April 16, 2024

Nason Ridge Community Forest Stewardship Committee Meeting

6pm Meeting Start

Introductions:

19 people attending in person

9 people attending online

Community Forest Updates:

Logging project on Nasonview will start again in spring

Cross country grooming and snowshoe trail season recap- warming hut a success. Logging limited what could be groomed but warming hut was useful in promoting use. Good location at intersection.

Rollie: logging project should be completed in a couple months if no problems. Signage on both ends of logging operation.

Trevor: trail counters would be good for documenting use. Hut logbook could be used to gauge use. Smoky woodstove (but safe!).

Hut will be closed up and left up there for the summer.

Gallaghers did a ton of maintenance on snowshoe trails.

Chelan Co working with DNR on fuels reduction project along Stellerwood border. Hand thinning and piling. DNR providing direct funding to do 10 acre project. Next steps would be developing a unit and a prescription. Any pile burning would wait until late fall when there is snow on the ground.

Mary: eagle nest in that area and should not be disturbed until fledging.

May Birdfest tours (Gallaghers/Schmittens): sold out

April 25th (5pm-8pm) UWPP Forest Health Community Outreach Event at Rec Club. Project- (~5000 acres) started approx. 5 years ago through NEPA process. County has GNA agreement to do the work. Plans for future timber harvest and fuels reduction. Will be recorded (presentation from County and USFS will be posted), but no Zoom option. Fire District, DNR, Cascadia will be there.

Recreation and Access Update:

Complete in draft form. Was sent out for feedback (not much received). Fairly high level- goes over charter, how stewardship group works, vision, topics included winter access, parking, hunting, recommendations, monitoring and adaptive management, non-consensus issues, wildlife recs.

Chad: Phase 1 funding for TPL (Chinook forestlands). Phase 2 ranked high. $15M total. Possible fisher sighting on property.

Review Process and Concerns:

Vision and Goals of Rec Access: Augment existing Comm Forest and cross boundary recreation opportunities to benefit local Chelan County residents

Management goals: Work with community members, rec interests, and neighboring landowners to rec objectives

Decision-Making Process: Subgroup committees will make recommendations to the NRSC

Subgroup comm members will seek to make decisions by consensus

The Stewardship Committee will consider this input and will make final recs

Ultimate decision lies with the land managers. Any recs approved by the land manager will be incorporated into the plan.

Butcher Creek Access Point:

Gate Placement Options:

 Don’t change gate

 Place at property boundary

 Place at tree island where natural barriers and a wide area already exist

 Place at a location between tree island and old gate where spur would still be accessible

 Move gate to far side of existing landing just past old gate location

 New gate was placed at current location in Sept 2023 after site visits by Stew. Group members

Easement Issue: a potential issue with access across Brunjes property.

Carla Burkhead: Would love to work with everyone to find solution- want to know options. Easement back to 1975. Family concerned about preserving space and property isn’t overrun by cars. Don’t want a giant parking lot, traffic, disturbance.

Mike: Happy to provide the title info that the county received when it acquired property

Dennis: Most landowners on Butcher Cr. have access easements on their properties. Who owns road 6910 now and has legal responsibility for the road? Neighbors take care of the road and provide access to CC residents. Jeff Rivera (?) We put thousands of our own dollars into maintaining that road. One of the biggest issues for the county.

Tim: County legal team needs to determine the rights that the county has to use 6910.

Mike: County has legal access to the property and will look into it. We need to work together to work this out. Line up easements that are on title.

Sarah: Weyerhauser didn’t take care of the road. The USFS used to grade the road. The repeater is up there.

Rollie: Timber oriented access easements. Nasonview, CD, have inherited those easements. USFS ROW to use road 112, assumed to be a USFS road. What are the rights of the property owners that have easements?

Is the biggest issue the maintenance/cost or the traffic?

Dennis: Increased traffic since Covid but more concerned with the road maintenance. Wish we had spent more time on the road issue before investing money in gate. People have enjoyed creek access for last 50 years- how do we manage that?

Chad: When was the last time the bridge was inspected?

Mary: The reason the gate was put where it is is so the Butcher Cr. residents can get onto ski trails.

Erin: If there is a snowpark there, State Parks could potentially plow the road in the winter.

Bill Miller: Gate location needs to be somewhere where people won’t block the gate. Motorcycle tracks turn around if gate is at pinch point.

Mimi: Doesn’t have an easement on 6910 from USFS. Find out if there are easements on 6910. When you go out to Hwy 2, it’s a difficult turn (in our out) due to lack of sight distance and is not a safe place to turn. The safety factor of the turn is a big concern and should be addressed.

New Proposal- input from group:

Gate was installed in Fall 2023. SC conducted field visit in June 2023 to determine gate location. Cleared by USFS for placement in current location.

Restoration in wetland area project decommissioned spur road to creek access. Gate was placed before a small spur (6920) road that accesses the creek that is not a part of the USFS road system.

Concerns with new gate placement:

Concerns with new gate location:

 Closer to private properties: increases in use may affect landowners

 Blocks access to spur road that accesses USFS 6920-112 and powerline corridor/Nason Creek

 Blocks winter snowmobile access to powerline corridor

 Lack of communication with neighbors prior to installation of new gate

Concerns with Old Gate Location:

 No parking, steep sidehill and narrow road, small turn around

 Allows motorized access further into the CF

 Encourages use of spur road accessing 6920-112

 Concern about riparian health of floodplain

 Lack of communication with stewardship group about compromise proposal and survey

Second potential gate location just past old gate.

Proposal:

New gate stays in but is closed for adaptive management to avoid sedimentation issues or when fire danger is high.

Work to improve signage in floodplain

Main trailhead would be at second gate

Working with USFS to understand their goals for the road 6920 and improve signage around restoration project.

We have made an open road (6920) inaccessible due to the restoration effort and the new gate.

New Gate Concerns and Responses

Old Gate Concerns and Responses

Comments

Rollie: no open fires, prevailing winds would wipe community out. Need to control that

Mary: Fire is a huge concern. Getting more people further up would increase fire danger.

Chad: It’s something that needs to be monitored. I like where the gate is now but understands need for river access. Prefers to move gate farther down the road but not all the way to the landing.

What’s usage of spur road to river?

Numerous fire rings and target practice

Road is chewed up- can’t drive a car down there. The road condition limits use.

Don’t substantiate one viewpoint over another by saying that it’s ‘not that good of a wetland.’

Monitoring Approach/Next Steps

What is the appropriate level of use and how do we monitor?

Adaptive Management options

Resolve Issues around easements

Work with USFS on long term plan

Potential for Sno-Park

Need to quantify thresholds for action. Start by collecting data.

When would first gate be closed? High fire danger, 4th of July

Why not have gate at the property boundary?

Mimi: All of the talk about the traffic and people all have to cross our property to get onto the property. Cascade Gardens should become a gated community and only provide access to residents and those who have access. Primary role is to keep motorized vehicles out of forest. There are other possibilities for access points besides 6910.

Erin: Much of the use is existing use and we don’t plan to have a big draw to the CF.

John: Usage over last 20 years has gone down- less hunters. Don’t anticipate a huge increase in usage.

Mary: It’s important to have counters on NR trail and Kahler Glen by Bill Miller’s house. In summer, people park in overflow lot and ride bikes. Not everyone signs in. All access needs to be monitored.

Trevor: Counters bought for winter to assess winter access but they could be left up for summer. Satellite upload of data. Can get the numbers for the ones that are out.

Shaun: Fire danger and closing lower gate might inhibit emergency response.

David: AI powered cameras that detect smoke. Data goes to management center in CA.

2024 Projects and Funding:

Mike: Easement work will take some time.

Next Meeting: Restoration work on CF in approx. 3 months.

 Minor trail projects: fence delineating ridge trail.

Dennis: Road survey/assessment- water runoff, culverts are undersized or collapsed. Don’t get Butcher Cr neighborhood wrong. Sign up at fire station where we can post info about the CF.

Needs to be Portapotty at gate

Leave No Trace signs