

Clallam County Trails Advisory Committee (TAC)

September 4, 2024, Meeting Minutes

A. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting was called to order and conducted via video/phone conferencing.

Members Present: Charlie Commeree (Chair), Andy Stevenson, Wendy Clark-Getzin (Vice-Chair), Gordon Taylor, Jennifer Reandeau, Justin Zarzeczny, Eric Rohrer, Lorrie Mittmann, Dick Gritman

County Representatives: Steve Gray, County Public Works Dept. (Ex-officio TAC member)
William Habel, Regional Trails & Active Transportation Coordinator
Mike French, County Commissioner

Guests/Public: Powell Jones, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe (JSKT), Rich James, Michele Canale, Peninsula Trails Coalition (PTC), Jeff Bohman (PTC).

B. MODIFICATIONS/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

- **Powell Jones, JSKT Lands Manager to discuss Bike & Pedestrian Safety on the Dungeness River Railroad Bridge**

Powell started by illustrating some of the traffic problems with the Railroad Bridge found at the Dungeness River Center. Since the bridge is utilized by pedestrian park visitors on foot, and trail users on wheeled transport, conflicts & collisions between the two have become a concern. JST is seeking input from the TAC on two options for reducing the conflict between wheeled trail users and on foot visitors to the park. The first option, an unenforced but indicated low speed limit just on the bridge. The second option, requiring dismounting and walking wheeled conveyance across the bridge. Chair Commeree began by emphasizing that any action or decision reached would ultimately be JST’s, as the Tribe operates that section of the trail. The group then proceeded to discuss the two options, with the majority seeming to agree with the speed limit sign option, as dismounting and pushing would be difficult for some trail users, especially those on trikes, such as the Sequim Wheelers. Suggestions including improved signage, trail division striping, directional markers were also proposed.

- Michele Canale, PTC Grants Manager, to overview what PTC is considering for projects to apply for 2025 Clallam County Lodging Tax Funding

Michelle began by stating that several rounds of Lodging Tax funding from various jurisdictions were upcoming, and that she would be giving an overview of some of the projects that PTC was looking to fund. Trail counting equipment, porta potties, a mobile visitors center, partial funding for a new trail maintenance position, bike maintenance stations in Jefferson County, maintenance tools, map printing costs, and finally the need for funding of a viewpoint overlooking Discovery Bay in Jefferson County. The hope is that the viewpoint will act as an anchor for future routing of the ODT.

Discussion on the proposals then followed, in particular the maintenance position. The position is intended to focus on Eastern Clallam County, which is intended to train an eventual replacement for Gordon Taylor. Member Gray raised his concerns with using County Lodging Tax funding for maintenance, and that Public Works had not done so in the past. He thought it may be an

interesting avenue to explore in the future. Additional discussion followed. A discussion of the trail counting equipment, maps, and directional signage improvements followed. Member Reandeau suggested that directional signs indicating which road is being crossed should be implemented.

- C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Member Stevenson moved, and Member Taylor seconded to approve the August 2, meeting minutes. The motion passed. Member Gray added an amendment to include Member Reandeau in the August 2 minutes, as she had been omitted.

D. DISCUSSION AND BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. **Continued discussion on Clallam County 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) related to trail projects for the upcoming 2025-2030 Update**
 - Member Gray gave a presentation on the ODT related projects that are included in the 2025-2030 TIP. Of these projects, 7 of them are included in the Clallam County RAISE Grant, which has made available \$3.75 million for planning funding. These 7 include: 4 trail gaps (Freshwater Bay Rd to Elwha River, Gossett Rd to Thompson Rd, Forks City Limits to Sappho and Sappho to Camp Creek Trailhead), 2 river crossings (Bogachiel River Crossing on the Forks to La Push Segment and the Bagley Creek Bridge Replacement), and a final design for the ODT Waterline Road.
 - The planning studies will address the general scope, public outreach, environmental constraints, land ownership, preliminary design, and other considerations.
 - Following the presentation, Chair Commeree led a discussion on timeline priorities of the 4 trail gap projects. Member Gray said that he would like to start something on all 4 as soon as possible, but that working on all concurrently would be difficult.
 - Member Stevenson agreed that it would be difficult to approach all projects concurrently, and that it would be useful to know what the county was planning on starting first, and what projects would be handled in-house.
 - Member Gray stated that the county had not finalized any priority decisions yet, but that the Waterline Road project would likely use in-house engineering. In terms of the gaps, a total in-house solution would likely allow for only one per year to be tackled, and with a mix of consultant and in-house work would allow for two or greater. Member Gray clarified that the other projects would still be worked on, but not at the same scale.
 - Member Stevenson stated that he thought the Waterline Road project should be near the top of the priority list, as it is the closest to shovel-ready.
 - Member Stevenson asserted that he believes that the Bagley Creek Crossing should also be near the top of the priority list, as the current bridge is dangerous to trail users. Member Mittmann concurred. Discussion continued.
 - Member Gray stated that the Gosset Road to Thompson Rd and Freshwater Bay to the Elwha Bridge are scheduled first in the TIP, and that both these gaps should be tackled in the next two years. Commissioner French stated that if an opportunity arrives for any of the TIP projects, that the county would jump on them. Member Mittman stated that having a currently amenable to trail projects Department of Natural Resources should be taken advantage of, as they have not been so in the past. Member Stevenson then stated that land ownership could be a potential hurdle for the Freshwater Bay to Elwha bridge reach. Chair Commeree inquired when the last outreach had taken place, which had been quite some time ago. Chair Commeree indicated that we should not put projects on hold prior to re-engagement with property owners. After some

discussion, Chair Commeree stated that the Freshwater Bay to Elwha gap should be the first addressed, as it could potentially be one of the most difficult to accomplish in relation to landowners.

- Member Gray made the suggestion that the two Eastern gaps should move forward concurrently. He made the same suggestion for the two Western gaps, in order to maintain as much continuity as possible, and to not build isolated segments. Chair Commeree concurred.
- Member Stevenson inquired if initial landowner contacts and permissions would be undertaken by the county, rather than a consultant. Member Gray stated that the county would likely make the initial contact. A consultant would be required to assist with engagement.
- Chair Commeree gave the group a time reminder, and started concluding the discussion. He inquired whether the Trail Advisory Committee should bring the 4 gap projects to the Commissioners. Member Gray replied that any decisions should wait until the next work session, and that further discussion can be had in the next meeting of the TAC. Chair Commeree concurred, and that stated the discussion can be narrowed in the next meeting.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments. During this time, Member Clark-Getzin requested a discussion on Safe Routes for All (SFA) funding for bicycle and pedestrian safety to be added to the October agenda. Chair Commeree also added an agenda item for the October meeting, a presentation by Christina St. John of the Noxious Weeds Board for noxious weeds found along the ODT, and how to manage them.

F. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Note: Agenda Items “Announcements and Member Updates & Trail Project and Maintenance Reports” were unable to be addressed during this meeting due to time limitations.