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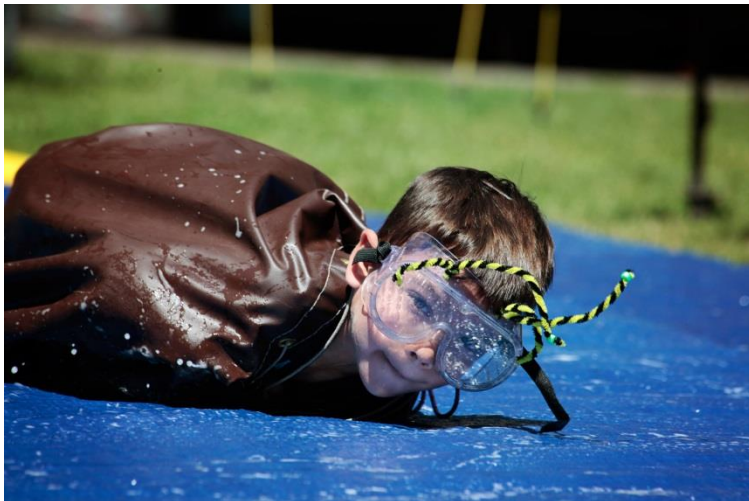
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READY, SET, SLIME! IT'S ALMOST SLUG FEST TIME AT NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK
Annual event features human slug races, games and activities for kids of all ages

EATONVILLE, Wash. – It's Slug Fest time at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park.

That means a celebration of sliminess and silliness with lots of activities for kids – and the rest of the family, too. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26.



the wildlife park's 435-acre Free-Roaming Area on an animal-watching journey.

Or think about tentacle headbands for people.

And human slug races? Yep, those too. Contestants can inch their way down a soapy, slimy track to victory. They'll get gear to help protect their clothes while they're in the race. But the track is wet, so some good, clean "sliminess" could wear off on contestants.

Slug races are slated to slime off at 11:15 a.m., 1:15 p.m. and 3:15 p.m.

Oh, and the guest of honor. Well, of course, it's a slug. A Pacific banana slug, to be exact.

Some would call it lowly, but the banana slug has an important role to play in the forests and their ecosystems. . Banana slugs are decomposers that break down organic matter and return nutrients to the soil.

So what's there to do at Slug Fest?

Well imagine large trams equipped with tentacles as they make their way through



What else is in store? How about these fun all-day activities?

- **...like a slug:** Participants roll a die and that roll determines what they must do to act like a slug
- **Photo Booth** with slug props
- **Slug crafts** (using recycled Northwest Trek maps)
 - Melted crayon bookmarks
 - Make your own Slug Fest postcard
 - Marble slime trail paintings
- **Tentacles galore!** Make a paper pair to wear for the day
- **Slug tots:** Children can enjoy some sensory play in a fake mulch pile and with bubbles

In addition, these events will be at specified times:

- **Slug Story Time:** 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- **Slug Hunt** (kids find six differently colored slugs cleverly crafted from plastic eggs and receive a prize)
- **Trailside Encounters** with small animals: 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Slug Fest 2016 is sponsored by BECU.

All activities are free with admission or membership to Northwest Trek.

And, as always, each admission to Northwest Trek comes with a 50-minute, naturalist-narrated tour on a tram through the Free-Roaming Area, which is home to American bison, Roosevelt elk, woodland caribou, moose, deer and other animals. It's a great time to look for the wildlife park's newest resident, a male moose calf born June 12.

There are more two dozen young animals in the meadows and forests of the Free-Roaming area, with a number of bison, elk and caribou calves and bighorn sheep lambs born this year, in addition to the young moose.

Plus, visitors can walk the paved paths through forests of tall evergreens to natural exhibits of wolves, coyotes, Canada lynx, black bears, a grizzly bear and a wetlands exhibit that includes beavers, otters and other small animals.

And kids will enjoy playtime and getting to know the outdoors a little better at the nature-inspired Kids' Trek playground, which opened in April.

For more information, 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. It's located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.

Photo captions:

Top: A contestant inches his way down the track during a human slug race as part of Slug Fest.

Bottom: Two girls pose atop a huge wooden slug at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park.

