

OVCBCHW
Legislative Report
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There is not a lot going on at the federal level. Jeff Chapman has been representing BCHW on a coalition of groups that are working together on access support. There are groups not typically working together on this (WTA, Washington Wild, EMBA). The Suiattle River Road restoration is just one. A decision to fixing the road is expected before the end of the year.

The upper Stehekin Road relocation project is dependent upon a Senate bill, and that is very unlikely to occur in the lame duck session. We still have misgivings about any reconstruction until a suitable alternate location for the PCT can be found. Both are important, but we do feel the PCT, once off a road, should not have a road put on top of it. These are probably issues for next year when the bill is mostly going to be taken up again. We didn't have too much heartache with the repairs of the lower Stehekin Road, a separate EA, as accepted by the Park Service.

What we are also working on is The Sportsmen's Act of 2012 (S3525), and Rick Larsen's Green Mountain Lookout bill (HR6039) to pass in the lame duck session. Two letters have been sent over Bob Gish's signature in support. Here is a brief summary of the bills:

1. The Sportsman's Act of 2012 is actually a package of 19 bills to reauthorize important access bills for hunting, fishing, and other recreation uses including activities involving pack and saddle stock. It has broad support from the recreation and conservation communities. It includes a number of measures that BCHW is on record as supporting. This Sportsmen's Act is sponsored by Senator Tester and is entirely different than the House Sportsmen Heritage Act that is so controversial.
2. The Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act (HR 6039) is sponsored by Representative Rick Larsen. This Lookout is at the end of the Green Mountain Trail. While the Green Mountain Trail is open to stock, the last half mile to the top is quite precarious and not recommended for animals. Few go up this last section. The Lookout needed to be repaired. It was in fact about to collapse. Efforts to employ mules to transport materials were really not feasible without great risk to the animals. In the end, the use of a helicopter was the only rational option to safely address the Lookout without compounding the situation by having the remains of the Lookout scattered across the mountain. Indeed, removing the Lookout at this point would require either continued use of helicopters or once again put riding and pack stock at unacceptable risks.

On the local scene Discover Pass revenues were about \$4.7 million short of expectations for the months of June through September. That means instead of asking for \$18 million from the general fund for the 2013-2015 biennium, the Commission will consider asking for \$27.2 million. With the State Parks getting 84% of the sales revenue, that means that the budgets of WDFW and the DNR will be further strained. There are some grant opportunities that will be exploited, but we should be aware that 2013 will be a very lean year for any new projects as well as for ongoing trail maintenance.

The PNTA and the DNR are still in discussion about trail specification for the Pacific NW National Scenic Trail through Goodenough Park from the international Airport to the Wilderness boundary. Hopefully that will be resolved soon so the tread can be permanently established.