

## Outdoors Notebook Lift to give Crystal Mountain boost

The first snowfall of the year is months away, but the folks at Crystal Mountain Resort are hard at work gearing up for this winter.

A new Doppelmayr chairlift named Northway is under construction in the North Country Area. The chairlift will open up about 1,000 acres of backcountry area, boosting the lift-serviced terrain to 2,300 acres.

The fixed-grip double chairlift will have a 1,870-foot rise (4,900-foot bottom elevation to 6,770 on top) and shuttle about 1,200 people per hour to the top of Northway Peak.

"The new lift in the North Country is designed to provide access but keep the snow quality higher," John Kircher, general manager of Crystal Mountain Resort, said in a written statement. "The new lift service will also serve to spread skier traffic out and keep skiers from funneling back through the base area."

The ride up to the peak will take a little less than 10 minutes. From there, skiers and snowboarders can choose to cruise down Snorting Elk Bowl, Northway Bowl, Paradise Bowl or Bruce's Bowl.

Those heading on Right Angle Ridge will find a wide range of expert glades and chutes or head farther north to places like Morning Glory Bowl and Brand X.

Several other trails are to be constructed that will feed into the bottom of the new lift.

Tree-cutting started last month, and a helicopter is being used to remove the trees, lessening the impact on the environment. The cement bases for the lift towers are scheduled to be poured next month, and the towers will be installed between late August and early September.

"There is still snow in places, which is hard to believe, but we need the ground to be completely cleared of that before we can start pouring the cement for the bases," said Tiana Enger, sales and marketing director for Crystal Mountain Resort.

Cost of the new chairlift is estimated at \$2.5 million.

Crystal Mountain, voted the seventh-best mountain in North America by SKIING Magazine, is the largest ski area in Washington with 2,600 acres of skiable terrain.

### TrailsFest coming

It's time to lace up the hiking boots and head to the Washington Trails Association's TrailsFest, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at Rattlesnake Lake near North Bend.

The event features many outdoor activities, including clinics on hiking with your family, smart backpacking, introductory lessons on canoeing and kayaking, camping and mountain-weather forecasting.

There will also be vendors from gear companies and outdoor groups, including experts from REI and the Seattle Audubon Society, displaying the latest items and providing advice. Kids can go on a treasure hunt or visit the kid-friendly booths and activities.

Craig Romano, author of "Day Hiking Olympic Peninsula" published by Mountaineers Books, will be on hand.

The event is free, though some programs have a small fee. Details: 206-625-1367 or [www.wta.org](http://www.wta.org).

### Sockeye fishery unlikely

The Lake Washington sockeye run is tracking well behind, and a summer fishery is highly doubtful.

Mike Mahovlich, a Muckleshoot tribal biologist, and Steve Foley, a state Fish and Wildlife biologist who monitors sockeye, both agree this year's return is very small and that a fishery is highly unlikely.

Through July 11, 43,928 sockeye have passed up the Ballard Locks, compared to 140,723 on the same date last year. To open the lake to fishing, the run has to be above the 350,000-fish-minimum escapement goal.

Salmon anglers will be rising early Monday morning to get their first chance at the selective hatchery-marked chinook fishery in Marine Catch Areas 9 and 10 (Central and North Sound), where catch-and-keep fishing hasn't happened since 1993.

The fishery might not last long, as the chinook catch quota in Area 10 is 1,700, and in Area 9 it is 7,000. State Fish and Wildlife staff have bets on how long the season will last, and many say anywhere from five to 20 days.

A bright spot for hatchery chinook is the Skykomish River, but things could change, as the river is expected to drop low and clear.

"It has been good the last couple of weeks, and they've been averaging one chinook for every three to four rods, and on certain days it has been higher," said Chad Jackson, a state Fish and Wildlife biologist. "Our fish creeler [Thursday] checked eight fishermen with six chinook. We are checking more steelhead, but it is still pretty bad."

#### Notes

The Seattle Poggie Fishing Club will host salmon-fishing classes from 7 to 9:30 p.m. on Aug. 6, 13, 20 and 27 at the Ballard N.W. Senior Center, 5429 32nd Ave. N.W. Cost is \$60, and \$30 for each additional family member. Details: 206-525-3593 or [www.seattlepoggies.com](http://www.seattlepoggies.com).

The sport halibut fishing season will reopen July 22 only at Neah Bay and La Push after an assessment by state Fish and Wildlife found enough remains in the catch quota.

The Puget Sound Anglers Eastside Chapter meeting is 7 p.m. on Wednesday at the North Bellevue Community Center, 4063 148th Ave. N.E. Tom Zimmerman will show a film with guide Eli Rico on fishing for kings in Lake Sammamish. Details: 425-562-9180.

The North Seattle Boys and Girls Club Elliott Bay Salmon Derby is July 28 at the Don Armeni boat ramp in West Seattle. Cost is \$25. Largest fish is worth \$1,000. Tickets available at Outdoor Emporium in Seattle. Details: 206-399-3575 or 206-624-6550 or [www.elliottbaysalmonderby.com](http://www.elliottbaysalmonderby.com).

The South King County Puget Sound Anglers meeting is 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday at the Des Moines Masonic Hall, 2208 So. 223rd St.

Salmon University instructor Tom Nelson will discuss salmon fishing in Puget Sound. Details: 253-833-1440 or [www.pugetsoundanglers.net](http://www.pugetsoundanglers.net).

The world's top mountain bikers will head to Whistler Mountain Resort in British Columbia for the Kokanee Crankworx Mountain Bike Festival, July 21 to 29. The festival will offer a wide range of mountain-biking events. Details: [www.crankworx.com](http://www.crankworx.com).

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## About the Author

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