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[Environment](#), [Water](#)



- What features of the landscape are significant to the placement of the trail?

There are a lot of features of the Wallace Falls' landscape. Majority of which are just so magnificent to be treated natural. The trails basically function to connect the different landscape and other geographical features of the Wallace Falls State Park. Some of the best features and landscapes that the trails connect—which necessarily makes it significant include the three greatest falls in Wallace River, the coniferous forests that surround the state park's land areas, and the rivers, streams, and lakes that intensify the beauty that the trailers experience when traversing the trails.

- What things are sacred or the ones that are treated as sacred here?

Some areas deeply surrounded by the forest of coniferous trees as well as some areas of some of the waterfalls are considered sacred, at least by the people living within the vicinity of the falls but not often by tourists.

- How is hiking in this trail a ritual and or a ceremony? Is there anything distinct about the Small Falls Trail as a ritual and or a ceremony?

Most tourists do not really go to the place to perform a ritual or a ceremony. Most of the tourists often go there to appreciate the beauty of nature. If in case it is really to be treated as a ceremony, it may be so because of the over 1200 feet of trails that the people have to hike and trail just to get to the highest point of the park and of course, to view the mountains.

- What is presented along the trail? What is not? How is nature interpreted (Tilden) for you?

Presented along the trail are the different levels of beauty offered at Wallace Falls. In that case, it would be safe to assume that things that are not

directly related to nature may not be presented because from the start of the trail to the top and back down again, all that a tourist would see is related to nature. In this case, nature can be interpreted based on the fifth principle of interpreting our heritage as explained by Tilden which suggests that “ interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase” .

- How does the forest serve as part of this ritual or ceremony? Where does the ritual of visiting the forest or nature begin? How is being in state betwixt and between states of social order involved?

It is common among American myth believers and other people from other countries to believe that natural sites such as waterfalls and other nature's beauties have something supernatural going on in them and that is why some, especially people living near the vicinity of such sites perceive some activities (which in this case, trailing or in some, praying) as rituals or ceremonies.

- What American myths are represented and or incorporated into this space? Are they directly referred to or implicit to the ritual? I am allowing you room to be inventive; tell me what you think what counts as an American myth here

No particular American myths are represented or incorporated into the space. Some people may have used the beautiful places around the part as a venue for some of their rituals or ceremonies but that does not really necessarily make the place holy or sacred. In general, it is a site that a lot of people appreciate, nothing more and nothing less. In terms of space, one can only say that this is one of the unique natural spaces available for one to

visit out there, considering that from a person to see all of the three highest falls, he has to travel a significant number of kilometers of a series of vertical (slightly) and horizontal trails first.

Visiting a state park exposes you to a lot of things, most things that are related to nature. Doing so also makes you realize new things and concepts about nature. In our previous lectures, we studied some new principles about interpreting a heritage, a culture, and nature, as described in Geertz and Tilden's works. The visit in the Wallace Falls State Park was one perfect opportunity to apply those concepts and principles. The objective of this paper is to discuss my most recent visit in Wallace Falls State Park and my experience in walking through its trails in relation to Tilden's work, particularly his book, *Interpreting Our Heritage*.

The Wallace Falls State Park is a large state park of about 4, 735 acres located along the shoreline of the Wallace River, Luis Lake, Jay Lake, Wallace Lake, Shaw Lake, and the Skykomish River. Some of the most distinct geographical features that can be seen once you are already within the state park's site include but may not be limited to the Cascade Mountains and the other beautiful features of Gold Bar, Washington.

Perhaps the main geographical feature that the tourists who visit the location really look forward to seeing would be the series of waterfalls that can be seen within the state park itself. This, seeing more than one spectacular waterfall, in one national or state park system, is not that common. This may explain why thousands of people visit this place every year to take camp, or for some, spend a couple of nights of vacation in one of the newly constructed lodges near the camping sites.

All in all, there are nine falls that people can see and visit within the Wallace Falls State Park. However, most people often visit the state park just to see the three most beautiful waterfalls in North America, two of which are just stunningly beautiful, although not so high, and the remaining one is the tallest one in the area with a top to bottom height of at least 265 feet. These three falls are what make visiting the Wallace Falls State Park so spectacular. This is why in my previous visit; I expected to have a lot of company. Every person who loves to travel would surely be thrilled to visit a state park that has a series of nine spectacular waterfalls, all located within the same state park.

It was raining a little bit when I paid a visit. Now, most people would think that during a rainy day, the flow of the water on the waterfalls and on the system of lakes and rivers that connect the falls would be vehemently violent. I was expecting the same thing but I realized that that assumption was wrong. The added volume and pressure of water as a result of the moderate rainfall just added to the intensity of the beauty of the waterfalls and rivers.

Some of the best geographical features of the state park include the surrounding coniferous forests. The general view of the leaves of the thick forest of trees was something that could instantly make you relax. I think the volume of the trees surrounding the lakes, the rivers, and some areas around the trails is one of the features that make the people get connected more to nature; or in my case, interpret nature better. After a quarter mile of walk, the sound made by the unstoppable drop of water from the falls and the continuous flow of water from the rivers could already be heard. Add the

view of the thick volume of coniferous trees and the sound coming from the falls and the rivers and you would already get the feeling that you are in for a real trip into one of the best spectacles of nature.

One of the highlights of the trip was the Woody Trail, a trail named not for its woody surroundings but rather for the name of the late senator, Frank Woody. Frank Woody was one of the senators who strongly advocated for the establishment of Youth Corps. One of the products of that program, the Youth Corps program, was the Trail. The view when traversing the trail was just spectacular. Cool breeze touched my face. These three features really made me feel as if I am one with nature, something which one would not be able to feel if he is in the city. At some points in the trails, there are benches that people could use to contemplate, meditate, talk to each other, rest, and basically do a lot of things.

After the trail, the climb towards the waterfalls begins. Tourists need not to worry about the durability and the toughness of some points of the trail as the Washington Trails Association has, so far, done a good job in maintaining them. The Lower Falls located near the North Fork Wallace River was one of the falls I saw; the Middle Falls, the highest among all the nine falls in the state park, was what I saw next. I was literally speechless when I visited these two falls as the view was nothing but spectacular, even after the tiring semi-vertical trail trip we experienced.

I could see some native-looking people meditating in some points of the trail, mostly the quiet ones where the only sounds one could hear are those coming from flow of water in the river and the drop of huge volumes of water from the falls. I can say that most people living near the vicinity of the state

park consider the falls and some areas in the forest as sacred, although I could hardly see tourists doing the same. Most, if not all, of the tourists were busy following the trails and scouring and viewing every little bit of good scenery they could.

Hiking in the trails is a requirement because without it, you would not be able to see the beautiful forests, rivers, and falls. My perception tells me that it can be considered as a ritual in the sense that it makes the people realize that they have to work first before they could be rewarded with something; in this case, they have to endure a long and toughly elevated hike first before they could get to see the real beautiful areas in the park.

It is common among some American myth believers as well as other people from other countries to believe that natural sites such as waterfalls and other nature's beauties have something supernatural going on in them and that is why some, especially people living near the vicinity of such sites perceive some activities (which in this case, trailing or in some, praying) as rituals or ceremonies. The visiting the forest or nature part begins right when you make your first foot on the trails as the sound of the water flowing in the river and dropping from the peak of the falls, and the feeling of the cool breeze touching your face get combined. This, for me, can be interpreted as a ritual in itself.

No particular American myths are represented or incorporated into the space. Some people may have used the beautiful places around the part as a venue for some of their rituals or ceremonies but that does not really necessarily make the place holy or sacred. In general, it is a site that a lot of people appreciate, nothing more and nothing less. In terms of space, one

can only say that this is one of the unique natural spaces available for one to visit out there, considering that from a person to see all of the three highest falls, he has to travel a significant number of kilometers of a series of vertical (slightly) and horizontal trails first.

In summary, I conclude that the things that I have witnessed and experienced during my visit at the Wallace Falls State Park were completely in line with Tilden's six principles of Heritage Interpretation, specifically, the fifth one which suggests that the interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole rather than just a part of it. In this case, there were a total of nine falls but even if I was not able to visit all nine of them, I was still able to grasp the extent of the Wallace Falls State Park's beauty, interpret it, and most important of all, appreciate it.

## **Works Cited**

Ham, S. " Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide for People with Big Ideas and Small Budgets." Fulcrum Publishing (2002).

Washington State Parks. " Wallace Falls State Park." Washington State Parks (2014).