

The Mt Pilchuck Lookout is part of Mt Pilchuck State Park, which is administered by and part of Wallace Falls State Park. Why do you care about that? On page 14 of the report linked below is the list of potential additional Washington State Parks closures in addition to the ones you have heard about on the news.

<http://www.parks.wa.gov/wsprcmeetings/2009-03-05%20detailed%20Commission%20agenda%20items.doc>

Wallace Falls State Park (includes Mt Pilchuck State Park & Lookout) is on line 11 of page 14.

I am attaching a document that is posted at the trailhead.

With all of the volunteer time and effort that has gone into upkeep and maintenance of the lookout over the last 23 years, it would be a shame for it to be closed-up and allowed to deteriorate. Given that Washington State Parks historically only supported Pilchuck as a part of Wallace Falls State Park, there is little chance they would support it independently if Wallace Falls is closed.

The list is of potential closures and the legislature is still in session. Note that the data for Wallace Falls State Park shows it is one of the most cost effective (\$/visitor in column 7 of the table).

However, the chart is missing a lot of revenue for Wallace Falls State Park. It appears the revenue from the new cabins is missing. As of 3/8/09, the cabins already rented for the 2009 Summer season (April thru Sept) (per WA parks website) will bring in \$20K, with the occupancy rate of about 18% so far (nice weather has not arrived yet and not everyone has committed to their camping plans for the year). I would expect the annual occupancy rate to be at least 55% and the revenue from the cabin rentals and camping fees to be closer to \$65K.

The visitation total in the chart appears to exclude those that visit Mt Pilchuck. If I recall correctly, the State Parks staff do not collect usage data for the Mt Pilchuck trailhead, since it is outside the park. I have often been at the lookout and counted 300 visitors on a nice day. One day I checked the USFS trailhead register and it appeared that only 1/4 of the people were at the lookout signed the register. If you add the visitors to Mt Pilchuck Park to the Wallace Falls Park user numbers (they would also be effected by a closure) the number of visitors would increase by at least 40,000.

If you add in the missing revenue and visitations, the actual "annual cost/visitor served" is closer to \$0.51. Which is more cost effective than most of the other parks on the list - - and probably more effective than many parks not on the list. So the table substantially overstates the cost savings of closing ("mothballing") Wallace Falls State Park.

Contact the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and your Washington State Representative and Senator if you have an opinion on this issue. Contact information is available at:

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission at

www.parks.wa.gov or 360-902-8500

State Legislator at www.leg.wa.gov

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