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WINTER SOCIAL WILL FEATURE HAZMAT PROJECT HEAD

On Saturday February 2, 2013 we again will have our Winter Social potluck at Marysville's Jennings Park "barn," 6915 Armar Road, starting with supper at 5:30 p.m. This year we have the opportunity to hear about the hazmat cleanup project from On-Scene Coordinator Joe Gibbens, who is the U.S. Forest Service person in charge of it. He will present information about the cleanup and then take your questions. This likely will be the best and only chance to have an up to date briefing before removal work begins this summer and we are excluded from the area for the duration. In January we will send you a reminder and directions to the park.

SEASON'S WRAP UP

September still was hot and dry (remember that?) with fire danger closures at 1 p.m. Yet we were able to drive our work crew into the townsite for a hard working morning of cutting brush along Dumas Street and around the town, maintaining trail drainage dips, and helping clear debris from the collapsed front of the former Trimble cabin for the Forest Service. Our October work party was a 180 degree change in the weather. Snow began falling near the school camp west of Silverton, making a challenge to reach Barlow Pass and the clay slide. There we dismantled our bulletin board for winter storage and headed back out after checking on the crossing log and observing a bobcat across the river from the slide. One individual later visited the town site (beautiful in the snow and a sun break), while others talked with a contractor pulling out his equipment from the start of grading work on the new hazmat access road. It begins at the Mowich bridge on the Darrington side of the highway a mile below Barlow Pass.

At last report high water had stripped the crossing log of its bark from the root wad almost to the other side. A woman project worker slipped off the bare log into the water and fortunately was grabbed by a fellow worker before being swept downstream. She was soaked but not injured. The clay slide remains stable. Work on the new three-mile access road included tree falling at the upper end, while the section from Mowich to the first creek had been surfaced with washed gravel.

Thank you to those who helped in our work parties, answered visitor questions, gave guided tours, checked on conditions, sent in photos, put in many hours of unrecorded labor, traveled long distances to help in the rain and heat (that kind of year), responded to requests for help, sent e-mails, donated money and materials, wrote letters, kept our records, dealt with keys and the gate, attended meetings, analyzed documents, assisted injured and tired hikers, worked as townsite hosts, and just went out of their way to help. You've been a great group to know and be around!

THANK YOU

REMOVAL ACTION MEMORANDUM ("RAM") SIGNED

This document, over 40 pages in length with its Appendix A, explains the rationale and present state of planning for the hazardous waste removal. It is long, but we suggest you read it and pay careful attention to some of the "bureaucratese" language as you do. We will be glad to forward the document to you by e-mail. Let us know at camlind@richpoor.net. It was approved and signed by Forest Supervisor Jennifer Eberlien and regional engineering director Jose L. Linares in September.

Forest Service documents also are available at the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest website, www.fs.usda.gov/mbs. Recently they posted a Sierra Club letter requesting that noted forest road critic Bill Lider be allowed observer status to report back to their organization. This was denied, with reasons given and letter concerns/errors addressed.

After analysis and board/member input we responded to Darrington District Ranger Peter Forbes' request for any questions by sending him some. These were forwarded to On-Scene Coordinator Joe Gibbens, and we can forward that information to you as well.

It is important to realize that portions of the cleanup plan still are incomplete. As work on it progresses changes may be made. We will keep you updated on those as we learn them, the better to understand and plan for their impacts.

ACCESS ROAD PLANS CHANGE

Earlier we had been told that the Forest Service planned construction of a new Level 2 Maintenance forest road suitable for high clearance motor vehicles from the Mowich bridge area to run 2.66 miles and intersect the present county road atop Hap's Hill. The RAM and letter to the Sierra Club state that has now been changed to "a minimum-impact CERCLA access route" without defining the term. It will be gated and managed as a non-motorized trail, with no public motorized use of the road. Hikers, bicyclists, and horseback riders would be allowed, while Forest Service personnel monitoring the cleanup ride ATVs. It also will be closed to the public, along with as yet undefined other areas, during the cleanup. What happens to the route when the cleanup is finished remains to be decided by the District Ranger. Lowering the standard meant that fewer old growth trees had to be felled, 43 down to four suitable for marbled murrelet/spotted owl nesting use, according to the letter.

Crossing Glacier Creek from the Mine to Market Road will utilize one or more large culverts. These will be removed by August 31 each season to lessen possible high water damage. An earlier suggestion to dismantle the Twin Bridges and reuse those materials was rejected. Meanwhile the Forest Service and county are discussing the "disposition" of the current right-of-way.

SITES TO BE AFFECTED

Private lands include the surface tramway, towers, and roads; the Pride/Mystery bunker and its associated terminal buildings such as the ore crusher; the Comet/Golden Chord terminal and bunker (part federally owned), and the United Companies concentrator area (also owned by both private and federal); the Rainy, and the Mystery mines (a mix). Mines in the Jackson Wilderness are the Pride of the Mountains, New Discovery, Pride of the Woods on the Glacier Creek drainage, and on the 76 Creek side the Sheridan, Sidney, and Liberty prospect (added in 2010). Outside the Wilderness are the Mystery, Justice, and Boston-American mines and the assay house, which is across from the school site and close to 76 Creek. All will be barred to keep out people and large animals but allow for drainage and bat habitat.

The RAM lists specific treatment by site. These range from massive materials removal such as 12,000 compressed cubic yards in the concentrator area, 3,300 for the Rainy, and 2,000 for the Pride of the Woods to just closing the opening of the Sheridan. Water treatment also is proposed for those mines draining into the creeks.

The hazardous materials depository will be just below the Bonnanos' Condor Placer and destroy the only switchback on the Everett & Monte Cristo Railway, that grade still very much intact. The Forest Service response letter to the Sierra Club notes that the depository might be constructed in two cells rather than one, allowing half to be capped after the first season.

Notice to private land owners that their property might be affected is the responsibility of the Washington State Department of Ecology, as are issues relating to possible damage and restoration. To our knowledge that has not yet been done. MCPA owns three lots on Dumas Street close to the concentrator, planned for our interpretive work.

This fall Forest Service surveyors finished marking the corners of private and federal land in the townsite, a project started several years ago.

WHEN WILL THE REMOVAL WORK AND EXCLUSION BEGIN?

It is planned for this coming summer. Joe Gibbens wrote that work will begin on the access road as soon as conditions permit; thus people should be able to hike in during late spring and early summer. They will have to use the existing route, which may mean no work party driving or removal of materials by us. Our state fisheries river crossing permit in the past has allowed us to ford at Twin Bridges once in July, depending upon fish activity. Repairs to the clay slide and crossing point have to be completed by then, plus the river being shallow enough for the Land Rover.

HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

Two years are estimated, with monitoring for the next thirty. Those are subject to weather and other unknowns, of course. The state Department of Ecology also will be monitoring the success of the cleanup and requiring any work needed to ensure state laws are met. Both agencies are involved in this, with the Forest Service the lead. If all goes well, perhaps the public will be allowed back in 2015.



HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Current estimates are to implement access \$1,100,000; removal action \$4,000,000; thirty years of operations, maintenance and monitoring \$410,000; and administration/oversight \$250,000. This is to be paid according to court judgment by the American Smelting and Refining Corporation, ASARCO, which last operated the mines a century ago.

WHAT WILL BE LEFT WHEN THEY ARE DONE WITH THE REMOVAL?

Disturbed areas will be covered with clean soil, seeded, planted, and mulched, according to Appendix A. We also will have a roughly three acre repository above the road before Bonannos'. *To the extent feasible* the concentrator site should be graded to suggest its five levels, large structural members such as railway trestle remains will be left in place, wood/brick/mining debris will be cleaned and returned to its approximate original location, roads and haulage ways will resemble their original appearance. There appears to be no money for trail improvements or maintenance/repair of the Forest Service cabins or other assets.

At present a three-person team from the Tierra Right-of-Way Co. of Seattle composed of two archaeologists and an historian are working to inventory and document affected sites, including the wagon road, with their report due in March. We have met two of them, offered our assistance, and will be talking shortly with the historian. An archaeologist also will be on scene during the removal. There will be interpretive signage as part of the "institutional controls" when done. The Sauk wagon road will be interpreted at one or two spots, and one or two programs per season during the project will be offered at the Gold Basin Campground.

There is no money, but they offer to seek some toward interpretive and long-term property management plans, long-term interpretive partnerships (including MCPA) and programs, and encouraging continuation of the townsite host program and involvement of the MCPA with on-site interpretation. Money and institutional valuing of what Monte Cristo has meant and will continue to mean to our history and heritage are keys to this wish list. We anticipate helping to make it happen with your support.

HISTORICAL ESSAY



"Do you have a picture of the school at Monte Cristo?"

That was a recent question we received from a woman writing an article about one of its teachers. We regularly receive inquiries about Monte, but this was a tougher one than most to answer.

The school was established as Snohomish County School District #70, just after Silverton #69, both in 1893 and created from part of Robe #67. That one was formed the year before from a portion of Granite Falls #21 (1886). A portion of Olney #43 (1890) to the south also was included, even though there was no practical way for any child to reach either location from the Sultan River country.

It took until 1895, but on Monday April 1 classes began, taught by Mrs. R.R. Howard, with Ralph Perrin as janitor, according to the Everett *Herald* of April 18. Fifteen students made up the student body, with more expected as the weather improved. New desks, seats, and a blackboard were ordered from Chicago but had not yet arrived, so furnishings were improvised and temporary. The following year Miss Grace Vrooman of Snohomish was hired for the three-month term, common at the time.

Elof Norman recalled Miss Florence Rice earning \$60/month with \$25 deducted for board in return for teaching during the years of economic decline in 1906 and 1907. Miss Moncrief arrived the next year to find only two children left: Elof and his sister Ely. Goto, the Japanese caretaker of the Royal Hotel where classes now were held to save heat and walking, joined them to learn better English and hoped the teacher would warm up to him. Mr. Norman managed to convince Jim and Susan Bedal that their son Harry and daughter Lucy should travel up and stay with the Norman family to make a larger enrollment, but that blew up when Elof and Harry got into a fight and the Bedal kids walked home, Mr. Norman catching up with them at Barlow Pass.

School never reopened in 1909, as Elof left for Everett to try entering high school, while the Bedal family donated land and built both a school and a residence for their teacher for a new district, Bedal #88. Silverton merged with Monte in 1914, and Monte Cristo with Robe in 1920. Bedal became part of Darrington in 1918.

Read Elof's *The Coffee Chased Us Up*, chapter 5 for his memories of the school.

David A. Cameron, Ph.D.



Some century-old remains of the school still exist. When asked whether we favored having the repository here (across from the assay and blacksmith buildings in the upper town) or at the switchback, we chose the switchback. Sophie's choice. Photo by Louise Lindgren

MCPA MEMBERSHIP FORM - June 2012- May 2013

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Area(s) of Interest/Occupation _____

Please check: Mail key and Permit Will Pick up Key and Permit

\$24.00 - Membership

Mail To: MCPA

\$0.00 - Key for Renewing Members (Use Old Key)

PO Box 471

\$18.00 - Key for New members only

Everett, WA 98206

MCPA CHARITABLE DONATION FORM

I wish to donate to the MCPA. The amount I wish to donate is:

_____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ \$500 _____ \$1000 _____ Other

MCPA INTERPRETIVE CENTER DONATION FORM

I wish to donate to the MCPA Interpretive Center. The amount I wish to donate is:

_____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ \$500 _____ \$1000 _____ Other

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail To: MCPA

PO Box 471

Everett, WA 98206

THANK-YOU!

C.D. ORDER FORM

This is a C.D. with pictures from Monte Cristo, up to 100 years ago.

Cost: \$20.00 -Includes Shipping

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail To: MCPA

c/o Kal Klass

3815 E Garfield St.

Seattle, WA 98112

Thank you for your order!

T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

These T-Shirts are colored gray with the MCPA Logo printed in green on the front.

(Price Includes Shipping within US Only.)

Please specify size: _____ Medium Short Sleeve (\$15.00)

 _____ Medium or Large Long Sleeve (\$20.00)

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail To: MCPA

c/o Kal Klass

3815 E Garfield St.

Seattle, WA 98112

Thank you for your order!



Monte Cristo Preservation Assoc.
PO Box 471
Everett, WA 98206-0471
www.mcpa.us

Winter Social is February 3, 2013
Speaker Joe Gibbens

«FirstName» «LastName»
«Address1»
«City», «State» «PostalCode»