

Clallam County Trails Advisory Committee (TAC) August 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Vice-Chair, Gary Gleason called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Jennifer Reandeau, Justin Zarzeczny, Gary Gleason, Dick Gritman, Kat Sample, Gordon Taylor, and Bill Biery.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Steve Gray announced new TAC members Eric Rohrer, City of Forks Representative, and Bill Biery, City of Sequim Representative. Steve also noted that he anticipates the September TAC meeting will also be a video and phone conference only meeting consistent with the Governor's Order prohibition on in-person public meetings related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

BUSINESS/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

(1) Sign Messaging on the Olympic Adventure Trail

Steve Gray indicated that related to this agenda item that the TAC has had previous discussions over concerns of bike speeds on the Olympic Adventure Trail (OAT). He received an email from an OAT trail maintenance volunteer that was also sent to the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR), and other Peninsula Trail Coalition (PTC) volunteers regarding bike speeds, especially on downhill section west from what the spot called as the living room/lunchroom at around MP 3.5.

Steve noted it is unfortunate that some bicyclists ride in a way that creates safety issues and diminished trail experience to other users (including other bikers) let alone their safety. The volunteer suggested consideration be given to segregation of downhill bike traffic in a separate track such as below the "Living Room/Lunchroom" picnic area and other needed areas.

Steve further explained that the OAT is subject to a Recreation Trail License that Clallam County has with the DNR for the current trail corridor alignment. One of the requirements of that license is that tread width not exceed 36 inches. To create a downhill bike trail segment on a separate track as suggested would require an amended license agreement. Such trail expansion will be subject to environmental review and possible additional permitting and limitations depending on location. It would also need to consider impacts to public timber resources. While pursuing a new license agreement is an option, it would be difficult to construct a separate track in many areas along the OAT, including the section in question due to topography and other physical constraints. Even where possible, constructing a separated downhill track in close proximity to the existing trail would likely eventually result in cross-connections or growing into one another increasing the trail footprint.

Steve also noted that one way traffic is not really an option due to east-west nature of current trail.

In terms of alternatives, Steve indicated that one idea identified by those responding to the email suggestion of a separated track was to install a sequential series of signs (Burma Shave format) along the downhill OAT section below the “Living Room” and possible other targeted segments. The signs would need to be simple targeted messages that can be easily read and understood while riding a bike such as:

- Reminder – Two Way Trail Traffic,
- Shared Path – Bikers Must Yield to Others,
- Ride Under Control,
- Downhill Traffic Yields to Uphill Traffic,
- Slow Down – 10 mph, etc.

Another suggestion by the respondents was improving line of sight where possible. Steve added that common OAT maintenance includes brushing to improve sight lines, but this is not always possible due to terrain features and large diameter trees. He also noted that the OAT is a highly maintained single-track trail that some users take advantage of to travel at higher speeds. Justin Zarzeczny, DNR, indicated that consideration could be to put in more turns to break-up downhill straightaways to slow down bicyclists.

Discussion followed with the Committee members present supporting the idea of installing simple targeted sign messages along the downhill segment from the “living room/lunchroom” picnic area (~ M.P. 3.5). Message themes supported included:

- Two Way Trail Traffic
- Slow Down
- Yield to Horses
- Other simple messages around the theme for the need to “*slow down*”.

Other suggestions at the “living room/lunchroom” area where users often stop was to consider more detailed signage to remind/inform trail users of two-way traffic and the need to slow down on the downhill section below the picnic area. It was also suggested to consider installing a trail courtesy sign at this location to remind bicyclists to yield to walkers and horses.

Discussion was also had on the type of sign installation with support to use corri plastic or laminated paper type signs that are low cost and can be more easily and cost effectively replaced than a standard metal sign. Dick Gritman suggested a sign installation of a metal post driven deep with a plywood sign face the same size of the intended sign that facilitate simply stapling signs to the wood face for easy replacement of vandalized or stolen signs.

(2) US 101 Bike Route Signage between River Road Interchange and Schoolhouse Road.

Steve Gray overviewed the signage plan by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) related to their planned Louella Rd left turn lane improvement project. The plan adds US 101 corridor signage between the River Road interchange and Schoolhouse Rd. to direct and encourage bicyclists riding eastbound or westbound onto the Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT).

Steve noted that he encouraged WSDOT to incorporate the ODT trademark logo on the planned new US 101 signs intended to direct bicyclists to the trail. WSDOT agreed to do that, and requested the ODT trademark logo image.

Gordon Taylor suggested that West Sequim Bay Road may be a better location for the bicyclist crossing signage location than the proposed Barker Road intersection due to the existing center turn lane at the US 101 and West Sequim Bay Road intersection. Steve Gray agreed that this was a good suggestion that he would pass on to WSDOT for their consideration.

(3) Other Discussion Items

There were no other items identified for discussion at this time.

PROJECT UPDATES/REPORTS

(1) Olympic Discovery Trail Project Summary Report (July 2020)

Vice-Chair Gleason complimented staff on the detailed ODT project update report. Committee members present indicated that they reviewed the ODT Project Summary Report (July 2020) included in the advanced meeting packet. Steve Gray noted that since sending the report the County Maintenance Crews did complete the placement of the large rocks on the side of the trail at both ends of the new ODT-Gossett to Waterline Rd. segment at the bollard locations to further discourage and prevent vehicle traffic. Discussion followed on the project report.

Staff was asked about the status of the City of Port Angeles project for the ODT-Waterfront to 10th Street (up Hill Street). Steve noted that the City was working on the design, but would need to get an update from the City on project status. He also noted the City of Port Angeles Complete Street Project that will include a non-motorized separated trail from Front Street to the Olympic National Park Visitor Center.

(2) Other Trail Project Updates

Steve Gray noted that the new ODT-Freshwater Bay to Thompson Rd segment was used as an emergency bypass when SR 112 was closed due to an accident.

Kat Stevens inquired about the status of Backcountry Horsemen of Washington (BCHW) request to the County for assistance for locating a parking area suitable for horse trailers to facilitate access to the Department of Natural Resource state forest lands and associated trails along River Road. Steve Gray indicated that he is working with BCHW representatives on parking improvement options that include either: (1) increases to the width of gravel shoulder on Happy Valley Road (near the intersection with River Road); or 2) improvements at Otter Way (a County dead-end road).

Dick Gritman inquired about the locations of the new trail bollards noted in the ODT project report summary. Steve indicated that they were placed on the ends of the non-motorized trail sections associated with the new ODT-Freshwater Bay to Onella Road and ODT-Gossett to Waterline Rd. segments. Dick Gritman noted he will paint the bollard warning safety lines at these new bollard installations.

OLYMPIC DISCOVERY TRAIL MAINTENANCE REPORTS

(1) County Volunteer Activities

Steve noted that Peninsula Trail Coalition (PTC) adopters have continued to perform trail maintenance and PTC work crews also have been mowing the ODT throughout the summer. The County Volunteer Trail Crew was not active most of summer, but once the County went to Phase 2 under COVID-19 orders the crew re-started in early-June. Currently, the County volunteer crew size is limited to a total of 5 persons.

(2) Other Maintenance Reports

Steve noted that the County Road Department recently purchased a zero turn mower to support trail maintenance. Tanner Boggs, County Trail Volunteer Coordinator, put the equipment right to work mowing the trail corridor between Morse Creek and Siebert Creek. Steve also indicated that Tanner not only supports the generally once a week County Trail Volunteer Crew, but also typically works on trail maintenance and responding to reports (e.g., downed trees) the rest of the week.

Gordon Taylor briefed the Committee on the PTC work at the Diamond Point Trailhead parking lot. Unfortunately, due to significant vandalism at this location to the perimeter fence, a PTC work party removed the fence. The Jamestown S' Klallam Tribe (JSKT) will soon be placing large rock around the parking lot perimeter. In addition, JSKT plans to be doing native planting in the trailhead area to help define the trail better. Gordon also noted the addition of the County mower access to Tanner helps with the ODT mowing schedule. He thanked Tanner for his efforts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Gleason asked if any additional comments by Committee members. Hearing none the meeting was adjourned.