



Northwest Trek
Wildlife Park

METRO PARKS TACOMA

HELP NAME TWO GRIZZLY BEAR CUBS AT NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK

Orphaned bears are getting ready to make their public debut in their new forested home

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Eatonville, Wash. – Will it be Hawthorne, Kenai or Sitka for the chocolate-colored grizzly bear cub from Alaska?



Bandera, Glacier or Huckleberry for the buff-colored cub with darker-colored legs from Montana?

Northwest Trek Wildlife Park wants the public's help to name two grizzly bear cubs who arrived at their new home last month after they were orphaned in the wild.

No date has been set, but the cubs will soon make their public debuts in Northwest Trek's forested grizzly bear habitat. The winning names will be revealed at that time.

Members of the public can vote for one name for each cub at www.nwtrek.org/cubnames.

Northwest Trek keepers suggested the two slates of names in keeping with the wildlife park's recent tradition of naming animals after geographic locations in the Northwest or iconic trees, plants and flowers native to the area.

For the orphaned cub from Alaska, the suggested names and their meanings are:

- **Hawthorne**, a name derived from the large, diverse group of thorny shrubs and small trees known as hawthorns that are native to the Northwest.
- **Kenai** (pronounced keen-eye), an Athabascan word for which a city, geographic peninsula and river in southeast Alaska are named.
- **Sitka**, a word derived from the Tlingit language meaning "people on the outside of Baronof Island." It is the name of a city that was once the capital of Alaska, as well as the name of a type of spruce tree.



Alaska cub, top; Montana cub, bottom.

For the orphaned cub from Montana, the suggested names and their meanings are:

- **Bandera**, a mountain in the Snoqualmie region of the Cascades.
- **Glacier**, the name of a national park and county in Montana. Glacier also is the name for a geographic

feature that is a slow-moving mass of ice on a mountain.

- **Huckleberry**, a small plant that bears blue, red or black berries. Wild huckleberries are a staple of grizzly bears' diets in the wild.

"We are excited to give our guests an opportunity to vote for their favorite names for these two engaging grizzly bear cubs," said Zoological Curator Marc Heinzman. "It's important to us that they have names that reflect their Northwest roots."

Each of the cubs has developed his own personality while working with Northwest Trek staff members to get accustomed to his new home, said bear keeper Angela Gibson.

The Montana cub is curious and interested in learning new things, eagerly exploring his surroundings, Gibson said.

The Alaska cub is playful and interested in the "toys" keepers provide to him for enrichment as he gains strength and motor skills, she added.

The cubs are estimated to be around 9 months old, having been born during the winter hibernation period.

The Alaska cub was discovered alone, emaciated and in need of immediate care near Nome after poachers killed his mother. Skilled zoologists with extensive expertise in the care of orphaned bears nursed him to health and helped him grow at Alaska Zoo for several months before he arrived at Northwest Trek.

The Montana cub was found orphaned on Blackfeet Nation land in northern Montana. His mother was killed after raiding pigs from a farm. Staff members at Montana Wild, which is operated by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, in Helena, cared for him from late June until he was moved to Washington last month.

Fortunately for the two young bears, Northwest Trek was in the final stages of reconstructing its grizzly bear habitat with the aim of providing a home for two orphans.

Without human intervention, the bears would likely not have survived after their mothers were killed, wildlife officials in Alaska and Montana said. Neither is releasable back to the wild.

Northwest Trek has a long history of caring for grizzly bears and black bears and is an active participant in bear conservation programs.

For more information, go to www.nwtrek.org.

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Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, 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 is a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma and is located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.

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