**Stemilt – Squilchuck Recreation Committee**

**Draft Meeting Notes – March 20, 2017**

**Participants:**

Bob Gillespie, Wenatchee Valley College

Michael S. Lesky, Wenatchee Valley College

Cody Gillin, Washington Trails Association

Jennifer Stein, National Park Service

Larry Leach, Washington Department of Natural Resources

Josh Jorgensen – Mission Ridge

Cindy Uren – Forest Ridge Resident

John and Marti Erickson - Apple Valley Snowmobile Club

John Lehmkuhl, Wildlife specialist, Mathison Orchard

Travis Hornby – Tread/Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliiance

Pete Lopushinsky – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Matt Kearny- Wenatchee Valley Chamber

Brain Patnode – Washington State Parks

Ken Bailey – Backcountry Horsemen

Will Wiggs – Stemilt Irrigation District

Susan Rosebrough – National Park Service

Erin McKay – Chelan County Department of Natural Resources

Mike Kaputa - Chelan County Department of Natural Resources

**Welcome and Overview**

Erin welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Susan and Erin gave a brief presentation on the planning process and current conditions. The presentation slides are attached.

**Section 16 &22**

Pete and Mike explained that additional funds were needed to finalize the purchase of Sections 16 and 22. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife was able to find the needed funding by using Section 6 grant funding from US Fish and Wildlife Service. The recreation plan will need to be reviewed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to ensure consistency with the Section 6 grant funding requirements which are used to protect endangered and threatened species. As a typical guideline, generally existing uses are okay, but new uses that would cause more impacts than existing conditions may not be consistent with the grant. The draft proposals and plan will need to be reviewed for consistency by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Desired Conditions/Goals**

The remaining part of the meeting was devoted to brainstorming desired conditions or goals for the future. Participants were divided into groups and asked to imagine returning to the basin 10 years after the completed plan was successfully implemented. They were asked what they would like the planning area to look like in terms of natural resources, visitor experiences, activities, and facilities?

Below is the results of this group’s brainstorm work divided by the three planning zones:

**Zone 1**

**Natural Resources**

* Clear regulations/better compliance
* Good access but less impact than current
* Forest health for snowpack retention/ agricultural water supply protected
* Enhanced wildlife habitat
* Less vehicle use on non-green dot roads
* Strategies:
  + Hardened sites to protect sensitive areas
  + Concentrated development

**Visitor experiences**

* Organized and designated opportunities for camping, fishing, and trails
* Protect agriculture
* Protect meadows
* Separated use and activities
* Available for short day trips
* Good access via roads (improve roads that will be used, close other roads)
* Heavy use, cluster development
* Would like to see more patrols and knowledge of what the rules are
* Opportunities for peaceful experiences
* Proper infrastructure, signage, organization
* Funding – need a sustainable source of funding for management and implementation

**Activities**

* Trail use – hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding
* Winter use – snowmobile, cross-country ski, snowshoe
* Wildlife viewing and bird watching
* Motorcycle and motorized use on green dot roads
* Okay to have new opportunities for motorcycle and 4X4 quad use possibly in some non-green dot roads/spur roads that are designated and appropriate for this use
* Target practice in appropriate designated areas only (need to consider conflicts with other users and impacts of lead on water quality)

**Facilities**

* Make improvements but not become Disneyland
* Keep it primitive, rustic facilities improve natural resources and enhance visitor experience
* If we do more organization will need more funding
* Parking lots, restrooms, improved road access, dumpster
* Designated dispersed camping with a fire pit and sign
* In areas of higher use, small developed, rustic (like USFS) camping with facilities such as a parking lot, signage, interpretive/educational signs, hardened sites, and restrooms (no water or showers)
* Trailheads
* Access and facilities designed for vehicles but not RVs and big trailers except possibly consider one area for horseback riding that allows trailers and a turnaround area
* ADA access
* Road should be gravel and graded
* Most of the opportunities and development would be along the loop road
* Interpretive signs at parking lots

**Zone 2**

**Natural Resources**

* Forest health/protection for private property
* Thoughtful recreation development with added benefit of wildfire protection
* Educational opportunities

**Visitor Experiences**

* There are differences between the north and south end. The northern end is more developed/higher use and will be even more so after the Mission Ridge development. The southern end is a transition zone to zone 3. It receives less use, is more remote, and visitors are more self-reliant.
* Solitude outside of the park, remote, inaccessible
* Need to protect the reservoir and don’t want to fence off the reservoir – Upper Wheeler.
* Concern about summer use from Mission Ridge development/housing and their use in this zone particularly along the Upper Wheeler reservoir
* Keep Upper Wheeler pristine
* Enforcement presence at high use areas/northern end
* Northern area will be a winter play area with new opportunities from Mission Ridge development
* Proper/designated areas
* Visitors connect with nature
* Limit business opportunities/development near/in the State Park

**Activities**

* Hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding
* Cross-country skiing, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing
* Student outings
* Non conflict opportunities (separate travel routes)
* Motorized access to Stemilt, but restricted to a specific route
* Potential for overnight dispersed primitive camping

**Facilities**

* Improved parking and restrooms for fishing access
* Squilchuck historic renovation
* Parking, trailhead, facilities in northern end – higher use section of zone 2
* Zone 2 should be split into high/low use sections
* Signage to clarify uses allowed in strategic places
* Potential for overnight facilities (primitive)

**Zone 3**

**Natural Resources**

* Maintain as primitive
* Less impact from domestic cattle
* Less illegal off-road travel

**Visitor Experiences**

* Education and enforcement
* Green dot roads need maintenance
* Natural experience, wild, getaway area, solitude especially outside of the green dot road
* Intact forest
* Pleasure driving to experience nature in a forest

**Activities**

* Day use and overnight
* Hiking, biking, horseback riding
* Skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling
* Dispersed camping
* Hunting
* Educational tours

**Facilities**

* Green dot roads better maintained, built more sustainably, less maintenance long term – same number overall
* Spur roads decommissioned restored to natural conditions
* Winter temporary warming hut with permanent CXT/toilet
* Signage/kiosk (educational)

**Mapping Exercise**

Erin introduced the mapping exercise and asked participants add places where they like to recreate on the map. See the attached picture showing the information collected.

**Parking Lot**

* Figure out options for use in 16 & 22
* Address impacts to wildlife and gather information on elk

**Next Steps and Wrap-up:**

Erin, Jennifer, and Susan will be taking what we heard today and drafting desired condition/goal statements to share with the group for feedback. **The next meeting will be on May 22 from 1-4.** At this meeting we will be working with maps to identify potential actions/recreation concepts for each zone.