



Photos courtesy of **Koreena Haynes**

Kulshan Creek program students from Mount Vernon spent Thursday and Friday, Aug. 15-16, at the Environmental Learning Center at Diablo Lake. Naturalists, graduate students and staff from the North Cascades Institute and the U.S. Forest Service supervised the kids throughout a packed agenda of hiking, games, and much more.

Kids learn about environment at Diablo Lake

Skagit Valley Herald staff

Mount Vernon students in the Kulshan Creek program spent Thursday and Friday, Aug. 15-16, exploring and learning about nature at the Environmental Learning Center at Diablo Lake in the North Cascades mountains.

Naturalists, graduate students and staff from the North Cascades Institute and the US Forest Service provided a packed agenda for the kids, including a hike in the barren Gorge Lake lakebed, stick-boat building races, animal games, campfire skits, songs, history lessons, canoeing and meals al fresco.

Arly Alfaro, 11, of Mount Vernon said she was so excited for the retreat that she packed her bags two weeks in advance.

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest staff member Koreena Haynes said students in the Kulshan Creek program travel



Staff leaders Erca Keene from the National Forest Foundation and Caitlin McHugh and Jeff Anderson from North Cascades Institute release the student-made driftwood boats down Stetattle Creek in Gorge Lake. Crews are completing work projects on the Gorge Lake dam so the water level is the lowest locals have seen in years.

on one trip per month to public gain self-awareness and connect lands. The outings help students with the natural world.