

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