The North Cascades
For over sixty years, the North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC—aka N3C) has been at the forefront of protecting America’s “Wilderness Alps”—Washington’s spectacular North Cascades. On the western slopes of the range, rainforest valleys rise to subalpine parkland and craggy summits flanked by hundreds of lakes and more than 700 glaciers. To the east, gentler pine and meadow-clad ridges and valleys stretch for miles, like waves on a turbulent sea. It is among the most beautiful landscapes on Earth and is one of the wildest places left in the Lower 48 States.

NCCC and the North Cascades: Our History
Archaeological evidence indicates that virtually every part of the range, even the high meadows and peaks, have been utilized by Indigenous people for more than 9,000 years. Euro-American settlers arrived in the 1870s. Logging and mining soon followed and much wild country was lost over the course of the twentieth century. Logging roads were pushed up many valleys and most of a once vast sea of old-growth forest was cut down.

As more people visited and fell in love with the North Cascades, pressure mounted for their protection, including the thousands of species of flora and fauna that live here. In March 1957, the North Cascades Conservation Council was formed to save these Wilderness Alps from the accelerating onslaught of logging, roads, and mining.

NCCC’s pivotal activism led to designation of the Glacier Peak Wilderness in 1960. Another great NCCC victory came in 1968 when Congress established North Cascades National Park, the Pasayten Wilderness, and the Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas. NCCC continued to play a leading role in the designation of new Wilderness Areas, including the Alpine Lakes and William O. Douglas Wilderness Areas. NCCC led campaigns to stop a planned open-pit copper mine near Glacier Peak and construction of High Ross dam on the upper Skagit River, both of which would have had devastating impacts on the pristine natural environment.

Despite these great victories, much of the biologically productive, species-rich low elevation valleys—the heart and soul of the North Cascades ecosystem—have been largely excluded from protection!

Today, NCCC is working on many fronts in the North Cascades.

• Establishing new wilderness: NCCC succeeded at designating the Wild Sky Wilderness and expanding Alpine Lakes Wilderness into Pratt River, and seeks to permanently protect more roadless areas in the Cascades.

• Defending forests: NCCC is at the forefront of efforts to stop damaging timber sales, protect ancient forests, remove abandoned and unnecessary logging and mining roads, and promote the re-wilding of our maturing second-growth forests.

• Supporting wildlife conservation and keystone species: Grizzly bear, wolf, and fish populations have plummeted in the North Cascades over the past 150 years. NCCC is helping to reintroduce fishers and supports the reintroduction of grizzly bears.

• Promoting sound recreational use: Motorized recreation in wild areas threatens fish and wildlife habitats, causes erosion, and shatters silence in the North Cascades. NCCC advocates strongly for sustainable, instead of damaging, recreational use.

“Nowhere do the Mountain masses and Peaks, present such strange, fantastic, dauntless, & startling outlines as here.”—Heinrich Küster, Swiss surveyor U.S. Boundary Survey, 1859

www.northcascades.org
www.facebook.com/northcas/

Ancient forests are vital to the North Cascades ecosystem.

Photo by Phil Zalesky

Membership Benefits
The Wild Cascades, premier journal of the North Cascades and its people, places, and politics—lively and unafraid to challenge the status quo (3 issues/year).

Cascades Catalyst email alerts, so YOU can take timely action to help preserve wildlands in the North Cascades.

JOIN NOW at www.northcascades.org/wordpress/join-us

Or use this mail-in form:

Name: __________________________________  Address: _________________________________

Email (opt): ______________________________  City/St/Zip _________________________________

I’d like to volunteer! Contact me.

Amount enclosed:

Low-income/students $10   Individual $30   Family $50   Sustaining $100

Other $ ____________________  You can also donate to specific NCCC projects (visit www.northcascades.org for info).

NCCC is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Send check or money order and this form to: NCCC Membership, Box 95980, Seattle, WA 98134
“A merely superficial spectator might call it the American Switzerland, with its abrupt peaks rising above the clouds, its deep valleys dividing the heights, its aspect at once grand and wild.”

Jules Verne, 1879

“Protected and Unprotected Wildlands in the North Cascades

Map by Pacific Biodiversity Institute and NCCC

If you love this great wilderness, please support the NCCC. With a record of accomplishments and an ambitious conservation agenda for the future, the NCCC invites you to make a difference. Be a part of the legacy. Please join today.

Threats to the Greater North Cascades ecosystem (shown here in satellite view) include damaging timber sales, mining, and road-building. Preventing these are NCCC’s priorities, preserving these lands for all to enjoy!

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The North Cascades Conservation Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.