



NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK'S 40TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

When: July 17, 18 and 19

Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

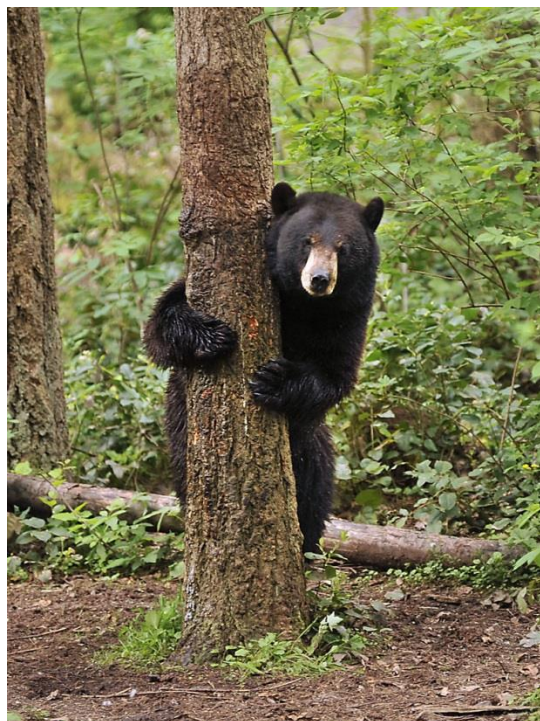
Where: Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, 11610 Trek Drive E., Eatonville, Wash.

Learn more: www.nwtrek.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 16, 2015

IT'S A WILD BIRTHDAY BASH: CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF AWE-SOME WITH UP-CLOSE VIEWS OF BISON, ELK, MOOSE, BEARS, WOLVES, COYOTES AND OTHER ANIMALS AT NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK

EATONVILLE, Wash. – Imagine a place where American bison, Roosevelt elk and rare woodland caribou roam free. Where moose stand majestically in a serene lake, and trumpeter swans glide silently across the water.



And where you get so close to the animals you can see bison breath steaming in the mist, hear a bear's mighty claws digging into a tree and watch wolves howl just a few yards away.

No hiking is needed to view these breathtaking scenes. No camping equipment necessary.

This is Northwest Trek Wildlife Park in Eatonville, Wash., where getting up close to native animals in natural exhibits is as easy as parking your car and walking through the gate.

Hop aboard a tram for a 50-minute, naturalist-narrated tour through a 435-acre Free-Roaming Area teeming with herds of bison, elk and caribou as well as bighorn sheep, moose, deer and other animals – all at home in forests and meadows.

Stroll forested pathways leading to natural exhibits in which black bears, grizzly bears, wolves, cougars, Canada lynx, bobcats and other animals wander wooded spaces.

Stop and smile at river otters and beavers splashing in pools.



Overhead, zip lines thrum as adventurous visitors test their mental toughness and physical agility on five zip line/challenge courses. They range from low-to-the-ground and very easy for kids as young as 5 to breathtaking heights – think more than 80 feet off the ground – for adults 18 and over who want extreme thrills.

This one-of-a-kind wildlife park, just an hour's drive from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and convenient to dozens of cities in the Puget Sound area, is celebrating its 40th Birthday in July with a three-day party showcasing its more than 200 animals in 40 species.

The event on July 17, 18 and 19th will include cupcakes for visitors each day (while supplies last), special enrichments and birthday cake treats for the animals, party games, a photo booth with props, historical artifacts, a film about Northwest Trek's history and visits by Footloose, Northwest Trek's moose mascot.

On July 17 animals in the Free-Roaming Area will get the biggest birthday cake of all – a treat composed of stacked hay bales.

Plus, spring and summer are baby animal season at Northwest Trek, and it's likely there will be distinctive orange bison calves, elk calves, deer fawns and other newborns for visitors to see this summer.

So what makes Northwest Trek so special?

Half a century ago, David T. "Doc" and Connie Hellyer looked at the water and the woods on their idyllic acreage in the shadow of Mount Rainier and knew it should be preserved for public enjoyment. Doc was a pediatrician, horseman, woodsman and writer, Connie an avid supporter of music and the arts. The couple raised three daughters, spending time in a small house overlooking Horseshoe Lake, and they wanted generations of other children to know and love nature as they did. They believed the land should continue to shelter animals as it was meant to do.

Their foresight and generous donation of land to Metro Parks Tacoma ultimately became Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, where conservation and education are daily watchwords.

The now 725-acre wildlife park, accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, is a recognized leader in the conservation of Northwest species and twice won the prestigious North American Conservation Award in recent years.

Visitors always leave with new nuggets of information about flora and fauna. Keepers bring small animals out along the pathways for Trailside Encounters in which visitors can view animals up close and ask questions about them. In the Cheney Family Discovery Center, kids participate in hands-on activities that connect them more closely with nature.

And in one corner of the wildlife park, the half-acre Kids' Trek nature-themed play area is under construction. It's due to open in spring 2016.

Northwest Trek draws families and friends for day trips, schoolchildren on field trips, visitors from around the world on vacation. There's a café and picnic tables and a gift shop for clothing, special gift items and souvenirs.

A one-day trip produces lifetime memories.

There's no better place to answer the call of the wild.

For more information and details on hours and admission prices, go to www.nwtrek.org.

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Northwest Trek, accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, is a 725-acre zoological park dedicated to conservation, education and recreation by displaying, interpreting and researching native Northwest wildlife and their natural habitats. The wildlife park, a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma, is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015. It's located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.