



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
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Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

August 1, 2024
6pm

In person and virtual meeting options.

In Person: **Anacortes Library Community Meeting Room**

Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/88308344363>

Preliminary Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approve May '24 Minutes
3. Thank You Geri Rubin for Decades of Service on the ACFL Trail Committee
4. Confirm New Member of the ACFL Trail Committee: Equestrian Representative Trisha Sutton
5. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda*
6. Budget Update with Director Lunsford
7. Friends of the Forest Update
8. Staff Report
9. Parks Commission Update
10. Other Business

Adjourn

Minutes of the Meeting: May 2nd, 2024

Board members present: Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Kit Gerwels

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan

Guest present: Robbie Andrus

Meeting held in person and via Zoom and called to order at 6:04PM

Minutes: April minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments: None

ACFL Forest Canopy Assessment Grant:

Robbie Andrus, a post-doctoral researcher at WSU, was in attendance to share his research on the Western Red Cedar dieback and its causes. His research indicates that there are a number of causes as to this dieback, beyond the normal and seasonal mortality. One area they have looked at are the core samplings and examining the rings of the tree. These give an indication of climate and growth, as well as the last ring gives clues to how and why the tree died. These trees are typically showing slowed growth for 4-5 years prior to dying. Climate plays a large part as warmer and drier springs (May and June) lead to slower growth. The years 2015, 2017 and 2018 had climate conditions that contributed to dieback.

Robbie spoke about the grant that was awarded to study the ACFL and monitor the tree crowns. The grant came from DNR and will allow for further research on forest health. This research will use high resolution scans to study individual tree crowns, bring together various monitoring programs and build a public access database. The goal of this project is to study how the ACFL has changed over time.

Brian asked about noting the old growth vs the 2nd growth trees in this study and does that make a difference in this study.

Kit expressed thanks to Robbie and Transition Fidalgo. He asked about the grant timeframe. Robbie shared that Transition Fidalgo has long term goals for monitoring but this specific grant allows for one year for the aerial monitoring and to set up the project and protocols. There are opportunities for additional funding in the future.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Katie shared that the Friends have moved locations and are now at 4th and Commercial. They are setting up their offices as well as a space for an interpretive center and classroom. This will give information on the history of the ACFL. They are working with the Samish and the Museum on this project. Katie invited the community to be Trail Ambassadors this summer. The program runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day each year.

Their summer camps are full at this time, always popular.
The next work party will be on National Trails Day-June 1st and will be continuing to remove invasives at trails 103 and 133.

Staff Reports:

Bob shared how to access information on the A Ave Landfill via the DOE website. The best information is online but staff is always happy to answer questions.

The June Forest Board meeting will be the annual hike with the Friends of the Forest Board, with no business taking place. The public is welcome to join the hike, location to be determined.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting, sharing that the most up to date information is in the packet.

Other Business:

None

Adjourn at 6:56pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan

July 2024
Assistant Director's Highlights
Submitted: July 23, 2024
Bob Vaux

BEAVER RETURN TO WHISTLE LAKE

You may have noticed the water level a bit high at WL over the last few weeks. We are excited to announce the beaver have returned! Based upon the best oral history we can find, they were trapped out of there in the '70's (though there has been sign of activity in Toot Swamp the last few years). I have been on site with WDFW, and we are working with them on a plan to care for our human-made dam along with the beaver's version.

FOREST PLAN

We continue to work on the first draft of the 2026 Update.

EMERGENCY CALL OUT'S

Parks Mgr Johnston and I were requested by APD to help search for a missing child on Sugarloaf 6/24. On the way there the call came in the child was found and safe. We then

received a call from a concerned citizen about fireworks at Whistle Lake. By the time we got up there we found some remnants along trail #204 but did not make any successful contacts.

WUI: THE WILD URBAN INTERFACE

There is more discussion in the community about protecting private property from the possibility of wildfire. Various City Departments are also discussing options for public education and action items for one's property. Look for the Fire Department to be taking the lead on this.

SAN JUAN PASSAGE VIEW WINDOWING

PM Johnston and I are working with Planning on this somewhat complex project. This is mandated every three years by the plat language.

FECAL COLIFORM TESTING

Storm Water Aaron and his two interns will be handling this for the ACFL this summer: Whistle, Heart and Little Cranberry. Testing is scheduled to commence the week of the 8th. Special thanks to Corrin at the Wastewater Treatment Plant for processing the samples.

In other lake testing news, we asked Skagit County Health to come and sample Little Cranberry for blue green algae the week of the 8th. There were detectable levels of microcystin toxin at 1 microgram/liter, the actionable level at which they would recommend limiting access and recreation is 8 micrograms/liter. They sampled right along trail 102 and collected the teal globules of algae directly so this was a concentrated sample of algae. We have posted the appropriate signage.

BEAVER DAM TAMPERING

The trail #106 dams are once again attracting some nuisance attention. We have a camera in place, along with some pretty good images, and our summertime Park & Woods Police Officer Kellington is conducting an investigation. WDFW has also been notified.

Ofc. Kellington was able to identify and contact the suspects. This issue should be resolved for now.

4TH OF JULY

ACFL staff, along with Ofc. Kellington were in the ACFL almost 17 hours from start to finish on this annual forest-threatening holiday. I am happy to report that our efforts paid off. As of July 5th, the woods are still standing. We did lock the Mt. Erie and Heart Lake gates at 10PM this year, and that made a positive difference. A very family friendly day in the woods for the most part. Special thanks to FAB member Brian Wetcher for taking on his annual firewatch commitment at Little Cranberry.

SUNSHINE AND HIGH TEMP'S ARE THE EVENT

Often when we are on parking duty at Whistle Lake, like we were over the weekend of July 6 & 7, people ask what event is going on? I see the amazement in the faces of locals and am still surprised by how many first-time visitors there always are. Folks drive a long way to enjoy our woods. Special thanks to Director Lunsford for coming out on Sunday the 7th to help manage the influx of visitors.

I did a couple more hours of this the afternoon of the 8th.

HEART LAKE MASTER PLAN

Director Lunsford received unanimous Council support (7/8 meeting) to pursue a grant from the Recreation & Conservation Office re: implementing our 2009-10 HL Master Plan.

OPEN STREETS

Working with long-time organizer Warren Tessler as he hands this title over to Josh Gates as part of this year's August 25 event. Really appreciate Josh stepping up and taking this on.

#108 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

Thanks so much to all the Parks Crew who worked on and finished the new 108 bridge. It looks and is working great. ACFL Jamie did a great job prepping for the one-day construction project. Special thanks to the Fidalgo Trail Riders for assisting with the prep work.

AND...

Took personal leave June 25-27, July 12

Had a really positive experience doing an informational presentation on the ACFL for the Anacortes Newcomer's Club. Great questions and feedback.

Robbie Andrus stopped by the office on the 10th. Canopy study going well thus far.

Denise and I handled the monthly Samish/COA ACFL outing. We covered #'s 25, 213 & 212. Took a good look at an equestrian challenge along the south end of 212. We will pursue an official repair in the fall.

Serving on a committee at the Friends of the Forest new HQ. Our job is to help staff with the interpretive display, short term and long term.

James Burroughs

ACFL Maintenance technician

July 18th, 2024

ACFL Maintenance Report: July – 2024

Introduction

Hello all, this month's theme has been patrol. We have seen some busy days out at Whistle Lake and the seasonals and I have continued our efforts on educating ACFL visitors. The addition of the school resource officer Jordan Kellington has been a huge help in patrolling the lakes and keeping the crazies in check. The woods survived my first 4th of July as ACFL tech, with little to no issues from our visitors. The seasonals have been plunking away at our trail trimming saga when time and more importantly weather allows. As the weather ramps up and the mobs of people roll in, it's been challenging to break away to the trail trimming as our efforts are needed elsewhere. Our bridge project took place July 17th, major thanks to the entire parks maintenance crew for stepping in and helping with the project, with their help we managed to finish the bridge that day. Very rewarding to see weeks' worth of work come together for a finished product.



Maintenance Activities

ACFL Patrol

ACFL Sanitation: Garbage and restroom cleaning

Trail trimming: Finished little cranberry trail trimming, we still have south heart lake and Mt. Erie trails still needing to be trimmed

Downed/ hazard trees removed: Trails, 22, 209, 249, 203

Signage: Blue green algae signs up at LC, No firework signs, Gates closed at 10 signs for 4th of July

Trail cam: Installed trail cam on Trail 106 near beaver dam, whistle lake trail cam to follow

108 Bridge project: Prep work of staging material at project site, Removed old bridge, installed new bridge with turnpike work leading up to the bridge

Violations in the ACFL

Homeless camp: July 3rd I suspected a man walking into the woods carrying what looked like a full garbage bag slung over his shoulder. On July 5th I returned to the area with Officer Kellington and followed the social/animal trails and found the man and his camp, he was told to pick up and leave. Kellington and I returned the following week and he had packed up and cleaned up his camp surprisingly enough.

106 Beaver dam Vandalism: I was contacted by an ACFL user about some notching that had been done to the 106 beaver dam, I reached out to Officer Kellington and put up a trail cam, the cam caught some kids messing around with the dam, Officer Kellington recognized one of them and was able to find them and educate them on the issue

ACFL PICTURES OF THE MONTH

