

## **Wilderness Management Review**

### Henry M Jackson Wilderness

Submitted by: Art Pope                    Date: 7/26-28/18

Report Title: Henry Jackson Wilderness

Route: Where did you go? How many days were you camping?

We were on a six-day trip that started in the Glacier Peak Wilderness and ended in the Henry Jackson Wilderness. A separate management review is filed for each of these wilderness areas.

We entered the Henry Jackson Wilderness on the PCT and followed it to the Wenatchee Ridge Trail which we followed, with difficulty, to Poe Mountain. We then went down the Poe Mountain Trail and up the Cady Creek Trail to end up back on the PCT. From the PCT we descended the Pass Creek Trail and the North Fork Skynomish Trail to its' trailhead. From there, we went up the Quartz Creek Trail to Curry Gap and down the Bald Eagle Trail to its' trailhead where we hitched a ride to our car at the Lost Creek Ridge Trailhead.

Summary: 250-word max

We did not see a single person during of our hike in the Henry Jackson Wilderness except when we were on the PCT where we encountered a wave of "through" hikers intent on "making miles". Except for the sadly eroded PCT, the trails we followed were typically lightly used; duff covered and well protected from significant erosion damage; most pleasant walking.

Wilderness or Wild River: Henry Jackson Wilderness

Management Unit: Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Administrative Location: Everett, WA

Head of Administrative Unit: Jamie Kingsbury, Forest Supervisor

Trip Report: Grade the success of the management agency with an A to F letter grade. Comments must support letter grades in each category; skip any category on which you do not want to comment.

**B** Access; is resource damage occurring at campsites on trails or at trailheads?

Our route was generally through lower elevation areas where brush was heavy but tread erosion was generally in the low to moderate range. Nevertheless, on steep grades and heavily used trails like the PCT, a greater focus on getting water off the trail—before it erodes it into a ditch—is desperately needed.

**B** Management; regulations, permit systems, education, enforcement actions.

Strangely, signboards at the North Fork Skykomish Trailhead were covered for the winter and the bathroom locked even though it was only August 28<sup>th</sup>. Trail reports posted on these signboards were dated 2015—useless information three years out of date! No-trace and other educational material was limited and looked almost as ancient.

Notably, at one trailhead we encountered a bright orange sign addressing the problem of snowmobiles violating the wilderness boundary. At another signboard, I noticed a posting that addressed the impact of stock use in wilderness and suggested that areas might be closed to horses if stock users did not mitigate these impacts.

We encountered no management personnel—not a bad thing when you're seeking the peace and freedom generally associated with wilderness.

- B** Stewardship; are management actions in accord with wilderness values and best practices in wilderness management?

Crosscut work on the North Fork Skykomish and Pass Creek trails was well done and extensive. Work was unfinished however and we were left scrambling through a significant area of blowdown—a challenge but a normal part of wilderness travel. The crew also completed sporadic drainage maintenance; much of it quite well done.

Recent light trail work was evident on the Poe Mountain Trail. At a puzzlingly large spacing light brushing had been completed and sporadic drainage structures had received a quick scrape or two.

- B** Wilderness; how well is management protecting the wilderness resource?

An impressively long boardwalk crossing the marsh and meadows at the bottom of Pass Creek. It is a great structure but unfortunately for the environment is made of creosote treated milled material. Other once high quality bridges, turnpikes and boardwalks are rotting away and in a serious state of deterioration. Wilderness is slowly reclaiming this area.

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Fire Management, Wildlife Management, Other