

Reiter Foothills Recreation Planning Committee

Meeting #1 Notes

April 8th, 2008 6:15 to 9:15 PM

Meeting Purpose: Introduce Planning Committee members, facilitator, and DNR supporting staff; outline the DNR recreation planning process and the Committee's roles and responsibilities in support of the DNR's long-term planning for the Reiter Foothills Area.

Welcome:

- Introduction to Mary Dumas, independent facilitator, her role in working with the planning committee and review of meeting agenda and Committee notebooks.

Bill Wallace, Manager DNR Northwest Region:

- Thanked the Committee for helping DNR identify interests and recreational needs for this planning area. The DNR is appreciative of the commitment the group members are providing.
- Brief overview of the DNR NW Region, function of a working forest, including mandate to generate revenue for several trust beneficiaries while addressing wildlife habitat needs and community interests, including recreation.
- DNR is changing its role and giving more attention to recreation interests. The DNR used to be reactive in recreational use issues and will now place more emphasis on proactive recreation management.

Committee Introductions:

Following brief Committee member introductions, members conducted a short asset mapping activity in small groups to get acquainted with each other, the recreational use areas they enjoy within the Reiter Foothills Planning area, and key areas for specific recreational users that they are aware of.

Questions:

- *Is the land included in the Reiter Foothills planning area going to be transferred to Snohomish County or remain DNR managed land?*

DNR Response: The planning area is DNR managed and there is no plan to transfer the land over to Snohomish County.

- *Where are the boundaries for the proposed wilderness area; there seems to be a misrepresentation within the public about the actual location for the proposed Wild Sky wilderness area? More detail regarding the wilderness proposal would be helpful.*

DNR Response: Staff outlined the USFS lands boundary on the map and indicated the general vicinity of the proposed wilderness area.

Committee Charter: Facilitator reviewed the Committee Charter and staff reviewed the DNR's role in planning and recreation.

Questions:

- *How far a reach does the committee's recommendations have? Who makes the DNR decision on the committee's recommendations*

DNR Response: The level of specificity in the recommendations will be driven by committee approach. The Committee is an advisory body to the DNR. The DNR will use the Committee's recommendations to develop recreational use plans for their area.

- *What type of decision-making process will the committee use?*

DNR Response: The Committee charter calls for consensus recommendations regarding types of uses and locations for these uses. The consensus approach the committee will use will include a minority report option in the event the group cannot reach full consensus on all recommendation elements.

- *Does DNR have maps of the areas within Reiter they will be harvesting in the future?*
- *Is it possible to have the Committee Charter and objectives sent to the members?*
- *Are we going to get down to the level of trail planning? There is a concern that multiple uses may not work in such a heavily used area.*
- *What is meant by "not adversely impact ecological functions" as contained in the Charter? This provision could be very broad.*
- *Can we send emails to each other to answer questions?*

Ground Rules: Committee reviewed and affirmed the ground rules the committee will use to conduct its work, following discussions regarding absences and alternates, communication to the broader public and media. The DNR will provide a web-based information site to report out the Committee's work so others not involved in the Committee can access meeting summaries. (Suggestion that DNR review the City of Gold Bar webpage as a model for posted minutes). The issue of committee members' contact information being open to the media came up. The consensus was that the DNR would be the contact for the media. DNR staff indicated that the cities of Monroe and Index may be selecting representatives for the committee, which will join the group at a later date.

DNR Project Staff Introductions:

- Candace Johnson – Project Manager, NW Assistant Region Manager
- Randy Kline – Recreation Planner from Division office

- David Way – Reiter Foothills Recreation Manager from NW region

DNR PowerPoint Presentation:

Trust Land Stewardship. Trust assets and revenue, healthy ecosystem, public use

DNR Recreation Statewide

1000 miles of designated trails.

143 developed recreational sites

DNR Recreation and Public Access

Land based recreation, dispersed in nature, primitive facilities, trail oriented, mostly in forested settings.

Diverse types of use

Safe, Enjoyable, and Sustainable and compatible with long term trust objectives and obligations

Planning Process funded by 2007 legislature

Timeline of planning process

Flow chart of Information in the planning process

Questions:

- *What is the \$200,000 that Snohomish County has allocated for the recreational use area? Committee is interested in the language associated with this funding.*
- *When the DNR conducts its SEPA on the recreational use plan, does the public comment at that point in the process trump everything this committee develops?*
- *Where did the legislation for planning come from?*

DNR Response: The funding resulted from a number of forces and pressures including Snohomish County zoning changes to permit ORV trails and individual user groups lobbying legislature.

Topics for Future Meetings: Committee members reviewed the DNR's list of proposed meeting topics to determine if it encompasses the types of information the committee members think they will need to develop their recommendations. Key discussion points regarding topics for future meetings:

- Are all interests represented, e.g., climbers, city mayors? DNR noted that it is their responsibility to engage and bring to the Committee the interests of other user groups and interested parties not directly on the Committee, including municipalities, tribes, and US Forest Service interests.
- Can the city of Gold Bar block development of this area? The committee agreed that urban growth management boundaries would be helpful to have. DNR noted that this information will be mapped as part of the suitability analysis is preparing.

- Recommend that the committee begin recommendation development earlier rather than waiting to the end of the meeting series. The committee agreed to formalize concepts as we go.
- The committee thinks access needs to be discussed very early on, especially the areas adjacent to Wallace Falls State Park.
- The challenge is going to be accommodating the variety of uses in the Reiter area. Committee discussed determining what types of uses are suitable and then formulating recommendations from there.

Next Meeting Needs:

April 30th will be the second meeting for the Committee. The following information and agenda discussions were suggested by Committee members:

- Access for any types of use. (info from DNR)
- Public comments from the DNR's February 12 kick off meeting will be distributed prior to meeting #2
- Future meetings set for 2nd Tuesday of the month through July.
- Discussion of having a "virtual tour" rather than going to a managed recreation site like Walker Valley. Committee will revisit this idea and use an online scheduler to plan for the field trip.