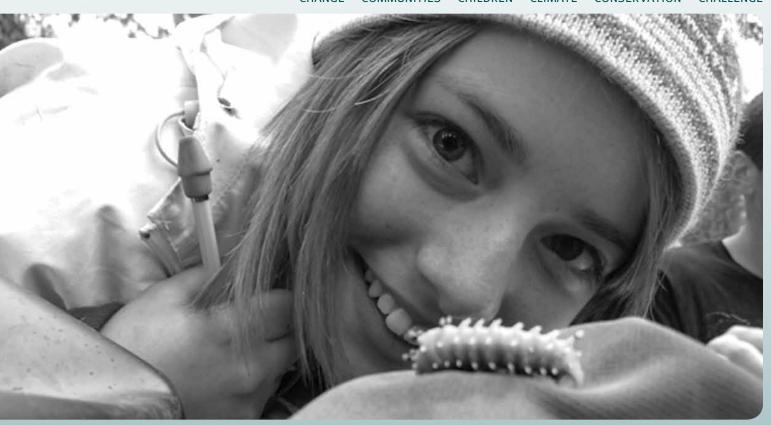
2010 ANNUAL REPORT

CHANGE ● COMMUNITIES ● CHILDREN ● CLIMATE ● CONSERVATION ● CHALLENGE





The mission of North
Cascades Institute is to
conserve and restore
Northwest environments
through education. Thanks
to the support of donors,
partners and participants,
we are making important
progress. Inside are highlights
of recent accomplishments,
challenges and new strategies
for the future.







Paying attention:



We began the recession, in 2008, as did many businesses, with a loss. It was a tough time. But due to careful planning, a focus on continued program improvement, and your support, we turned that into positive territory in 2009, and demonstrated even stronger growth in 2010. Our mission is at the heart of everything we do. And we pay careful attention to the business side of our mission as well.

I write these words as we dive deep into spring, or what passes for spring this year. Varied thrushes and yellow-rumped warblers are singing in the lowlands, while snow continues to fall in the mountains. As I reflect on 2010, I also think about this current year – North Cascades Institute's 25th Anniversary – and you, our supporters, participants, partners and friends.

This Annual Report is for you. I hope it tells our story well – the story of all the people, young and old, who have walked the trails, paddled the lakes and watched a sunrise in the North Cascades.

You know that getting more kids outside to explore Northwest mountains, forests and rivers leads to great things – powerful changes in their lives and the lives of their families. Changes in our communities. Changes in our world.

With your help in 2010 we were able to reach more kids than ever before. Programs like Mountain School, North Cascades Wild, Cascades Climate Challenge, neighborhood stewardship and citizen science provided new experiences and great adventures for young people outdoors in the North Cascades. We were also able to expand our family and adult programs with new field excursions, family getaways and backcountry adventures. And our graduate program continues to grow and change lives as our students take their knowledge into the world to create and strengthen new organizations and old.

We began the recession, in 2008, as did many businesses, with a loss. It was a tough time. But due to careful planning, a focus on continued program improvement, and your support, we turned that into positive territory in 2009, and demonstrated even stronger growth in 2010. Our mission is at the heart of everything we do. And we pay careful attention to the business side of our mission as well. In these challenging times we need to be good at both to succeed. Our goal is long-term sustainability, so that we are able to achieve our mission of conserving and restoring Northwest environments through education.

As we look ahead, we will develop ways to not only reach more kids, but to stay connected and engaged with them *over time*. We'll be able to follow them, mentor them, and evaluate the effects of our programs on their lives – in high school, college and beyond. Your assistance will help us serve more kids, engage them at deeper levels, and evaluate what works and what doesn't. And that information will be helpful to all of us who work with kids in the outdoors.

We call this new initiative our **Path for Youth**. Its goal is simple: to help create informed and engaged citizens, community leaders and environmental stewards, by beginning with young people and following them into adulthood.

New initiatives in 2010 included: I) Our first Youth Leadership Conference, bringing together high school students who participated in summer programs in North Cascades National Park, to learn about next steps and other opportunities available to them through education and volunteer stewardship. 2) A new role as the Park's Cooperating Association – we now provide

visitor services and *operate six bookstores in the North Cascades*. All profits support youth education programs and promote naturalist activities and volunteer opportunities.

3) Base Camp, a new opportunity for individuals and families to visit the North Cascades and the Learning Center, choose their own dates and length of stay and create a learning vacation that fits their schedule.

Looking ahead to 2011, new initiatives include: 1) Skagit Tours – we are partnering with Seattle City Light and the National Park Service to operate public tours by boat and bus to explore Diablo Lake, Ross Dam, and North Cascades National Park, and 2) expanded Group Programs, including rentals, conferences and retreats, and even a few weddings!

Our core themes continue to inform our mission and all our programs:

- Teach at the convergence of natural and cultural history, science, humanities and the arts
- Encourage exploration, reflection and stewardship in the out-of-doors
- Value the importance of public lands for education, recreation and renewal
- Inspire informed and engaged citizens, community leaders and environmental stewards.

Thanks for your ongoing support.

I look forward to seeing you in the mountains.

SAUL WEISBERG (Executive Director

Mentey

25 years of thanking our donors

In the midst of our twenty-fifth year of operations, I remind myself of who has made it all possible: our donors.

In the past 25 years, the Institute has weathered the banking scandals of the 80's, the dot-com boom and bust, political changes that altered the climate of environmental policies and school budgets and the financial meltdown that has precipitated our current recession. Through it all, our donors have helped us thrive, investing in our programs and our future.

During the past few months, board members have hosted donor appreciation gatherings in Bellingham, the Skagit Valley and Seattle. Originally conceived as an informal social way for our staff and board to thank donors and update them on programs, finances and plans for the future, we've found that each gathering was a rare opportunity to hear people tell us personally why they support the Institute and what they need from us in order to continue their support. Many of their needs make great sense to us:

- Our donors value collaboration among the organizations they support as a means of reducing duplication. They'd like to see more cooperation and less competition for their resources.
- Donors appreciate what we have accomplished in the past, but are equally interested in our long-range plans. How do we plan to innovate, grow and thrive?
- Our donors want concise information about our financial condition that shows we are making the most of what we have to work with
- Finally, most of our donors are personally invested in the Institute's work with underserved youth and they want to hear the details from the kids themselves of how lives have been impacted by their participation in our summer youth programs.

We have long utilized our key partnerships with North Cascades National Park, the US Forest Service, Seattle City Light and Western Washington University to achieve our mission and contribute to

Seeing young lives impacted by deep, inspiring learning experiences in the natural world is what keeps us all going. Meeting our donors during the past few months, and sharing these experiences, has reminded me that we simply could not do this work alone. We can only do it together. Thank you for all you do. theirs. We have also been strengthened by newer partnerships with Seattle Arts & Lectures, Richard Louv's Children & Nature Network, the Seattle Parks Foundation, Kulshan Creek Community and many others. We will continue to collaborate and support each other to leverage donor dollars.

We continue to be financially healthy, as the enclosed report shows. Board member Dunham Gooding pointed out during the Bellingham gathering that "we run a tight ship." We completed 2010 in the black, with several new initiatives successfully launched and key elements of our strategic plan achieved. Charity Navigator, the nation's largest independent evaluator of charities, gave us our seventh consecutive 4-star rating, the highest possible. We are looking at the feasibility of an endowment campaign and are inducting members into our new bequest group, The Headwaters Club.

Let me close with a testimonial we received this year from a new donor, a pediatrician who saw the effects of our North Cascades Wild program on an at-risk youth. We heard this from Dr. Jenny Taylor from Mount Vernon:

"I am a pediatrician and recently met a low-income teen who had just come back from a program with the Institute. He raved about his experience. He had no experience in the mountains or in the woods and had never considered work or education in conservation. He was hooked! He was motivated to participate in his community and his environment. You broadened his horizon, empowered him, and made him feel a part of something important! Connecting with teens in a positive way is tough to do and you clearly did it. An organization that can do this as part of their commitment to the environment is worthy of our support."

Thanks for your continued support.

canne a Muir

JEANNE MUIR Board Chair



Jeanne Muir, Institute Board Chair, and author Richard Louv

Our mission:

CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION North Cascades Institute seeks to inspire a closer relationship with nature through direct experiences in the natural world. Our mission is to conserve and restore Northwest environments through education. For 25 years we have helped connect people, nature and community through science, art, literature and the hands-on study of natural and cultural history. Our goal is to help people of all ages experience and enjoy the mountains, rivers, forests, wildlife and people of the Pacific Northwest so all will care for and protect this special place.

North Cascades Institute is committed to innovation and excellence in environmental learning and leadership within the nonprofit community. We believe that sustainable communities are built on healthy environments, vibrant economies and social equity.

TOWARD THAT END, THESE CORE VALUES DRIVE OUR PROGRAMS:

- We teach where natural and cultural history, science, humanities and the arts converge
- We encourage exploration, reflection and stewardship in the out-of-doors
- We value public lands for education, recreation and reflection
- We believe that human history is integral to the history of landscapes and wild lands.

WE OFFER A BROAD VARIETY OF PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES:

- School programs and summer adventures for under-served youth
- Natural and cultural history classes and field excursions for adults
- Graduate degree in environmental education.

North Cascades Environmental Learning Center is located on Diablo Lake in the heart of the North Cascades. The result of a partnership with the National Park Service and the City of Seattle, the Learning Center is surrounded by millions of acres of protected public lands—a hub of discovery in one of the wildest, most biologically diverse landscapes in North America. People of all ages come to learn and explore through innovative programs that inspire and enrich their lives.



Youth Programs:

Mountain School

"When I went to Mt. School something inside me changed. All that time I was there, I felt much better and more healthier inside. That feels great." 5TH GRADER, CARL COZIER ELEMENTARY, BELLINGHAM

"I learned that if we all make small changes about how we live, we can help our environment stay healthy." 5TH GRADER, LARRABEE ELEMENTARY, BELLINGHAM

"It has been a gift to me, as a teacher, to have the opportunity to spend four years up here each spring. As I retire, the memories from Mountain School will linger far longer than any lesson I taught in over 38 years in education." BILL PALMER, 5TH GRADE TEACHER, CENTENNIAL ELEMENTARY, MOUNT YERNON



Mountain School is a nationally recognized environmental education program offered by North Cascades Institute in cooperation with North Cascades National Park. Since its inception in 1990, it has introduced more than 17,000 young people to this ecosystem through science, art and observation. The multi-disciplinary Mountain School curriculum is aligned with Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements (this is their official name) and includes pre- and post-visit support for teachers. In addition to learning about the environment, students develop a sense of respect for one another and their surrounding environment as they live and work together.

During 2010, nearly 1,600 young people and 380 adults attended Mountain School from 11 Washington school districts including Anacortes, Bellevue, Bellingham, Clover Park, Highline, Meridian, Mount Vernon, Pateros, Seattle, Sedro-Woolley and Tukwila school districts. Private school groups came from Bellevue, Bellingham, Bothell, Mount Vernon and Seattle.

Of the schools providing data, 34% of Mountain School students were minorities and 70% qualified for free and reduced lunch. Public schools pay less than half of the total cost of \$300 per student. The remaining tuition is financed by Institute fundraising.

Mountain School partners: North Cascades National Park, Seattle City Light and Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission.



North Cascades Wild

North Cascades Wild is designed as a gateway for underserved students to jumpstart their lifelong engagement with nature, stewardship and community. The program aims to connect underserved youth to wild places, thus fostering the development of a stewardship ethic, building awareness and support for wilderness and public lands, developing leadership skills, and inspiring students to pursue higher education.

In 2010, 54 high school students from the Seattle area and Skagit and Whatcom counties participated in six 12-day trips on Ross and Baker lakes while completing service projects, learning Leave No Trace, outdoor camping and leadership skills, and fostering personal development. Most of these kids were from urban neighborhoods and had never sat by the warmth of a campfire, slept under a starry night sky or floated on deep waters in a canoe. During the past three years, more than 12 languages have been spoken within the groups, and many of the teens are new citizens who had never visited a national park.

The program also includes spring and fall community service and outdoor recreation field trips and a 3-day Youth Leadership Conference at the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center.

Thanks to generous donors, the program is free for those who qualify from high schools in Seattle, Lake Forest Park, and Skagit and Whatcom counties.

North Cascade Wild partners: North Cascades National Park, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Student Conservation Association, Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation and Ross Lake Resort.





Cascades Climate Challenge



Cascades Climate Challenge is a tuition free program that provides emerging youth leaders from across the Pacific Northwest with the experiences and tools to become climate change ambassadors within their home communities. During the three-week program students gain the knowledge, motivation and skills to talk about climate change, public lands and the relevance to their home communities.

In 2010, Cascades Climate Challenge brought 38 student leaders from communities across Washington and Oregon — including Bellingham, Snohomish County, Seattle, Wenatchee, Vashon Island, Walla Walla, Pendleton and Astoria — to North Cascades National Park and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest to study climate change firsthand. With the largest number of glaciers in the contiguous United States and as a biologically diverse region, the North Cascades is a particularly effective "classroom" to learn firsthand about climate change and the resource issues that the Pacific Northwest faces because of it.

During the three weeks they spent in the North Cascades, students hiked to alpine zones and glaciers in the company of park and forest service rangers. They met with field scientists and natural resource managers who demonstrated data collection and observation methods and shared their perspectives on the changing landscape. Additionally, while in the field the students developed their leadership skills through a daily practice of team roles, leader duties and reflection.

Upon returning to their home communities, Cascades Climate Challenge team members plan and implement community service projects. Projects in 2010 included:

- A team of eight students from Astoria, Oregon worked in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park to create games and lessons about climate change, which they then presented to 7th and 5th grade classes in Knappa and Astoria.
 - Chris E. hosted a nationally distributed electronic field trip with the National Park Foundation and North Cascades National Park.
- Mara C. collaborated with a representative from the U. S. Forest Service to create and present a series of three lessons for 8th graders at the Icicle River Middle School in Leavenworth.
- Students from Shorewood High School worked with 8th grade classrooms at Albert Einstein Middle School for three days to teach the fundamental concepts of climate change, lessons about the human impact on climate change, and ways to reduce our carbon footprint.

Through this program, North Cascades Institute and its public lands partners are identifying and developing the next generation of environmental leaders. They will be at the forefront of the youth movement in climate change awareness and will inspire people of all ages in the Pacific Northwest and nationwide. As one young participant observed, "It's our world to inherit. If we don't care, who will?"

Cascades Climate Challenge Partners: North Cascades National Park, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, The Paul G. Allen Family

Foundation and The National Park Foundation.

Youth Leadership Conference

In November 2010, 48 high school students participated in this new conference, all of them alumni of youth programs in the North Cascades, including Cascades Climate Challenge, North Cascades Wild, International District Housing Alliance and Youth Conservation Corps.

Conference attendees participated in breakout sessions on topics including, "Whatever You Are, Be a Good One: Leadership Styles," "The College Admissions Experience," "Red Carpet Ready: Job Interviews" and "No More Sweaty Palms: How to Speak to a Group with Confidence." These interactive workshops gave students the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and enhance their communication and goal-setting abilities. Inspiration for the entire group was provided by two keynote presentations in the evening: Benj Drummond and Sara Joy Steele shared their multimedia work "Facing Climate Change" and talked about the strength of communicating in different mediums, while Maketa Wilborn and Benji Howard sang, strummed and drummed their way through a lively performance based on their New Wilderness Project campaign.

The weekend also included an opportunity fair in which students discussed job, internship and volunteer opportunities with Institute partners. They will use this information to help them formulate academic and career goals and action plans for further environmental stewardship.



Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Program

The Kulshan Creek Neighborhood
Program is a year-round outreach initiative
that engages youth from one of Skagit
Valley's most diverse neighborhoods in
a variety of informal outdoor activities.
In 2010, youngsters learned about bears,
mountain goats, bald eagles, marine
biology, migratory birds and the natural
history of the Skagit Valley through visits
to local public lands.

The program is the result of a unique grassroots partnership between the Institute and a number of community partners. It targets under-served urban youth in the Kulshan Creek neighborhood in Mount Vernon. This is a predominately Hispanic community of 2,400 low-income residents, including many teenagers with little opportunity to explore nature.

Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Program partners: Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, National Park Service, Mount Vernon Police Department, Mount Vernon Parks and Recreation, Skagit Valley College and Washington State Parks





Adult and Family Programs

Adult Seminars and Retreats

North Cascades Institute offered a rich diversity of overnight and multi-day seminars, retreats and presentations at North Cascades Environmental Learning Center and beyond. This broad array of programs increased appreciation for the natural and cultural history of the Pacific Northwest and provided people inspiration to conserve and restore our environment.

In 2010, more than 1,260 adults enrolled in seminars and field excursions to learn more about birds, art, geology, sustainability, native plants, insects, climate change, wildflowers, local farms, writing, mammals, mushrooms and more.

One popular offering was Diablo Downtime, where busy adults spent restorative weekends at the Learning Center enjoying hiking, canoeing, yoga and slow food.

Base Camp

New in 2010, this program provided an inexpensive, flexible and fun opportunity to explore and learn about "the American Alps" from skilled Institute naturalists while enjoying the comforts of our award-winning campus in the heart of North Cascades National Park. Approximately 320 people participated in this pilot program, which will be expanded in 2011.



Family Getaways

From naturalist-led canoeing and hiking adventures to bunk beds and campfires, North Cascades Institute's Family Getaways provided a unique opportunity for families of all shapes and sizes to gather in the North Cascades. The Learning Center offered busy families the opportunity to connect with nature as well as each other. Kids and adults learned about the natural

and adults tearned about the natural world through explorations of the lake and trails, outdoor games, arts and crafts, storytelling and scientific inquiry.

Approximately 275 people enjoyed learning more about the North Cascades ecosystem in Family Getaways during 2010.



Master of Education in **Environmental Education** and Certificate in Leadership and Nonprofit Administration

The Institute helps prepare leaders for a career in environmental education by earning a M.Ed. while working with the Northwest's best educators, naturalists and conservation leaders. This unique professional residency program prepares students in all aspects of environmental education while living and working at North Cascades Environmental Learning Center. Course work explores environmental education while placing an emphasis on field science, cultural studies, teaching and nonprofit administration.

Unlike many other graduate residency experiences, our professional residency is fully integrated into a degree program at Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University.

Eight students graduated from this program in 2010 after having spent two years planning and leading Institute programs including Mountain School, Family Getaways, North Cascades Wild and a wide array of natural and cultural history seminars and retreats. Since its inception in 2005, 51 students have successfully completed the program.

Partners include Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University and North Cascades National



Group Rentals at the Learning Center

North Cascades Environmental Learning Center inspires reflection, understanding and connection to the natural world. We welcome business conferences, weddings and reunions, board retreats, staff trainings and other gatherings and celebrations to help us fill up our annual calendar. During 2010 the Institute welcomed a broad diversity of groups including:
Adventures In Good Company

- Arlene Morely group lunch and tour
- Canlis Restaurant staff retreat
- Classic Car Club of America

- Council of Educational Facility Planners International
- Fowler/Edelman wedding
- Fairhaven College Wilderness Class
- Ithaca College Department of Recreation and Leisure residency
- Kays/Ennis wedding Kinship Conservation Fellows
- Leadership Skagit
- Nason/Rubert wedding
- National Park Foundation electronic field trip filming
- Port of Skagit board retreat
- Remote Medical International training residencies
- Sedro-Woolley High School Yearbook Team retreat
- Sedro-Woolley School District administrative retreat
- Sierra Club national outings
- Silver Bay Tours lunch and tour
- Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission retreat
- Steele/Drummond wedding
- University of Alaska Girls on Ice Washington's National Park Fund
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources retreat
- Whitman College Alumni Association's "Camp Whitman"
- World Affairs Council Pakistani Women's Delegation meeting



The Sourdough Speaker

Series was another successful program. This intimate gathering of adults, the Institute's take on a "salon in the wilderness," featured special speakers, exquisite dinners of local



and organic foods and naturalist-led explorations of the Diabo Lake neighborhood. In 2010, participants learned about wolverines. landscape photography, sustainable transportation,

the history of microbrewing in the Northwest, sailing, ocean ecology and ethical wildharvesting.

Park Bookstores

North Cascades Institute recently signed an agreement with North Cascades National Park and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest to conduct retail sales in visitor information sites around the North Cascades. In 2010, the stores greeted thousands of diverse people and provided books, maps, guidebooks, passes and other merchandise that inspire them to more deeply experience. enjoy, interpret, share and remember their experiences in North Cascades National Park.

Retail sites include the Sedro-Woolley headquarters, the Wilderness Information Center (Marblemount), NPS Visitor Center (Newhalem) and the Golden West Visitor Center (Stehekin). In 2011, we will also conduct sales at the Skagit Information Center in Newhalem. Proceeds from sales will help fund youth education in our national park and on our public forest lands.



Special Events

The Institute presented, in partnership with Seattle Arts & Lectures, a Seattle reading by naturalist and author Barry Lopez attended by more than 1,200 people. This was the latest in our "Wilderness and the Imagination" lecture series produced with SA&L, which has brought Gary Snyder, Terry Tempest Williams, Peter Matthiessen, Mary Oliver and other literary luminaries to the Pacific Northwest.

The Institute also produced a public event at the Mt. Baker Theatre

in Bellingham with photographer and ecologist Amy Gulick on her new book "Salmon in the Trees: Life in Alaska's Tongass Rain Forest," and a canoe journey on the Skagit River in partnership with the Museum of Northwest Art and their exhibit on Fishtown.





Thanks to our partners, donors and leadership











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Skagit Valley College

Skagit Watershed Council

Village Books

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Washington Department of Transportation Washington State Parks Department

Whatcom County Sheriff

RECENT AWARDS



For the past seven years, North Cascades Institute has consistently received a four-star rating for sound fiscal management from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent evaluator of charities. Only three percent of American charities are rated as highly. Charity Navigator highlights the work of efficient nonprofits and provides donors with essential information needed to give them greater confidence in the choices they make. To learn more about its ratings, visit www.charitynavigator.org

- Silver LEED Certification for construction of the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center (2009)
- Outstanding Service Provider (2008), North American Association for Environmental Education
- Organizational Excellence Award (2006), Environmental Education Association of Washington
- Best Use of FSC Certified Wood (2006, for Learning Center), Forest Stewardship Council
- "Champions of the West" Achievement in Environmental Education (2006), Sunset Magazine

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> Ascending Eagles, a 1983 bronze sculpture by Northwest artist Tony Angell, now soars over the amphitheater at the Learning Center thanks to a generous gift from Qwest Foundation. The piece -and two smaller bronzes— was moved to the site and installed by Artech, Seattle.

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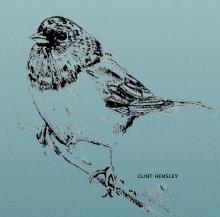
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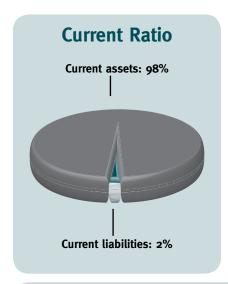
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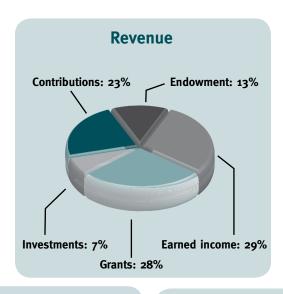


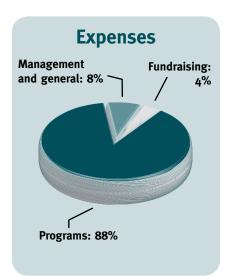
2010 Financials











STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION as of DECEMBER 31, 2010

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 267,294
Operating reserve	1,597,758
Receivables	609,878
Prepaids	74,235
Investments	2,079,105
Property and equipment, net	221,904
	\$ 4,850,174

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	36,862
Accrued expenses	50,496
Deferred revenue and other	16,996
	104.354

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	
Undesignated	335,473
Board designated reserves	3,590,000
Temporarily restricted	660,347
Permanently restricted endowment	160,000
	4,745,820

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS \$ 4,850,174

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

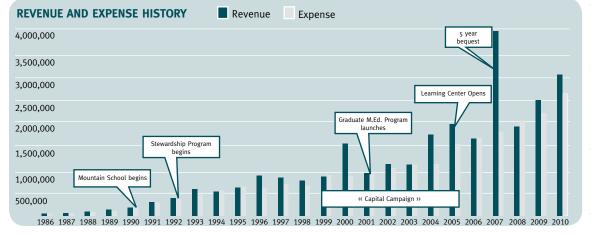
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Earned income (tuition and contracts)	\$	804,048
Special events		3,953
Bookstores, net		73,255
Endowment (Learning Center Fund)		400,000
Government grants		340,615
Foundation grants		487,938
Contributions		330,289
In-kind contributions		351,613
Investment income		217,592
	3	3,009,303

EXPENSES

Programs	2,301,100
Management and general	200,996
Fund-raising	95,665
	2,597,761

CHANGE IN NET ASSESTS \$ 411,542



The condensed financial statements presented above reflect North Cascades Institute's complete set of financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2010, which have been audited by Jones & Associates LLC, Certified Public Accountants, and on which they have rendered an unqualified opinion dated March 31, 2011. The organization's audited financial statements and the independant auditors report can be found at www.ncascades.org

JASON RUVELSON, CONTROLLER





The Headwaters Club

Your support helps conserve and restore Northwest environments through education. To ensure future generations benefit from our education programs, please consider joining the Headwaters Club by naming North Cascades Institute as a beneficiary in your will.

Donors choose to join the Headwaters Club for two key reasons:

- They deeply believe in our educational mission. If we just continue to try to fix things, but don't educate people about essential systems and causes, what will ever change?
- They trust the Institute's fiscal management, leadership and vision. The Institute is audited annually and, in 2010, received its seventh consecutive four-star rating from Charity Navigator -- only 2% of American charities are rated as highly. We have appropriate reserve funds, a viable strategic plan and a clear vision for our future.

Let us hear from you soon! North Cascades Institute is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. In celebration of it, donors who join the Headwaters Club will be honored at a Club luncheon at the Learning Center July 22, 2011.

