side of State Road 206, 2) a multi-use summer and snowshoe



Trail Work at Mt. Spokane

trail from the upper parking area to Quartz Mountain, traversing below the nordic area, 3) a summit loop for the disabled, and 4) a ridge trail just north of the Day Road to complete another loop.

The group expects to complete its work on this plan and present it to the Parks Commission in 2006. Once the Commission completes its review, a public presentation will be made to collect additional comments before the plan is adopted. If you have specific ideas or suggestions as to what should be included in this plan, please mail them to the Friends or send an e-mail to criscurrie@igc.org.

Ragged Ridge NAP

Friends Group members returned to the Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve (NAP) three times this year to spray and pull Spotted Knapweed. This is the sixth straight year for the program, and the number of plants continues to decrease dramatically



Ragged Ridge

each year. The ridge is located in the far southeast corner of the Park. The area is currently open only for pedestrian use and for scientific research and education.

Future Development

In addition to the new trail construction that is being recommended in the draft trail plan, several other projects are in the early planning stages. As part of the State Parks Centennial 2013 Commitment, four new rental cabins will be built in the Park. Details and locations have yet to be decided upon. Plans also include restoring the north end of the Vista House as a fire lookout museum, in keeping with its original purpose. And the alpine ski area is preparing a proposal for expanding its operation to the west side of the summit. The area was left unclassified under the State Parks Classification and Management Plan until the concessionaire submitted a proposal.



Thank You Donors and Volunteers

Many thanks to our 2005 financial donors, including William and Patty Houff, Debra and Bruce Howard, Parviz Partovi, Daniel Farber, and Mike Brixey!

Also thanks to our dedicated Advisory Committee/Friends Board members and volunteers including, Mark Augenstine (motorized winter recreation), Anita Boyden (Friends Treasurer), Mike Brixey (active summer recreation), Ken Carmichael (equestrians), Cris Currie (Chair), Tom Frost (non-motorized winter recreation), Dean Kiefer (education community), Barbee Scheibner (at large member), Aaron Spurway (Secretary), Shelley Tschida (at large member), Sam Deal (neighboring business owner), Brad McQuarrie (concession representative), and newest member Rob Lindsay (at-large and alpine skiing). Craig Bierly and Karen Covelli have also provided invaluable assistance.

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.

Note: Documented volunteer service of 20 hrs/yr or more qualifies for a free Park pass.

Date: _____

Name: _____ I would like to volunteer: _____ hrs

Address: _____ I have enclosed: \$ _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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.mountspokane.org

