

Clallam County Trails Advisory Committee (TAC)

February 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order. The meeting was conducted via video and phone conferencing. In person public meetings, are currently prohibited by Governor Order due to COVID-19.

Members Present: Gary Gleason, Justin Zarzeczny, Dick Gritman, Kat Sample, Charlie Commeree, Gordon Taylor, Eric Rohrer, Bill Biery, and Richard Bloomer.

County Representatives: Steve Gray, County Public Works/Road Department
Bill Peach, County Commissioner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Commeree motioned to approve the December 2, 2020 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Zarzeczny. The motion passed with all in support.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Gray welcomed new member Richard Bloomer representing Olympic Peninsula Bicycle Alliance (OPBA). He also announced the Run the Peninsula – Elwha River Bridge Run (5K/10K) Event will be held this Saturday (February 6) on the Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT) between the Elwha River Bridge and the Port Angeles 18th Street Trailhead. The trail event will incorporate changes to address COVID-19 concerns such as the event will be run in separate participant waves.

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Nominations/Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mr. Taylor motioned to re-elect Andy Stevenson, Chair, and Gary Gleason, Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Commeree and passed with all in favor.

New member Richard Bloomer representing the Olympic Peninsula Bicycle Alliance (OPBA) introduced himself and indicated his interests. He added that he recently volunteered for the day on the County Trail Crew, and that he is on the OPBA Safety Committee and hopes to be a conduit to share information between the TAC and the OPBA.

TRAIL PROJECT UPDATES/REPORTS

Project update reports were provided as summarized below:

ODT-Spruce Railroad Trail

State Grant Close-out: Mr. Gray reported that Clallam County successfully closed out the 2016 and 2018 WA. State Recreation and Conservation Office Trail Grants to complete the Spruce Railroad Trail (SRRT) around Lake Crescent in Olympic National Park (ONP), and that the County received the expected balance of awarded grant funds.

SRRT Trail Closures: Mr. Gray reported that due to a landslide the SRRT has been closed since January 3 between the two tunnels. He noted that ONP recently secured funding needed for removal and clean-up of

slide debris across the trail, and that the work likely to be done by Bruch & Bruch that still has an open contract related to final SRRT work. The next-step will be to finalize scope of work and schedule. Weather conditions will be a factor in the schedule. Mr. Gray added SRRT user's traffic following reopening was high even during this time of year. A question was asked if there was trail user counts for the SRRT section. Mr. Gray responded that the plan is to install a trail counter at the East Beach Rd/Lyre River trailhead start.

SRRT Maintenance: Mr. Gray indicated that going forward the ODT--Spruce Railroad Trail segment within ONP will be maintained by Park staff and/or their approved volunteer crews. Clallam County will no longer be assisting with maintenance. The Peninsula Trails Coalition (PTC) is working on an agreement with ONP to allow them to assist with trail maintenance on this section. In the future, if County assistance for trail maintenance is something ONP wants to explore, the County and ONP can consider an intergovernmental agreement. Reports are forwarded now to the Parks Road Supervisor. Gordon Taylor reported that the PTC and ONP agreement is still under discussion at this time.

Posted Speed Limits: Mr. Gray noted that 15 mph speed limit signs have been posted near the Lyre River (East Beach Rd) and North Shore Area access points in ONP. It is not known at this time whether ONP will enforce speed limits. A 15 mph speed limit has been previously discussed by the TAC. Other portions of the ODT in Clallam County have been posted with 5 mph and 10 mph warning signs in certain areas due to steeper grades. A 15 mph speed limit for ODT may be starting point for formalizing County future ODT trail policies and regulations.

Mr. Bloomer inquired whether there is a 15 mph speed limit on the ODT. Mr. Gray indicated that 15 mph would be a recommended speed limit under good conditions and lines of sight. There is no current regulatory speed limit in County managed sections and he does not believe in other ODT trail jurisdictions. Adopting and posting of ODT speed limits is an item identified for continued discussion by the TAC. Right now trail users have a responsibility to travel at a prudent and safe speed to avoid harm to themselves or other trail users. Mr. Gray added that 15 mph would not be safe speed in certain areas and conditions.

Mr. Biery noted that some bike users travel at high speed and are not considerate of others and appear to think everyone needs to get out of their way. He inquired is there a way to provide education material such as signage or public announcements in the press to help inform proper trail etiquette of who yields to who. Mr. Gray responded there is already a fair amount of this type of messaging out there such as information in brochures at trailheads, ODT web page has trail courtesy information, and some trail yield sign messaging scattered along the trail. He added this might be an area for follow-up by the TAC to identify how we can improve such messaging.

ODT-Diamond Point Rd to Old Gardiner Road Connector.

Mr. Gray noted that the approximately 100-foot long sidepath along the east-side of Diamond Point Road between the road crossing point and the recently paved ODT connector between Old Gardiner Road and Diamond Point Road was completed and paved in December 2020. TAC members were referred to the before and after photos that were part of the meeting packet materials.

Mr. Gray indicated that no solid bollards are being proposed at either end of the short ODT-Diamond Point to Old Gardiner Road connector by either Clallam or Jefferson County. On the Clallam County side, the plan is to install flexible tubular posts and pavement markings between road travel lanes and new side path to increase visibility and safety. The tubular posts are to be centered in a 3 to 4 foot wide within a pavement marked buffer strip. The County will also be installing a stop sign on the new sidepath at the trail crossing on the east side of Diamond Point Road. There is already a trail stop sign on the west side of this crossing at the Diamond Pt. Rd trailhead. The County will also install "motorized vehicle" prohibited signs. Mr. Gray

also noted that the County is exploring purchasing a walk behind power painting equipment for smaller painting jobs. This equipment should benefit trail pavement marking efforts.

Mr. Bloomer reported that he observed near the ODT trail crossing at Knapp Road a car on the trail. There is a bollard at this location.

Mr. Gleason inquired about adding a rumble strips or grooved type pavement along the edge of Diamond Point Road between the road and sidepath. Mr. Gray responded that at this point the plan is to install the flexible bollards and pavement marking to provide the physical and visual separation.

Motorcycle Barrier Removal Project on Olympic Adventure Trail (OAT)

Mr. Gray reported that the County has removed 12 motorcycle barriers to-date on the Olympic Adventure Trail (OAT). This includes removal of the barriers between SR 112 trailhead and Eden Valley Road crossing, except for the barrier at the Dan Kelly parking area and the one just west of the powerlines near the SR 112 trailhead. There is also one-half of a barrier to remove east of the Eden Valley Road crossing. The County hopes to remove most of the rest of the barriers in February, but may need to hold-off on some removals until the DNR sign order for “motorized vehicles prohibited” is received. TAC members were referred to the before and after photos of one of the barriers that was removed that were part of the meeting packet materials.

Commissioner Bill Peach indicated that he had joined the meeting.

ODT-Dean Creek Bridge Crossing

Mr. Gray reported that the channel dug out across the small meander bend on the downstream side of the ODT-Dean Creek bridge crossing is working well to prevent erosive stream flows directly at the repaired east bridge abutment. Most of the streamflow now follows this channel. TAC members were referred to the before and after photos that were part of the meeting packet materials.

Mr. Gray also summarized results of a recent report by Jamestown S’ Klallam Tribe (JSKT) consultants related to cost estimates for two, long-term options for the bridge crossing:

Option 1: Longer bridge replacement (Est. Cost ~ 1 million)

Option 2: Reconstruct the bridge in its current location with deeper pile foundations and abutment protection. (Est. Cost ~ \$800,000)

These costs are based on the JSKT consultant cost estimates where engineering, environmental review and permitting, and construction management being contracted out by JSKT. One potential cost saving consideration may be for JSKT to come to agreement with County for these types of work items. Another option being explored by JSKT is with WSDOT regarding possibility of moving up the US 101 Dean Creek Culvert Replacement with the option to extend to accommodate a trail crossing.

Mr. Zarzeczny provided additional information regarding the earlier comment by Mr. Bloomer regarding vehicles on the trail near the ODT-Knapp Road crossing. He noted that he has also seen vehicles in that trail section. He believes they are getting onto the trail via a driveway on property just east of Knapp Road directly across from the Lavender Farm (on south side of US 101). Mr. Gray will pass this information to JSKT who manages this section of the trail.

ODT-Forks to La Push

Mr. Gray reported on recent progress for the ODT- Forks to La Push project from US 101 in Forks. He noted that the Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFL) contracted for a project feasibility report to evaluate project scope, schedule, costs, risks and delivery methodology and that on January 6, he and Joe Donisi, Asst. County Engineer, met with the WFL Project Manager and the consultant team to discuss the project and visit the trail route. He also noted that the draft report is expected sometime this spring/summer, and that the County will be continuing with work related to trail corridor acquisition efforts this year.

Mr. Commeree inquired about the status of the funding award to support trail corridor acquisition that received a #1 project ranking for a state grant. Mr. Gray explained that there are two main sources of funding for this segment. Construction funding is from the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) award (5 million plus). The trail corridor acquisition state grant is anticipated to be officially awarded to be available to get under contract in the summer 2021.

Mr. Gleason inquired whether any federal stimulus funding available for the planned trail bridge crossing immediately east of this segment in Forks. Mr. Gray noted he was not aware of any such funding yet to directly support trail, but that the County will be targeting pursuing federal surface transportation funding to help fund the bridge. Commissioner Peach indicated the County Commissioners have prepared a project list for potential stimulus funding and recommended to follow-up to see if this project could be added to the County list.

OLYMPIC DISCOVERY TRAIL MAINTENANCE REPORTS

Olympic Adventure Trail (OAT) Whiskey Creek Horse Trail Crossing Repair

Mr. Gray reported that on January 14, the Clallam County Volunteer Trail Crew with local Backcountry Horsemen of Washington (BCHW) volunteers working with Tanner Boggs, County Volunteer Coordinator, completed the work to reconstruct the west-side horse trail approach to the OAT Whiskey Creek crossing. This culminated a total of 12 work days on this project starting back in September 2020. Work party sizes were limited due to Covid-19.

Mr. Gray noted that County staff consulted with Tom Mix, BCHW, on a design concept to ensure the rehabilitation would work well for horses. Reference was made to the before and after photos of part of the restored trail included in the meeting packet materials. Key project steps included, but not limited to: 1) digging down to solid material; 2) locating suitable diameter downed logs in the surrounding forest for trailside curbs and hauling them to the project site; 3) stripping and anchoring the curb logs; and 4) hauling and spreading several yards of rock base and 15 to 20 yards of gravel by power wheel barrow. The project also incorporated stalls mats to firm up trail base previously placed by a friend of the trail. Permission to use a trail on part of private property from the County pit cut hauling distance from about 1.3 miles to 0.5 miles. Mr. Gray noted there is some work needed to be done on the east side of the crossing that is targeted for the spring.

Lorrie Mittman inquired whether there were any plans to replace the OAT Whiskey Creek Trail Bridge. Mr. Gray indicated that the trail bridge support will need future replacement, but there is no funding to replace at this time. He indicated due to riparian and murrelet habitat concerns, DNR will not allow felling of an available tree close by the current bridge site for a new bridge support. Potential considerations noted included shoring up current crossing to extend lifespan, purchasing a tree and hauling to site to replace current support, working with the BCHW for a stock bridge crossing at the horse crossing (not ideal approach grades for bikes), and looking for a shorter crossing point span.

Other County Trail Maintenance Efforts (December – January)

Clallam County trail maintenance highlights for December thru January included:

- Inspected the Gossett to Waterline Road and Freshwater Bay to Thompson (including horse trail) sections and blew off trail debris ODT-Gossett to Waterline Road Section.
- Patched a small developing hole on the trail just west of Seibert Creek Bridge Crossing.
- In late-December, responded to report on a treefall cluster and related debris across the ODT west of the Daley-Rankin Tunnel (between mile 30 and 32) in ONP. The treefall was cleared to open path, but part of debris from large rootwad and small slide too large and left for ONP to address.
- Inspected Old Blyn Highway to Heath Rd and Siebert to Morse Creek trail sections, and conducted targeted blowing off of trail debris in both of these trail sections, as needed.
- Applied approximately 1500 lbs of sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) for moss control in sections between FS 2918 Road to Camp Creek Trailhead Area. This effort was coordinated with PTC volunteers who used the Kubota to broom/sweep the corridor prior to moss treatment.
- Repaired blocked culvert on OAT (mile 14) and repaired trail tread.
- Audited and blew off debris on the OAT from mile 15-21

Other County Volunteer Crew Work Party Efforts

Other County Volunteer Crew Work Party efforts besides the Whiskey Creek Horse Trail Rehabilitation for the December – January period included the removal of approximately 300 scotch broom plants along a stretch of the ODT from HWY 101 to FS 2918 and moss treatment near ODT milepost 41.

Other Maintenance Reports/Needs

Mr. Taylor reported that PTC work crew used the Kubota to sweep/broom sections of the trail west of Lake Crescent and also between Health Road and Bagley Creek Road.

Mr. Gleason inquired whether any new reports on Jefferson County trail development efforts. No one had anything new to report.

There were no other member reports of needed trail maintenance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments. See Lorrie Mittman earlier comment related to the OAT Whiskey Creek Horse Trail Project.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Gleason asked if any other business. Hearing none the meeting was adjourned.