



Washington Trails Association

A N N U A L R E P O R T 2 0 0 8

"I enjoyed everything about the work party. Crew leaders were humble and supportive. They were very encouraging. I enjoyed being in nature, working in a team, and the feeling of accomplishment. WTA is one of the best man-made things."

~Shubhangi Falnikar, Work Party Location: Mount Rainier

Accomplishments: Trail Maintenance

WTA completed 81,163 hours of volunteer trail maintenance in 2008. That's the equivalent of a year-round, full-time trail crew of 40 people tending to trails on Washington's public lands.

Access was restored to the Barnes Creek Trail in the Olympic National Park through the replacement of two foot-logs that had been washed out by floods.

At Mount Rainier National Park, volunteers began construction on a major relocation of the Glacier Basin Trail away from the river in order to protect the trail from future flood damage.

Trail volunteers removed hundreds of downed logs from the Suiattle River Trail in anticipation of restored access to the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail through Glacier Peak Wilderness.

In the Iller Creek Conservation Area near Spokane, WTA protected water quality in an ecologically sensitive riparian corridor by relocating sections of steep, eroding trail.

PHOTO: Kendall Katwalk north of Snoqualmie Pass

Letter from the President and Executive Director

Hiking is about the exhilaration that happens when you come face to face with wild, untamed beauty. It can happen on top of a snow-capped ridgeline in the heart of the North Cascades. It can happen when you catch a ray of sunlight through the trees in your local nature preserve.

Hiking is about what we discover about ourselves along the way. It is the sense of accomplishment that comes from getting there yourself, no matter how steep the climb, no matter how long the trail, no matter how many mundane distractions you had to tear yourself away from before you even got out the door.

Most of all, hiking is about giving back. It is about what each of us has to give as individuals, and what we can accomplish as a community. It's the power of that community that makes Washington Trails Association a strong and effective advocate for trails. Our 7,800 members and 2,000 volunteers make a difference for trails every day, whether they're picking up a tool on trail or giving voice to their favorite places in Olympia and Washington, DC.

Thanks to WTA members, volunteers and supporters like you, hiking is about passing on a legacy. It's about a child watching a creek ripple at her feet. It's about a teenager who returns from a week in the woods with a newfound sense of meaning and purpose.

This is the spirit in which we present WTA's 2008 Annual Report. We are truly grateful to each of you whose contributions, large and small, will benefit hikers today, tomorrow and fifty years from now.

See you on trail!

Elizabeth Lunney, Executive Director

Craig McKibben, President

Washington Trails Association

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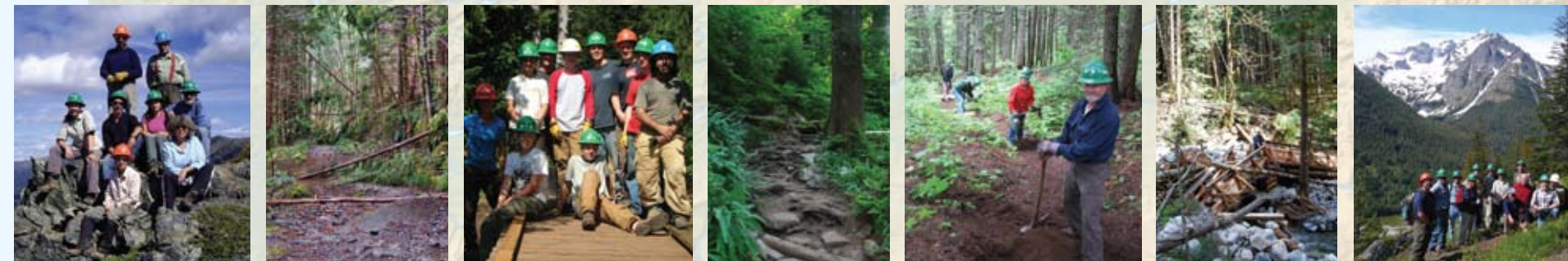
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Photo: Washington Trails Association / Ann Rhodes



Accomplishments: Hiking Information and Education

Washington Trails magazine launched a full-scale redesign with bigger photos, more maps, bolder fonts and reorganization of content in March 2008.

The June 2008 issue featured our first 8-page full color insert, highlighting mountain wildflowers, thanks in part to the Stusser Endowment.



PHOTO: Looking down at Colchuck Lake from Asgaard Pass by Wade Trenbeath

PHOTO: Redstone Mountain Grand Park by David Basinge

Trail Maintenance

Impact: The Enchantments

The **Icicle Creek Valley** outside Leavenworth must be among the most inviting places for hikers anywhere in the world. Found on the sunny side of the Cascade Crest, it warms up in early May and stays warm well into October. Icicle Creek cascades down the valley, a churning rush of white water, and the hillsides boast a dramatic array of wildflowers interspersed beneath the pine trees. In this valley, hikers can choose from a full range of trails - from short, sweet loops to challenging mountain climbs. During the summer of 2008, thanks in part to a grant from the Spring Trust for Trails, WTA took on several trail restoration projects in partnership with the Wenatchee National Forest in the Icicle Creek Valley, all of which proved to be quite challenging, but ultimately satisfying, for both the volunteers and the hikers who benefited from their work.

Snow Lake Trail: With an amazing influx of volunteer effort from the BoeAlps climbing class, WTA coordinated nearly 1,000 hours of volunteer work over just two weekends in May. Volunteers worked the first two miles of the scenic and high-use Snow Lake Trail. Crews built and maintained close to 80 large drain dips, and took care of brushing the trail and reestablishing tread as needed. The crews also removed rock berms and fixed a seriously eroded section of the trail. After two weekends of dedicated attention, these trails looked great and allowed for a safer and more enjoyable hiking experience.

Stuart Lake: In July, WTA led a Volunteer Vacation at Stuart Lake. The crew brushed the trail, maintained drainages, and cleaned culverts from the trailhead to 2.5 miles in. A quarter mile from Stuart Lake, the crew found a section of trail that was muddy and rocky with water running right down the tread. To improve this situation, the crew built a retaining wall, improved drainage and moved the trail upslope to allow for a drier, more stable trail. In other places, they added rock steps to address the deeply eroded drainage.

Colchuck Lake Trail: On the first day of August, a Backcountry Response Team headed up Colchuck Lake Trail, one of the most heavily-used trails in the Stuart Range for hikers and climbers. Colchuck Lake, part of the Enchantment Lakes Basin, is a stunning high alpine lake set in a fragile ecosystem.

Our volunteers' main charge involved building short switchbacks through a steep 100-foot section of the trail which had eroded down to the bedrock. With the brains and brawn of this crew—and the help of three rock bars—we accomplished our mission. The crew constructed and reconstructed five turns in all and the many hikers traveling the trail that weekend were duly impressed. Every one of them gave a heartfelt thank you for the crew's work.

For each of these projects in the Icicle Creek valley, our volunteers braved hot, dry weather and challenging terrain. Their dedication to the work is a testament to the sheer beauty of this region. As the many hikers and climbers headed up and down these trails, each of them was thankful of the maintenance and repair work accomplished.



PHOTO: Washington Trails Association

Partnerships

Impact: Mount Rainier

Mount Rainier is the quintessential Northwest icon. More than 1.3 million people visit Mount Rainier National Park annually to get up close and personal with this majestic natural wonder.

Global climate change and a growing population are hurting Mount Rainier's ecological health and our ability to experience its treasures. If that weren't enough, in November 2006, record-setting storms battered the mountain with 18 inches of rain in a 36-hour period. Subsequent storms, though not as severe, have continued to damage roads and trails and reduce public access. It was clear from the start that Washington Trails Association could play a leading role in restoring and protecting hiking, backpacking and climbing opportunities on the mountain.

In 2008, thanks in part to major grants from The Boeing Company and REI, 600 volunteers joined WTA for 49 days of trail repair and maintenance work in the national park. All told, they contributed 4,757 of volunteer service on eight different trails, including the legendary Wonderland Trail. WTA volunteer crews worked in partnership with the National Park Service, National Parks Conservation Association, Student Conservation Association, and others.

The recovery effort has attracted hundreds of new volunteers to WTA, and participation from Pierce County and other South Sound communities has increased by 40 percent. Returning volunteers are forming a skilled and experienced volunteer base who will continue taking care of trails on the mountain into the future.

After two summers on Mount Rainier, a significant portion of storm damage has been repaired. Projects have ranged from restoring washed out sections of trail and repairing bridges to clearing avalanche debris. One of the most ambitious projects, which is continuing through the 2009 season, is a two-mile re-route of the Glacier Basin trail—a key access route for climbers traveling via the Emmons Glacier—away from the White River to reduce the likelihood of future flooding. Every project, no matter the size or scope, is critical to the national park's longevity, and the mountain's power to inspire future generations.

Trail Maintenance

Impact: Barnes Creek Bridge, Olympic National Park

During the winter months, the Olympic Mountains can be a forbidding place. Storms march down from the Gulf of Alaska and unleash rain, snow and high winds. So it was with some trepidation that WTA asked for volunteers to work on a new bridge construction project over Barnes Creek near Lake Crescent in Olympic National Park in February.

Worries about a shortage of volunteers were quickly dispelled. Twenty hardy and enthusiastic souls signed up for the project within days. These folks were led by two amazing WTA volunteer crew leaders on the Olympic Peninsula, Don Stoneman and Rich Tipps. They made a great team, with Don concentrating on the technical aspects of the project and Rich handling the logistics. Olympic National Park trail foreman Larry Lack coordinated with the crew.

The old Barnes Creek Bridge had broken several years ago, and a Park Service maintenance backlog meant the bridge sat unrepaired. The WTA crew began by flattening a large log that spanned much of the creek near the old bridge. Volunteers constructed a new approach trail down a very steep hillside, then hauled a 25-foot log across the creek and winched it into place, spanning the gap between the existing log and the stream bank. Bridge projects are hard work, so during the evenings the crew relaxed in housing provided by the Park Service and whipped up some outstanding meals.

The project kicked off with more log flattening, trail construction and hand-milling. Volunteers installed cedar posts and rails for the bridge, pictures were snapped, and the project wrapped. The Barnes Creek Bridge was replaced, restoring access to this trail in advance of the spring hiking season just around the corner.

Throughout 2008, WTA trails crews spent a total of 95 days repairing and maintaining hiking trails on the Olympic Peninsula, on national park lands, national forest trails and state parks.



PHOTO: Barnes Creek Bridge by Washington Trails Association

"The trail to Stuart Lake has just been refurbished by a WTA work crew and it is fabulous. Brush has been cut back, drainage ditches have cleared, and some pretty impressive rocks have been moved. The trail is in very good shape. The scenery, especially from the big meadow up to Stuart peak, is breathtaking."

— trip report filed online at www.wta.org

"I especially enjoyed the camaraderie! People worked together and had fun doing it. This was my first WTA work party, but not the last. I had a great time - learned a lot and enjoyed the experience."

~Chris Baldini, Work Party Location: Iller Creek Trail

PHOTO: Sahale Arm by Scott Means

Accomplishments: Youth

The Youth Volunteer Vacation program increased the number of advanced backcountry trips we offer for returning volunteers, and added two distinct trips for all girls and families with kids ages 10-14.

WTA partnered with schools to allow teachers an opportunity to integrate a day of service into the curriculum while students learned through hands-on experiential education.

WTA was able to reach more youth by connecting them with knowledgeable crew leaders who shared their passions for the outdoors through partnerships with community youth programs like Big Brother Big Sisters, Urban Wilderness Project and Boy Scouts of America. WTA's youth program introduced over 500 young volunteers to hiking and trail maintenance.

WTA's Families Go Hiking program reached families new to hiking with the basics of getting kids outdoors and on trail through workshops and seasonal guided hikes.

WTA produced a short documentary on our youth trail maintenance program to reach an on-line audience of young volunteer prospects. The video was viewed hundreds of times on You Tube.



Grassroots Advocacy

Profile: Mike Monahan

Mike Monahan is a longtime member of WTA from Tacoma. An avid hiker, Mike regularly read WTA's online trip reports, submitted pics to our annual photo contest, and had even penned a cover story to **Washington Trails** magazine on hiking the Wonderland Trail with his brother. But he'd never been an activist for a hiking issue before. He just hadn't felt compelled to do so.

Then, in August of 2008, hiker Pamela Almli was killed when she was mistaken for a bear by a 14-year old bear hunter on the Sauk Mountain Trail. The boy was with his 16-year old brother when he fired the rifle. Mike, also a hunter, felt that this was the time to lend his unique experience as both a hiker and hunter to an issue he cared about.

"I decided to become involved after Pam Almli was killed, and give my point of view to my legislators for once," Mike said.

In Washington state it is legal for 14-year-olds to hunt without adult supervision. After the shooting, WTA began working with state legislators right away on legislation that would raise the minimum age to hunt unsupervised to at least 16.

Knowing grassroots activism would be key to the legislation's success, WTA mounted a grassroots effort to involve hikers in the issue, including a Hiker Lobby Day in Olympia. Mike attended Hiker Lobby Day in Olympia to advocate on behalf of the legislation, and for the first time came face to face with the people who represent his district in our state capital.

Mike had good meetings with his legislators about the hunting age legislation. "I can't believe it took me until I was 39 years old to do this," he said. "I met with my senator, and assistants who work in the offices of both my representatives. I thought that all the people I met with were genuinely interested in hearing what I had to say. No one acted as if they were too busy for me - I appreciated that."

Mike felt his first experience as an activist was so good, in part, because he felt so well-supported. "The WTA staff were great, and the preparation that they put in to the day was much appreciated."

Will his activism for trails continue? Mike says probably, especially if an issue "really hits me in a soft spot." He stays in touch with what's happening with the hunting age legislation and many other hiking issues through WTA's Trail Action Network.



Youth

Profile: Kelsey Walker

Kelsey, age 16, goes to Roosevelt High School and aspires to attend college upon graduation. She participated in two Youth Volunteer Vacations in the summer of 2008, one coed, the other an all girls trip.

Kelsey caught wind of Youth Volunteer Vacations from her parents who are WTA members. Since she likes to hike and enjoys the feeling that volunteering brings she decided to sign up. The amount of fun she had was more than she expected.

When talking to Kelsey she explains that she did not expect to receive so much direct positive feedback on trail. "It was great to see hikers while working on the trail because they were so nice and friendly to us. It really made us feel appreciated."

Since her trips with WTA Kelsey explains how she has "learned more about how good it feels to do community service" and how while on trail she noticed how the people working there "had the best attitudes which encouraged me to get more involved." Since Kelsey's Volunteer Vacations in 2008 she has been more involved in the community and had more desire to get out hiking. When asked what she thinks of now when looking back she explains "how amazing all of the people were. It was a great setting because I became friends with people I would not have ever gotten to know - and only within a week!"

PHOTOS: Washington Trails Association



Support

Profile: Ken Mondal

Ken Mondal moved to Spokane in 1992 from Ohio, and quickly became an avid outdoor explorer. He found hiking to be the perfect outlet for the daily stress of his ophthalmology practice. Over a seven-year period, he completed every hike in Rich Lander's **100 Hikes in the Inland Northwest**, the first person to do so.

Photo courtesy of Ken Mondal

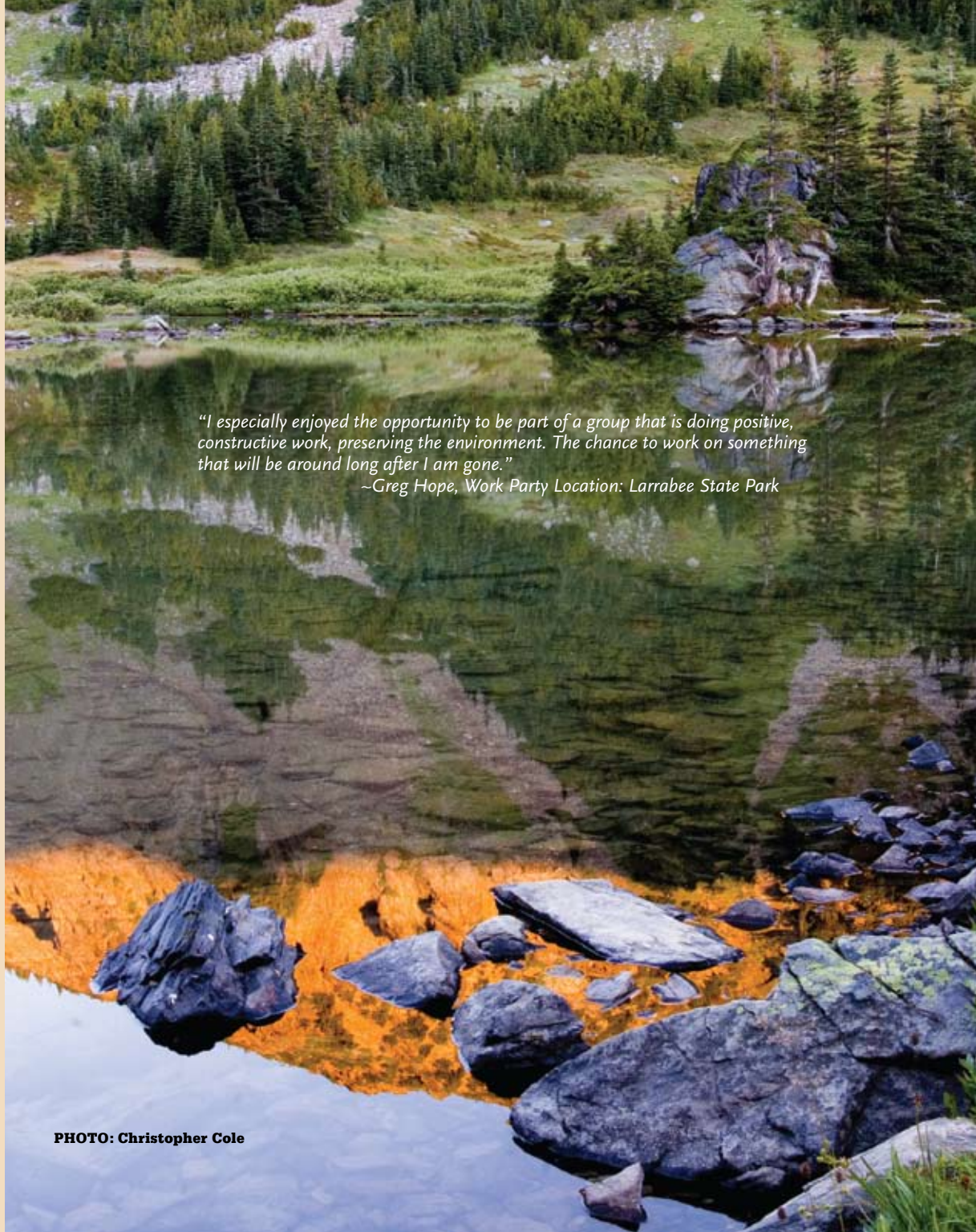
Eventually, Ken says, "It was time to start giving something back for all of this fun that I was having. I benefited from other peoples' hard work and I felt it was my turn." By the late 1990s, he was volunteering with several conservation groups in Spokane and was a regular contributor to WTA's **Signpost** magazine. Ken and his wife Juliet became members of WTA's Fireside Circle in 2003.

The following year, while hiking in the Goat Rocks Wilderness, a chance encounter with then-WTA board member Susan Saul led to Ken's eventual nomination to the WTA board of directors. During his three years as a board member, Ken spearheaded WTA's efforts to do more to improve hiking opportunities in eastern Washington.

Ken also encouraged WTA to do more across the state to introduce kids to the outdoors. Concerned that young people today are more connected with their electronic devices than with nature, he argued that getting kids outside, on the trails, and exploring our wilderness could inspire them to become life-long stewards of the natural world. His ideas grew out of personal experience and a growing body of research that acknowledges the role of nature in childhood development.

In 2008, Ken made a \$70,000 gift to seed the Mondal Youth Endowment, a fund that will support WTA's youth program. Through the endowment, Ken is helping WTA to introduce future generations to the outdoors through hiking, educational programs and trail maintenance.

Even though he's no longer a board member, Ken is still an active Fireside Circle member and volunteer. "I feel so blessed to be living in a part of the country where we have wonderful parks and national forests and a wonderful trail system, but I also realize that this just doesn't happen by chance," says Ken. "There's a lot of sweat equity that goes into it. Leaving something of an environmental legacy is important to me and I am glad that I found just the right organization to help me accomplish that."



"I especially enjoyed the opportunity to be part of a group that is doing positive, constructive work, preserving the environment. The chance to work on something that will be around long after I am gone."

~Greg Hope, Work Party Location: Larrabee State Park

PHOTO: Christopher Cole

Many Thanks to Our Members & Supporters

Washington Trails Association gratefully acknowledges all of you whose financial contributions in 2008 helped to protect trails and wildlands.

Fireside Circle

Members of WTA's Fireside Circle are recognized for their direct gifts, workplace contributions, and corporate matching gifts.

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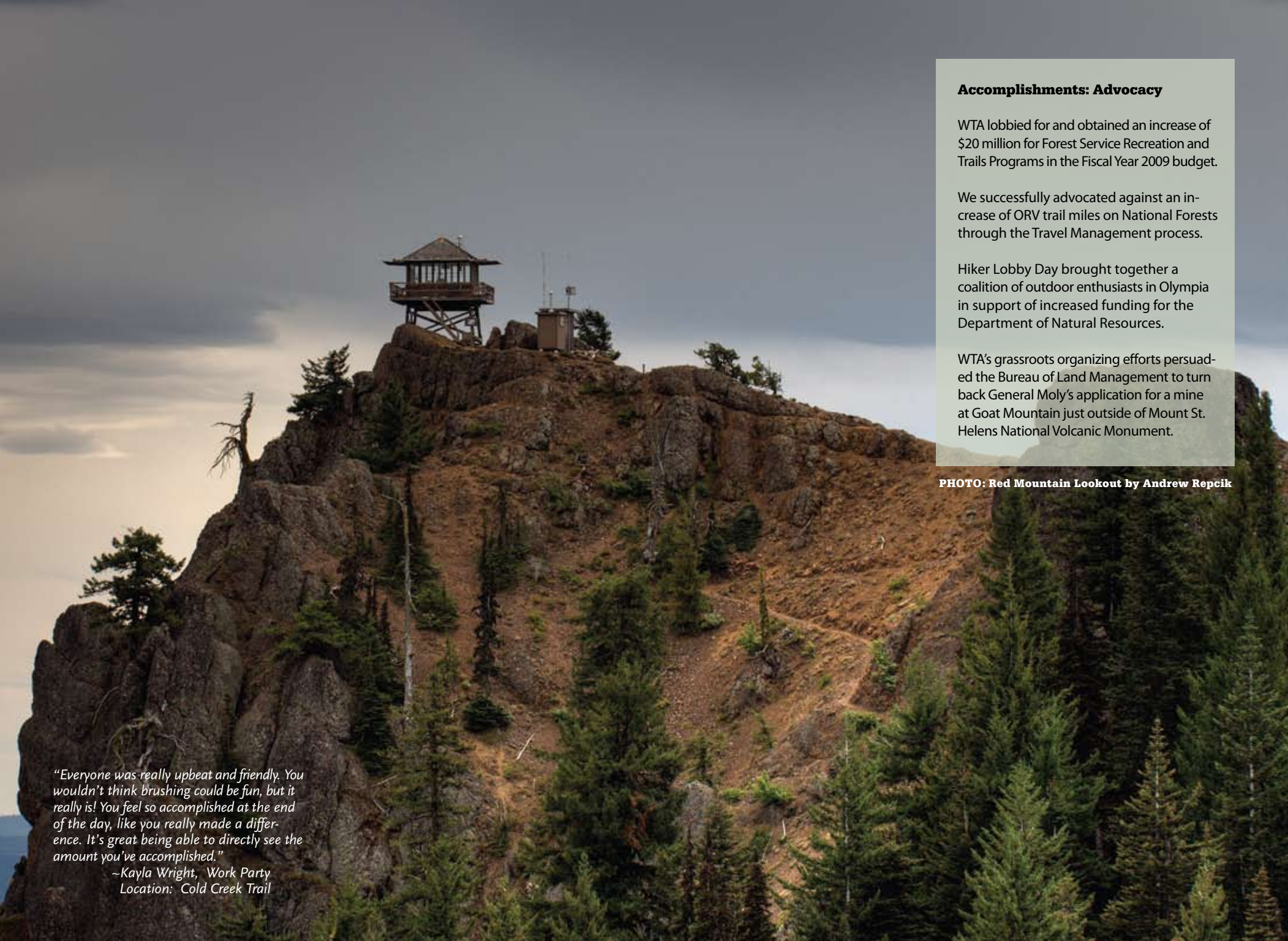
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We have made every effort to ensure that donors are properly recognized. If we have omitted or incorrectly listed your name, please accept our apology and contact us at 206.625.1367.



Accomplishments: Advocacy

WTA lobbied for and obtained an increase of \$20 million for Forest Service Recreation and Trails Programs in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget.

We successfully advocated against an increase of ORV trail miles on National Forests through the Travel Management process.

Hiker Lobby Day brought together a coalition of outdoor enthusiasts in Olympia in support of increased funding for the Department of Natural Resources.

WTA's grassroots organizing efforts persuaded the Bureau of Land Management to turn back General Moly's application for a mine at Goat Mountain just outside of Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument.

PHOTO: Red Mountain Lookout by Andrew Repcik

"Everyone was really upbeat and friendly. You wouldn't think brushing could be fun, but it really is! You feel so accomplished at the end of the day, like you really made a difference. It's great being able to directly see the amount you've accomplished."

~Kayla Wright, Work Party
Location: Cold Creek Trail

Washington Trails Association **Financial Information**

Condensed Statement of Financial Position

| | Dec 31, 08 | Dec 31, 07 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| Current Assets | 655,282 | 558,518 |
| Investments | 713,610 | 793,385 |
| Fixed Assets (less accumulated depreciation) | 22,029 | 22,353 |
| Prepaid Rent and Security Deposits | 6,082 | 6,082 |
| Total Assets | \$1,397,003 | \$1,380,338 |
| LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS | | |
| Current Liabilities | 149,064 | 98,426 |
| Net Assets | | |
| Unrestricted | 579,973 | 630,761 |
| Temporarily Restricted | 35,464 | 94,202 |
| Permanently Restricted | 632,502 | 556,949 |
| Total Net Assets | 1,247,939 | 1,281,912 |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | \$1,397,003 | \$1,380,338 |

Condensed Consolidated Statement of Activities

| | Year Ended Dec 31, 08 | Year Ended Dec 31, 07 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| SUPPORT and REVENUE: | | |
| Support | | |
| Membership | 240,461 | 210,266 |
| Donations | 1,107,923 | 834,845 |
| In Kind Contributions | 4,168 | 4,136 |
| Revenue | | |
| Trail Maintenance | 250,433 | 243,948 |
| Special Events | 21,355 | 24,677 |
| Interest and Dividends | 36,220 | 91,216 |
| Change in Investments | (213,325) | |
| Other Income | 19,988 | 39,701 |
| Total Support and Revenue | \$1,467,223 | \$1,448,789 |
| EXPENSES: | | |
| Program Services | | |
| Publications and Outreach | 524,801 | 453,222 |
| Trail Advocacy | 111,537 | 103,222 |
| Trail Maintenance | 632,989 | 547,577 |
| General and Administrative | 125,172 | 88,016 |
| Fundraising | 106,697 | 99,904 |
| Total Expenses | \$1,501,196 | \$1,291,941 |
| Changes In Net Assets | \$(33,973) | \$156,848 |
| Net Assets, Beginning Of Year | \$1,281,912 | \$1,125,064 |
| Net Assets, End Of Year | \$1,247,939 | \$1,281,912 |

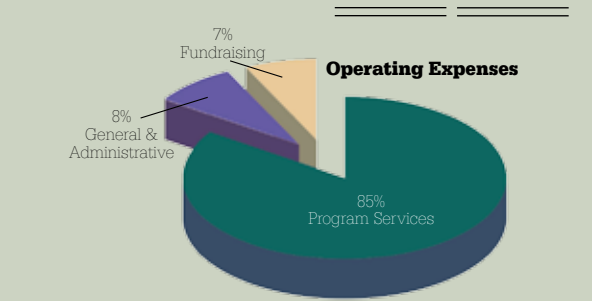
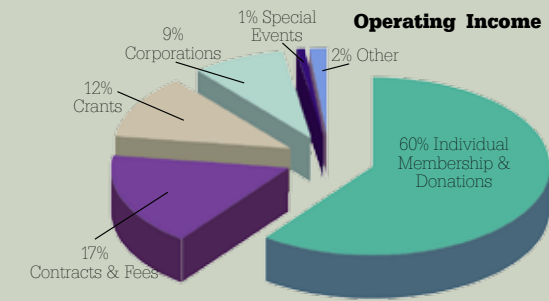


PHOTO: Ken Smith

2008 by the Numbers

1,663 volunteers joined a WTA work party.

Places you'd find a WTA crew on National Trails Day: **10**

2,488 trip reports filed online at www.wta.org.

Hard hats awarded to volunteers on their 5th work party: **224**

1,031 hikers receive WTA's 'Trail Action Network' alerts related to protecting trails.

Hike-a-Thon miles = **2,598**

497 youth volunteered this year on day trips and Volunteer Vacations.

Youth who came out for a 2nd Volunteer Vacation this year: **29**

3,000+ people attended WTA's 15th annual TrailsFest in July.



PHOTO: Alan Bauer



PHOTO: Ingunn Markiewicz

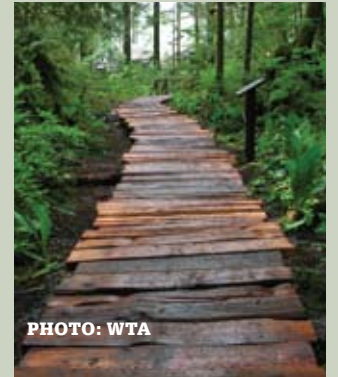
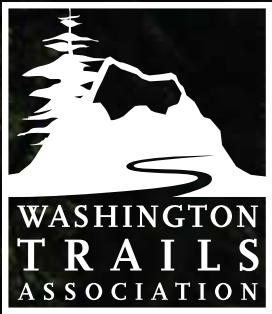


PHOTO: WTA

The financial information for the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007 have been derived from Washington Trails Association's consolidated financial statements, audited by Morrow Kessler & Dowsing, PLLC. A complete set of 2008 audited financial statements are available upon request.



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MAIN PHOTO: Summerland Trail (Lloyd Smith) SMALL PHOTOS (left to right): Ebey's Landing (Shahid Durani), Gold Creek (mytho man), Green Mountain (Gail Blacker), Volunteer (WTA).

Our Mission:

Washington Trails Association's mission is to preserve, enhance, and promote hiking opportunities in Washington state through collaboration, education, advocacy and volunteer trail maintenance.

Thank you for your support.

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