



Recreation Planning Committee Meeting Notes

February 21, 2017 | 6 to 9 p.m.

Deming Public Library, 5044 Mt. Baker Highway, Deming

In Attendance:

Committee Members

Arlen Bogaards	Glenn Gervais	Mike McGlenn
Bill Lawrence	Lance Hansen	Ari Bezona
Dana Johnson	Becky Peace	Chris Tretwold
Kevin Vanderhorst	Walden Haines	Carole MacDonald
Eric Brown	Buck Bouck	Dan Probst
Wendy McDermott		Doug Huddle

DNR Staff

Rick Foster	Laurie Bergvall	Chris Hankey
Dana Leavitt	Hyden McKown	Kyle Galloway
Glenn Glover		

Meeting Purpose: The committee participated in brainstorming activities, a group mapping exercise, and heard committee member presentations on recreation experiences.

Welcome: Dana Leavitt welcomed the group and did introductions, went over the agenda and reviewed the January meeting notes, which were approved.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Committee Member Recreation Experience Presentations:

Doug Huddle - Citizens for Forest Roads (CFFR) – a service group that formed in 2009 to take action on the USFS Roads. Help keep forest roads open for public use and advocate for future funding for road upkeep. Have worked on numerous roads in the Mount Baker Ranger District doing spring log-out, brushing to standard, condition/drainage surveys, marker installation, slide debris clearance, traffic counters, re-opening ditch lines, and chuckhole patching. All work is done with knowledge and permission from senior USFS staff prior to work commencing.

Marbled Murrelet DEIS Discussion: Discussion on the letter and BNR visit. Request for extension on the comment period and time extension for the BNR visit discussed. Discussed not giving a preferred alternative from the group with such a diverse group. The comment period ends March 9th. Some members of the conservation organizations are conflicted about supporting commenting on the DEIS. Further discussion was had over content of the letter. Committee felt like they were blindsided by the information presented on the MM – having had many meetings and fieldtrips and they just heard from Peter last meeting about all the land potentially off base with the alternatives.

Brainstorming Activity: Three ways – typical brain storming captured on the flip chart, then ideas captured on the maps, followed with a presentation from the breakout groups (orange, blue, & green teams).

Hiking: Everywhere. North fork area, lots of connections between North fork to Canyon Lake, hiking on Sumas not just motorized, potentials for different trailheads on Sumas, people want to hike everywhere, hiking is easiest because it's the least amount of impact on the landscape and the least amount of regulation, wherever the trails are really excellent signage, hook up with what the county is doing for example at Lake Whatcom, look at the broad PNT

Mountain Biking: Everywhere. North fork, Middle fork, shuttle downhill trails, connectivity, multi-use connectors between areas, connections between areas, ability to do some epic days where you could camp, epic days are degree of difficulty – how much exercise (50 miles, how much vertical, a lot bigger days), contained shooting areas around trails and trailheads, a hut system for camping

Equestrian: Everywhere, contemplative sport, quiet, not against sharing trails, not really work with downhill mountain bike or motorbike, time money and effort invested in the South Fork Park and Van Zandt Dike, bridge on the Middle Fork then do a 70-80 mile loop. Pack string and disappear on a trail for three days. Parking is necessary – a big area.

Hang gliding/paragliding: Needs are very limited, but very specific. Known sites around the planning area that could be improved. New sites need quite a bit of recon to be developed and known to be ok to be used. They can dovetail on other development. It is hard to plan ahead for paragliding sites. Need the ability to drive most of the time to get to the spots – you can carry a paraglider on your back, but not a hang glider.

4x4: Everywhere. Don't want a tight area like Reiter ended up being. Want a large area where they can go for 2-3 days and not hit the same trail twice. Viewpoints, destinations that would take 5-6 hours to get to. Road access. Do we have the ability to get out in the event of a breakage? Geographically is there a place to bail in the event of a breakage. One of the longest unfulfilled needs in the use. We have not seen enough pro-active on the part of the resource people to provide the use. Need parking.

Water recreation: Boat where the opportunity is. In the planning area there are defined runs. Roads to access those need to be maintained or re-established if damaged. North fork parcel is a big economic contributor. Hiking trails to water access. Have brought in things to build bridges over little creeks. Clearwater – hike in 10-15 minutes – walking across creeks now. Love to be able to drive right up to the put-in again. Vehicular access is great. Parking area maintained at least. Commercial rafts in the North fork. Upper Middle fork goes to the Twin Sisters – this is a good road that isn't explored that much.

Motorcycle: Everywhere. Sumas makes the most sense from the use standpoint – historically has been difficult because of the geology and the Swift Creek Slide. Red is where most people are riding right now. Want to see something where families can ride with beginner loops. Van Zandt Dike, Saxon. A lot of 4x4 and quad trails already on Sumas. Something has to happen or you aren't going to stop it. Distance at least 50 miles of trails. People won't go if you put in 5 miles of trails. Climbs are pretty important. Elevation change. Walker Valley has a pretty good parking lot. USFS guidelines for spark arrester and noise restrictions.

Committee Members Report on Map Brainstorming by Group:

Orange team – double track/motorized – Sumas, South Fork Valley, Medford Road, Wickersham Truck Trail, Epic loop between Sierra Pacific and DNR – Red Mountain to Black Mountain. Van Zandt Dike to add mileage.

Green Team - Single Track motorized – Haner Mountain, Saxon, Sumas, Red Mountain, shared trails work well in a lot of places. Don't want to see no non-motorized only.

Blue team – non-motorized trails single track – horse people have trail head at Vedder Mountain, Red Mountain horses, Paraglider side at Black Mountain and Red Mountain, and Sumas. North Fork would be good for non-motorized recreation. Slide Mountain has trails and paragliding launch. Middle fork Valley. Acme South Fork Park is the launch for the big circle route for the horse/hike/bike 70-80 mile ride. Stuart Mountain – horse trail head. Largest county park in the state of WA, Olsen Creek/Lake Whatcom Park down to Haner Mountain/Cub Creek. Clearwater creek launch/parking spot.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.