

## Nason Ridge Recreation Planning

### XC Ski Trail Subgroup Meeting Notes

December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 6-8pm at Lake Wenatchee Fire and Rescue

Participants:

Name Affiliation

Chad Spies	Valley Resident, Hunter/Recreation
James Munley	Leavenworth Winter Sports Club/Evergreen
Ralph Leslie	Kahler Glen HOA
Mary Gallagher	Kahler Glen Resident, Audubon Society
Tim Gallagher	Kahler Glen Resident, Sierra Club
Bill Miller	Kahler Glen Resident
Nancy Miller	Kahler Glen Resident
Terri Weiss	Plain Valley Ski Trails
Dennis and Anne Gilbert	Kahler Glen
Mat Lyons	TREAD
Mike Stanford	Lake Wenatchee Fire and Rescue
Shon Smith	Chelan County Commissioner
Bill Deters	North Central Washington Audubon Society
Christie Saugen	Plain Valley Ski Trails
Mason Schuur	US Forest Service
Deb Wadkins	State Parks/Lake Wenatchee Fire and Rescue
Eric Prestbo	Stellerwood Resident
David Millard	Kahler Glen Community Association
Trevor Wylie	WA State Parks
Matt Morrison	WA State Parks
Rob Whitten	Plan Valley Ski Trails
Mike Kaputa	Chelan County Natural Resource Department
Erin McKay	Chelan County Natural Resource Department

Introduction:

- First recreation planning subgroup meeting, for the purpose of having an open forum to discuss current status and priorities for short and long term management as well as potential future opportunities to explore regarding XC trail grooming, use, and trail connectivity.
- Meeting goal is to expand on short and long term management objectives. Discussion topics are documented and tied to short and long term objectives for inclusion in planning documents.

Background:

- State Parks Winter Recreation Program runs sno-parks and grooming out of Lake Wenatchee State Park and Kahler Glen. State Parks grooms ~17 km in State Park and ~18km on Nason Ridge/Kahler Glen. Kahler Glen Association contributes financially for grooming on golf course.

State Parks has groomed on Nason Ridge for ~30 years, through various agreements with different landowners. Chelan County and State Parks currently have a 5-year agreement for grooming on the property.

- State Parks is a signatory on the MOU for Shared Stewardship on the Nason Ridge property, and helps maintain road system that is used for grooming XC trails.
- Nason Ridge Community Forest Management Plan includes the continuation of the current grooming structure as a management objective. The plan states support for continuing overall trends of use on the property (non-motorized, with the exception of the Nason Ridge Trail). The Plan also mentions a hut system as desired future opportunity, but does not go into detail about what type of hut system.

## Discussion Topics

*Warming huts on the groomed trail system on the Nason Ridge property.*

- State Parks purchased a mobile warming hut in 2022 with the intention of putting it high up on the ridge along the groomed trail. The hut did not make it onto the ridge due to early snow. It is currently located at Beaver Overlook. Has wood stove.
- Sub-group expressed support for placing the hut on Nason Ridge next year, and potentially adding additional warming huts along the groomed system (*short term management objective*).
- Intention of warming huts is day-use. A concession-run system should be considered, which could enable overnight use (*long term management objective*).
- Warming huts could increase the amount of use on the ridge trail, and be beneficial for youth outings. More use is desirable, to bring more funding to the program.

*Grooming frequency.*

- Nason Ridge is currently groomed on weekends. Increasing grooming frequency could improve conditions and make the system more accessible to more people.
  - Increased grooming frequency would require increased State Parks Winter Rec funding. Other options for increased grooming could come from grants, increased parking pass sales, or partnerships with other organizations.
  - If use increases due to warming huts, outreach, and partnerships, case may be made to State Parks for increased funding.
  - Increase outreach, partnerships, and accessibility of groomed ski trails to increase use and create potential for increased funding which could then be used to increase grooming frequency (*short term management objective*).
  - More parking would be needed if use increased. Current parking lot at Kahler Glen driving range could be extended, through USFS coordination. Additional sno-park should be considered on western side of the property (will be discussed at Access and Parking meetings). State Parks would be interested in investing in additional sno-park (*short to long term management objective*).

### *Create partnerships with Valley Ski Teams*

- Increase accessibility of groomed trail system on property to local Ski Teams (Plain Valley Ski Trails youth Nordic teams)
  - Form partnerships between Chelan County, State Parks, PVST, Leavenworth Winter Sports Club, etc. to explore grant programs to cover sno-park fees for ski teams. Grant opportunities could include: State No Child Left Inside, Our Valley Our Future, Regional Impact Grants, donation programs for season pass holders, fundraisers (*short-term management objective*).

### *Winter Trail System Assessment*

- Assess options for added loops on ridge (*short-term management objective*)
- Assess options for connecting a winter trail from Kahler Glen to Nason Ridge Trail above steep section. This could have added benefit of being a fire break/escape route for south shore residents (*short term management objective*)
- Assess options for making climb to ridge less steep (*long-term management objective*)

### *Trail System Connections and Opportunities for Higher Elevation Groomed Trails*

- Evaluate opportunities to connect trail systems (ex: Plain Valley Trails with Lake Wenatchee State Park and Nason Ridge Trails). Work with USFS early to develop these ideas (*long term management objective*).
- Explore opportunities for higher elevation groomed ski trail systems in upper Wenatchee area to ensure continued recreation opportunity into the future as climate change affects low-elevation snowpack. Work with USFS early on these ideas (*long term management objective*).
- Evaluate Coulter Block for potential groomed trail system and connections to Nason Ridge Trail system. Consider this when evaluating locations for future sno park (*short term management objective*).

### *Fat Tire Biking*

- Not a priority at this time, but may consider in the future if there is demand.