

Topic: Recreation Forum meeting
Partner Updates
Time: September 19, 3:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Time	Agenda Item	Speakers, and Desired Outcomes
3:00	Join Teams, and Roll Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions, goal setting• Discuss how to represent June/July field trips in note form
3:15	Subcommittees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green Dot Roads• Trail Option
3:25	KSF Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request for Applications
3:30	Conservation NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kurt Hellmann• Recreation and Wildlife literature review• Wildlife Ambassador Project
4:10	Land Manager Updates	All
4:30	Adjourn	

PLEASE NOTE: we will continue to utilize MICROSOFT TEAMS for our digital option in September. We will continue to meet in-person at DNR's Ellensburg office (713 W Bowers Rd, Ellensburg, WA 98926). Please use the link below:

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 240 025 146 587

Passcode: 4inGKD

Attending: Karen Behm, Eva Tyler, Barb Penniston, Gene Reed, Kurt Hellman, Kay Emery, Vince Pruis, Stephanie Margheim, Tonya Morrey, Kurt Hellman, John Morrow, Sonja Hartmann (USFS), Claire Thompson

- Representing June/July Field Trips – no meeting notes
 - Recap of conversations from the field:
 - July – Ryan Schriener briefed group on West Fork Trails Plan, status, planning team, etc
 - Fielded questions about priority implementation of trails, input opportunities
- Subcommittees
 - Trail Options
 - Eva, Barb, and Karen worked on Trailhead Ambassador Program with Cle Elum Ranger District.
 - Tabled once per month throughout summer
 - July 8 – Esmerelda Basin Trailhead, 88 people, many backpackers, full parking lot (30 vehicle capacity)
 - August 5 – Salmon la Sac, 17 people due to bad weather
 - Despite weather on trails, every pullout was occupied by vehicle and tent
 - After tabling time period, Karen noted that a lot of teenagers showed up for the swimming hole in the late afternoon
 - Sept 9 – Hyas Lake, dual trailhead so many people went up Cathedral Rock instead of Hyas. Logged 104 people up Hyas. 172 cars (11 in horse trailer parking – Barb notes that horse people tend not to go there because they know the trailer spots will be filled)
 - If 2x people per car, over 300 people total – there aren't that many campsites up Hyas or Cathedral!
 - Decent engagement – about 35% of visitors stopped to chat
 - Questions for directions
 - Most were from West Side, unfamiliar with East trails
 - Shared Leave No Trace info
 - Some people thought representation meant they needed to register to use the trail!
 - Karen noted that the THA canopy was really key to engagement!
 - People were pleased to see them
 - Barb wrote an article for BCHW about this, there was interest but she reported back that most of the horse folks are interested in WDFW lands. WTA may have more information about that rec use, since they did THA for WDFW this summer
- KSF Updates
 - 20k raised in first year of 1% for Public Lands program

- Grant applications opened Labor Day 2023
 - 6 applications so far
 - Array of projects: moto and nonmotor rec, forest health, enviro ed, safety programing, etc
 - Reminder for other groups to consider their Kittitas-based projects and submit applications up to \$5k
- CNW
 - Nonprofit that works across the state to connect wildlife and wild lands
 - “Bettering the Relationship between Wildlife and Recreation” project
 - A literature and review of current knowledge, produced Fall 2023
 - https://conservationnw.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Recreation-and-wildlife-in-Washington-Considerations-for-conservation_FINALreduced.pdf
 - Looking at co-existence of recreation and wildlife
 - Increasing visitation to public lands even before Covid –
 - up 12% from 2019 to 2020
 - 2016 – 2020 saw spike of 130mil to 170mil visitors to USFS
 - Due to increasing population
 - Tourism boom
 - “Outdoor rec industry is going to hit \$1TRILLION in GDP next year”
 - So we need more thought into how increasing rec affects public lands and resources
 - High economic value
 - 3.2% of state GDP, 264000 jobs
 - Many figures drawn from 2020 Earth Economics and WDFW put together a report on Increasing Use on Public Lands
 - CNW focused on 15 WA species in partnership with Home Range Wildlife Research
 - Species selected based on:
 - Availability of science
 - Intersection with other areas of CNW work (habitat conservation)
 - Findings on Implications for Wildlife:
 - Growing body of research on wildlife-recreation dynamics
 - Research indicates negative impact from recreation, caused by:
 - Disturbance
 - Displacement
 - Disturbance and displacement indicate short-term responses to human presence.
 - It is difficult to demonstrate population-level impacts!
 - We can’t know how the state-wide population of mule deer will react to disturbances in a handful of heavily hit areas.
 - So CNW is trying to pull themes from short-term, small area focused studies to create projected long-term population responses

- Ex: if a deer flees hikers in one area, it spends energy and experiences distress, which lowers overall fitness in short term
 - Long term, loss of fitness may mean loss of successful reproduction
 - However, the extent of rec impacts are context dependent
 - Ex: wolverines and grizzly bears respond differently!
 - Variables include:
 - Habitat type
 - Recreation activity (moto vs non, hiking vs biking, etc)
 - More local-scale information is needed
 - Observed trends:
 - Animals have stronger responses to LESS PREDICTABLE forms of rec
 - Off-trail travel
 - Reproductive status important
 - Pregnant females and young are more vulnerable to fitness reduction
 - Seasons are important – summer vs winter matters
 - Especially ungulate species
 - Habitat generalists (black bear) are less vulnerable than specialists (bighorn sheep)
 - If they can thrive in multiple habitats, they're less bothered
 - Some animals are behaviorally flexible
 - Some adapted daytime behaviors to nighttime to avoid recreation
 - Intensity of rec affects impact to wildlife
 - Different types of rec have different impacts
 - There are noted differences, but important to stress that ALL types of recreation cause impacts. It's not about pointing fingers, it's about owning our collective impact.
 - Land Managers and Rec Stakeholders Key Focus Areas
 - Identify wildlife-recreation overlap zones
 - Where does habitat overlap with rec hot spots
 - Measure recreation intensity and frequency
 - Protect spatial and temporal refugia
 - “protect the space and the time that wildlife need to thrive”
 - Ex: establishing wildlife corridors and keep rec out
 - Ex: keep rec out of ungulate winter range areas
 - Implement adaptive management actions
 - Suggestions for recreators:
 - Stick to trails, be predictable for wildlife!
 - Limit majority of rec to daytime
 - Respect seasonal closures/restrictions
 - Consider consolidating your own rec footprint
 - Don't travel as far into wilderness areas, leave land for wildlife

- Engage in rec management processes!
 - Advocate for science-based land management, and for wildlife
 - Include and welcome others in the outdoors so we can collaborate
 - Learn more about respectful and responsible recreation
 - Ex: Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Movement
- Suggested reading:
 - Earth Economics
 - <https://www.eartheconomics.org/all-publications/2022/wdfw>
 - Tulalip Tribes Report on: The recreation boom on public lands in western WA, and impacts on treaty tribes
 - <https://nr.tulaliptribes.com/Base/File/NR-Tulalip-Recreation-Impacts-to-Wildlife-2-28-21-v2>
- Question:
 - How do we consolidate recreation footprints?
 - “instead of hiking a trail that takes a long drive to reach, consider sticking to a closer trail that you’ve done before”
 - Make them new again by focusing on something different every time. Sights vs sounds.
 - Where does CNW want this information to lead?
 - Help influence policy on rec management to prioritize coexistence
 - Gov’s office, WDFW 10 year rec plan, DNR rec management
 - A tool for strategic planning!
 - Educate the public about the ways they impact wildlife, and how they can minimize it
 - What does the 6th principle of LNT – Respecting Wildlife – actually mean? Giving actionable behaviors there.
 - Implementing some of this would require policing. Any suggestions for enforcement?
 - CNW focusing on getting this information out to people for educational purposes
 - Can Kurt send the report QR code?
 - Yes, will distribute with notes
- CNW also launched an Wildlife Ambassador project in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River this summer
 - 2022 brought increase of bear sightings in Mount Baker Snoqualmie
 - Half a dozen bears were transported or euthanized due to getting into people’s food/campsites
 - Increase in overall bear encounters elsewhere (Leavenworth, Whatcom)
 - CNW worked with MBS, Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Program, and Greenway to create a Wildlife-Recreation Coexistence Program
 - Aimed to connect recreationists with info needed to be out on the land with respect to wildlife
 - Hired a part time seasonal specialist
 - Out 8am-2pm Saturday and Sunday, July 1 – Labor Day, plus volunteers

- Table near trailhead, plus ‘campground stroll’ through campsites to encourage food security
 - Outreach tools:
 - Bear info
 - Activity sheets for kids
 - Photobooks and photographs to draw in viewers
 - Engagement metrics
 - Conversational – 1,250
 - Getting into bear safety, food storage orders, ancestral land history
 - General – 2,000
 - Chats that extend beyond ‘hi’ but aren’t particularly educational
 - Observations:
 - 22% leashed dogs
 - 2% unleashed dogs
 - 2.5% bear spray
 - Successful outcomes
 - No negative bear encounters at the campground or trailhead (despite presence of bears)
 - New signage about bear-boxes
 - Outreach materials
 - Developed more partnerships
 - Generated public excitement
 - Areas for improvement:
 - Public confusion around other issues (leashed vs unleashed dogs, dispersed camping, etc)
 - How to encourage bear spray usage
 - How to train campground hosts to be sources of info
 - Unpack fear around bears and other animals
 - Future
 - Possibly expand into other areas in Middle Fork
 - Possibility to draw CNW into east-side THA efforts?
 - CNW hired part-time person to oversee volunteers
- Land Manager Updates
 - DNR
 - Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation Plan rolled out last week
 - Guides actions, but does not take the place of landscape-level management plans
 - More of a visioning guide!
 - Kicked off Sept 12 with interested tribes. Will be consulting west side tribes for input.
 - Once tribal input has been collected, there will be townhall meetings around this topic, and the 5 main goals of the plan, throughout the winter

- 5 draft goals
 - Preserve and protect the natural environment and cultural resources
 - Build an outdoor stewardship and responsibility ethic
 - Increase equitable outdoor access and responsible recreation development, stewardship, and management
 - Secure financial stability for recreation development, stewardship, and management
 - Mitigate climate impacts and build resilience
- Still no campfires, though this will be reevaluated as we move into fall. Stephanie will let us know when that changes
- West Fork Trails Plan – updates will be provided to coalition members next week, will have news to share after that meeting
 - Finalizing master agreement so trailwork plan can be implemented!
- Wrapping up SEPA and County permits for West Fork Trailhead!
- USFS
 - Sonja Hartmann on as Partnership Coordinator! On to help support Rec Partnerships. Currently setting up new agreements to help bring funds to partners, clarify USFS role, provide guidance about how partners are allowed to work with the forest
 - Supports staff who manage on-the-ground volunteers - handling the data input for volunteer and conservation education programs
- BLM
 - Upcoming workparty at Liberty for National Public Lands Day
 - Cleanup activities
 - Painting
 - Fire ring breakdown
 - Fencing Work
- TNC
 - The Lightning Point Trail reroute in the Taneum is 99% complete! Northwest Motorcycle Association (NMA) is planning one last volunteer day for final trail touches before it settles under the winter snow and opens next season. I'm not an experienced dirt biker, but I've heard others that know what they are doing on a dirt bike give it high compliments. It will be available for multi-use single track recreation too – but watch out for dirt bikes!
 - On top of that, NMA has received funding from the WA Recreation and Conservation Office to address other unsustainable trails in the Taneum! We are all excited to keep our partnership with NMA and the Cle Elum Ranger District going. This effort reduces sedimentation in streams and enhances water quality where quite a bit of time and money has been invested into fish habitat restoration
 - We currently do not have any recreational closures on the Cle Elum Ridge. Pending funding for a restoration contract, a section of Ewok will be temporarily closed this fall. We also have a couple burn units planned for this fall. Should

conditions line up, there may be associated recreation closures. [Our Facebook Page](#) is the best place to stay up to date on closures.

- Greenway
 - National Public Lands Day in Middle Fork
 - Opportunity to support NHA funding on Greenway website
 - Volunteer trail events coming up with Kay
 - Mt Lillian Trail – Sept 30
 - Thorp Creek trail - Oct
- TCF G5
 - 10-year anniversary for the TCF!
 - 12-2pm community celebration, BBQ, potluck, photocontest winners
 - Teanaway Campground
 - TCFAC meeting to follow
- WTA
 - TCF workparty on Sat, Oct 14, as part of volunteer appreciation week
- Land Managers Group
 - RESCHEDULING to every-other-month
 - Next meeting in NOVEMBER of 2023
 - 2024 schedule:
 - Hybrid: Jan, March, July
 - In Person: May, Sept, Nov
 - Agencies want to renew the “what’s eating our lunch” conversations in 2024 – update Rec Forum on current challenges and opportunities
 - Also want to see updated priority project lists from Rec Forum members!