



ELEMENTS OF CHANGE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

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Change is the essence of this planet we call home. The ancients believed our planet was made of earth, water, wind and fire. Through the ongoing interactions of these four classic elements the natural landscape continuously changes keeping these four elements in balance. These changes may be slow and gentle or swift and violent. Three of the elements can change the landscape in either manner. Change by fire is always ephemeral yet cataclysmic.

Coming face to face with the results of a violent natural event where the change is obvious and the hidden is revealed is a rarity. The images included here were found after such an event. At this place, the water's edge, there exists a small world of constant change where all four elements were in contact with one another. Immovable rocks force the water to circulate around them while water continuously erodes the land along the banks of the river. The invisible wind shapes the surfaces of both earth and water. The fury of fire has laid bare all these interactions.

At the water's edge there exists life, death and rebirth. With the fire's moment of triumph gone, the land which has been altered by it begins to be reshaped by earth, water and wind. This barren landscape is but one small example of the constant change which is taking place everywhere on our planet. As the four elements shape the landscape into a balance, observations must be swift. The change is constant. Our home planet is active and vibrant. The cycle of life is timeless.























Brooks Jensen made this picture of me photographing the Chewuch River during our annual photo safari in 2008. Our goal was to photograph throughout the Okanogan National Forest. We made as far as Winthrop, Washington on the first day. The following morning we asked around town for interesting things to photograph. We were advised to drive up the Chewuch River to see the “Thirty Mile Burn.” We spent the next five days photographing places that were burned and places spared by the inferno. On the last day of our trip, we took one last drive up the Chewuch River, “to make sure we got it all.” At that point, it all came together for me. The water, the rocks, the burned trees and the new growth at the water’s edge made sense to me. I began to photograph. The images in this folio were made in just about one hour, but the mental preparation for that one hour of photography took the four previous days of looking and thinking about the landscape to realize this vision.

The Thirty Mile Burn was one of the ten most devastating forest fires in the history of the US Forest Service. If you would like to know more about this fire, you can start at this link http://forestry.about.com/od/forestfire/ss/top_fires_na_4.htm.

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