



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE



CONNECTING PEOPLE, NATURE AND COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION SINCE 1986

Letter from our Executive Director and Board Chair



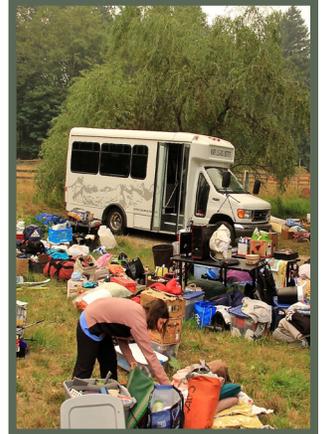
2015 was an amazing year. We celebrated many successes and learned from a few (big) challenges.

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)



Mountain School program celebrated 25 years in 2015!

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!



Institute staff & grads evacuated to Marblemount due to the wildfire.

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.

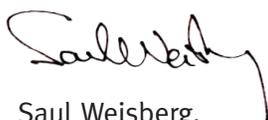
Other exciting developments in 2015:

- 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.



Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell would “rather be in the North Cascades!”

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



Mt. Baker SnowSchool taught students about snow science and climate change.

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 (<i>Seattle Foundation</i>)	325,000
Bookstores (retail/outreach), net	<u>133,167</u>
	2,836,830

EXPENSES

Programs	2,665,880
Management and general	221,767
Fundraising	<u>255,145</u>
	3,142,792

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

\$ (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	<u>427,901</u>
	\$ 5,772,478

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	73,112
Line of Credit (house purchase)	317,115
Accrued expenses	70,978
Deferred revenue and other	<u>36,555</u>
	\$ 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	<u>44,240</u>
Founders Fund	\$ 5,274,718

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

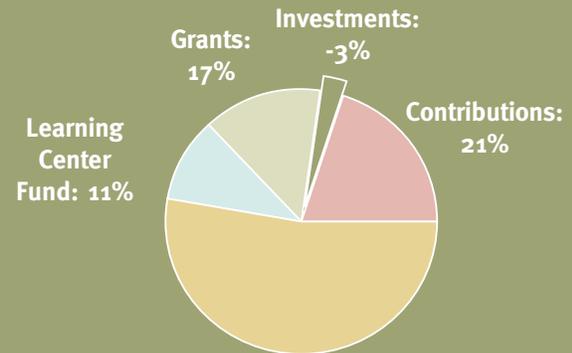
\$ 5,772,478



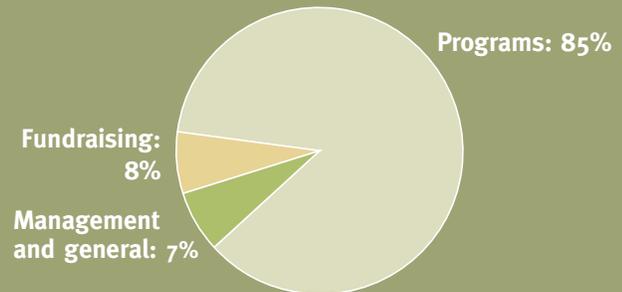
North Cascades Institute has received eleven consecutive 4-star ratings from Charity Navigator for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

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



"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."

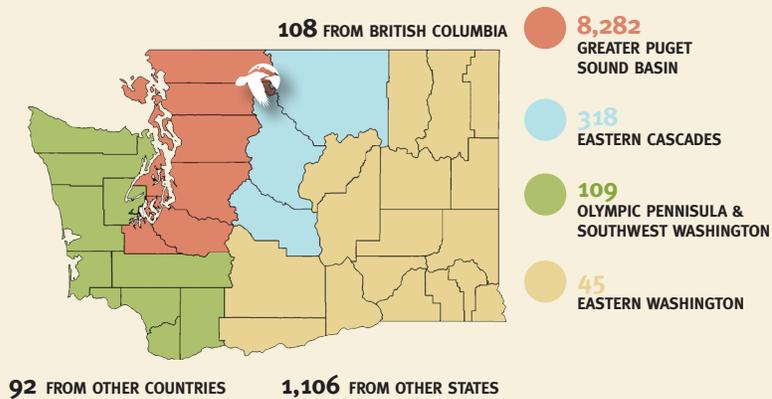
I know of no better place to invest in the future than North Cascades Institute!

— Gerry Cook,
donor and board member

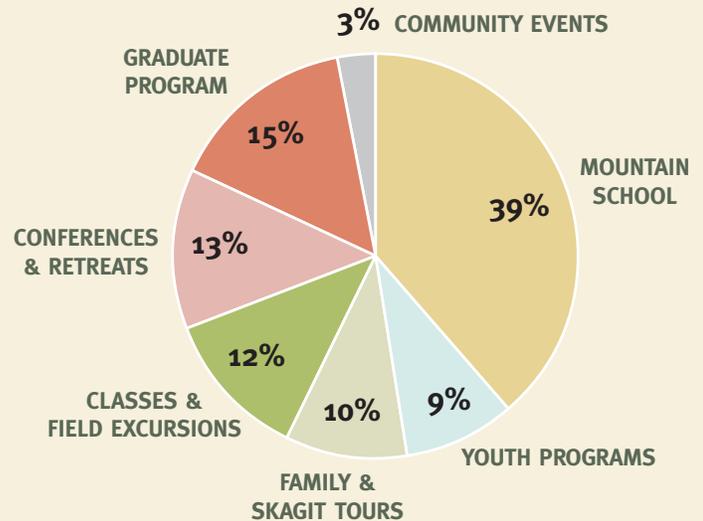


IT ALL ADDS UP:

Participants = 10,000



Participant days = 21,700



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

“Youth Leadership Adventures, offered through the North Cascades Institute... 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 are racially diverse; many come from low-income families and, if they choose to attend college, will be the first in their families to do so. None of them know each other when they start the program.

Kate Rinder, youth leadership coordinator for NCI, says for many students, the program is a transformative experience. “We know they won't all be environmental educators, but we want them to have an ethic of caring for the environment,” she said.

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
Shari Galiardi: Waterfall, cover. **Molly Hashimoto:** Watercolor, cover. **Christian Martin:** Salish Dancer, cover. **Rick Allen:** Mountain School Birthday, cover. **Dylan Klinesteker:** NOCA sign & fire, cover. **Joshua Porter:** Grads, cover. **Nika Myers:** Girl and rock, cover.
Jodi Broughton: Saul & Nan, pg 2. **Codi Hamblin:** SnowSchool, pg 2. **Buff Black:** Mountain School, pg 2.

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



Mountain School on ISSUU



Youth Leadership Adventures on ISSUU