



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #2 Notes
March 21, 2017
6:00 to 8:00 PM**

Meeting Purpose: To issue sort public input received to-date and broaden perspectives regarding the larger community concerns.

DNR Staff in attendance:

- David Way – Northwest Region's Natural Areas Recreation Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager
- Jason McMillen – Natural Areas Recreation Maintenance Steward
- Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect

Committee in attendance:

Frances Chiem – Representing Washington Trails Association (WTA).

Ken Masel – Representing Washington Trail Blazers.

Rad Roberts – Member of American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers

Chris Hagen – Is the YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director.

Marc Bardsley – Representing North Cascades Conservation Council

Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Holly Zox – Morning Star Volunteer Site Steward

Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward

Matt Jensen – UWild Adventures Program

Gary Paull – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails

Mike Schutt – Snohomish County PUD

Ruth Milner – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Julie Sklare – City of Everett

Mike Town – Sierra Club and Friends of Wildsky

Kathy Johnson – Pilchuck Audubon Association

Phil Roberts - USGS Soils Survey

Welcome: David announced transition to Wildfire position. David introduced Jason to the Natural Areas Program at Northwest Region. Paul McFarland will take over project management of Morning Star Trails Planning process.

Confirmation of Planning Process Guidelines and revised schedule: David asked for questions, changes, issues or concerns and receiving none guidelines upheld. New committee schedule was handed out with dates and goals added to each meeting. Field visits are moved to July. The schedule is posted to the webpage.



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Committee member future presentations: The committee was asked if individual members would like to bring a short presentation to the meetings. A sign-up sheet was circulated for presentation dates.

December 15, 2016 Public Meeting Feedback: Barbara went over the summary from the Public Meeting. The most mentions were of Boulder Lake Trail, Grieder Lake Trail, Vesper, Bald Mountain Trail, and Olney pass trail. Committee was asked to keep in mind public feedback going forward as representatives of the larger community for Morning Star planning.

Committee member presentation: Mike Schutt, Snohomish County PUD and Julie Sklare, City of Everett Watershed presented overviews of Spada Lake reservoir recreation facilities (two non-motorized boat launches, rules, visitors and issues and concerns associated with the City of Everett watershed. 9300-9500 trail visitors/year register at Olney Pass. Low percentage of boating activities on Spada Lake; 50% of visitors use the area accessed off of Culmback Dam Rd; Sultan River canyon trail is very popular with kayakers; 50% of visitors visit South Shore Rd and associated sites; 2400 people registered for Greider Lakes alone; Vandalism is a problem at recreation sites. Note re visitation: It is known that a percentage of visitors fail to register, the effect of which is undercount of actual visitation. There is also recognition that registration is likely overcounting use in some cases, as each activity/location checked on the form by registrants is counted as a visit (if one visitor checks multiple boxes, each check counts as a visit). PUD and City of Everett are working on this. The presentation is posted to the webpage.

Question – Discover pass requirement at Boulder Grieder Trailhead?

Answer: No. You do need to register at Olney Pass if you plan on overnighing at Grieder Lakes.

Question - Do you have good compliance at the registration kiosk?

Answer: Compliance is not as good as it should be.

Question - How much boating occurs?

Answer. Moderate use.

Question - Is the north shore road a mine to market road?

Answer: No it is not a mine to market road

Question - Can you use your boat to access the north side of the lake?

Answer: No. It is against the law.

Question - Will the DNR reopen the road to the old Grieder Trailhead?

Answer: Not at this time.

Question - Why isn't the Spada Lake watershed closed?

Answer: Because the dam's FERC license requires recreational opportunities for the public.

Online Survey Results Synthesis and Analysis: The committee divided into four groups to go over the public survey results. Each group took notes and reported back



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major/strong takeaways to the larger committee at the end of the analysis exercise. The group notes (sorted by survey question #) are as follows:

Group 1:

- #1 Backcountry camping popular
- #2 All trails have similar use levels, Gothic Basin has high use due to closure of Monte Cristo and social media
- #3 Most of public think trails and campsites are at least adequately maintained. Note that most trailheads are on USFS land
- #6 Garbage and human waste highest concern
- #7 People don't mind walking thru H2O
- #8 Yes! Interpretive signs

Group 2:

- #3 and 4 Maintenance is an issue - lack thereof
- # 5 and 7 Many trails need bridges
- #6 and 11 Garbage and human waste a big problem
- #9 People want maps and signs
- #10 People may be describing desire for an experience that may not be available in the Morning Star
- #12 Desire for a website
- #14 and 16 Most users from local area, 85% Snohomish and King counties

Group 3:

- #1 Three or four activity groups
- #2 Equal trail use
- #3 Low maintenance in the NRCA
- #4 No clear winner
- #7 12" water crossing? Armchair hikers responding
- #8 High level of "yes" response
- # 9 What is meant by trail mapping?
- #10 Consistent with idea that respondents are fit, backcountry hikers

Group 4:

- #1 Hiking and backcountry camping received highest votes, but is that representative of at large public or only those who attended meeting?
- #2 Except for Static, all trail systems received high degree of votes
- #3 Most trails are maintained adequately but not over done
- #4 Except Boulder, trails are adequately maintained
- #5 Equal importance for all
- #6 Waste/garbage management is high priority
- #7 Time of year/temperature, depth of water to cross relative to adult vs. child, flow speed
- #8 Information and enforcement signage important



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- #9 Information and enforcement signs and mapping combined at trailhead important
- #10 4-12 mile hikes covers majority of day and overnight camping
- #11 Need for toilets greatly out weighs all else
- #12 Quality info on website important, what specific info is provided, linked to other websites such as WTA and NW Hikers

Online Survey Written Responses Results: This exercise was moved to homework assignment due to time. Committee was asked to review the public written comments from the survey, and identify and sort the common categories or themes and bring back the main themes/concerns results to Meeting 3.

Additional homework: Committe asked to write down their own feedback on what is missing from the public feedback and identify missed themes, comments or categories. Committee was given copies of the Natural Areas Statewide Management Plan to read.

Next Meeting is April 18th, 2017, 6:00pm to 8:30pm