

# SOAP Action Update

## *Pack it in, Pack it Out at Snohomish County Parks*



### Everyone Benefits When You Recycle At Home

As many as 346 tons of garbage are left at Snohomish County Parks each year by our 4.7 million Snohomish Parks visitors. A lot of time and money is expended to manage all of this waste, with County Parks spending an estimated \$207,000 in time and resources servicing garbage cans.

In 2014, Snohomish County Parks is making changes to the setup of garbage receptacles. The number of small garbage cans at park facilities will be reduced, and instead Parks will increase the capacity of park dumpsters for garbage and recycling. Park visitors are encouraged to “pack out” garbage and recycling for disposal and recycling at home, instead of using park garbage cans and dumpsters. Packing out garbage and recyclables from County parks enables more recyclables to be successfully diverted from the landfill. If visitors cannot pack out what they bring in, central garbage and recycling dumpsters are available on site.

By packing out your trash and recyclables, we can feed three birds with one worm – recycling what would have gone to the landfill as waste, keeping our parks clean, and conserving Park resources to maintain the enjoyment of County Parks for all Park users!

### *environmental goals*

Snohomish County is working to achieve the energy and resource conservation goals established in our internal Sustainable Operations Action Plan (SOAP) for government operations. Reducing the amount of waste at our County parks is one example of how we are taking action to achieve our SOAP Goals and Objectives, namely:

- **Goal 3:** Reduce, Recycle and Repurpose Waste
- **Objective 40:** Reduce waste from County facilities by 30% by the end of 2013 (or until goal is met) against a 2011-2012 average baseline

### *environmental benefits*

Packing out our trash and recyclables...

- Diverts from the landfill the equivalent in weight of 66 2010 Ford F-150s<sup>1</sup> (or close to 350,000 pounds) in the first 7 years of the campaign
- Can make 10,500+ acres worth of Snohomish County parks<sup>2</sup> cleaner and more enjoyable
- Can prevent the total amount of garbage disposed of at Snohomish County Parks from rising to 425 tons/year in seven years<sup>3</sup>

### *economic case*

By taking action to achieve Snohomish County sustainability goals and reducing waste at our parks, the County realizes an economic benefit of:

- **\$207,000** savings in staff time and resources from garbage can servicing. These resources can then be put towards other Parks projects and activities.