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**Copter Aids Cleanup Of Mess In Wilderness -- Army Hauls Away Abandoned Vehicles**

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When a 12-ton U.S. Army Reserve **helicopter** came barreling into the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River area yesterday, ripping grass from the ground and flinging tree trunks backwards, it became clear:

There was, after all, a machine that could take care of **Wade** Holden's problem.

**Holden** has been tearing through the Snoqualmie Valley for two years, cleaning up the enormous mess that's been left in the wilderness.

He's loaded empty beer kegs into his pickup and packed bags of bullet casings on the backs of his two llamas. He and his crew, mostly juvenile and adult offenders doing community service, have plucked portable toilets and refrigerators from the river and carried them on stretchers. The area has long been a popular spot for high-school keg parties and target shooting.

With tow trucks, the scrappy native Texan has hauled off two dozen cars that littered the side of the road. But the 14 others, resting belly-up in the river or rotting on its bank, gave **Holden** a headache.

"Every time I see them I just get sick," **Holden** shouts disgustedly (**Holden** shouts everything). He moved here because he loved the mountains, and says he can't stand to see them abused. "This area just got it the worst," he says.

Tow trucks couldn't get to the last few cars in the valley and most helicopters couldn't carry them. And Holden's group, Friends of the Trail, couldn't afford to rent a **helicopter**, anyway.

So **Holden** asked the Army Reserves to lift the cars out.

The Reserve unit he approached is based out of Fort Lewis and specializes in heavy-lift operations, using the tandem-rotor Boeing CH-47D Chinook **helicopter**. Some of the unit's recent missions have been helping to rescue hikers stranded on Mount Rainier and fighting massive fires in Eastern Washington.

After a year and a half of what **Holden** calls "bureaucratic hoops," the Reserves told him the mission was a go.

Yesterday, **Holden** - along with his crew, other trails volunteers, state Department of Natural Resources officials, hikers and bikers - watched as the giant copter swooped in and hovered over the cars.

Workers on the ground connected the cables to a 250-foot cord dangling from the copter, which carried the cars to a clearing where they'll be picked up for scrap.

The copter got three yesterday, and planned to return today for a few more.

"Good glory Hallelujah, I've been waiting for this for so long," **Holden** shouted. "This place is becoming a whole different animal now."