

Whatcom County Code

Title 20 - Zoning

Chapter 20.43 COMMERCIAL FORESTRY (CF) DISTRICT

20.43.050 Permitted uses.

.060 Trails, trailheads, restroom facilities and associated parking areas for no more than 30 vehicles.

20.43.150 Conditional uses.

.154 Operation of dispersed, primitive recreational facilities including tent campgrounds, game reserves, developed trailheads with parking for more than 30 vehicles, but **excluding uses such as community centers, riding academies, off-road vehicle parks,** parks, marinas, camping clubs, institutional camps and recreational vehicle and travel trailer parks.

Chapter 20.97 DEFINITIONS

20.97.435.2 Trailheads.

“Trailheads” are areas used for access to trails. Trailheads may include parking areas, restrooms and garbage collection facilities.

20.97.435.3 Trails.

“Trails” mean areas used for walking and hiking. Where these are adequately constructed, then they may be used for bicycling and may meet ADA standards for wheelchair accessibility. Trails may also be used for mountain biking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding where appropriate.

Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan

Adopted August 9, 2016
Whatcom County Planning and Development Services



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Chapter 9 – Recreation

Off Road Vehicle Riding Areas

Recognizing that it is better to regulate and manage where off-road vehicle (ORV) riding may occur, the county attempted twice to develop an area for exclusive ORV use. Both proposals were met with controversy and not pursued. However, ORV riding still occurs and in many instances on land not suitable for that use and without the owner's permission. The end result is that ORV riding is impacting neighbors and the land in which riding occurs, and is in general creating a problem for less intrusive recreational activities.

Goal 9F: Coordinate with the DNR to provide ORV opportunities.

Policy 9F-1: Recognizing that there will continue to be a demand for ORV riding, the County should continue to assess its role in the ORV program. Between the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the Forest Service, some joint solution may be possible.

Chapter 79.10 RCW

LAND MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES AND POLICIES

RCW 79.10.100 Concept to be utilized, when. - The legislature hereby directs that a multiple use concept be utilized by the department in the administration of public lands where such a concept is in the best interests of the state and the general welfare of the citizens thereof, and is consistent with the applicable provisions of the various lands involved.

RCW 79.10.110 Multiple Uses Defined. Defines the “multiple use concept” to mean, in part, “...provide for several uses simultaneously on a single tract...”. While these statutes do not require that recreation be incorporated on DNR managed lands it does indicate that both motorized and non-motorized recreation are recognized as valid uses of these lands where appropriate and where it will not adversely impact the financial obligations of the trust.

RCW 79.10.120 Multiple uses compatible with financial obligations of trust management—Other uses permitted, when.
(2) Recreational trails for both vehicular and nonvehicular uses developed or maintained consistent with RCW 79.10.500.

RCW 79.10.500 Recreational trail policy—Development.
Finding—2014 c 114: "The legislature finds that the citizens of the state will benefit from a coordinated effort to plan recreational trails on land managed by the department of natural resources that are accessible by the greatest number of people and are constructed to standards that are consistent statewide.

RCW 79.10.510 Recreational facilities and trails—Local government permits. Directs the department to work with representatives of local governments to find efficiencies in gaining local government permits for the development and maintenance of recreational facilities and trails

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Preliminary DNR - Suggested Zoning Amendments

Chapter 20.97 DEFINITIONS

20.97.xxx Motorized Trails.

“Motorized Trails” means linear, unpaved, routes primarily intended for motorized recreation vehicles located on Department of Natural Resources managed land.

20.97.xxx Off-road Vehicle Park.

“Off-road Vehicle Park” means a facility designed to accommodate competitive ORV recreational uses including, but not limited to, motocross racing, four-wheel drive competitions, and flat track racing. Use of ORV sports parks can be competitive or noncompetitive in nature.

Chapter 20.43

COMMERCIAL FORESTRY (CF) DISTRICT

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20.43.150 Conditional uses.

.154 Operation of dispersed, primitive recreational facilities including tent campgrounds, game reserves, developed trailheads with parking for more than 30 vehicles, **motorized trail systems and associated motorized trailheads**, but excluding uses such as community centers, riding academies, off-road vehicle parks, parks, marinas, camping clubs, institutional camps and recreational vehicle and travel trailer parks.