

Topic: Recreation Forum meeting

Time: April 20, 3:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Time	Agenda Item	Desired Outcomes
3:00	Join ZOOM and Roll Call  Approval of March notes	Set expectations and clear goals for teleconference meeting.  Join a little early if possible, so we can troubleshoot any tech issues people may have
3:10	Kittitas Stewardship Fund	Quick status update – Nicky
3:15	Rec Forum Goals Assessment and Expectation Setting	Question 1: How would you, as members of the Rec Forum, like to be engaged by the Land Managers?
3:30		Question 2: What are your, or your organization's, expectations for this Forum? Please refer to the mission statement, and roles and responsibilities laid out in our <a href="#">charter</a> .
3:45		Question 3: How can we best balance short-term problem solving and immediate needs with longterm strategy development and implementation?
4:00		Question 4: Do our subcommittees (Outreach, French Cabin Creek, Swauk 5 Fingers) adequately reflect our preferred focus areas? Based on question 2 and 3, how might we add or adjust?
4:15	Land Manager Updates	USFS, DNR, WDFW, State Parks, TNC, Kittitas County
4:30	Adjourn	

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/842158553?pwd=a1VwS3dyaUsySkIpc3hhS2cyMDJ4QT09>

Meeting ID: 842 158 553

Password: 848859

One tap mobile

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4/20/2021

Present: Susan Thomas, Bradley Gasawski, Kathy Young, Wayne Mohler, Kristin Ashley, Karen Behm, Doug Kilgore, Madison Ford, Kevin Clements, Crystal Smith

Land Managers: Nicky Pasi, Stephanie Margheim, Tristan Spencer, Darcy Batura, Larry Leach

Guests: Tonya Morrey

- Note changes/updates
  - No updates or changes for March notes
- Kittitas Stewardship Fund – Nicky Pasi
  - Amazing progress in last month
  - Proposed to Kittitas Chamber of Commerce to stand as fiscal entity
  - They showed interest and Erin Krake is working on formalizing plan for them to approve
  - Many positive conversations with businesses in town including Basecamp Bites + Books/Outfitters and Hotel Windrow
  - Suncadia interested in being on board and being a donor
  - Rolling out this coming summer
  - People that showed interest in board, look out to hear from Nicky
    - Bradley Gasawski only rec forum member on board
- Rec Forum Goals Assessment and Expectation Setting
  - Question 1: How would you, as members of the Rec Forum, like to be engaged by the Land Managers?
    - Wayne: what are land manager expectations? Joined to listen and gain information, and would like to sit in on LMC meetings. Not a lot of opportunity for sharing information with them and advocating, but thinks we've done a good job circulating information during COVID.
    - Kristin: volunteer for Fish that sends out text when they have need for volunteers, do something similar w/ ECRP. Make opportunities come to volunteers instead of other way around. Bi-weekly updates from land managers of what has been done, what they are doing, and what will be done
    - Kathy: a lot of building occurs in the first year of a group this size is hard, now at a time when we could be doing more. This group should be touchstone for agencies to find out what recreation groups need and want to see done – but Kathy would like to see more direction from agencies instead of leaving the RF to find solutions. Will strengthen if we keep pushing through.
      - Forest Service is rolling out “smart sheet” an interactive project management tool that volunteers and agency can use to communicate projects. Susan and Kathy have contact for more info
    - Doug: managers could present larger questions of land management in a context where users of the forest could provide feedback. Then there would be greater involvement of folks in this group acting in support of gaining public resources to meet needs of public lands. Frustrated on emphasis on private fundraising because it creates undue influence of those donors, funds that we are able to gather are not sufficient to meet needs of public lands

- Asks whether Land Managers have an issue with the public resource collection proposal – are they not allowed to dig into that?
  - Kevin: This coalition has, given COVID restrictions, been engaged effectively (Zoom, nothing in person, limitations on people in the field). Hoped the Rec Forum would provide on-the-ground opportunities for projects, and to leverage resources each group has access to. Wants to aim to increase effectiveness of what we already have (volunteers, funds, etc). Echoes Kathy's 'tell us what you need' request from LMC.
  - Karen: tax payers pay for land managers to manage the land, but they are not guided by tax payer desires. Disappointed Forest Service sees opportunity for private funding but does not have infrastructure to accept it. Should do NEPA studies on their land. Land managers could be better at communicating their restraints to reduce getting members hopes up. Big asset in member skills, hope to see more engaging projects than trash collection.
  - Bradley: shares Karen's concerns and desire to learn more about the constraints. Wants to see a platform used to discuss user challenges. Wants Land Managers to listen to Rec Forum feedback, be supportive of their projects, and collaborate on opportunities to uplift rec opportunities in Kittitas Co. Feels we are not doing much in the way of 'strategic planning' stated in our charter. users are not going to stop but increase, how are we planning for that?
  - Madison: tourism side, thinks that a merger of TREAD and KSF will help to fill some of the volunteer engagement gaps. KCC proposing to take some hands on projects from Public Works/PROS plan, so she needs the land managers to educate her about the funding/resource gaps that are exacerbated by growing tourism rates.
  - Eva: The focus this last year has been assisting land managers with some of the current problems. Covid has exacerbated the use of our recreational lands and has made the problems more urgent. I would like to see the forum assist the land managers to do some strategic planning to develop long term solutions to the issues of land usage and sustainability. Strategic planning requires time to focus on long term issues and the Zoom format does not lend itself to achieving that. In the meantime the people will keep coming and create issues that need to be dealt with in the short term. I would like to see the forum devote two thirds of its time and resources to short term and one third to long term solutions.
- Question 2: What are your, or your organization's, expectations for this Forum? Please refer to the mission statement, and roles and responsibilities laid out in our [charter](#).
  - Crystal: likes the original statement for where we would like to go, add/modify that we may have to be reactive to unforeseen circumstances
  - Wayne: Hasn't run past the state organization, but has some questions about if the Rec Forum may be taking over some activities that the state organization has typically done (trailhead outreach, maintenance, etc). mission statement sounds good and identifies needs, but we are not working towards it yet

- Kristin: Wants more clear cut volunteer opportunities. Improve how information is distributed, so volunteers can plan accordingly
  - Kathy: fine with operation statement, will never be perfect for everyone, something to check back in on. Acknowledgement that our tasks will fluctuate. Need and use will continue to grow, feels that the group is a good cross section to collect information and help identify priority projects!
  - Doug: not enough (if any) discussion on what the larger issues relating to this actually are. This forum can be used to surface differences or similarities in opinion on what needs to be done. Would like to see land managers come forward with details on what the issues they are facing are. Too much focus on rounding up volunteers to do basic tasks/work that could be done by anyone
  - Kevin: happy with statement, have not been able to do all of it but making good start. Unsure if this is the appropriate forum to tackle big policy questions, and doesn't think the mission statement currently empowers us to take them on.
  - Karen: statement covers our basis, same as roles. Non-moto winter rec was hoping to find more out about projects to get NEPA studies done or winter trail infrastructure improvement. Lacking approval to do things within management constraints. Disappointed in little effort towards getting planning documents done. Has not published much from ECRP to own group because there is not anything solid to communicate. How do agencies operate to get something done?
  - Bradley: statement and roles are good
  - Madison: thinks the Rec Forum has served a lot of the gaps that the tourism department has been seeing. Not having as much structure enables it to be a group for collaboration and updates, which is really successful. Glad that this remains a place to keep everyone on the same page with an informal strategy.
  - Eva: I will let WTA speak to this question.
- Question 3: How can we best balance short-term problem solving and immediate needs with long term strategy development and implementation?
- Crystal: Break out committees to tackle short term vs long term, or set dedicated meetings for those topics. Provide some space in either meeting to give SHORT UPDATES on the topic that is not in focus.
  - Wayne: predominantly worked on short-term in the last year, leave long-term stuff more for agencies to say we need to focus on. Opposes splitting up meetings between long/short term
  - Kristin: the different interests groups do and should influence the longterm strategies of the land managers, but what if we do a quarterly meeting where land managers give OVERALL STRATEGIES accompanied by their short term plans to accomplish those, and then the intervening meetings are about bringing resources to bear on those strategies.
    - Also provides opportunity to revisit accomplishments quarterly to course correct and see how we're doing.
  - Kathy: agrees with Kristin

- Doug: Long term issues have not thus far been a focus, outside of today and when we were drafting our mission statement. Would like to start by hearing from the land managers about what they think the long term issues are.
  - Kevin: agrees with Wayne. Building good will is positioning us to meet short term needs. Not opposed to long term thinking, but forum is opportunity for leveraging everyone's individual expertise. Doesn't want to lose that.
  - Karen: agrees with everyone. Still need big umbrella to work under. Working on smaller projects are tangible and keep us motivated (while acknowledging that some projects are largely bandaids that do not address the overarching problem).
  - Bradley: Start planning longterm initiatives! From there, we can break it into the intermediate shortterm projects and keep building that goodwill. But land managers need to know what Rec Forum's priorities are! Would like to dedicate time to catch up on status of both short and longterm goals (possibly a living document?)
  - Eva: I think the forum should continue to focus on short term issues as they arise and while doing so be thinking of and implementing, if possible, some long term solutions. At the same time there should be long term strategy development not tied to short term issues, where the issues of the impacts on our environment and ways to manage and mitigate those effects are at the forefront.
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- Question 4: Do our subcommittees (Outreach, French Cabin Creek, Swauk 5 Fingers) adequately reflect our preferred focus areas? Based on question 2 and 3, how might we add or adjust?
  - Crystal: current committees are doing good, new projects will need new committees to collect info and report back to forum, as well as discontinue when project complete
  - Wayne: agrees w/ Crystal, standing committees for long term initiatives
  - Kristin: pass
  - Kathy: pass, sees values in group and supports agencies
  - Doug: French Cabin Creek has done good work, touchstone for how our group can engage, other committees can be formed to address larger questions once they are identified
  - Kevin: likes sub-committee structure, including standing vs ad-hoc. Adding subcommittees as needed will target the people who are most interested in a project
  - Karen: current committees are fine, advocacy/political sub-committee? Oodles of focus areas will be coming down the pike
  - Bradley: no suggestions for current committees, sees need for more to come as projects identified
  - Madison: pass
- Nicky: [Kittitas County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan](#) outlines priorities for our county. Currently open for comment (see contact in link above). Group can talk about making list of what they'd like to prioritize to bring to the Public Works Department

- Bradley, ask of those representing rec groups: how are we engaging our collective users with information shared here? How are we growing our reach to connect with users who don't seek out and interact our respective groups? - education, natural resource protection
- Eva: I can only speak to the French Cabin Creek subcommittee. At the moment the work has been to address the short term issues. The Forest Services recognizes that there needs to be a long term solution, which will take time to implement due to onerous rules federal agencies must follow. I think there should be a subcommittee formed to develop long term strategic goals focused on the use of the natural world, our impact on it and of long-term sustainability. Once the goals are developed then the committee can focus on brainstorming creative solutions.
- Land Managers Update
  - DNR – Stephanie
    - Appreciated listening to everyone's thoughtful answers
    - Updated green dot maps will be out May 1<sup>st</sup>, access here: [DNR.wa.gov/go](http://DNR.wa.gov/go)
    - Teanaway camp opened April 1<sup>st</sup>, 29 Pines opened April 1<sup>st</sup>, Indian Camp opens April 21<sup>st</sup>
    - Larry: building Naneum ridge rec plan and Teanaway Community Forest rec plans, once complete they will be able to manage rec pressures currently felt. Working on day to day management until then. Hopes group can help manage dispersed recreation workload. If we can set a handful of objectives, land managers can help define tasks to reach those objectives
  - The Nature Conservancy – Darcy
    - Glad to be here for thoughtful conversation, struck by how much people put into this. Original ECRP purpose was to maintain integrity of trails in our system instead of taking away and increases scarcity. Engage volunteers that are already great stewards of the land. It would be powerful to have our own prioritized list that reflects recreation values
    - Upcoming fuels reduction work: see attached fact sheet for information
  - Forest Service – Rob Allen
    - Not present, still onboarding for his new position
  - Yakama Nation – Tristan Spencer
    - Good to hear everyone's comments, acknowledges the difficulty of operating over Zoom and sees the light at the end of the tunnel when the pandemic ends