

## **SAS Resolution: Support for American Alps Legacy Project – the expansion of the North Cascades National Park**

**Background:** Under the leadership of SAS Past President and Conservation Chair Emily Haig, Seattle Audubon was a strong supporter of the creation of the North Cascades National Park, established in 1968. However at that time, the more extensive plan supported by SAS and other environmental organizations was compromised to get a bill passed. Now forty years later, the American Alps Legacy Project has been proposed to complete our original vision and add important unprotected areas to the park. Climate change, population increase, energy needs and water shortages are resulting in new threats to these unprotected areas. The project will focus on lands north and south of the north Cascades highway from Ross Lake to Mazama. This includes a portion of the Cascade Loop of the Washington State Birding Trail.

**WHEREAS,** our national park lands in the North Cascades Mountains are a treasured resource to all Americans for their conservation, recreation, research, and economic values; and

**WHEREAS,** more than 40 years after the North Cascades National Park was created, pristine rivers and streams, magnificent mountains, lowland old growth forests, core wildlife habitats, and popular recreation sites surrounding the park still remain unprotected; and

**WHEREAS,** local gateway community and regional economies depend on high-value recreation and tourism opportunities provided by the North Cascades; and

**WHEREAS,** all Washington State residents depend on a healthy environment to sustain commerce, green jobs, ecosystem services, and a cherished quality of life; and

**WHEREAS,** regional climate change and human population growth in the Puget Sound threaten the water supplies, aquatic ecosystems, wildlife habitats, old growth forests, and outstanding recreation opportunities provided by the North Cascades; and

**WHEREAS,** these treasured resources can be permanently and completely preserved through Congressional designation of new park lands; and

**WHEREAS,** conservation groups have initiated the American Alps Legacy Project to preserve public lands around the North Cascades National Park;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Seattle Audubon Society supports, and will partner through volunteer efforts, in the American Alps Legacy Project to help complete the conservation vision for the North Cascades National Park through Congressional designation of additional park land.