



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
(360) 293-1918

Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

May 1, 2025
6pm

In person and virtual meeting options.

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

Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88308344363>

Preliminary Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approve April '25 Minutes
3. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda*
4. Forest Plan 2026 Update: work on current draft in progress
5. Parks & Recreation Budget Update: Director Lunsford
6. Friends of the ACFL Update
7. Staff Reports
8. Parks Commission Update
9. Other Business

Adjourn

Minutes of the Meeting: April 3rd, 2025

Board members present: Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Tabb Stringer, Nathan Schwarck

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan

Meeting held in person and called to order at 6:02PM

Minutes: March minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments:

None

Lapsansky Proposal:

Tony Lapsansky was in attendance to give an overview of his scientific proposal. He is studying the effects of cyanotoxins on aquatic invertebrates and would like one of his testing sites to be Heart Lake. The other local lakes will be Campbell, Pass and Erie. The testing window will be from May through October. He proposes about 6 sites on Heart Lake in about 6 feet of water with weekly testing. Data will be shared with the City.

Bob will show Tony the best spots to place the traps. Brian made a motion to approve the proposal, there was full Board approval.

Forest Plan Board Review

JoAnn gave an overview of the process and timeline, thanking the public for their written comments.

Bob presented a power point review of the public comments received and the major topics covered. There was discussion about the new electric motorcycles that are coming out and the need to address them in the plan. Bob addressed the topic of ADA access at Little Cranberry. It is in the plan as the state and RCO require ADA access. A number of years ago the group, Barrier Busters, did an audit of the forest lands and determined that Little Cranberry was the best location for ADA access. Bob also clarified that the DOE dam safety office required the removal of vegetation and planting of grass on the LC dam. They have asked staff to remove more vegetation but so far have not required it. As to trail maintenance, that is Jamie's main focus. He works tirelessly on narrowing trails.

JoAnn then asked the Board members to share their feedback on the public comments.

Brian asked the Board to refer to the letter submitted by Evergreen Islands as he had a hand in writing that. The letter has goals and recommendations listed.

Tabb stated that on page 17, there should be some review and rewriting of the policies and goals regarding motor vehicles. He would like to see it written similar to the other goals, stating that the main goal is to protect the ACFL.

Nate had nothing new to add but discussed how the comments should be evaluated and weighted.

Bob spoke about the previous Parks and Recreation comprehensive plan and the survey that was done for that project. There were 418 households that responded with overall favorable ratings. Staff have found that when there are no calls or requests, people are happy with the parks and ACFL. Staff generally only hear from the public about problems or issues, with pickleball being a perfect example.

There was discussion about Mt Erie and the suggestion that climbing groups should be required to get permits. However, this opens the City to liability. JoAnn shared that she also reviewed and categorized the comments and was pleased to see that it matched up with what staff had presented. She would like to see an expanded section about fire safety and response.

Kit was not in attendance but had submitted written comments. He would like to see ebikes addressed in the plan. He also submitted a draft executive summary and glossary of terms.

Discussion was had about defining "best available science". Bob stated that Staff relies on other regulatory agencies and their expertise during the extensive permitting process.

Nate would like to see a section on regulation and the processes of writing the plan.

The Board voted unanimously to approve Staff writing the final draft. This will be brought back to the Board for adoption and then presented to Council. Public comments will be taken by Council at that time.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Josie Henderson was in attendance and introduced herself as the new Executive Director. She comes with a background of professional non-profit management and is excited to be a part of the Friends. Youth programs are running at this time, with the Homeschool program in its second year. Spring Break camp is next week and summer camp sign-ups are open. They are looking for volunteers for the Trail Ambassador program this summer with sign-ups available online. The Friends are working with the Downtown Alliance, Procession of the Species and the Luminary Parade to celebrate Earth Day.

Staff Reports:

Bob shared that the Dallas Kloke Mt Erie clean up is happening soon. There will also be a lake clean up on Earth Day. And opening day for fishing is April 26th.

Jamie presented a list of the infractions in the last 16 months in the ACFL that have required a call to police. Every one of these events takes time away from trail maintenance and his regular responsibilities.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported that Staff are working on fixing the pickleball fencing and the sound dampening curtains will go up by the end of the month. Staff are also in discussions with the school district on resurfacing and lining two of the district's tennis courts to allow for pickleball play there. Staff are working on updating cemetery policies and adding green burials.

Other Business:

Bob announced that former Mayor Laurie Gere will be in attendance at the next Parks Commission meeting on April 8th. She will be presenting about the future Community Center.

Adjourned at 7:45pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan

APRIL 2025
Assistant Director's Highlights
Submitted: April 17, 2025
Bob Vaux

2026 FOREST PLAN UPDATE: we continue to work on the update via the public comments and input from the Forest Advisory Board.

Received advisement from the Forest Advisory Board at the April meeting to get the next draft written. The goal of this draft is to be approved by the Board and onto the City Council. Now working with colleagues on this draft.

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK PH II: work with our Engineering team continues as we are getting close to finalizing our Civil Engineer contract.

W. 6TH PARK PLAN: HLN Engineering has delivered a few conceptual park design options. We will be holding a second community meeting on May 8th to review and discuss.

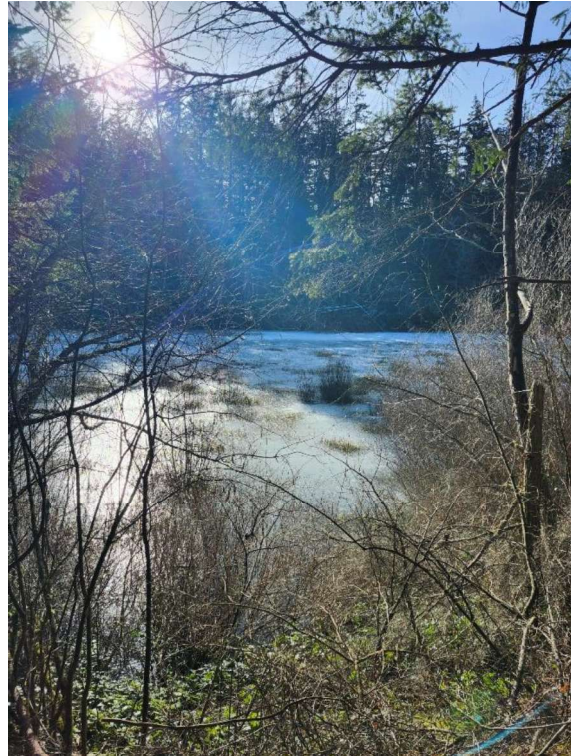
SEASONAL STAFF: Parks Manager Johnston and I spent most of two days interviewing candidates for these critical positions in the parks and ACFL. We had a nice diversity of candidates. Working on offers the week of the 7th.

ACFL RECON: Jamie and I spent a beautiful morning on #'s 300/302/303. We were focused on motorbike damage, specifically the Little Round Top meadow and possible steps to better communicate trail use restrictions on the "State Park Hill". We did encounter three hikers up there with a dog off leash.

- Looked at various sites along the Heart Lake shoreline with Dr. Lapsansky from the Northwest Indian College. As explained and approved at the April Forest Advisory Board meeting Dr. Lapsansky will be placing his invertebrate traps soon.

THANK YOU'S:

- APD, for helping Parks Maint. Steve and I with a challenging camping situation at Washington Park in Nicole's absence.
- The Samish Indian Nation for this month's COA/Samish hike with Education Program Manager Denise Crowe. A beautiful walk in the woods on the west side of Little Cranberry.
- The Estate of Sherry L. Kolar, for a wonderfully generous donation to the ACFL. It was formally accepted by City Council on the 14th.
- The Noon Rotary Club, for all the work required over the last several years to complete the new Cap Sante trail and viewpoint. And all the volunteer work in the meantime. Also, thanks for lunch the day of the viewpoint ribbon cutting.
- APRD staff for covering for me while I take some time off April 21-28. This is also why I am submitting my report early this month.



James Burroughs
ACFL Maintenance technician
April 23, 2025

ACFL Maintenance Report: April – 2025

Beaver rounds

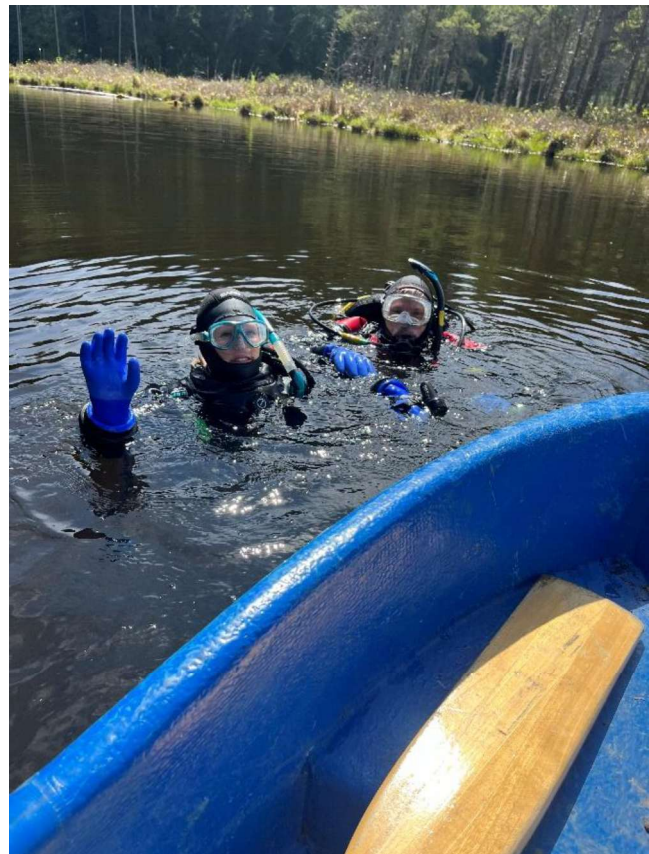
The beavers have been relentless at Ace of Hearts Creek, plugging underneath the bridge almost every day. I have continued my effort to keep water moving here as the lake is substantially higher than it was this time last year. Hopefully these busy beavers will take a much-needed day off.

Downed tree removals

Surprisingly, only 3 reports of downed trees after a few windy days. I removed trees off Trail 203 and Trail 116. One tree was removed by a volunteer in the Whistle Lake section.

Little Cranberry Dive

On April 18th we had two divers come out to Little Cranberry Lake. The goal was to locate the rope and identify what it was attached to, that we previously were unsuccessful with. I towed the divers out to the location, when we got that I discovered that someone had cut the rope. This made trying to locate whatever was attached extremely difficult given the very low visibility in the murky lake. I had a general area where I believed it was. The divers did their best to identify anything in the area. All that was found was A large log jam near the bottom. The divers stated the visibility was so low they could hardly see their flashlights in their hands, so unfortunately inconclusive but not from lack of effort. Special thanks to Diver Darcy and Diver Fred. We do, however, have an earth day cleanup from The Dive Shop at Little Cranberry Lake and potentially they may find something we didn't.



Dallas Kloke Mount Erie Clean up

On April 19th we had our annual Mt. Erie clean up with multiple climbing groups. This was my first time attending this event which was great, special thanks to Jason Martin with the American Alpine Institute for leading the charge on this. We collected multiple garbage bags of litter from mainly the summit area of Mt. Erie and other climbing route locations. The volunteers did state that it was much less garbage than previous years. I also got to get eyes on a lot of the climbing routes and trails, which was great for me to get familiar with these areas.

Preparation for Heart Lake Opening Day

April 26th is opening day for fishing at Heart Lake. I will be working 6am-10, keeping an eye on things. I have spent some time getting things ready to go. Bringing out trash cans, filling potholes and cleaning up the Large Doug fir that blew down a couple months back.

Motorbikes in North Whistle Lake Area

With the continued poaching of non-motorized trails such as 302 and others, Bob and I went out to this area and brainstormed some ideas to emphasize the motorized trails to make it easier to identify the proper routes, now that we are in motorized bike season. As there are a handful of motorized trails that do become dead ends for motorbikes. Our idea is to put up signs in these areas where it's very clear to motorbikes which route they MUST take. As we all know, signs are not going to stop all poaching of trails as an example Trail 132, however it may encourage some to play by the rules.

In-Town Parks Help

This month I have helped the in-town crew in a lot of different areas. Cemetery work, trimming markers, installing markers, digging graves and setting up for services. Sanitation duties, pulling garbage and cleaning restrooms. Pruning trees at the library. Small mowing parks and facilities.