



## Recreation Planning Committee Meeting Notes

April 10, 2018 | 6 to 9 p.m.

Mt. Baker Senior High School, 4936 Deming Road, Deming

### In Attendance:

#### *Committee Members*

Ari Bezona - Absent

Arlen Bogaards

Bert Isaacson

Bill Lawrence

Carole MacDonald - Absent

Dana Johnson

Doug Huddle

Eric Brown

Glenn Gervais

Kevin Vanderhorst

Lance Hansen

Mike McGlenn

Becky Peace

Walden Haines

Chris Tretwold

Buck Bouck - Absent

Wendy McDermott

Mark Harding

#### *DNR Staff*

Dana Leavitt

Jean Fike

Ron Whitehall

Glenn Glover

Laurie Bergvall

Greg Erwin

Brock Milliern

Kyle Galloway

Hyden McKown

**Meeting Purpose:** To review an update to the committee charter, review public comments from community meetings and consider the development of Concept H. Continue review of objectives for trails and facilities, gain an understanding of the outstanding topics and process for completing the plan.

**Welcome:** Glenn Glover

DNR Staff Introductions

**Charter Update:** Glenn Glover explained how the Planning Committee Charter is being updated to reflect DNR's decision to move forward in the planning process with non-motorized recreation only and will be posted on the planning webpage shortly.

**Public Comments:** Public comments were taken and are provided on the planning webpage.

**Review Agenda:** The planning committee approved the agenda.

**Review February Meeting Notes:** The committee accepted the February meeting notes.

# Baker to Bellingham



**Charter Discussion:** The committee and DNR staff spent time discussing the change in the planning process to only a non-motorized recreation plan. Points discussed included:

- Concern that taking motorized recreation out of the planning will not resolve what is occurring in the planning area at this time
- DNR should have been more involved and advocated to the County Council for allowing motorized recreation on DNR-managed lands in the county
- Committee members should not be removed from the committee
- The planning process has been broad ranging and provided an opportunity to understand DNR's management process
- Any value in adding people to the planning committee
- Any additions to the committee may not be able to be brought up to speed without slowing down the work of the committee

**Review Public Comments from Community Meetings:** Dana Leavitt led a discussion on comments from the community meetings, public comments from committee meeting, and emails sent to DNR. The discussion addressed:

- With motorized recreation out of the planning process, comments pertinent to motorized recreation are excluded from consideration.
- Middle Fork consistently came up in the comment process, issues and discussion involved:
  - DNR has many concerns for showing a trail corridor in that area
    - Marbled murrelet conservation zones
    - Crossing the Middle Fork may require a bridge – how to address
    - DNR is looking into working with adjacent landowners to address how we can connect that area in the future; there are many that issues need to be addressed
  - Comments about the PNT, and the Baker to Bellingham Trail can be addressed in the objectives and strategies
  - Concerns over the marbled murrelet long term strategy and the impacts it imposes on our ability to plan for recreation
  - The best way this can be addressed is in the objectives and strategies section of the recreation plan rather than on the final concept plan
  - The committee agreed with DNR's proposed solution



**Trail Management Objectives:** Dana explained what trail management objectives (TMOs) are (see first bullet item below) and led a discussion on their use in planning different recreation zones. Topics covered in the discussion included:

- TMOs are documentation of the intended purpose and management of a trail based on management direction, including access objectives. TMOs are the means to define how a trail system will be planned for, built and maintained.
- Multi-use trails, single-use trails, directional trails, downhill trails for mountain bikes, etc. all help to direct trail planning were considered by the committee
- Maintain consistency between Lake Whatcom Park and DNR recreation zones and work together
- Multi-use leading to single-use trails
- Parking is always a concern – grants won't help fund construction of trailheads
- Consider using old logging roads and rail grades for horse trails
- Using existing GPS data that is out there to save time and resources for planning new trails

**Discussion on Draft Concept H:** Dana reviewed new concept maps that show non-motorized recreation only in the planning area; these maps were shown as Concepts D and E and are now called Concept F and Concept G. Committee discussion revolved around:

- Combining the two concepts to make it easier to consider a final concept
- Need to prioritize low hanging fruit – like lower and upper Slide Mountain
- Upper North Fork area has better views and more uses
- Red Mountain conflicts need to be taken into consideration between dirt bikes and forms of non-motorized activities
- Water access and a para/hang gliding launch site are important
- Look at connectivity to Whatcom County parks

**Next Steps:** Two more committee meetings in May and June. The focus is on reviewing the final concept map and prioritizing projects in two steps. DNR will prepare a draft recreation plan for the environmental review (SEPA). The SEPA process will include a 30-day public comment review period and have a final recreation plan by late October. Public comments are considered during the final part of the SEPA process.