



# Wallace Falls State Park

## Classification and Management Planning

### Stage 3 – Preliminary Recommendations

July 18, 2018      Sultan City Hall

#### **Thanks for coming!**

This document contains State Parks preliminary recommendations for land classification, long-term boundary, and management recommendations. This document takes into account comments received at the November 17, 2017 and March 21, 2018 public meetings and written comments received throughout the planning process. Please provide comments on these preliminary recommendations at the meeting tonight or by Friday August 3. Comment can be submitted to Randy Kline, Project Manager, at [randy.kline@parks.wa.gov](mailto:randy.kline@parks.wa.gov).

For more information visit our Wallace Falls Planning web page at <http://parks.state.wa.us/1074/Wallace-Falls-Planning>.

## **Key Features of the Preliminary Recommendation**

- Looks to provide additional trails and recreation opportunities for hikers, bikers and equestrians
- Identifies areas where trailhead facilities can be located – both on-site and off-site
- Promotes dispersal of recreation through potential use of the Snohomish County trailhead (the Lawson property) with parking for 50 to 60 vehicles and potential bridge access into the existing trail system north of the Wallace River
- Identifies additional parking within the park (the Camp Huston in-holding) for either permanent or temporary parking with potential to accommodate up to 100 vehicles
- Long-term boundary includes DNR, Snohomish County, commercial forest landowners, and private properties
- Supports the potential for expanded recreation use south, east, and west of the park in coordination with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Includes land within the long-term boundary along Ley Road and May Creek Road to coordinate with property owners and City of Gold Bar to improve on-street parking

## **Summary of Core Management Issues**

Several recurring management issues arose through public meetings and written comments. Preliminary management approaches to these issues as identified by the public and staff include the following:

### **Parking**

Parking has been and continues to be an important management consideration at Wallace Falls State Park. The park has 108 parking stalls and that limit is often exceeded on week-ends and holidays with as many as 150 vehicles parking outside of the Wallace Falls entrance, especially along Ley Road.

This planning process was initiated in part to address these parking issues. Two approaches to the parking issue are proposed. The first is to identify specific parcels in close proximity to the park with the capacity to provide conventional parking facilities to supplement existing in-park parking. Parcel along Ley Road have also been included in the long-term boundary to call out the need to work with property owners on improvements to the current parking situation.

The second approach is the use of a van shuttle from an offsite parking location to the park. While this continues to be an option there are a number of issues that make a van shuttle a challenge. Traffic volume on Route 2, especially in the summer, is very heavy and crossing Highway 2 can be difficult. With this in mind a van pick-up site would likely be most successful if located north of Highway 2. This would require an off-site parking lot to accommodate overflow parking. One challenge for a shuttle is the irregularity with which it would likely run making it difficult for a concessionaire or private shuttle company to operate. This document includes a management recommendation that supports use of a shuttle service should one become feasible.

*Preliminary Recommendation:* State Parks proposes to:

- Include specific parcels in the long-term boundary that can accommodate and support new parking facilities.
- Include specific parcels along Ley Road in the long-term boundary to work with the City of Gold Bar and property owners along this road which handles the majority of overflow parking.
- Understand the challenges associated with shuttle service but work with the local stakeholders to support a shuttle if viable.

These parcels can be seen in the Long-Term Boundary map below.

## **Coordination with the Department of Natural Resources**

Wallace Falls State Park is surrounded by a combination of public and private ownerships. The Wild Sky Wilderness area is located east of the park. Generally, adjacent lands located east, west and south of the park are managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Ownerships on the north end of the park include private commercial forest land owned by Weyerhaeuser Company and Sierra Pacific Industries. Both commercial forest lands and DNR managed lands have been included in the long-term boundary for the park.

Reiter Foothills Forest, a DNR managed working forest that includes recreation, is located east, west and south of the park. DNR lands are managed to provide revenue for trust beneficiaries and to provide wildlife habitat. Recreation can occur in these landscapes as a secondary use provided it does not impact the primary objectives. Many opportunities exist to provide trail connections through working landscapes and to coordinate with DNR to provide a range of user experiences in the area.

*Preliminary Recommendation:* Include adjacent DNR lands within the long-term boundary to encourage and facilitate recreation opportunities including non-motorized trail connections between DNR public lands and the park. State Parks seeks to accomplish the purpose of including a property in the long-term boundary in the least burdensome and most advantageous manner. With the surrounding DNR lands this is best achieved through a management agreement that articulates shared recreation goals. Washington State Parks has no plans to acquire any DNR properties in the long-term boundary at present. DNR will continue to manage their lands within the long-term boundary as working forest under the multiple use concept described in RCW 79.10.110.

These parcels can be seen in the long-term boundary map below.

## Resource Protection

Wallace Falls State Park includes a series of mid-montane lakes and wetland systems that include Shaw, Jay and Wallace Lake. The Wallace River and the North Fork of the Wallace River run through the park. There are two known rare plant species in the park (Gnome plant and Pine-foot) and eight forest communities. In some areas of the park overstocked forest conditions exist.

In the long-term boundary on the north end of the park there is a pond and wetland system that supports Shaw, Jay and Wallace Lake that are also identified for conservation and resource protection.

*Preliminary Recommendation:* Classify environmentally sensitive lands within the park and the long-term boundary as *Natural* to limit the intensity of use and provide a higher level of protection.

This can be seen in the land classification map below.

## Planning Process

The CAMP planning process involves four sequential stages. Each stage typically includes a public workshop and an opportunity to provide follow-up comments in writing by mail or e-mail. The process does not conclude until the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission; the agency's seven-member governing board; formally adopts land classifications and long-term park boundaries and the Director approves a finalized park management plan. Standard planning stages include:

### **Stage One – Identify issues and concerns**

The purpose of this stage is to understand what is important to the park community and identify issues to address through the planning process. The issues public meeting was held on November 15, 2017 at the Sultan City Hall.

### **Stage Two – Exploring alternative approaches**

At this stage, the planning team suggests potential thematic alternative approaches to address the various issues and concerns raised in stage one. No preferred alternative is established; rather this is an opportunity to examine and understand the range of possibilities. The alternatives public meeting was held on March 21, 2018 at the Sultan City Hall.

### **Stage Three – Preparing preliminary recommendations**

The best ideas from the alternative approaches in stage two are combined into a preliminary plan in this stage. The preliminary plan includes recommendations for use and development of park lands and ways to address issues identified during the planning process. A third public meeting is held at this stage to receive input on the preliminary recommendations. *We are currently at this stage. The preliminary recommendations public meeting was held on July 18 at the Sultan City Hall.*

### **Stage Four – Preparing final recommendations**

At stage four, final adjustments are made to recommendations and submitted to the seven-member Parks and Recreation Commission for approval. The public is encouraged to attend the Commission meeting and provide testimony or written comment.

## Planning Products

The CAMP planning process produces three main products for each park: land classifications, long-term boundary, and a park management plan. The combination of these deliverables constitutes a land use plan. At Stage 3 State Parks provides preliminary recommendations for land classification and long-term boundaries.

## Land Classification

A central part of CAMP involves zoning, or classification, of park lands. State Parks has developed a system of six land classifications: *Recreation Areas*, *Resource Recreation Areas*, *Natural Areas*, *Heritage Areas*, *Natural*, *Natural Forest Area* and *Natural Area Preserves*. When assigned to a specific area within a park, each classification sets an appropriate intensity for recreational activity and development of facilities. Classifications align along a spectrum, ranging from low to high-intensity land uses. By classifying park lands, the agency is able to consciously achieve a balance between protecting park resources and providing a variety of recreational opportunities for park visitors. State Parks' land classifications are defined in Chapter 352-16 in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

For each land classification, the agency Director has developed detailed management guidelines and a use matrix. These guidelines identify specific activities and facilities permitted in each designation. A copy of the land classification matrix can be found on the Wallace Falls Planning web page at <http://parks.state.wa.us/1074/Wallace-Falls-Planning>.

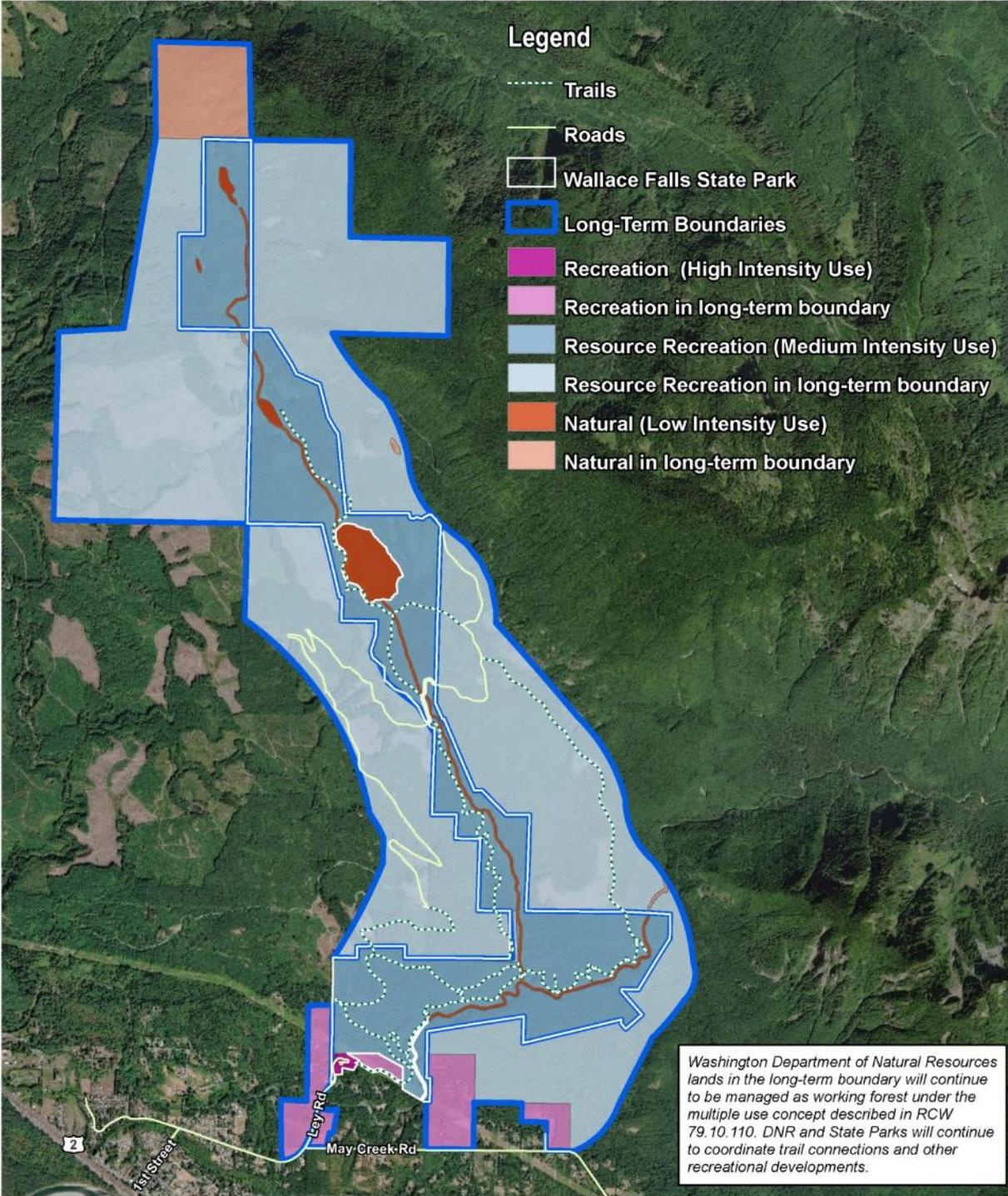
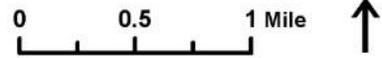
## **Wallace Falls State Park - Preliminary Land Classification Recommendation**

A combination of 3 land classifications are proposed for Wallace Falls State Park. They can be seen in the *Land Classification* map below.

- **Recreation** applies to:
  - The existing day-use area to allow for continued high-intensity use, including the water served restrooms, office and shop buildings near the park entrance, and the recreational cabins.
  - In the long-term boundary, all parcels south of the park that have the ability to provide parking in order to allow for water served restrooms if necessary.
- **Resource Recreation** applies to:
  - The majority of the park and trail system are classified as Resource Recreation. This classification allows for a balance between recreational use and resource protection.
  - DNR and commercial forest lands in the long-term boundary.
- **Natural** applies to:
  - The stream corridors and riparian area of the Wallace River and the North Fork of the Wallace River.
  - The mid-montane lakes and wetland systems that include Wallace Lake, Jay Lake and Shaw Lake.
  - In the long-term boundary the northern most commercial forest parcel above Shaw Lake to protect the system that supports the lake and river features in the park.



**Wallace Falls State Park  
Land Classification (Draft Work Product)**



**DRAFT WORK PRODUCT – SUBJECT TO CHANGE OVER TIME**

## **Long-Term Park Boundary**

A second product of CAMP is adoption of a long-term park boundary. This is a frequently misunderstood aspect of park planning. One of the purposes of delineating a long-term boundary is to take a big picture look at lands surrounding the park that, independent of ownership, may advance the conservation and recreation mission of a park. Additionally, the long-term park boundary is used to identify surrounding lands with which State Parks would like to advance shared management goals. The long-term park boundary also considers whether agency-owned property should be retained or be considered surplus to park needs.

Including privately owned property in a long-term boundary gives Commission direction to staff to work with nearby landowners on cooperative management or potential land transactions. Transactions may range from simple agreements, to recreation and conservation easements, and sometimes even to agency purchase of property if there is a willing seller. If a landowner is not interested in participating, State Parks is unlikely to pursue the matter further. If you have questions please contact Randy Kline, Project Manager, at 360.902.8632 or [randy.kline@parks.wa.gov](mailto:randy.kline@parks.wa.gov).

Since land frequently changes hands, the agency uses delineation of a long-term boundary to set its long-term property planning goals. Including private land within a long-term boundary can sometimes alarm property owners. The planning team makes every effort to contact affected landowners and explain implications of this process. Property owners should be assured that long-term boundary and land classification decisions are for Commission policy direction only and should not affect private property values, be used as an indication of their willingness to sell, or be used as a basis for making state or local government regulatory, permitting, or zoning decisions.

Including lands in the long-term boundary allows a range of mechanisms to accomplish the recreation and conservation goals of the park. State Parks will use the most efficient and reasonable real estate instrument as a means to achieve the park's goals of resource protection and recreation opportunities. In doing so State Parks may:

- Seek to formalize an agreement with an adjacent property owner to advance a shared property management goal
- Solicit a conservation or recreation easement from an adjacent property owner to protect certain recreational, natural or cultural features
- Accept a donation of all or part of a property
- Consider exchanging agency-owned property for a public or private property
- Consider purchase of a property in fee if there is a willing seller

## **Long-term Boundary**

The long-term boundary for Wallace Falls State Park includes the following:

- Private commercial forest land on the north end of the park above Wallace Lake to provide for resource protection for natural features and potential expanded recreational use.
- Adjacent Department of Natural Resources (DNR) lands south, east and west of the park to promote shared non-motorized recreation objectives including coordination with non-motorized recreation use in Reiter Foothills Forest.
- Public and privately owned lands south of the park to provide potential parking solutions by working with the city of Gold Bar and private property owners including leasing property or potential purchase from a willing seller. This includes:

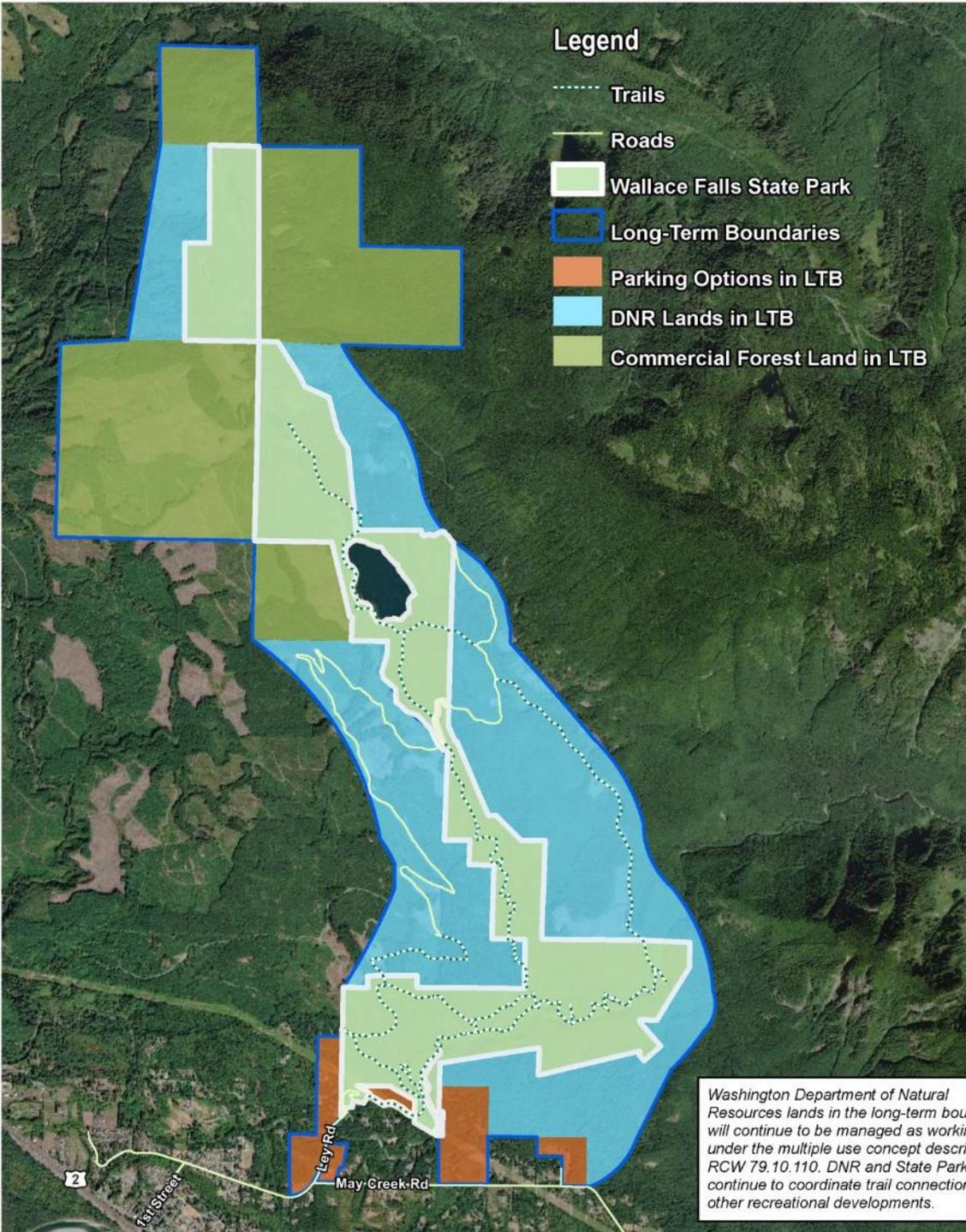
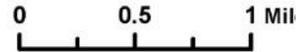
**DRAFT WORK PRODUCT – SUBJECT TO CHANGE OVER TIME**



- The Snohomish County owned parcel known as the Lawson property currently being used for informal trailhead parking
- The Camp Huston in-holding parcel under the powerlines
- The former gravel pit located west of the Lawson property on the north side of May Creek Road
- Privately owned parcels along Ley Road and at the intersection with May Creek Road



# Wallace Falls State Park Long-Term Boundary (Draft Work Product)



**DRAFT WORK PRODUCT – SUBJECT TO CHANGE OVER TIME**

## Preliminary Management Approaches

Management approaches provide direction to staff and the public for addressing the issues identified by you through the planning process. The management recommendations below were developed based on feedback received at our 2 public meetings.

### Issues and Preliminary Management Approaches

Natural Resource Issues	
Issue	Management Approaches
Forest Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage park resources consistent with Natural Resources Management Policy 73-04-1 <i>Protecting Washington State Parks Natural Resources</i>.</li> <li>• Coordinate with agency forestry specialists to develop a forest health plan that includes regular tree assessment and considers removal of hazard trees in areas where the public congregates, including day use and parking areas.</li> <li>• Work to complete vegetation restoration plans for existing and future ground disturbance and construction.</li> </ul>
Protecting natural plant and animal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before development, conduct plant inventories to verify the absence of sensitive and rare plant species in areas planned for development.</li> <li>• Work with plant experts to develop a rare plant protection plan to identify, monitor, and establish protective prescriptions.</li> </ul>
Invasive species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with weed boards and volunteers to develop and implement an invasive species management plan.</li> <li>• Work to remove invasive species, especially along the railroad grade and particularly high traffic areas and adjacent lands that have been harvested.</li> <li>• Remove invasive species as part of development projects.</li> </ul>
Working with adjacent public landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with DNR to address issues related to vandalism and illegal park use.</li> <li>• Work with DNR to maintain stream corridors and trail corridors that traverse both DNR and State Parks land.</li> <li>• Work with DNR to facilitate non-motorized recreation in the areas surrounding Wallace Falls State Park including joint trail development efforts.</li> <li>• Enter into a management agreement with DNR to address recreational use in the long-term boundary.</li> <li>• Work with Snohomish County to determine the best method to develop the Lawson property and provide access to the park from the south.</li> <li>• Work to create an on-going discussion forum to improve coordination between</li> </ul>

Natural Resource Issues	
Issue	Management Approaches
	<p>Wallace Falls State Park, DNR and the Forest Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with DNR regarding harvest occurring in close proximity to the park.</li> </ul>
Water system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to identify a potable water source as an alternative to the current use of water supplied by Camp Huston.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities that allow Washington State Parks and Camp Huston to work together to improve the existing water system including consideration of moving water storage to an upland area within the park.</li> <li>• Conduct a water system assessment at Wallace Falls as part of the statewide water system assessment that will occur by July 2019.</li> </ul>
Aquatic and Wetland System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect aquatic and wetland systems work to complete an impact assessment and determine any monitoring needs.</li> </ul>

Cultural Resource Issues	
Issue	Management Approaches
Protecting cultural and historic resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a cultural resources management plan to determine appropriate treatments for all cultural features.</li> </ul>
Protecting cultural and archaeological resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete site-specific cultural resource surveys for areas that will be disturbed due to development.</li> <li>• In all development actions, comply with direction from the Commission’s Cultural Resources Policy 12-98-1 and Governor’s Executive Order 05-05 regarding consultation with tribal entities.</li> </ul>

Recreational Resource Issues	
Issue	Management Approaches
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When determining trail needs within the park consider the use and seasonality of other trail systems in the area including near Skykomish and at the Stevens Pass Ski Area.</li> <li>• Conduct a trail assessment for both the Greg Ball trail and the Woody trail to determine baseline condition.</li> <li>• Consider and work to address any potential impacts to trail experience that may be caused by increased use due to additional parking capacity.</li> <li>• Consider providing a CXT bathroom facility at the start of the Woody Trail.</li> </ul>

<p>Trails</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install trail counters as a method to better understand trail use at the park.</li> <li>• Continue to work with the community and volunteer groups to assist with maintaining trails.</li> <li>• Consider a “Sunshine Coast” type trail system connecting area landscapes and features such as Mt. Stickney and Mt. Index including facilities such as huts and three sided shelters for multi-day hikers.</li> <li>• Consider providing a trail connection from the park to Lake Isabell.</li> <li>• Work with adjacent public land managers including the Washington Department of Natural Resources and the US Forest Service to investigate whether a connection to the Wild Sky Wilderness Area is practical.</li> <li>• Work with DNR and other public land owners to provide trail access to the park from the trailhead parcel currently owned by Snohomish County (known as the Lawson property) to the park.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with DNR to coordinate trail connections and other recreational developments acknowledging that DNR will continue to manage those lands as working forest under the multiple use concept described in RCW 79.10.110.</li> <li>• Monitor trail use to better understand park and trail carrying capacity. Consider alternatives such as a reservation system if trail impacts reach a point where resource damage is occurring and recreational experience is diminished.</li> </ul>
<p>Camping and Cabins</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to ensure Wallace Falls State Park users are aware of the camping opportunities provided at Snohomish County Parks and US Forest Service camping areas.</li> <li>• Based on the popularity of the 5 existing cabins consider adding additional cabins in the same or an alternative location.</li> </ul>
<p>Community Relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to ensure the park serves the local community in addition to park users traveling from nearby urban centers.</li> <li>• Consider facilities and programming that promote local park use on week-days and during the school year such as an education center or others means to serve local schools.</li> <li>• Work to provide facilities and programming that support use by diverse ethnicities.</li> <li>• Work to enhance the relationship and connection between Wallace Falls State Park and Forks of the Sky State Park.</li> <li>• Continue to participate in the Sky Valley Recreation working group.</li> </ul>
<p>Signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that interpretive signs, such as those located on the Small Falls Interpretive Trail, are weather protected.</li> <li>• Consider providing educational signage along the trail including items such as flora and fauna, weather, average rainfall and other science based information.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider providing educational signage related to timber harvest and the working forests located in proximity to Wallace Falls State Park.</li> <li>Use signage to ensure that park visitors understand that dogs must be on-leash and poop bags disposed of in trash cans.</li> </ul>
Trail Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with trail runners to better understand the condition of the trail network from their perspective and their recreational needs.</li> </ul>
Mountain Biking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with mountain bikers to better understand the condition of the trail network from their perspective and their recreational needs.</li> </ul>
Horseback Riding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider camping opportunities for horseback riders.</li> <li>Work with equestrians and surrounding land managers to identify horse and stock trailer parking opportunities on adjacent lands.</li> <li>Work with equestrians to determine if trail access to Wallace Lake can be provided without negatively impacting the lake and its shoreline.</li> </ul>
Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support events such as the Wallace Falls Trail Run and other community activities.</li> </ul>

Parking Issues	
Issue	Management Approaches
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the use of shuttle vans through a concessionaire, volunteer group or park staff to alleviate parking overflow.</li> <li>Consider the use of web cameras or other technology to alert park users of parking availability prior to arrival through an app or on-line mechanism.</li> <li>Include land in the long-term boundary that supports additional parking opportunities.</li> <li>Work with the City of Gold Bar and Snohomish County to investigate the possibility to improve parking and pedestrian activity along Ley Road including a path or sidewalk that takes pedestrians off the road and/or potentially widens shoulders to accommodate parking.</li> <li>Work with the county to provide parking at the county-owned site south of the park.</li> <li>Work with Camp Huston to improve traffic flow in the area where the Camp Huston entrance and park entrance meet.</li> <li>Work with Community Transit to identify opportunities to improve alternative transportation options.</li> </ul>
Potential Locations for Additional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Camp Huston on the potential to use the in-holding parcel along the</li> </ul>

<p>Parking</p>	<p>trail and below the powerlines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider relocating the existing shop and office to provide parking in that area.</li> <li>• Coordinate with Snohomish County for parking at the county owned trailhead (known as the Lawson property) south of the park.</li> <li>• Consider the gravel pit north of May Creek Road and east of the park as a potential parking location.</li> <li>• Consider privately owned parcels along Ley Road for parking facilities or cooperative solutions to overflow along Ley Road.</li> </ul>
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