2015 ANNUAL REPORT
NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE

CONNECTING PEOPLE, NATURE AND COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION SINCE 1986
2015 was an amazing year. We celebrated many successes and learned from a few (big) challenges.

**Mountain School** celebrated its 25th year. Our first foray into educating young people, this award-winning, 3-day residential program has now reached more than 27,000 students. While the program continues to adapt to stay responsive to teachers, evolving science and school curriculum, the core of the program remains consistent: inspire children to learn about and fall in love with the natural world. (See *Seattle Times* excerpt on back)

We also looked forward to celebrating the 10th birthday of the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center with our partners Seattle City Light and North Cascades National Park. However, our anniversary picnic was thwarted by the **Goodell Creek wildfire**. This lightning-sparked fire laid low around Newhalem at first, but strong winds in August pushed it up the Skagit River Canyon toward the Learning Center. We were forced to evacuate all personnel except for a small safety crew, and for two weeks we watched and waited and worried. Finally, a well-timed rainstorm extinguished the blaze, and as quickly as the crisis had begun, it was over. Except for picking up the pieces of a major interruption in the heart of our field season!

Through this experience, we learned about the **resiliency of the Institute and our participants**. Our staff and graduate students pulled together in the face of adversity – camping at our Blue House in Marblemount, and planning for fall Mountain School as a tent-based program at a new location. We received a wonderful outpouring of support from our community throughout the Northwest and the country. People came forward with offers of housing for our displaced staff, financial contributions to make up for lost revenue and well-wishes of all kinds.

Thank you.

**Other exciting developments in 2015:**

- We launched **SnowSchool** in collaboration with the Mt. Baker Ski Area, Northwest Avalanche Center and the US Forest Service, to teach local 6-12th graders about snow science, climate change and the joys of winter outdoor recreation.
- In 2015, Institute staff met with national partners **far afield from our home** mountain range – in Washington DC; Gettysburg, PA; Yellowstone National Park; and New York.
- We welcomed the **largest cohort yet to our Graduate Program (M.Ed.)**, and established new leadership tracks with regional agencies and non-profits.
- We **invested in technology** to improve efficiency, including upgrades to our database and website.
- And Saul published **Headwaters**, *his first collection of poetry*, and undertook a reading tour that promoted the Institute in communities across Washington.

We are already well into 2016, and celebrating two more exciting milestones: the Institute’s 30th Anniversary and the Centennial of the National Park Service. We are deeply engaged with our partners and other stakeholders as our board leads us in strategic planning to guide us into the future. Thanks for being part of this exciting journey.

Saul Weisberg,  
Executive Director  

Nan McKay,  
Board Chair
2015 Financials
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015

SUPPORT AND REVENUE
Contracts, tuition and fees, net $1,395,528
Investment income (92,716)
Contributions 394,055
Foundation grants 261,785
Government grants 217,563
In-kind contributions 202,448
Learning Center Fund (Seattle Foundation) 325,000
Bookstores (retail/outreach), net 133,167

\[ \text{Total Revenue: } 2,836,830 \]

EXPENSES
Programs 2,665,880
Management and general 221,767
Fundraising 255,145

\[ \text{Total Expenses: } 3,142,792 \]

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS
\[ \text{Net Change: } -305,962 \]

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2015

ASSETS
Cash and cash equivalents $502,782
Short-term investments 195,381
Receivables, net 87,854
Inventory and other 111,392
Long-term investments 4,447,168
Property and equipment, net 427,901

\[ \text{Total Assets: } 5,772,478 \]

LIABILITIES
Accounts payable 73,112
Line of Credit (house purchase) 317,115
Accrued expenses 70,978
Deferred revenue and other 36,555

\[ \text{Total Liabilities: } 497,760 \]

NET ASSETS
Operating reserve 1,800,000
Unrestricted and temporarily restricted funds 1,080,512
Conservation Education Fund 1,540,338
Nugent Family Fund 513,446
Darby Foundation Scholarship Fund 44,544
Youth Leadership Fund (Ginny Darvill) 184,284
John Miles Graduate Fund 37,378
Weisberg Scholarship Fund 29,976
North Cascades Conservation Council Founders Fund 44,240

\[ \text{Total Net Assets: } 5,274,718 \]

\[ \text{Total Liabilities and Net Assets: } 5,772,478 \]

THANK YOU TO 617 INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS WHO GAVE IN 2015!
www.ncascades.org/donors

Revenue: $2,836,830

Expenses: $3,142,792

“\[ \text{I have had the privilege to be a part of North Cascades Institute’s youth programs and personally witnessed the power of diversity — youth of every size, age, gender and color — outdoors in the North Cascades backcountry cooperating, discovering and getting to know their true selves. Future stewards of the planet they will surely be, and the Institute is leading the way into a future where our survival depends on our species working together in an inclusive world.} \]

\[ \text{I know of no better place to invest in the future than North Cascades Institute!} \]

— Gerry Cook, donor and board member
IN THE MEDIA:

Mountain School Makes the Magic of the Wilderness Real for Kids
“The concept...sounds simple: In a three-day mountain camp experience, imbue in school children a visceral connection with this special place — the thumping, mountainous heart of Northwest wilderness. Make its magic real to them at a micro level, in the hope that some of them will feel the pull to return as powerfully as a salmon headed home to spawn.

This is how it’s done at Mountain School. Has been, in fact, for 25 years as a program that sprouted in leaky Army surplus tents at Newhalem Campground matures into a national model for wilderness education on public lands.” — The Seattle Times Pacific NW Magazine, August 2015

Students learn leadership, love of nature on trips in North Cascades
“...takes kids, most of whom have little experience with the outdoors, backpacking or canoeing in the North Cascades in hopes of instilling a love and appreciation for wild places.

The students echoed that theme in their talks. They talked about the value they felt in the natural environment after living so close to it.” — Everett Herald, July 2015

To read the full articles, visit www.ncascades.org/press

MANY THANKS TO THE PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO CONTRIBUTED WORK FOR THIS PUBLICATION INCLUDING

YOUTH PROGRAMS’ YEAR-END REPORTS online >>

In 2015, Mountain School and Youth Leadership Adventures reached thousands of young students. Learn about where the students come from, what they learn and how they are impacted in these transformational programs. www.issuu.com/ncascades