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now and forever

April 11, 2008

Thank you for your continued interest in the Ahtanum Recreation Planning Workgroup. We have selected a diverse and dedicated group of representatives to participate in this inclusive planning process. Interest group representatives include, but are not limited to, equestrians, 4x4 use, ORV's, hiking, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, and conservationists. Throughout the planning process I will continue to send regular monthly updates and occasional additional information on our progress and upcoming discussions. Soon we will have an Ahtanum State Forest Planning website which will provide public access to the meeting presentations and reading materials.

The workgroup had a successful first meeting in March and established the background and framework for the planning process. The members were provided with an overview of the Department of Natural Resources Policies and Procedures which will guide recreation management activities in the Ahtanum State Forest. These procedures will be important in future meetings as the group begins to develop the recreation plan. The workgroup was also given background information on the Yacolt Burn State Forest and the Reiter Foothills, two areas that are currently creating similar recreation plans.

Over the next couple of months, the workgroup will begin to analyze and discuss environmental and management factors that will affect trail and facility locations. These factors, such as talus or very steep slopes, will be mapped using Geographical Information System (GIS) software to identify the areas that are most appropriate for facility location. We will also begin to review current use patterns and future trends related to recreation in the Ahtanum.

We encourage you to stay involved through your local recreation interest group and share your comments regarding the Ahtanum State Forest Recreation Plan with DNR staff and the committee representatives. Your ideas are highly valued and will be discussed during our future meetings.

Thank you again for your participation and enthusiasm in the future of recreation management in the Ahtanum State Forest. We look forward to working with you to create a plan that will provide for a future of safe, sustainable recreation in the Ahtanum State Forest. If you have any question or would like more information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Erin Kreutz
Planning and Volunteer Coordinator
WA DNR Southeast Region
(509) 925-8510
asfplan@dnr.wa.gov