

Manastash Ridge Trails Stakeholder Group Meeting

December 6, 2016 1900 hours

KVFR Station 29
400 E Mountain View Ave
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Attendees: Nathan Longoria, Cindi Confer-Morris, Alan Lawson, Stephanie Margheim, Alan Carter Mortimer, Bruce Simpson, Anne Merrill-Steskal, Bradley Gasawski, Noel Knoke, Jessie Cunningham, Andrea Nesbitt, Kevin Dwight, Kathy Houck, Rob Perkins, Justin Turnbull

Agency rep introductions: Nathan Longoria (WDFW), Cindi Confer-Morris (WDFW), Alan Lawson (DNR), Stephanie Margheim (DNR)

Team building activity/stakeholder introductions:

- Alan Carter Mortimer (WTA) regional program manager
 - WTA volunteers would like to see WTA's involvement. Would like to see sustainability, good experience for multiple users – can be difficult.
- Bruce Simpson lives near trailhead
 - Masters in recreation, internships with BLM, USFS
 - Would like to see a handle on erosion, memorials, and an involved volunteer base. Trust and empowerment of people who care.
- Anne Merrill-Steskal
 - Lives near TH. Hiked the trail the first time her family ever came to Ellensburg. Hikes 3-4x/week.
 - Would like to see volunteers caring for trails, wants future generations to enjoy, does not want human impact to change experience on trails. Would like to see trail system connected with downtown – perhaps along canals.
- Bradley Gasawski
 - Lived here for a year: hikes, mtn bikes, skis. Outdoor Pursuits and Rentals manager (CWU). Sends students there weekly and they enjoy it.
 - Would like to see well-built trails for hiking & MTBing, avoid user conflict, be able to promote trails to visitors and community. CWU would like to lead trips out there.
- Noel Knoke
 - Lived here her whole life, Manastash has considerable degradation
 - Would like to see the trail more natural like how it looked before cattle/people
- Jessie Cunningham
 - Lived here since 2009 and has used trails since then for hiking, MTBing
 - Background in outdoor rec/ecology/environmental science.
 - Would like to see sustainability. Has seen severe degradation since 2009, seasonal use is an issue. Allow access to diverse user groups and make everyone happy.

- Andrea Nesbitt
 - Lived here since 2005, grew up horse packing, now MTBer EMBA, EMBA trail school
 - Would like to see hiking trails improved, main focus is bikes, habitat restoration/native plants/weed management. Would love to see people learn about erosion, seasonal use, soils; would like to see garbage service, poop bags. Sustainable climbing grades, challenging descents, would like to see more trails possibly biking through the trees, tourism, well mapped/well signed trails, improve signage
- Kevin Dwight
 - Lived here since 1994, MTBer, hiker
 - Would like to see: excited to see group here to steward area, create long term plan, enhance user experience
- Kathy Houck
 - Lived here 25 years. Hikes, connection with one memorial (Nelson Ng), MTB is passion. EMBA. Skills park at Rotary Park.
 - Would like to see: solve erosion issues, establish maintenance group/maintenance plan, and establish process for putting in new trails in the future. EMBA has 300 volunteers looking for trail work.
- Rob Perkins
 - In the valley 27 years. Connection: Jack Powell. Son's Boy Scout troop designed/built Boy Scout trail. Used trail thousands of times. Trail has grown dramatically since he started hiking it. Director of recreation, tourism and events program at CWU – students looking for things to do. Uses trail to teach classes.
 - Would like to see: sustainability, wants it to last a really long time, it's a county gem, continual maintenance, upgrade system, and control building.
- Justin Turnbull
 - County ROW planning, assistance, is the alternate for Lucas Huck

Meeting Ground Rules

- Adopt rules Cindi sent out (see page 5), plus
 - Phones on vibrate
 - Bradley would like to add that this should be a safe environment so people can share thoughts and opinions w/o being attacked.
- Set up room differently for next meeting

Cindi - Hunting? Does group see people hunting on the trail? Hunters are a big group and maybe we should include a hunter or two in the committee. Kittitas County Field & Stream member, possibly. Reach out to BCHW? Not a lot of equestrian use on trails.

Rob and Kevin have seen hunters actively shooting, taking big game. Worried about an accident between hunters and hikers, would like to see hunter input on how to limit the danger. Andrea – notify hikers when hunting seasons are in progress. Bradley – people should wear orange. Kevin – hunters have been rational, well-thinking sportsmen in the area of the trail. Anne – it would be good to have a hunter representative. Kevin – soils and slopes weren't right for horses and the group communicated within themselves that the trails weren't right for horses.

Stakeholder Responsibilities

- Review information, see handout packet.
- Review [DNR Recreational Trails Policy](#) before next meeting.
 - [Adopted plans & current planning](#) for your reference
- Serve as spokesperson with the public and bring that feedback to the group. Also, share group meeting info with the public.
- Think about broad ideas.
- Be collaborative, work as a team.
- Keep comments concise
- Be receptive and open to new ideas

Are members okay with sharing email with the public?

- Group members are going to have time to make an email address and get one to Nate that they are ok sharing with the public.
- Work on website beyond, or in addition to, the FB site Carey Gazis started – Kathy’s husband is an IT guy and could work on a site if grant pays for domain
- Maybe have one email for hikers and one email for bikers on that site
- Have a link for a survey and group can access that information
- Post website at TH
 - Protect signage from vandalism somehow
- Post signage for not building new trails
- Will need to mobilize public’s awareness using technology to give information about upcoming meetings, take suggestions to talk about at the meetings from members of the public – perhaps a forum.
- Open quarterly meetings to update the public
- For now, post meeting notes, maps, etc on [DNR webpage](#) and eventually, when webpage is up, link to DNR site for meeting notes, upcoming meeting agenda

KRD and County have been invited to attend meetings, but we can specifically ask them to be present at meetings when we know we will need them there.

The grant is for planning and the plan is up to the group. We cannot move dirt until we get an implementation grant. The group will determine the priorities and the plan.

Grant money goes to the planner, engineer, and cultural resources survey, admin.

DNR uses volunteers heavily, WDFW is less organized so will follow DNR’s lead on that note. We need lots of buy in to have the dedicated volunteers to work on the trail maintenance long term.

Group needs to come up with the boundary for where the group will focus. A box needs to be drawn to focus on. Maybe start small and focused and address area outside the boundary broadly. Harness good intent, modify negative behavior.

Reassurance signage on trails that are open.

Priority issues

- New trails being built
 - How do we manage it?
 - Sign the kiosk, contact newspaper, college, high school, hiker group, biker group, social media – so they know what’s going on (planning) and might stop building rogue trails. Users can educate other users about rules, the process we are going through.
 - Give those building lower grade trails an option to get to a destination area from an existing trail/road while this process is going on.
- Signs
 - Rules about not building trail
 - Information about the planning process, website info
 - Stay on existing trails
 - Trail reassurance signs
 - Hunting safety
 - Designate a sign subcommittee
 - Kevin, Bradley, Anne, Cindi, Stephanie
 - Signs must follow DNR sign standards
 - Temporary signage
- Name will be: Manastash Ridge Trails Association
 - Emails back and forth after the meeting suggest “coalition” instead of “association”

For next meeting

- Work on a mission statement at the next meeting
- Identify Project Area boundary
- Next meeting: Meet once a month on Tuesdays
 - Next meeting: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at 1830
 - Location? TBD. Will email location, meeting notes.

HIGHLIGHT TO DO ITEMS FOR GROUP MEMBERS

Adjourn 2115

Session Ground Rules

- Agreement on Agenda
- Be on time
- Come prepared to contribute
- Use good listening skills & listen carefully
- Respect others opinions
- Be considerate & respect each other
- No hidden agendas
- Focus on issues – not on people
- No personal attacks
- Don't interrupt
- No side conversations
- Stay focused on topic/issue
- Be concise – keep comments to the point
- Be part of the solution – not the problem
- Make and record decisions
- Follow ground rules
- Phones on vibrate
- Provide a safe environment so people can share thoughts and opinions without being attacked.

- Have fun!!

MRT First Stakeholders meeting Agenda for 12/06

Professional staff introductions

What is your professional experience?

Team building questions

What's your history with the site?

What are you hoping to get out of this process?

Meeting rules- Have stakeholders Identify the rules they would like to have in place

Stakeholder Responsibilities

Email address public- Inform stakeholders we would like to share their emails with public

Keep constituents informed- reiterate this responsibility

Attend, engage, be open-minded- reiterate this responsibility

Priority issues that need to be addressed now

New trails- discuss current improvised trails being developed, how we would like stakeholders to help

Signage- What signs do we need immediately, what signs do we need in the long run

Groups reaching to members and other users

Other issues?

Next steps- What are the next steps in the process? What should people be thinking about for next meeting.

Set standard meeting date/time

Handout: DNR REC trails Policy, maps