



## Public Comments\*\*

### Recreation Planning Committee Meeting

February 13, 2018 | 6 to 9 p.m.

Mt. Baker High School, Deming

**\*\*Note: Comments were captured to the extent possible by DNR staff**

**Leif Shuman** - Rutsatz Road – 36 year resident. Raise your hand if you oppose ORV's in our county? There are friends amongst us. I'm not a nimby though. I appreciate the need for logging – there is a need for logging, fishing, hunting, non-motorized trail bikes – all consistent with the mission of DNR. Ensuring environmental protection, funding. Absolutely opposed to ATV, ORV, other than what is necessary to bring logs out. Seen abuse from it. Lived across from it. Seen people cut trails in Tom Williams Slew – seen the outcome. RiderPlanet.USA. All existing ORV parks 36 parks. Lunar landing module on the moon. Don't see how you are going to manage this. This will become a meca that will draw people from across the state – send people up to Sumas Mountain then to the Dike. I don't get it. That somebody's brainchild was to put loud unmuffled vehicles in the middle of God's wilderness.

**Rainbow Medicine-Walker** – I say no to the DNR proposal of ORV proposal. I have noticed there are 6 ORV representatives. It is unfair, unprofessional that there is this unbalance for this representation. This unbalance makes it so flawed. They should have showed up sooner to comment. Most of us had no idea that DNR would have had an idea that this type of usage was illegal proposal in the County. Many of us trusted that the DNR would have trusted that the DNR would support a plan. That DNR would support a plan that would invite a plan to invite people to come and play in our forest. This is hugely stressful and insanely unfair. DNR should have never allowed to get this off the ground in the first place.

**Karen Bean** – Lived in the area for over 20 years with property on Red Mountain. Having been shot at by somebody at on my own property with my pack goats. This is a very ill advised idea. Fire Danger – don't have resources in law enforcement – lowering our tax base. All property going to take a dump. Hikers, horse people, senior strollers, this is what our community needs. Hunters – large carnivores going to be in our neighborhoods. The DNR's own map shows that the area is unsuitable because the creeks are feeding salmon creeks. There are endangered and threatened birds that would be made unhappy so they wouldn't be breeding.

**Linda Perth** – new Resident – moved about a year ago – the reason I moved and bought land was because I wanted to live in a beautiful quiet forest. I live in an area called peaceful. It hurts my heart. This will destroy the area – I suspect that you all feel the same. I want to talk about dirt. As a burgeoning gardener – the soil is alive – it is a living entity. A single teaspoon of soil can contain bacteria,

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nematodes, earthworms, arthropods; healthy soil is an entity that contains soil structure and building defense systems against disease. The health of the soil is key to the health of our bodies – dirt is dead. If you plow soil and kill off the soil biota. The industrial solution is to feed the soil with water-soluble fertilizer. Weeds encroach and we come in with herbicides – we wind up with toxic soils. Soils with good tilth allows for good oxygen. What do you think a 700-pound quad will do – what about hundreds of them?

**Max Duncan** – I want to speak in support of every form of recreation except ORV's. A major recreation group – you folks represent groups. People who walk around the forest do not represent groups. I want to speak to that. I was just reading on your recreation plan that DNR has a trust mandate as well as multiple use. This support DNR can be done in an environmental accommodating way and a social way. The largest concentration in Whatcom County lies in Eastern Whatcom County. I am going to come to every meeting and talk about a different topic. Last time I talked about a 4-wheel drive truck going in the creek. I heard one proposal saying there might be 25 miles of trails, but who knows how many miles of illegal trails there already are? I do not support this ORV use. Thank you for listening.

**Joseph Knight** – Live on Sumas Mountain. As you know – there is a substantial slide on the mountain releasing asbestos into swift creek. If you let this ORV use on Sumas Mountain it will become a health hazard. Read from a technical article regarding Asbestos. Personal exposure regarding naturally occurring asbestos. Both studies showed that soil samples contained asbestos – disturbance of the soil – could release asbestos. DNR has a responsibility to a thorough study of all soil. I really sympathize with the lady who was shot at – the bragging rights in Idaho is if you could shoot wildlife out of the trees while riding – let's get to the science.

**Gary Deling** – Maple Falls – I support what I have heard tonight. Support all forms of transportation, except the motorized.

**Randy Schote** – Live on Red Mountain – very concerned about fire danger and if someone gets hurt. Hard to find people. Worry people will be driving up his road to find somebody. Road is gated. Turn around in his driveway with a trailer on is very impossible – not going to back all the way down. Come down to his place. All the access will be from the main red Mountain Road – idiots coming to his place. Two forest fires on Red Mountain in 40 years – using his road to get to the fire. It is a huge area up on the flat, but I don't think the ORV's are going to stop here. He used to drive over the Holy Smoke to get a beer. I imagine it is a lot of fun and damn near killed himself. My neighbor was in the hospital. I am totally against all the noise, the fire danger. I am all game for the horses and non-motorized, let them get exercise besides a come-along.

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**Holly Koon** – I am going to come to all these meetings and say something different each time. Sumas – residents about the fear of noise. You say ATV's aren't loud, but they are. Not trespassing, we look like the least friendly road around. Two houses guarding that. A lot of illegal ORV use. I am telling you there are 16 houses down there – the neighbors would call each other to tell them that it's your turn to tell them it's loud. I will put my life into stopping this. I am going to be at every one of these meetings. 200 feet is your setback.

**Keith Carpenter** – This is the 50<sup>th</sup> year I've lived in this county. South Pass from Sumas. We can hear a dog barking a mile and half away. Multiple machines would be excessive. Acceptable to make a living. The use of that mountain for hiking, hunting, camping has been going on a long time. Loud, fast machines would be incompatible. Even if there was an economic advantage – it would turn away the people who are currently using it. We fought this proposal 35 years ago. What has changed now – it wasn't ok then? We have more people now. It is going to affect more people now. I agree with everything said tonight.

**Marjorie Bell** – Lived in the Welcome Valley for 50 years. I plan to be at all of these meetings. I am going to talk about salmon. Millions of dollars have been devoted to restoring salmon in the Nooksack. On the one hand, the state is putting money into salmon. On the other hand, you are willing to put money into trails for ORV. The mud, the soil, all that runs into streams – it degrades salmon habitat. I just think it's crazy to have all that money into salmon habitat and then to cancel it out. It isn't fiscally responsible. The impact of the off road community. You are nice guys and gals. The garbage includes human waste – people zooming by – almost everyone I know has been run over by an ORV– you don't have a lot of credibility where I live – I'm sorry but that's the truth.

**Larry Duncan** – Former Motorcycle rider – as teenagers we were riding off the road – we were not reliable citizens. I don't think I would be able to trust this group to stay on the trails. For sure they are going to stay on an ecological zone that doesn't need to have an more pressure on it. Whatever groups you are representing – you can't police yourselves – to have state, federal, local officials, some of you guys would probably do the right thing, but there is a bunch who won't.

**Beth Basaby** – Lived in the county for 30 years – living near Stewart Mountain- dirt bikes zip up the roads – It's shocking. I don't understand how you are going to have horses on the mountain. I have seen someone get dismounted from their horse. I don't think ORV's belong up on the mountain. It is noisy. It is reckless abuse of the mountain.

**Red Dodd** – Born and raised here in Whatcom County – started riding dirt bikes up on Galbraith Mountain – Good people in the group. I can't say hey if you let us ride up there we will all be good – I want to say thank you to the committee. This isn't really their forum. I do a lot of riding. I don't know if

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there is 36 ORV parks. I know of about 5 or 6. What I can tell you when I am there it is a managed area – the DNR will tell you about how to manage the environmental concerns. Medical concerns – anytime you are out doing something, you are going to get hurt. I do understand the noise concerns. I am here to thank the committee. I hope for the opportunity to get to do something.

**Cathy Lavelle** – My husband and I live on Silver Lake Road – I want to thank the gentleman who spoke. I want to start with affirmations. We want them in the neighborhoods. ORV's staying on trails – someone decided that my walking trail was wide enough for their quad – at least half of my trail was damaged – they couldn't get over the downed tree – through the trees and tore up the meadow. But you cannot police and no amount of instruction will teach someone like that. Hurt – one of my neighbors was in a terrible accident on Mount Baker Highway – took emergency resources a long time to get there. Risking resources, life, etc. What gives your right to fun my one home?

**Peter Holcomb** – I know there are hundreds of bird watchers and fly fisherman in the county and I don't see any of them up here. I don't see any poets or artists. But what I really want to talk about is nature. Human beings have pretty much destroyed wherever we have been – we have better preserve what little we have. We won't live if there is no nature. When nature dies all humans will die.

**Lorainna Havens** – Live on Mosquito Lake road – I am really disappointed that DNR would take a committee that is half ORV. I have had Polio as a child – heard nothing about trails for people who are handicap people. Want camping. ORV – is fun – yahoo. But it doesn't give them a right to ruin it for everyone. How are they going to be policed? How is it going to be maintained, how is the money going to come? I think the DNR should be ashamed of themselves. I see one woman here. Is that the best that you all can do? I think it needs to start over.

**Peggy Parker** – Thank the committee for coming here – Live on Rutsatz Road – this is a solution in search of a problem. Independent of the six members on this committee – the damage that will be done will be forever. I am in my 60's and if I have learned one thing you can't get everyone in life. You won't see a western tanager unless you are really quiet. You are hearing from a lot of people. If this isn't dropped you will see a lot more organized people – they will not stand down. We are committed to not see this happen in Whatcom County.

**Joelle Adams** - Live next to Silver Lake Park – As a conservationist. Survey Work – love riding motorcycles. Not tearing up trails. Really fun – I see both sides of it. I challenge any one of the six members – would you want the whole state in your back yard riding motorcycles. There are hundreds of thousands of acres in the state. I do it responsibly. I did marbled murrelet surveys and spotted owl surveys for 8 years. Go back to the drawing board. This is insane. Why not look at the eastern slopes of Black Mountain. You have to think worst case scenario. Let me have my time. If we want to address the

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issues of noise – that aren't surrounded by people's homes. I don't want to see them on the eastern slopes of Black Mountain. I am here tonight for a woman who couldn't be here because she is sick. A man was knocking with shattered hands after being in an ORV accident.

**Michael Plumber** – I am a trail runner – I have only been here for about 3 years. I have seen the damage from motorcycles throughout the Chuckanut mountains. I grew up in Kentucky in a rural community. And East Tennessee. They were destroyed. They are not a good self-policing community. Every year we would go to Cooper's rock. We would go get a full truck load of beer cans and trash. If you can get somewhere with a truck – it is going to get trashed. Early on in the meetings they talked about hiding and riding. The committee has good ethics, but the community in general doesn't. They are riding in the reconveyance. They go out and cut new trails. I am just dead set against it. I was thinking concentrating in one place would be fine – but then I think they are going to continue what they are doing anyway.

**Bruce Burpy** – Not enforcing the laws on all of the off-road stuff – instead of trying to coral, we ought to try to enforce the current use. Amendment to Whatcom County. Your pressure point is with County Planning.

**Dana Jack** – Lived in the County for 39 years – agree with everyone who is in strong opposition – not just red or Sumas Mountain – in opposition to all ORV. Walker Valley could be stopped. Could you explain that? Population has grown. This committee needs to know that the state supreme court upheld the San Juan County Ban on Jet Skis because the noise was such a deterrent to nature. Nature doesn't have a voice – a lot of research to bird life. Ban already established – serious harm to wildlife. Nuisance really counts.

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