

Manastash Ridge Trails Coalition Meeting Notes

January 24, 2017 | 6:30-8:30pm

DNR Southeast Region Office, 713 Bowers Road, Ellensburg

In Attendance:

Committee Members

Noel Knoke

Anne Merrill-Steskal

Jon Ackiss

Jesse Cunningham

Kevin Dwight

Andrea Nesbitt

Bradley Gasawski

Robert Perkins

Kathryn Houck

Alan Carter Mortiner

Justin Turnbull

Agency Staff

Cindi Confer Morris – WDFW

Nathan Longoria – WDFW

Stephanie Margheim – DNR

Introductions/Grounding questions:

- How do you feel about being here tonight?
- How many times have you been on the trail since the last meeting December 6?

Overall, the group was happy to be in attendance. Many had been out skiing, hiking on the trail and noted the conditions were great right now.

Website update:

Kathy Houck presented a range of options for Manastash Ridge Trails Coalition (\$204 for 2 years with web hosting for one -.org, .com, .info, .net, .us) and she will check on ManastashRidge.org.

Project Area Boundary:

It was discussed to address a smaller project boundary first, then discuss expanding the scope to the areas outside the initial project boundary at a later date. The grant was written for the specific trails that begin at Cove Road and end at the Book. To include other trails may put the work outside of the approved scope from RCO.

The mountain bikers and trail runners use the area south of the top of the ridge, down to Umtanum Road, for mellower slopes and the trails are considered one flow from Umtanum Road to Cove Road. The trail runners also use these trails for mileage.

It was brought up that expanding the scope/project boundary/complexity will increase the cost, but the only way to control the south side is to include it in the scope and maintain it. It's the area covered, not trail mileage, which causes a cost increase.

The mountain bikers conservatively estimate they have 1000 hours of man-time to maintain trails and would like a process in place through this MRTC process about how to manage the trails to the south, even if it's at a later time. Members from the hiking group stated a similar sentiment on the south trails.

*A question was asked about agency concerns for the north side and the south side of the ridge.

Special Use Permits

- **Manastash Dash – Memorial Day Weekend trail run event by Friends of the Manastash**

The group is overall in support of the event to bring attention to the trails and raise money for the group to invest back into the trail system.

There were comments about having the trail run route include trails other than the Westberg trail to promote the lesser used trails. The other trails are narrower and will have less room to pass. The sight lines on the mountain bike trails to the east are great and will allow users to see each other coming.

The group would like to be able to recommend trails that are better for large events like this in the plan.

Planning Process Overview

A PowerPoint presentation was given to outline DNR's recreation planning process and WDFW and DNR agency missions. The recreation planning process is more intensive than a trail planning process, but many of the components are very similar on a smaller scale.

The PowerPoint presentation will be available on the [DNR website](#).

A question was asked about including hunters in the group. WDFW did not receive input when it was brought up at the PLAC meeting, but will be in touch with the Field & Stream club to see if they would like to send a representative. A CWU Equestrian team member stated they use the trail every week, invite a member to a meeting? A discussion will need to happen about a possible seasonal closure or a way to protect trails at a vulnerable time from the impacts of horses or other uses. Also, the group will help clarify the PMO/TMO for the trail.

MRTC Mission Statement Development

The committee developed a draft mission statement:

"Promote safe and sustainable trail recreation opportunities for non-motorized users through public education and cooperation between land managers and user groups while protecting wildlife habitat and natural resources."

Sign Sub-Committee Meeting

Members: Kevin, Anne, Bradley, Cindi, Stephanie

The meeting will be Tuesday, January 31 at 6:30 at the DNR SE Region Office.

Standard Meeting Date/Time

Each meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8:30pm at the DNR SE Region Office. The next meeting is Tuesday, February 28.

MRTC Homework

Please be prepared to answer the following questions at the next meeting on 2/28.

- What do you most cherish about the lands in the planning area?
- What are the biggest challenges to be addressed as part of the planning effort?
- What are the most important goals to be accomplished – what would you like to be able to point to and say, "this is what we accomplished?"
- As a group, what do we need to understand and learn about as we begin making a plan?

Also, please take a look at the draft mission statement and bring any thoughts to the next meeting. And please bring the email addresses used to contact the mountain bike group and the hiker group.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm