



ANACORTES COMMUNITY FOREST LANDS

FOREST LANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

5/91

"Game management and forestry grow natural species in an environment not greatly altered for the purpose in hand, relying on partial control of a few factors to enhance the yield above what unguided nature would produce. Their controls are barely visible; an observer, unless he were an expert, would see no difference between managed and unmanaged terrain. Hence their success depends more on the exercise of skill in the selection of the right factors, than on heavy investments of labor or materials"

Aldo Leopold

Game Management, 1947

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE
ANACORTES COMMUNITY FOREST LANDS

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Anacortes has been endowed with over 2,000 acres of forest lands within the City limits. This area includes Mt. Erie, Whistle Lake, Little Cranberry Lake, Heart Lake unit, wetlands, and forests. These community forest lands contain some of the most unique and complex living environments in the Puget Sound Region. Few cities are so fortunate to have such a resource, coupled with the broad-based desire of its citizens to conserve and responsibly use these resources.

The Anacortes Forest Land Advisory Committee developed this management plan in 1981, and revised it in 1990. Our purpose was to create a self-supporting comprehensive resource plan which “maintains and enhances aesthetic and recreational values”. This is not a preservation plan or a “cut and get out” plan. The overriding goal is to make these lands more accessible to the people of Anacortes and to enhance these resources for the future. The guidelines in this plan derive from three constraints: deed restrictions, soil and timber type and the Goals and Policies of the Comprehensive Plan, 1982.

This plan consists of three parts. Part I is this Management Plan which develops policies and guidelines for these Community Forest Lands. Part II is the City of Anacortes Conservation Plan prepared by the Soil Conservation Service, U.S.D.A., under a cooperative agreement with the City. This report inventories soils, vegetative types, timber types, wildlife, watershed characteristics, wetlands and recreational sites. Part III is the Forest Inventory prepared by Robert Kline, Forest Management Consultant. This inventory provides information on timber volumes and grades.

This Plan is a consensus of the Forest Land Management Committee. It is environmentally sound, economically sound and addresses the needs of the community. The guidelines contained in this Plan will allow the City of Anacortes to continue the stewardship of these lands in a responsible and productive manner. Managed as a Trust, these lands will be available to the people of Anacortes in perpetuity.

The Growth Management Act has a category of “Forest Land of Long Term Commercial Significance” as land primarily useful for growing trees, including Christmas trees subject to the excise tax imposed under RCW 84...33.100 through 84.33.140, for commercial purposes, and that has long-term commercial significance for growing trees commercially (emphasis added). There are no lands within the City of Anacortes that fall within this “Forest Land of Long Term Commercial Significance”. Specifically, the Anacortes Community Forest Lands do not fall within this category as the City Comprehensive Plan, together with this plan, establish that “The City’s timber resources should be managed with the principal goal to maintain and enhance aesthetic and recreational values. This may allow deriving economic benefit from the resources, “(emphasis added) – Comprehensive Plan, Goal 3, Conservation Section.”

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of recommendations for management of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL). The complete recommendation for each section will be found in the body of this report. A map will be found in Appendix No. 2.

MANAGEMENT UNITS

A) Little Cranberry Lake Unit

Current Conditions: Moderate problems around Cranberry Lake caused by motorcycles, vandalism and unrestricted entry.

Projected Use: Local resident park use for low-impact recreational activities. Use will intensify as surrounding areas become urbanized.

Recommendations: Develop a master plan for this basin and associated wetlands in conjunction with planning for 32nd Street Restrict current intensive-use activities (allow motorcycle use south of proposed 32nd Street extension, camping, and after-dark access). Repair existing damage. Vacate streets and alleys in Morrison Natural Park. Declare Morrison Park by City ordinance.

B) South Cranberry Unit

Current Conditions: Accessible by a major forest road beginning at old dump site. Primarily used by motorcyclists, equestrians and hikers.

Projected Use: Develop a series of trail-bike trails in southern part of Section 26.

Recommendations: Improve main road and rehabilitate trails. Post property boundaries. Develop area for trail bikes.

C) Whistle Lake/Fidalgo Ridge Unit

Current Conditions: Some four-wheel drive access. Some trails, mostly used by motorcyclists and equestrians but walking and mountain hiking gaining in popularity. Heavy use by swimmers in summer months.

Projected Use: Manage watershed/forest land and low-impact recreational use. Consider a walk-in picnic area.

Recommendations: Restrict unauthorized traffic. Repair damage to trails and lakeshore. Design all forest management activities to protect water quality. Prohibit vehicular access. Promote local use only.

D) Heart Lake Unit

Current Conditions: Intensive recreation area on shores of Heart Lake, adjacent to Heart Lake Road.

Projected Use: To be developed in conjunction with Heart Lake State Park.

Recommendations: Maintain a cooperative working relationship with State Park Department.

E) Heart Lake Road/Ray Auld Drive Unit

Current Conditions: This area is already intensively used as a multiple-use park. The Heart Lake Road and drive to Mt Erie summit are regional attractions.

Projected Use: With the development of Heart Lake Park as a satellite of Deception Pass and the closeness of this area to dense urban areas, use of this area will increase during the next decade. There is no Master Plan for the summit.

Recommendations: Maintain a cooperative working relationship with State Parks for this unit. Encourage the Anacortes Parks & Recreation Department to develop a Master Plan for the summit of Mt Erie. Close all unnecessary access points along Heart Lake Road and Ray Auld Drive.

F) Mt. Erie Conservancy/Forest Study Unit

Current Use: Relatively inaccessible except for trail bikes. Very sensitive habitat area. Little merchantable timber.

Projected Use: Low-intensity dispersed recreation. Conservancy/study area.

Recommendations: Restrict high-intensity use. Repair trails. Work with trail-bike users to direct their use to South Cranberry Unit.

MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

- A) Forest Management: The Anacortes Community Forest Lands are to be managed for their aesthetic and recreational values. Timber harvesting will be done only when necessary to remove blow down where substantial hazard exists, and only where removal of wind thrown trees does not severely impact standing trees or other vegetation. Natural succession processes, except wildfire, will be encouraged. Roads, fire trails, and recreation trails will be kept open. Any revenue derived from blow down harvest will be deposited into the Forest Endowment Fund.
- B) Flora Management: No taking of trees, shrubs, bushes, flowers or other vegetation without a permit approved by the Forest Advisory Board.
- C) Wildlife: Anacortes Community Forest Lands should be managed to enhance current populations of wildlife. Citizens should be made aware of the diversity of this resource.
- D) Water Resources: Every effort should be made to maintain and enhance the water quality of Little Cranberry and Whistle Lake and their associated marshlands and wetlands.

MANAGEMENT OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- A) Picnicking: Consider at least one walk-in picnic site, for local use.
- B) Trails: For the present, restrict obviously destructive activities from specific trails. Make available a map of trails on City land. Maintain a full trails plan for the ACFL.
- C) Trail Uses: For specific trail uses see current Comprehensive Trail Plan, Appendix #3.
- D) Motor Vehicles: No unauthorized motor vehicles (cars, trucks, and ATVs) will be allowed on ACFL roads. All access points to be gated and/or beamed and ditched.
- E) Fishing: In conjunction with the Department of Wildlife, the lakes in the ACFL should be managed for fishing. Develop a long-range sports fishing plan with that Department.
- F) Hunting and Trapping: Resolution No. 968, adopted December 7, 1987 and amending Resolution No. 663, prohibits hunting, trapping, and discharge of firearms on Anacortes Community Forest Lands.
- G) Education: ACFL should be made available to the Anacortes School system and institutions of higher learning for environmental education and research. These lands are invaluable for instilling a conservation ethic in our young people.

MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

- A) Management Authority: A five-member advisory committee is established to be known as the Anacortes Community Forest Land Advisory Board. Members will provide technical advice, policy guidelines, review procedures and act as a liaison with the community on all forest land matters.
- B) Funding: In the long-term, funding will be available from the community-supported Forest Land Endowment Fund, which has been established by the City for this purpose. While contributions to this Fund are being aggressively sought, but the amount available is still inadequate, funding for ACFL management will be provided to the extent possible, from the City's general fund.
- C) Enforcement: The City of Anacortes Police Department has enforcement powers on ACFL. Where appropriate. Joint Enforcement Agreements shall be encouraged with other agencies.
- D) Fire Protection: Maintain a comprehensive fire plan in conjunction with the Anacortes Fire Department, State Parks and the Department of Natural Resources.
- E) Signs and Boundary Markers: The boundary of ACFL should be clearly marked. All access and egress points should be posted. Private property lines should be posted with appropriate warnings.
- F) Cooperation with Adjacent Land Owners and Other Public Agencies: City subdivision ordinances should reflect the sensitive nature of these forest lands and review all future subdivision activity adjacent to these areas with this in mind. The City should develop cooperative agreements with adjacent owners, and other agencies such as DNR, Skagit County and State Park Department, to insure compatibility on land-use decisions.
- G) Future Acquisition Consideration: Specific areas are identified for acquisition in order to insure continued public access to the ACFL.

III

MANAGEMENT UNITS

INTRODUCTION

These sections of the plan propose management units, defined by topographical features, deed limitation and timber type, in order to simplify decision making. In effect, this is a kind of "zoning" for the forest lands. By identifying primary, secondary and prohibited uses in each unit, we hope to minimize present and future conflicts, protect the resource and prevent further damage from occurring in critical habitat areas. When applicable, management activities on lands proposed for acquisition are included.

The recommendations for Management of these lands will be presented with the fewest possible restrictions on user groups and yet consistent with protection of the forest against damage, the observance of essential sanitary/safety measures and the prevention of actions by individuals or groups which unduly conflict with the enjoyment of the area by all citizens.

MANAGEMENT UNITS

This section of the Management Plan is governed by the following statements in the Comprehensive Plan (1982), Conservation Section:

Goal:

- (1) "The provision of recreation/tourist sites and activities for visitors should be planned and coordinated to provide opportunities for residents to have access to undeveloped natural areas."

Policy:

- (a) "Whistle and Little Cranberry basins should be managed to maintain their pristine and/or fragile environment for use primarily by residents."

Goal:

- (2) "The City's timber resource land should be managed with the principal goal to maintain and enhance aesthetic and recreational values. This may allow deriving economic benefit from the resources."

Policy:

- (a) "City Council should adopt such ordinances and resolutions as deemed necessary to implement the Anacortes Community Forest Land Management Plan."

PLANNING UNIT: LITTLE CRANBERRY LAKE (Approx. 360 acres)

Boundaries:

Entire area dedicated as Little Cranberry Park (1964), John M. Morrison Natural Park and associated wetlands, including the proposed 32nd Street route and dedicated parkland buffers.

Restrictions:

The majority of this area is land dedicated for "public park purposes only". The Morrison Natural Park was given with the stipulation that "timber and land never be alienated." The City attorney advises that this restriction would allow salvage, sanitation and a light stand improvement timber management. In addition, Cranberry Lake is still technically a back-up water supply for the City (see Acquisition section). Its dedication as Cranberry Park in 1964 and the need to maintain water quality argue for very sensitive and careful management.

The draft EIS for extension of 32nd Street is a review of the conditions and impending problems with the Cranberry Basin. Even without the proposed roadway, intensive residential development on the north and west flanks of the basin portend future difficulties in maintaining water quality. As a result of urban pressures, human impacts will markedly increase.

The marshes which feed the lake provide an important habitat for waterfowl and other animal life. In addition, the presence of scattered old growth and mature second growth timber create a very rich and diverse biological zone.

Current Conditions:

Little Cranberry Lake is used extensively by walkers. Fishing and crayfish gathering, from shore and small non-motorized boats, are also very popular. Swimming and picnicking are major activities in good weather. Littering is a problem and unauthorized campfires and cook fires persist. The majority of the users are local residents. Occasional late night drinking parties occur in the parking lot by the dam. The access, a gravel road from Georgia Avenue and West 4th, is open at all times. Maintenance is shared by the Forestry and Park Maintenance divisions of the Park Department, and volunteer trail stewards of the Friends of the Forest. The Comprehensive Trail Plan prohibits motorcycles use in this unit, north of the old city dump, and this restriction is observed by most riders. The lake basin provides a variety of habitats for plants and animals, and wildlife is relatively plentiful. The rocky meadows on both sides of the lake are prime spring wildflower sites, although encroachment by scotch broom is a persistent problem. Other sensitive areas, such as the south lake shores, show signs of erosion and compaction of trails, due to increased foot traffic. Many of the trails cross natural drainage ways and minor wetlands, where small increases in traffic may generate greater degradation of soils and plant life. This is most evident south and east of the lake, where pedestrian traffic is mixed with horses and bicycles. Previously forested private land on all sides of this unit are being converted to residential neighborhoods. It is expected that trail traffic impacts, litter, etc., will increase over the next few years, as more people "discover" this unit. There will also be a concentration of current users, and wildlife, into a smaller area, as present open space becomes unavailable.

Projected Use:

The easement for the Fidalgo Lake Forest Trail (cross-island) granted by the City Council (Feb., 1979), was specifically designed to avoid using Cranberry Lake as an area for intense non-local use. This trail easement skirts the southwest corner of Cranberry Park then loops around the marshlands, using existing logging roads.

The lake basin should be reserved primarily for local resident use. Current low impact uses, such as hiking, fishing, picnicking, nature observation and non-motorized boating and canoeing should continue. High impact use such as motorcycles, horses near the lakeshore, and use of the lake after dark should be discontinued.

Recommendations:

In light of the heavy urban pressures; on this area, the current levels of vandalism and the probable impacts from the 32nd Street extension, a master plan for this specific area should be developed. Responsibility for the Cranberry Lake Basin should be transferred from the Park Board to the Anacortes Community Forest Land Advisory Board (see Management Authority Section). This would insure harmonious policies consistent with the provisions and guidelines of this plan.

In addition, the City Council should, by ordinance, vacate all streets and alleys in the Morrison Natural Park and officially dedicate this area as Mr. Allmond wished when this land was given to the City.

In the interim, the following measures should be instituted:

- 1) Post this area for no motorcycles north of proposed 32nd Street road and restricted horse use;
- 2) Gate and lock the access road 2 hours after sunset;
- 3) Post directional signs for hiking trails;
- 4) Block or obliterate trails in areas which need to be re-vegetated;

- 5) Arrange with one of the community service clubs to take care of the area on a volunteer basis;
- 6) Make arrangements to develop a Master Plan for the Cranberry Basin and associated wetlands;
- 7) Horse logging and light motorized equipment should be considered for any necessary salvage operations in this Unit.

SOUTH CRANBERRY UNIT (Approx. 320 acres)

Boundaries:

All of Section 26 exclusive of those areas in the Little Cranberry Lake Unit. Bounded by "A" Avenue on the east and south line of Section 26 on the south.

Restrictions:

This unit is comprised entirely of land purchased from the Washington Water Company in 1919. There are no restrictions attached to the deeds. The only restrictions on use would be those included in the Timber Management section regarding wetlands. The major wetland in this unit (in the southeast corner) drains south, towards Havekost Road and Alexander Beach. Most of this unit is not in the Little Cranberry drainage basin.

Current Use:

This area, including the old City dump, is used extensively by trail bikes, horseback riders and hikers. There is a major forest road in this area which begins at the dump, circles the southern marsh, and then heads north toward Cranberry Lake. This road has allowed extensive salvage and wood-cutting operations in the past.

Projected Use:

Current recreational uses will probably increase, and improvements which would enhance those and similar uses should be considered.

Recommendations:

- 1) The main road should be bladed and rocked where necessary to make it a walking trail as well as forest management road.
- 2) Trails should be rehabilitated (and redesigned where necessary) to serve the ends of this plan.
- 3) Boundaries of adjacent private property ownerships should be posted.
- 4) Local trail bike users; should be contacted and a design and construction strategy developed for the intensive trail bike area.
- 5) There is a unique stand of timber (type 6) at the property corner of 41st and "A". This is the only stand of mature Cedar, Hemlock, White Fir and Douglas Fir in the Anacortes forest lands and should be preserved.

WHISTLE LAKE/FIDALGO RIDGE UNIT (Approx. 520 acres)

Boundaries:

This unit includes the northern half of the Whistle Lake basin, and all ACFL property north of Whistle Lake in sections 6 & 31. The western boundary is west line of section 6.

Restrictions:

Whistle Lake is a former City reservoir, acquired when Douglas Allmond sold the Washington Water Company to the City in 1919. Until recently, the lake was used as a storage reservoir for water pumped from the Skagit In case of a future water emergency, it may become necessary to use this source again. Consequently, all efforts should be made to maintain the water quality and the wilderness quality of the basin. There are no deed restrictions. Parts of this unit area also visible from the summit of Mt. Erie and on the descent along Ray Auld Drive.

This unit includes the major ridge seen when traveling west along Highway 20 into Anacortes. All forest practices should take visual impacts and watershed management impacts into account. The lake basin is an extraordinary echo chamber. As a result, noise, especially trail bike motors, shatters an otherwise pristine quiet.

Current Use:

Use patterns at Whistle Lake are quite seasonal. In fall, winter, and spring, most trail riders and walker are local residents, and use is light and relatively low-impact. The summer season is very different. Young people from Anacortes, Whidbey Island, and mid Skagit County come to the lake to swim, drink beer, and in the process litter and trample the sparse vegetation on the lake edges and on the island, where they jump off the cliffs into the lake. Local families also come out to swim and *fish* and picnic, and there are occasional conflicts. Campfires and cook fires are a problem, and littering is heavy and widespread. Most motorcycle, bicycle, and horse riders comply with the restrictions in the Comprehensive Trail Plan. There are some traffic problems on Trail 20, where pedestrians share the road with horses, bikes, and motorcycles going to and from the lake, and to a lesser degree on #204. There are still recurring problems with 4-wheel drive trucks gaining access to the trails here by way of private property on the north and east of this unit. This unit has six of the recent clear-cuts, and will be a potential fire hazard area for some time. Keeping the fire road clear makes it impossible to restrict unauthorized vehicles once they get in. The western end of the lake is a large marshy area. The lakeshore is rimmed with old-growth fir left from previous timber harvesting because of difficult access or by Council stipulation.

Projected Uses:

Whistle Lake should be reserved for low impact use. Consideration should be given to a walk-in picnic site. All efforts should be made to maintain water quality and the wildland as part of this area. Primarily, this unit should be managed for low density recreational use. The lake lends itself to fishing and swimming activities

Recommendations:

- 1) Securely gate or block all entry points against unauthorized traffic.
- 2) All forest practices and recreational activities shall be designed to protect water quality
- 3) Repair damage to existing areas of intensive use.
- 4) Encourage low impact recreational use by local residents.

HEART LAKE UNIT (Approx 80 Acres)

Boundaries:

80-acre ACFL at the north end of Heart Lake.

Restrictions:

This land was acquired by the City from the State of Washington to assure access to the outflow from Heart Lake for reservoir purposes. There are no deed restrictions. In the past, the City allowed this unit to be logged "except for 300 feet along the road to preserve the scenic beauty". Visually, this unit is the entry to the magnificent Heart Lake Road corridor.

Current Use:

Until recently, there was free access into this parcel from Heart Lake Road. Areas near the lakeshore have been developed as camp sites; people have dumped large amounts of household garbage; and numerous trees, live and dead, have been cut down. Much of this destructive activity ceased with the City erected a sturdy steel gate across the entry road. The north end of the lake is accessible by a trail which circles the lakeshore, allowing spectacular views of Mt. Erie, Sugarloaf and the surrounding ridges. This unit is also currently used by trail bikes, horses, swimmers, fishermen, boaters and bird watchers. During the winter, eagles and ospreys often perch on the large old-growth snags on the lakeshore.

Projected Uses:

There should be no change of title or sale of property. Eventually, in conjunction with State Parks plans for the lake (day use only at this time). Parks and the City can develop a working interpretive area, where people can see the results of sensitive forest practices benefiting wildlife, the forest and the community. Use of State Park biologists and planners will assure environmentally sound management.

Recommendation:

Maintain a working relationship with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.

HEART LAKE ROAD/RAY AULD DRIVE UNIT (Approx. 500 acres)

Boundaries:

All City property adjacent to Heart Lake Road and Ray Auld Drive and those lands dedicated for "Park Purposes" on the summit of Mt. Erie.

Restrictions:

As with Heart Lake Unit, parts of this area were logged in the past between 1940 and 1950 with the stipulation that a 300-foot buffer be left along Heart Lake Road. The 160 acres at the top of Mt. Erie was given to the City for "park purposes" by Gus Hensler and the Kiwanis Club. Mr. Heavier stipulated that his donated 120 acres be a "haven for birds and/or animals" (i.e., a wildlife sanctuary).

Current Use:

Heart Lake Road (formerly Lake Forest Road) is a scenic corridor of regional renown. The thoughtful stipulations of past City Councils have preserved a feeling of passage through primeval forests. It is important to realize, however, as the history indicates, that this is only by previous restrictions that this corridor remains. 300 feet off the road, there are second and third-growth stands of timber. In addition, the dirt roads which feed onto Heart Lake Road and the Mt Erie Road allow ample opportunities for illegal garbage dumping and camping.

The summit of Mt. Erie is already a multiple-use park. On a sunny day, hundreds of people drive to the parking lot for rock climbing, hang-gliding. Picnicking, sightseeing, photography, hiking

and nature study. The Seattle Mountaineers, Skagit Alpine Club and the Bellingham Mountain Rescue Unit all use the summit and south face for rock-climbing practice. Trail bikes have historically used the Sugarloaf area for trail riding and are now regulated by the Comprehensive Trail Plan.

Projected Use:

Recommendations:

- 1) The City should maintain a working relationship with the State Parks for management of this unit
- 2) A Master Plan for the Summit of Mt. Erie, honoring the covenants requested by the donors, should be developed.
- 3) All unnecessary access points from Heart Lake Road and along Mt. Erie Road should be ditched and bermed. Others should be gated. Ray Auld drive should be closed two hours after sunset.
- 4) Develop a Management Plan for the Heart Lake Road corridor including trail access to Lake Erie Viewpoint, a foot trail to the summit of Mt. Erie, interpretive trails off Ray Auld Drive and forest management program.
- 5) Cut or top selected trees along Ray Auld Drive to allow views of Whistle Lake, the San Juan Islands, and Mt. Baker. At the present time it is impossible to see some of the most spectacular views.
- 6) Post and sign key access points with appropriate notice of rules in effect.

MT. ERIE CONSERVANCY UNIT (Approx. 340 acres)

Boundaries:

This unit is primarily defined by the southern boundary of City property on Mt. Erie, the south shore of Whistle Lake, and the east flanks of Mt. Erie.

Restrictions:

The marshes at the western and southern edges of the lake provide a relatively isolated habitat. Eagle and Osprey have been observed in this area. Much of this unit is timber-type 4, mostly rock outcrop with thin soils. "Relatively small amount of commercial timber—Numerous locations in the unit provide unique visual viewpoints—Vegetative condition provides a contrasting habitat type for wildlife species." (Soil Conservation Service Report, p.5. Woodlands section). There are no deed restrictions.

Current Use:

This is a relatively inaccessible area, especially the knobs southeast of Mt. Erie. There are some footpaths and motorcycle trails. There have been some access problems by trail bikes from the Campbell Lake Road area. Trail-bike damage to trails and soils on the south Whistle Lake shore is severe, with deep ruts and erosion gullies crossing perennial streams which feed Whistle Lake. Four-wheel-drive vehicles have had access to the northern corner of this area, with large-scale firewood harvesting as a result.

Projected Use:

This area should be limited to low intensity use; hiking, nature observation and horseback riding of designated trails. Sensitive habitat, lack of merchantable timber, difficult access and steep rocky slopes are all reasons to place this unit in a Conservancy/Forest Study designation.

Recommendations:

- 1) Post signs and erect suitable barriers to restrict intensive use of this area.
- 2) Repair trail-bike and horse-caused damage to trails.
- 3) Work with trail-bike users to help them understand the reasons for these restrictions and direct their use to the Sugarloaf and west Whistle Lake area or to the South Cranberry area.

IV
MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Goal: The forest lands of the City should be managed and protected in perpetuity to insure the maximum benefit and enjoyment to the citizens of Anacortes.

“The City's timber resources should be managed with the principal goal to maintain and enhance aesthetic and recreational values. This may allow deriving economic benefit from the resources.”

A similar goal is indicated under Conservation, Goal 5, Policies:

- (a) "Establish and promote an ongoing volunteer program aimed at educating residents and visitors with speakers, programs and written information. This program shall promote stewardship of Fidalgo Island Resources."
- (b) "Develop and implement a program aimed specifically at reduction of litter within the City."

Policies:

- 1) In those areas designated "parks", the City Attorney advises that the level of management must be confined to timber stand improvement by removal of cull trees, insect or disease infestations, and blow downs. This policy will apply to all Anacortes Community Forest Lands. The level of activity must reflect the desire of the various donors to leave these areas in a "natural state": Healthy, live, standing timber will not be cut in these areas.
- 2) Any direct economic benefit realized in the management of this land should be reinvested to protect the resources. The area should be made more accessible and useful to the community by enhancing the aesthetic timber, wildlife and water qualities.
- 3) The underlying policy must be one of minimum disturbance with respect to woodland "products" such as timber, wildlife, low-density recreational opportunities. Important "by-products" will include clean air and water and the availability of a forestland setting for citizens' physical and psychological well being. For many people, the knowledge that this opportunity exists, whether they ever avail themselves of it or not, is a source of great satisfaction and relief. The increasing urbanization of this area will make this "relief valve" principle a priceless community resource in coming decades.
- 4) Any salvage logging conducted on the Anacortes Community Forest Lands shall be in accordance with Washington Forest Practice Rules and Regulations. Further, such salvage operations shall be held to the minimum extent necessary to keep open access and fire roads, and to remove hazards to people and structures. Whether or not to conduct such operations and their extent shall be at the discretion of the Forest Board and Forest Manager.
- 5) All forest management activities will be conducted so as to minimize damage to native plant communities and wildlife. Natural processes of growth and succession, with the exception of wildfire, will be encouraged, and any replanting will use species native to that site.

FLORA MANAGEMENT

Goal To maintain, enhance and rehabilitate the native vegetation on City of Anacortes properties.

Policies:

- 1) No taking of trees, shrubs, bushes, flowers or other vegetation from City land without a permit approved by the Forest Advisory Board.
- 2) Encourage the use of City property for botanical research, field work and observation by local educational institutions.
- 3) Identify those areas of particular and/or unique plant species or colonies and restrict use to an appropriate level.
- 4) A list of plant species found on city land may be made available to the public.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Goal: To preserve and enhance the present diversity of wildlife on City of Anacortes forest lands.

Policies:

- 1) This plan, including the Soil Conservation Service section on wildlife management, provides only a rough estimate of the species and habitats present on City land.
- 2) No other activity should be permitted which will significantly alter the mixture of habitats that provide a varied and abundant wildlife population (see Dr. Booth's list in Soil Conservation Service report).
- 3) The stands of old-growth timber on City land provide a diminishing resource for wildlife and aesthetic enjoyment. The major stands of this timber type (3b) occur along Heart Lake Road, in association with the major stand on State land at the south end of Heart Lake. Any activity along this corridor should be accompanied by a thorough inventory and evaluation.
- 4) The City should be open to proposals by groups wishing to study these lands in order to provide baseline data on wildlife populations and species diversity.
- 5) A list of wildlife species found on City land may be made available to the public.
- 6) Encourage local school districts to use City land for nature study. This could include building and setting nesting boxes, passive observation of seasonal wildlife and development of some site-specific curricula (see Education Section).
- 7) Develop suitable wildlife observation sites in conjunction with recreational development. After a detailed study, observation boardwalks should be built in one or more of the marshes for the purposes of nature study and education.

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Goal: To maintain and enhance the water quality of lakes, marshes and wetlands in the Anacortes Community Forests.

Policies:

- 1) All forest practices within 500 feet of wetlands and lakeshores will be evaluated. After proper evaluation, openings in tree cover planted back to native grasses or original species might provide a beneficial "edge" effect at certain points along the lakeshores (See Wildlife Section of Soil Conservation Service Report).
- 2) Relocate trails away from lakeshores and marsh edges in order to minimize impacts on water quality. Identify areas where trails perpendicular to main trails can be built to shorelines with minimal impacts.
- 3) Improve existing trails to minimize erosion. Where necessary, obliterate trails which are causing undue resource damage.
- 4) Whistle Lake, Heart Lake, and Little Cranberry Lake are back-up supplies of water in case of an emergency. All management activities in the watersheds of these lakes must take this into account.
- 5) Timber harvesting within 25' of all wetland areas shall be subject to the City of Anacortes Nontidal Wetland Protection Ordinance.

V

MANAGEMENT OF RECREATIONAL
ACTIVITIES

PICNICKING

Goal: To allow picnicking at designated walk-in areas.

Policies:

- 1) Develop at least one walk-in camp in the Whistle Lake area for local resident day-use only.
- 2) Provide fire pits and proper sanitary facilities.
- 3) Prohibit camping except under special conditions when a permit will be required from the managing authority. Groups with adult supervision, such as Scouts and Bluebirds, can make special arrangements.

There has been an historic use of City lands for overnight camping by local residents. Numerous camp areas are obvious in walking around the Whistle Lake and Cranberry Lake basins. Without regulation and planning, this could become a very serious problem. By developing a specific site (or using an existing area), this opportunity will still be available in the future. Opportunities are available for a camping experience at Washington Park and Deception Pass State Park. No further opportunities need to be available on City property at the present time. For the time being, walk-in camps should be in areas where there is already a Park Manager.

TRAIL SYSTEM

Goal: Maintain an overall trail system in City forest lands.

Policies:

- 1) "Enhance parks through improvement of signing (remove unnecessary signs), and establishment of an easily recognized park logo to identify City park sites and trail system." (Action Program, No. 4, Parks Comprehensive Plan, 1977)
- 2) Make available at City Hall a map of existing main trails on City of Anacortes properties. This map should also summarize use policies outlined elsewhere in this plan.
- 3) Where necessary, rehabilitate trails where horses, trail-bike or erosion problems have developed. Seek involvement of user groups and community service organizations as much as possible.
- 4) Coordinate forest management activities with recreational trail use, especially along the easement granted to Washington State Parks for the cross-island trail (Fidalgo Lake Forest Trail)/Centennial Trail inside City limits.
- 5) For the present time, sign and post current-use main-access trails on City of Anacortes property. Except where posted, allow current use to continue.
- 6) Obtain easements for current-use trails where they cross onto private property. Work with adjacent owners to prohibit, control or allow current use. Minimize conflicts by working with user groups.
- 7) Post regulatory signs at all entry points and where trails cross onto private property.
- 8) Design and/or renovate existing trails to serve the recreational objectives of this plan with a minimum amount of maintenance. Sign trails to serve the needs of local residents. Design loop trails and loop options as much as possible. All improvements should harmonize with the natural setting.
- 9) Interpretive trails should be developed (in conjunction with the recreational trail system) with self-guiding brochures available either at the trail-head or at City Hall.

- 10) Arrange with Outdoor Planning class at Western Washington State University or at the University of Washington to develop a full trail system plan for each potential trail user type. See Appendix.

The City Forest Lands are crisscrossed by numerous trails which follow old logging road, skid trails, and game trails or have been deliberately created by horseback riders or trail-bikers. In the Parks Survey of 1977, hiking was listed as the second most popular recreational activity after swimming (Survey Results, pg. 13). This survey also placed on a first priority on "using existing City-owned timber and shoreline areas for recreation" (pg. 14). The 1989 Park and Recreation plan says basically the same thing. Out of 50 recreation activities, walking for fitness rated #3, nature walks #6, and hiking #15. All trail activities, put together, rate 1.5 times as popular as the #1 activity, watching TV.

While the dominant users in the past have been horse riders and dirt bike riders, current use by walkers recently has far exceeded those two groups, and mountain bikes are gaining ground also. The comprehensive trail plan was adopted in 1989, and subsequently trails have been posted with appropriate designations. Most use restrictions are obeyed. Overuse by all trail users is beginning to cause problems: erosion, compaction and trail spreading have increased trail maintenance needs. The publication of the trail maps and marking of trails with numbered signs has done a lot to popularize trail use and make it easier for people to get around the trail system. The new access to Whistle Lake has greatly increased trail traffic in that unit. Trail maps should be updated and improved as new trails are identified and trail maintenance must be increased to accommodate the greater use.

TRAIL USES: For specific trail uses see current Comprehensive Trail Plan (appendix #3, attached).

MOTOR VEHICLES

Goal: Prohibit the use of motor vehicles in City forest lands and parks except on designated roads.

Policies:

- 1) All access points into City property shall be gated or blocked to prevent unauthorized vehicular access.
- 2) All entry points will be posted with this information and strict penalties invoked for non-compliance.
- 3) The other goals of this plan are incompatible with vehicular access. The land area is too small and potential and present abuses are reason enough to limit this use.

Over the past years, vehicular access has become an increasingly difficult problem. Unprepared drivers enter City lands and need to be rescued by commercial towing outfits. More serious drivers in rigs equipped for cross-country or rough-road travel have taken considerable quantities of standing timber, mostly alder, from City land. Access by other vehicles to the Whistle Lake Basin has allowed large and destructive parties to be held, for which the police and sheriff have had to be called in. In addition, adjacent private property owners have complained about unauthorized entry across their property by 4-wheel-drive vehicles.

FISHING

Goal: Provide the opportunity for local residents to fish in Little Cranberry and Whistle Lakes.

Policies:

- 1) Develop or improve limited access points for fishing City-owned lakes.

- 2) Maintain restrictions on motor boats in Little Cranberry.
- 3) Prohibit use of any motorboats in Whistle Lake.
- 4) At the present time. Whistle Lake will not be enhanced for sport fishing.
- 5) Develop a long-range sport-fishing plan in conjunction with the State Game Department.
- 6) Monitor fish population in conjunction with water-quality monitoring program.

There are seven major lakes on Fidalgo Island. Each has particular recreational and fisheries value. Heart Lake is a well-known trout-fishing lake on which motor boats are allowed. Campbell Lake and Lake Erie both have boat-launch facilities and are managed for spiny-ray and trout. Pass Lake is a fly-fishing-only lake adjacent to Highway 20. Trafton Lake (Crater Lake) is surrounded by private property. Little Cranberry is accessible by automobile and is actively used for fishing and crayfish diving. Whistle Lake is the only lake not impacted by automobile access. Whistle Lake will be reserved for a more "primitive" recreational experience.

HUNTING AND TRAPPING

Goal: Hunting and trapping is not allowed on City land. Resolution No. 968, adopted December 7, 1987 and amending Resolution No. 663, prohibits all hunting, trapping, and discharge of firearms on Anacortes Community Forest Lands.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Goal: To use the Anacortes Community Forest Lands for dispersed low-intensity recreational activities.

Policies:

- 1) Developed park sites in Anacortes allow the opportunity for group games and activities such as baseball, soccer, basketball, tennis and other sports. There is no need to develop these sorts of facilities on City Forest lands.
- 2) Deception Pass State Park and Washington Park offer an opportunity for overnight recreational camping. It is not appropriate to develop more facilities of this sort in the ACFL.
- 3) Facilities needing utilities and/or extensive site improvements should be located in or near currently developed facilities.

EDUCATION:

Goal: The City Forest Lands should be made available to educate the Community in the stewardship of our natural resources. "Develop and maintain a resource conservation attitude within the City with an ongoing educational program based on volunteer assistance." (Goal 5, Conservation Section, Comprehensive Plan, 1982)

"Establish and promote an ongoing volunteer program aimed at educating resident and visitors with speakers, programs and written information. This program shall promote stewardship of Fidalgo Island Resources." (Policies, Goal 5, Comprehensive Plan, Conservation Section, 1982)

Policies:

- 1) Encourage joint cooperative arrangements with local colleges and universities to use these lands for ongoing research projects by students and faculty. Botany, Biology,

Outdoor Recreation, Planning, Forestry and other academic disciplines will all find fruitful opportunity in the watersheds of our lakes and the surrounding forest lands. These "experts-in-training" could supply useful baseline and monitoring information to the managing authority.

- 2) Teaching our young people about the recreational and natural values of their land will develop an attitude of possession and care which can translate into less vandalism and destruction of park and forest areas in the future.

VI
MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Goal: To provide efficient and effective management of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands in order to implement the goals and policies of this report.

Under Council form of government, the City Council has ultimate legal authority and sets policy direction for the City. The Mayor is charged with management responsibility for administration of all City assets under the direction of the City Council. The City Council must approve all contracts, asset sales, and use policies. However, within the framework of these legal restrictions, it is recommended that an advisory board be established with broad authority to set use policies and effectively guide management of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands.

Policy:

- 1) Continue an advisory board to be known as the "Anacortes Community Forest Advisory Board".
 - a) The Board should consist of five members, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Membership should be one member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, one member of the Planning Commission, and three citizen members.
 - b) Terms of the Board members should be 5 years, with the initial terms staggered to provide for reappointment of one member each year.
 - c) At least four members should be residents of the City of Anacortes, with it being permissible for the fifth member to reside on Fidalgo Island. The Mayor, or his designee, should serve as Executive Secretary to the Board.
- 2) The duties and responsibilities of the Anacortes Community Forest Advisory Board shall include the following:
 - a) Setting use policies and guidelines, under the terms outlined in this report, for the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. Use policies requiring legal enforcement authority shall be confirmed by the City Council. Use policies not requiring legal-penalty provisions shall be set by the Board.
 - b) Securing additional studies, trail plans and surveys as deemed necessary by the Board.
 - c) Recommending an annual budget to the Mayor and the City Council for management of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands.
 - d) Providing policy advice to the City Council for the long range use, enhancement and conservation of the resource. Conducting periodic reviews and recommendations for required changes in this plan. Providing technical advice to the Mayor for implementation of this plan.
 - e) Managing all timber salvage operations.
 - f) Serving as a liaison with interested citizens, user groups, educational institutions and volunteer service organizations.

FINANCE

Goal: In the long term, funding will be available from the community-supported Forest Land Endowment Fund, which has been established by the City for this purpose. While contributions to this Fund are being aggressively sought but the amount available is still inadequate, funding for the ACFL management will be provided, to the extent possible, from the City's general fund.

Policy:

- 1) A Forest Land Management Fund has been created by ordinance. This ordinance will specify the uses for which these monies may be expended.
- 2) Monies expended for the Forest Land Management will come only from the above-mentioned fund.
- 3) If necessary, special accounts may be set up within the Forest Land Management Fund.
- 4) All monies from sale of timber or other resource will be placed in this fund.
- 5) Continue coordinated planning and joint funding and maintenance of facilities among the various providers of park and recreation services (State, County, School, City, private entities).

ENFORCEMENT

Goal: The policies and regulations developed in this plan will be enforced by the appropriate authority.

Policies:

- 1) The Cranberry Lake area will be patrolled on a random basis by the City of Anacortes Police Department.
- 2) Develop an enforcement agreement with Washington State Parks for those areas identified as Joint-Cooperative Agreement areas.
- 3) Develop awareness that vandalism and destruction are acts for which everyone in the community pays - both for facility repair and enforcement time.
- 4) Defensively plan facilities to minimize vandalism. Build and design rugged facilities to harmonize with surroundings.
- 5) Maintain facilities. Rundown areas promote vandalism and destructive behavior.

FIRE PROTECTION

Goal: To protect the City forest lands from damage or destruction by fire.

Policies:

- 1) In conjunction with other forest management activities, improve and map the existing road system to allow fire vehicle access.
- 2) Maintain existing fire plan in conjunction with local DNR office in Sedro Woolley.
- 3) Prohibit fires on City property until designated fire pits at developed recreational sites are available.
- 4) Levy stiff fines, in addition to suppression costs, for violations.

SIGNS AND BOUNDARY MARKERS

Goal: The boundaries of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands shall be clearly marked to indicate that users are entering publicly owned property.

Policies:

- 1) Boundaries of areas likely to be impacted by recreational use or real estate development should be surveyed and posted as quickly as possible. In some cases, this should be done in cooperation with adjacent private owners.

- 2) All access and egress points should be posted with notification that use of the City of Anacortes lands is governed by certain rules and regulations.
- 3) Access roads should be blocked by sturdy gate, ditch and berm or other suitable barriers to prevent unauthorized garbage dumping, timber harvesting and creation of mayhem on City lands. Unauthorized uses should be punishable by stiff fines.
- 4) A distinctive, visible boundary tag should be used to indicate Anacortes ownership.

COOPERATION WITH ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS AND PUBLIC AGENCIES

Goal: All land management decisions should be compatible with adjacent land owners within Anacortes and on Fidalgo Island.

Policies:

- 1) City Ordinance No. 2129 (Land Gearing Ordinance) should be revised to better serve the City's long-term interests. Areas of high potential for impact from land clearing should be clearly identified on a map available to City staff. Planning Commission and Council. Impacts on City forest land and current use access points should be severe without "defensive planning". Special areas of concern would be the area between "A" and "D" Avenues between 41st Street and 17th Street, the northern border of Cranberry Park and the western border of Section 26 adjacent to Skyline. A series of small clearings has the same cumulative effect as a large clearing.
- 2) On land outside the City limits, efforts should be made to contact adjacent private property owners and inform them of the intended use of the City land. Every attempt should be made, as early as possible, to resolve present and potential conflicts arising from timber harvesting, trespass, garbage dumping, etc.
- 3) Development adjacent to City forested lands and/or watersheds should provide buffers, erosion and drainage control measures and access control. This should be part of the review by the Planning Commission and City Council, "...provide for flexibility to allow for attractive and cost-effective plat design in subdivision development." (Goal 6, Housing Section, Comprehensive Plan, 1982)

"Develop and use a one-stop permit application process which clearly outlines the requirements for a building permit, and states what the City expects from the developer and what the developer should expect from the City." (Policy Section of Goal 6)
- 3) Whenever necessary, reach agreement with adjacent land owners to create, by easement, purchase or donation, buffer areas between developments and public use lands. This recommendation depends upon the specific characteristics of the site.

FUTURE ACQUISITION CONSIDERATIONS

Goal: Assure guaranteed public access to Anacortes Community Forest Lands. The parcels listed below would guarantee future access to areas already important for recreation.

Policy:

- 1) Consider acquisition of a public access to the rock-climbing route to Mt. Erie.

One of the primary recreational uses of Mt. Erie is by rock-climbing groups often numbering up to 100 people on any given day. Much of the route on the south face of the mountain crosses private property. The present trail follows a narrow, unbuildable parcel belonging to two private owners. The main concern is that this route does not become a trail-bike access point.

VII
APPENDICES

1. HISTORY
 - a. History of Land Acquisition
 - b. History of Logging Activities
2. MAP: Management Units
3. COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN
4. HEART LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN

HISTORY OF LAND ACQUISITION

Every land-use document prepared for Anacortes has a standard history of the City, its incorporation and growth. It is not necessary to repeat, once again, that scenario. There is, however, another history, more crucial to the responsible development of this management plan.

The first half of this century, especially the period before 1930, was a time of growing civic awareness of the scenic resources of this area. As a result, numerous individuals deeded land to the City for "public park purposes". What follows is a brief catalog of the major land parcels dealt with in this plan, the donor and the restrictions and covenants these donors placed on the deeds.

These donations are examples of what is called the "bequest motive", or the desire of people to leave estates for their heirs or the public. The dedication of private properties for public parks is exemplary of this desire. Douglas Allmond, John M. Morrison, Gus Hensler, Havekost, and others all donated substantial holdings to the people of Anacortes to assure that future generations would have natural environments to enjoy and grow with. As our population grows, these natural areas will increase in value and future utility. For many people, exploring these areas and using them for recreation is often secondary to the knowledge that they exist. This knowledge is a resource of personal satisfaction - that a part of the natural world still surrounds us, unpaved, unlit and unspoiled, in perpetuity.

Cranberry Park was created by City Council on January 7, 1964, by Ordinance No. 1358. These were Water Department lands which are to be used for public park purposes and managed by the Park Department. Cranberry Lake is approximately 25 acres and the park land is approximately 106 acres. "Said Park is created in order to preserve for public use and general welfare the natural beauty and recreational facilities of Little Cranberry Lake for such period of time as the said property is not required for actual use by the Water Department in the public interest"

John M. Morrison Natural Park. Douglas and Cora Allmond donated this park to the City on February 25, 1928, and on March 12, 1928. Other owners, including L. Farmer and W. Odlin and E. English, also donated substantial holding. This area includes the forested ridge seen from downtown Anacortes when looking west the parcel donated on February 25th is in the Tuttle and Buckley Addition, including a portion of the large marsh which drains into Little Cranberry Lake. The parcel donated on March 12th (the ridge) is in the Northern Pacific Addition. Both areas are platted with streets and alleys.

Although Douglas Allmond stipulated that these lands "for all time be named John M. Morrison Natural Park", the City Council of Anacortes has never ordinated these lands as Mr. Allmond wished. The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce advertisements from the 1935's state that "J.M. Morrison Natural Park is a recent gift to the City by public-spirited citizens. ...It is scenic and admirably adapted to park uses." Morrison was a former mayor of Anacortes at the beginning of the century who, with Allmond, "conceived of the idea of the peninsula forming the extreme northwesterly part of Fidalgo Island being secured to the City for park purposes. (Sunset Park/Washington Park)". Morrison was also the President of the Chamber of Commerce when that organization led the effort to make Deception Pass a State Park. In Allmond's words, "No man ever appreciated or loved the woods of Puget Sound more than Mr. Morrison." (Aug. 5, 1925)

Allmond donated these lands "with the absolute condition and proviso that said land and timber be never alienated by the grantee or used or permission given to use it for any other than strictly park purposes and that the park hereby created shall for all time be named John M. Morrison Natural Park." In the original deed "property" was the original language but was changed to read "land and timber". The City Attorney advises that this change, coupled with the naming of the park "Natural Park", are severely restrictive.

Another 60 acres of land was also donated to the City directly south of Little Cranberry with the same restrictions, but without the designation, "Morrison Park".

History of Land Acquisition

Page 2

Water Department Lands. The major portion of these extensive holdings, including most of Section 26 (south of Cranberry Lake), the Whistle Lake basin, and both sides of Heart Lake Road, were obtained by the City on August 2, 1919, when Anacortes bought Douglas Allmond's Washington Power, Light and Water Company for \$135,000. The assets included all equipment and these extensive land holdings. The 80 acres at the north end of Heart Lake was acquired from the State in order to control the outflow of the lake for public water purposes. The City still has the right to drain the lake or raise its level by 4 feet.

On November 26, 1952, F.E. and Eva Foss donated 80 acres located adjacent to the Hensler/Kiwanis donation on Mt. Erie for \$1.00.

There are no restrictions on use or sale of Water Department Lands attached to the deeds.

Mt. Erie Park. Gus Hensler donated 120 acres around the summit of Mt. Erie to the City on January 12, 1934. His will states the following: "Said property to be deeded by my executors to the City of Anacortes for park purposes, it being my wish that same be a haven of safety for birds and/or animal."

On March 30, 1951, the Kiwanis Club, by way of Dr. Pinson, deeded the City the 40 acre summit of Mt. Erie. "The property herein conveyed shall be used for public park purposes only, and any other use by the Grantee shall render this instrument void and cause title to revert to the Grantor, his successors and assigns. The Grantor hereby reserves the right to place, upon a prominent part of the property herein conveyed, a suitable plaque to inform the public that the land was donated by the Anacortes Kiwanis Club."

HISTORY OF LOGGING ON CITY OF ANACORTES PROPERTIES

During the time Bob Powell was the City Forester, he compiled, by way of City Council minutes and associated documents, a chronology of forest-related activities on City land from 1942 until 1975.

The record reveals that during the decade 1942-1952, eight separate logging contracts were signed by the City Council. These sales, mostly to local businesses, including Anacortes Veneer and a local shipbuilding firm, encompassed most of the City forest lands.

All of Section 26, south of Little Cranberry, except the John M. Morrison Natural Park area, was cut over during the late 1940's. During the same period, the timber at the north end of Heart Lake was cut. F.E. Foss and Sons logged much of the timber at the north and south end of Whistle Lake and the east side of Mt. Eric. Also, during this period, the right-of-way for the Mt. Erie Road was cleared and the south face of Sugarloaf was logged.

In addition, many contracts for wood cutting and salvage logging were let by Council. All of these requests were granted "provided contractors stay 300 feet from the lake shore" or "provided a 300 foot strip be left along lake and road (Heart Lake Road) to preserve scenic beauty."

The record makes clear that at no point in the past has the City had any long range management plan for these lands. It is most likely that much of this land had been previously logged, by horses or oxen, sometime around the turn of the century. In short, except for buffer strips expressly left in the past for scenic and aesthetic reasons, most of the City forest land has been logged at least once, perhaps twice; either clear-cut or high-graded. There was no conscious effort to reforest and as a result many areas grew up in brush and undesirable species. Forest fires have swept across much of this area. Past practice has left inferior or defective trees for seed sources.

In addition, over the past 20 years, the City has allowed certain parties to work on City land salvaging dead and dying timber. A memorandum from Bob Powell indicates the kind of problems that can result from unsupervised forest practices when the City supposedly "knows" what is going on. The potential loss of resources and revenues through unsupervised activities does not need to be elaborated upon (See Forest Land files).

Any residual large trees, not along visible road corridors or lake shores, remain because they were deemed unmerchantable or inaccessible when surrounding timber was cut.

In 1984, 1985 and 1986, partial cuts were contracted by the ACFL Board in the South Cranberry and Whistle Lake units, covering about 50 acres each year. These contracts removed over 500,000 board feet, but because they did not turn a profit, selective cutting was abandoned in 1987 in favor of clear cutting. That year 20 acres were cut in 2 units northwest of Whistle Lake. Over 400,000 board foot was harvested, but the road building cost half of the City's share of the revenue, so that job also did not cover the ACFL expenses that year. In 1988, four parcels totaling 20 acres, were clear cut northeast of Whistle Lake, removing 400,000 board foot of timber and producing enough revenue to cover the ACFL budget and a small surplus which was carried over to 1989. In that year another 20 acre clear cut in one parcel southwest of Heart Lake, harvested another 400,000 board foot of timber and generated revenue sufficient to pay the ACFL budget for 1989 and 1990. At this point two things happened to stop the logging activity: the Board and ACFL staff began to doubt the capacity of the forest lands to sustain this level of harvesting; and, the citizens of Anacortes, led by the Friends of the Forest organization, began to voice their opposition to logging on the ACFL. In 1989, an ad hoc committee was appointed by the Forest Advisory Board to study the problem, and their recommendation was that timber harvesting as a source of revenue be stopped. A petition circulated by the Friends of the Forest demanded that all logging on the ACFL be stopped. A survey conducted by the Board through the Parks & Recreation Department's quarterly newsletter indicated that the majority of residents of Anacortes and Fidalgo Island did not want the City to harvest timber on the ACFL. Another survey, randomly distributed throughout the city and statistically valid, showed that Anacortes citizens did not want logging to occur on City forest lands, nor do they

History of Logging

Continued

want any revenue facilities built on these lands, but they do expect the City to manage them for current uses and protect them from fire, vandalism, and trespass. In response to these statements of citizen concern, the Forest Advisory Board has stopped all logging activity and is pursuing other methods of funding the ACFL management program. See funding section, page 21.

In 1990 the Forest Endowment Fund was authorized by Council, and the ACFL Board and Friends of the Forest began soliciting donations. When the fund reaches \$50,000, interest from it can be used for ACFL management. Early in 1991, donations had exceeded \$10,000, indicating public support for the Endowment; and the State law banning export of timber from public lands went into effect. Both of these events convinced the Planning Commission and Forest Board to recommend deletion of revenue logging from the revised Forest Plan and the City Comprehensive Plan. On April 15, 1991, City Council voted to remove all references to logging, with the exception of limited salvage of blow down and hazard trees.

ANACORTES COMMUNITY FOREST LANDS

COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL PLAN

Prepared for
ACFL Advisory Board
by

Doreen Dunton
Karen Beebe
Marty Laumbattus
Justin Bannerman
Leigh Slotemaker

May, 1991

TRAIL USE PLAN OUTLINE

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1. Introduction

As required by Appendix Ed of the 1981 Forest Management Plan, a comprehensive trail system plan has been completed. This plan was compiled by a user-group committee with a representative from each of the following user-groups: hikers, horse riders, mountain bikers, and motorcycle riders.

It was the goal of the committee to come up with a trail plan that would satisfy the needs of all trail users, while also ensuring the protection of the ACFL in its present state. The committee worked on this plan from December of 1987 to March of 1988, and the plan that follows is the result of their efforts.

It is the hope of the committee that this trail plan will ensure access to these beautiful forests, for all who wish to enjoy them, for years to come.

The User-Group Committee:

Doreen Dunton - Hiker Representative

Karen Beebe - Horse Representative

Justin Bannerman - Mountain Bike Representative

Marty Laumbattus - Motorcycle Representative

Leigh Slotemaker - Group Coordinator/ACFL /Field Assistant

A. Trail Plan Limitations

1. Environmental Limitations

According to the 1981 ACFL Management Plan, Section IV, Pages 34-36, the goal in water resources, flora, and wildlife management is to " maintain, preserve, and enhance the present quality and diversity" of such resources. The trail use plan must always ensure that these goals are not hindered.

If wildlife, flora, or water quality are being adversely impacted at certain locations by trail users, the trail plan may be amended in those areas to protect environmental quality. The procedure for amending the trail plan due to environmental impacts is as follows:

- a. Environmental impact must be documented.
- b. Environmental impact documentation must be made available to the Forest Lands Manager, the Forest Advisory Board, and interested citizens.
- c. Amendment to the trail plan must be passed by the Forest Advisory Board in cooperation with the Forest Lands Manager.
- d. User-group representatives must be notified of any potential trail plan changes and must have the chance to be present and make comment during the decision-making process.

2. Safety Limitations

Multiple use trails have the potential to create safety problems for all user groups. The trail user rules and regulations, if followed, should prevent safety problems; however, if it is found that the trail use plan must be changed to alleviate trail user collisions, or a number of near-collisions, the following procedure for amending the trail plan must be followed:

- a. The safety hazard must be documented.
- b. Safety hazard documentation must be made available to the Forest Lands Manager, the Forest Advisory Board, and interested citizens.
- c. Amendment to the trail plan must be passed by the Forest Advisory Board in cooperation with the Forest Lands Manager.
- d. User-group representatives must be notified of any potential trail plan changes and must have the chance to be present and make comment during the decision-making process.

3. Fire Hazard Limitations

Seasonal dry periods may require temporary trail closures due to high fire danger. These closures do not require trail plan amendment. These trail closures can be mandated by the Department of Natural Resources or can be requested by the Forest Lands Manager under the approval of the Forest Advisory Board.

4. Natural Hazard Trail Construction Limitations

There will be times when natural hazards may require temporary trail closures. Trails may be washed out, bridges may become unsafe, or a trail crew may be working on a portion of trail causing it to be temporarily unusable. In such circumstances, the trails involved can be closed temporarily without trail plan amendment. These trail closures will be imposed under the discretion of the Forest Lands Manager, and will be posted until the trail is repaired.

5. Provision for Trail Plan Amendment

Unforeseeable circumstances may create in the future the need for trail plan amendments other than those already provided for in the trail plan limitations. If such a situation arises, amendment to the plan must follow the procedures below.

- a. The public and user-group representatives must be notified of any amendments proposed by the Forest Advisory Board of the Forest Lands Manager that have not been covered under other Trail Plan Limitations.
- b. The public and user-group representatives must be given the opportunity to make public comment. A public hearing must be held for those amendment proposals which elicit a large amount of public concern.
- c. After public comment, the Forest Advisory Board will make a recommendation and send the proposed amendment on to the Anacortes City Council for a final decision.

II. The Trail Plan

B. The Cranberry Unit

1. Rationale for Trail Designations

The Cranberry Lake Unit of the ACFL includes a number of environmentally sensitive areas. There is one lake, three large beaver ponds, and numerous smaller wetland areas, which support diverse wildlife populations. There are also a number of rocky bluffs covered by thin soils and small meadows of native wildflowers. To protect these sensitive environments, the trail plan for the Cranberry Unit directs the heaviest usage to the South ends.

2. Trail Designations

a. Hikers

All the Cranberry Unit trails are open to pedestrian users. Those wishing to avoid other trail users may wish to use some of the pedestrian-only trails. The hiker-only trails are as follows:

- 1) The #101, #102 loop around the lake shore of Little Cranberry.
- 2) Trail #104, the Morrison Forest Nature Trail. (The southern portion of this loop is multiple-use.)
- 3) Trails #103, the Mine Shaft Trails.
- 4) Trail #108b, along the east shore of the Big Beaver Pond. (Access to this trail requires following multiple use trails.)

Refer to the "Hiking Trails" map for the Cranberry Unit.

b. Horses

Horses are allowed on most Cranberry Unit trails. Access to the Cranberry Lake Parking Lot is provided via trail #100. Access from the North to Sound end of the unit is provided via trails #105-11 and #100, #118, 29th, #104, #107, following the completion of a #118 to 29th Street trail extension. Horses are prohibited on the following trails:

- 1) Horses are prohibited on Cranberry Lake shore trails, #101, and #102.
- 2) Horses are prohibited on #108b, the trail that runs along the eastern shore of the Big Beaver Pond.
- 3) Horses are prohibited on the west and short portions of trail #104, the Morrison Forest Nature Trail.
- 4) Horses are prohibited on trails #103, the Mine Shaft Trails.
- 5) Horses are prohibited from using the portion of trail #12 along the edge of the Little Beaver Pond until the trail is relocated away from the immediate edge of the pond. This new trail will be open to horses.

Refer to the "Horse Trails" map for the Cranberry Unit.

c. Mountain Bikes

Pedaled bicycle use is directed to the South end of the Cranberry Unit Mountain bike access to the Cranberry Lake parking lot and boat launch area is provided via trail #100. Access from the North to South end of the Unit is provided via 100-118-29th-104-107, following the completion of a 118 to 29th Street trail extension. Mountain bikes are prohibited on the following trails:

- 1) Mountain bikes are prohibited on the Cranberry Lake Shore Trails, 105, 101, and 102.
- 2) Mountain bikes are prohibited on the west and north portions of trail 104, the Morrison Forest Nature Trail.
- 3) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trails 103, the Mine Shaft Trails.
- 4) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trail 108b, which runs along the eastern shore of the Big Beaver Pond.
- 5) Mountain bikes are prohibited from using the portion of trail 12 along the edge of the Little Beaver Pond until the trail is relocated away from the immediate edge of the pond. The relocated trail will be open for mountain bike use.

Refer to the "Mountain Bike Trails" map for the Cranberry Unit.

d. Motorcycles

Motorcycle use must remain in the South end of the Cranberry Unit Access is provided to the Sound end via 114 and 10 at the Old City Dump.

Motorcycles are not allowed on the following trails:

- 1) Motorcycles are prohibited on Cranberry Lake Shore trails, 105,100,101, and 102.
- 2) Motorcycles are prohibited on trail 104, the Morrison Forest Nature Trail.
- 3) Motorcycles are prohibited on trails 103, the Mine Shaft Trails.
- 4) Motorcycles are prohibited on trails 107,108,108b.
- 5) Motorcycles are prohibited on trails 106, and the portion of trail 10 north of the intersection with 12.
- 6) Motorcycles are not allowed on trails 109,110,11,118,119,121.
- 7) Motorcycles are prohibited on the portions of trail 113 that follow the shore of the Big Beaver Pond. A loop away from the shore will be maintained.
- 8) Motorcycles are prohibited from using the portion of trail 12 along the edge of the Little Beaver Pond until the trail is relocated away from the immediate edge of the pond. The relocated trail will be open for motorcycle use unless environmental impact from motorcycles is documented.

Refer to "Motorcycle Trails" map for the Cranberry Unit

C. The Whistle Lake Unit.

1. Rationale for Trail Designations

The Whistle Lake Unit includes deep forest areas, a pristine lake, a swamp, mountainous bluffs with native wildflowers, and numerous trails. This relatively undisturbed forest unit must be protected from over-use, thus our trail designations direct most non-pedestrian usage to wide forest trails and old skid roads.

2. Trail Designations

a. Hikers

All Whistle Lake Unit Trails are open to pedestrian users. Those hikers wishing to avoid other trail users may wish to use some of the pedestrian-only trails. The pedestrian-only trails are as follows:

- 1) Trail 204, along the West shore of Whistle Lake (a small portion of this trail is multiple use.
- 2) Trail 205, along the East shore of Whistle Lake from the end of 20 to the intersection with the un-numbered trail that heads Northeast.

- 3) Trail 215, from its Southern access on Ray Auld Drive to the top of Sugarloaf.
- 4) Trail 214, the Ray Auld Trail
- 5) Trail 220, the Erie View Trail (the first half of this trail is open to horses).
- 6) Hiker use is prohibited on trail 212 which can only be accessed via Heart Lake State Park or private property.

Refer to the “Hiking Trails” map for the Whistle Lake Unit.

b. Horses

Horses are allowed on most Whistle Lake trails. Horse use is prohibited on the following trails.

- 1) Horses are prohibited on trail 204 along the West edge of Whistle Lake, except on that portion of 204 that provides a loop back onto trail 203 (Please refer to the “Horse Trails” map for the Whistle Lake Unit).
- 2) Horses are prohibited on trail 205 from the end of 20 to the intersection with the un-numbered trail coming from the Northeast.
- 3) Horses are prohibited on trail 214, the Ray Auld Trail.
- 4) Horses are prohibited on trail 215 from its southern access on Ray Auld Drive, to the top of Sugarloaf. Horses climbing Sugarloaf must access 215 from its north end at the base of Ray Auld Drive. Near the top of Sugarloaf, horses must be left in the marked wooded intersection. Leaving horses at this intersection and walking out to the viewpoint will protect the meadows and native wildflowers.
- 5) Horses are prohibited on the southern half of trail 220, the Erie View trail.
- 6) Horses are prohibited on trail 212 which can only be accessed via Heart Lake State Park or private property.

Refer to the “Horse Trails” map for the Whistle Lake Unit.

c. Mountain Bikes

Mountain bikes are allowed on most Whistle Lake Unit trails. Mountain bike use is prohibited on the following trails:

- 1) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trail 204 which runs along the West shore of Whistle Lake.
- 2) Mountain bikes are prohibited on those parts of trail 203 that lie within 200 feet of the Whistle Lake shoreline (these boundaries will be marked).

- 3) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trail 205 from the end of 20 to the intersection with the un-numbered trail coming from the Northeast.
- 4) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trail 215 from its southern access on Ray Auld Drive, to the top of Sugarloaf. Mountain bikes climbing Sugarloaf must access from its north end at the base of Ray Auld Drive. Near the top of Sugarloaf, mountain bikes must be left in the marked wooded intersection. Leaving bikes at this intersection and walking to the viewpoint will protect the meadows and native wildflowers.
- 5) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trail 214, the Ray Auld Trail.
- 6) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trails 220, 25, 24, and 213, the Erie View trail and the Pine Ridge Loop.
- 7) Mountain bikes are prohibited on trail 212, which can only be accessed via Heart Lake State Park or private property.

Refer to the “Mountain Bike Trails” map for the Whistle Unit.

d. Motorcycles

Motorcycles are allowed on a number of Whistle Lake Unit trails.

Motorcycles are prohibited on the following trails:

- 1) Motorcycles are prohibited on trail 204 along the west short of Whistle Lake.
- 2) Motorcycles are prohibited on those parts of trail 203 that lie within 200 feet of the Whistle Lake shoreline (these boundaries will be marked). Motorcycles must be left at these boundaries when walking down to the lake shore.
- 3) Motorcycles are prohibited on most of trail 205, except that portion of 205 between its intersection with trails 206 and 22.
- 4) Motorcycle use is prohibited within 200 feet of the shoreline of Whistle Lake on the un-numbered trail intersection with 205 on the east side of Whistle Lake. Motorcycles must be left at the 200 foot boundary (it will be marked), and riders must walk to the lake shore. To access this un-numbered trail one must use a proposed new trail which will be accessed via road 20. (If this trail is not built, motorcycle access will be prohibited on the un-numbered trail).
- 5) Motorcycle use is prohibited on trail 215 from its access on Ray Auld Drive, to the top of Sugarloaf. Motorcycles climbing Sugarloaf must access 215 from its north end at the base of Ray Auld Drive. Near the top of Sugarloaf, motorcycles must be left in the marked wooded intersection. Leaving motorcycles at this intersection and walking to the viewpoint will protect the meadows and native wildflowers.

- 6) Motorcycle use is prohibited on trails 210, 24, 25, and 213, the Erie View trail and the Pine Ridge loop.
- 7) Motorcycle use is prohibited on trail 214, the Ray Auld trail.
- 8) Motorcycle use is prohibited on trail 212, which can only be accessed via Heart Lake Park or private property.

Refer to the “Motorcycle Trails” map for the Whistle Unit.

Trails and Roads to and within the 1987 Clearcut

All new and existing trails within the 1987 clearcut will be reopened to all trail users when the replanted trees are of sufficient height and health to withstand public entry. Fire trails created during logging will be maintained and become new trails when the area is reopened.

The new road leading to the logging site will be open only to its intersection with trail 21 until the logging site trails are reopened.

The Forest Board and the Forest Lands Manager will make the decision to reopen the area when the consulting forester advises. All entry until that time is prohibited.

D. The Heart Lake Unit

1. Rationale for Trail Designations

The Heart Lake Unit trails lie mainly in the northern half of the unit and their use does not seem to pose any serious environmental impacts at present. The Trail Plan thus provides for use by all the user groups on all the trails, except trail 210, which runs along the northeast lake edge. To protect the interests of Heart Lake State Park, which allows only pedestrian trail use, a new trail is proposed which would connect 23 and 209. This trail, when completed, would provide a loop that would discourage any illegal entry onto park property via trail 23.

2. Trail Designations

a. Hikers

All Heart Lake Unit trails are open to pedestrian use. Those hikers wishing to avoid other users may wish to use trail 210, a pedestrian-only trail.

b. Horses

All Heart Lake Unit trails are open to horse use, except trail 210, along the northeast lake edge.

c. Mountain Bikes

All Heart Lake Unit trails are open to mountain bike use except trail 210, along the northeast lake edge.

d. Motorcycles

All Heart Lake Unit trails are open to motorcycle use except trail 210, along the northeast lake edge.

Refer to maps for the Whistle Lake - Heart Lake Unit

III. Implementation of the Trail Plan

A. Enforcement and Education

1. Trail Users Rules and Regulations

a. General Rules and Regulation

- 1) Trail users found or proven to be violating the ACFL trail users rules and regulations can be cited or/ or fined by the Forest Lands Manager or any other on-duty law enforcement agent employed by the State.
- 2) All City, State, and Federal laws that apply within the city limits of Anacortes can be enforced within the ACFL, except where differences are specifically outlined in this trail plan, or other ACFL documents.
- 3) All trail users must remain on designated trails. Clearing new trails or traveling off-trail is prohibited.
- 4) Knowledge of trail designations is the responsibility of the user (barring sudden changes which have not been posted or announced). Traveling on trails not designated for the mode of transportation being used is prohibited. Trail use violators on unmarked trails where signs have been vandalized or removed can still be ticketed and fined.
- 5) Trail users must obey all seasonal trail closures.
- 6) Pets must be leashed or kept under physical restraint at all times.
- 7) Littering is prohibited on ACFL property. All litter must be packed out.
- 8) Fires are allowed in designated areas only. Smoking is prohibited on trails.
- 9) The taking of trees, shrubs, bushes, flowers or other vegetation from the ACFL land without a permit is prohibited (ACFL Management Plan, pg. 14).
- 10) Hunting and trapping is prohibited on ACFL property.
- 11) The taking of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, or any other wildlife (with the exception of legal sports fishing) is prohibited without a permit from the ACFL office.

b. Hiker Rules and Regulations

- 1) Hikers must remain on trails designated for hiker use in the ACFL trail plan. Traveling off trail is prohibited.

- 2) Hikers must walk in such a way that they will have little or no impact. It is unlawful to cause the following impacts:
 - severe erosion
 - damage to vegetation along the trail
 - damage to vegetation in meadows and mossy outcrops
 - damage to trails such that trail use by other users is hindered
- 3) Upon meeting a horse, mountain bike, motorcycle or other hiker from the front, a hiker should slow down or stop and move to the right to allow safe passage to the other users. If you meet a horse, let the horse have the uphill edge of the trail. Say "Hi" as each rider in a string passes you, otherwise a green horse may spook when the thing seen as a stump suddenly moves.
- 4) Upon meeting a horse, mountain bike, motorcycle or other hiker from behind, a hiker should slow or stop, announce his/her presence and ask that the other user(s) move to the right (or uphill side in the case of a horse) to allow safe hiker passage. Only when the other user is safely out of the way may the hiker proceed.
- 5) When stopping along the trail, hikers should move over to the right or uphill trail edge to be out of the way of others. Ideally, a biker should wait for a widening in the trail before stopping.

c. Horserider Rules and Regulations

- 1) Horses must remain on trails designated for horses in the ACFL Trail Plan. Traveling off-trail is prohibited.
- 2) Horses must be handled in such a way that they will have little or no adverse impact. It is unlawful to allow your horse to cause the following impacts:
 - severe erosion
 - damage to vegetation bordering the trail
 - damage to vegetation in meadows or mossy outcrops
 - damage to trails such that trail use by other users is hindered
- 3) When stopping for equipment adjustment or to view the scenery, horseriders should move over to the right or uphill trail edge to be out of the way of others. Ideally, a rider should wait for a widening in the trail before stopping.
- 4) Upon meeting a hiker, mountain bike, motorcycle, or other horse from the front, a horse rider must slow or stop, move to the right, or uphill side, and allow safe passage to the other trail users(s). Keep the horses head facing the trail to avoid kicking.
- 5) Upon meeting a hiker, mountain bike, motorcycle, or other horse from behind, a horserider should slow or stop, announce his/her presence, and ask that the other user move to the right or downhill side. Only when the other user is safely out of the way may the horse proceed. Keep the horses head facing the trail to avoid kicking.
- 6) Maintain at least one horse length between horses when traveling in groups.

- 7) Horse riders must remove all manure left by their horses from parking areas and designated picnic areas. If no receptacle area or container is provided, take it out with you.
- 8) When tying up horses, be sure to tie them in such a way that damage to vegetation or trees will be minimal. Causing severe impact is unlawful.

d. Mountain Bike Rules and Regulations

- 1) Mountain bikes must remain on trails designated for mountain bikes in the ACFL Trail Plan.
- 2) Bikes must be handled in such a way that they will have little or no adverse impact. It is unlawful to cause the following impacts:
 - severe erosion
 - damage to vegetation bordering the trail
 - damage to vegetation in meadows or mossy outcrops
 - damage to trails such that trail use by other users is hindered
- 3) When stopping along the trail, bikers should move over to the right or uphill trail edge to be out of the way of others. Ideally, a biker should wait for a widening in the trail before stopping.
- 4) Upon meeting a hiker, horse, motorcycle or other mountain bike from the front, a biker must slow or stop, move to the right (unless meeting a horse when one should let the rider use the uphill side even if it is on the right), and allow passage to the other trail user(s).
- 5) Upon meeting a hiker, horse, motorcycle or other mountain bike from behind, a biker should slow or stop, announce his/her presence and ask that the other user move to the right (or uphill grade in the case of a horse). Only when the other trail user is safely out of the way may the mountain biker proceed.
- 6) Maintain at least one bicycle length between bikes when traveling in groups.

e. Motorcycle Rules and Regulations

- 1) A motorcycle is defined as a two-wheeled vehicle. Three and four-wheeled all terrain vehicles are prohibited on ACFL trails.
- 2) Motorcycles must have an adequate and operating muffler that limits exhaust noise to 105 decibels at 20 inches from the exhaust, to be trail legal in Washington State.
- 3) Motorcycles must have a USDA Forest Service approved spark arrester to be trail legal in Washington State.
- 4) Motorcycles must have lighted headlights and tail-lights at night or during poor visibility to be trail legal in Washington State.
- 5) Motorcycles must have brakes which work properly to be trail legal in Washington State.

- 6) Motorcycle riders must have a valid Washington State ORV permit or vehicle license to be trail legal in the State of Washington.
- 7) Motorcycles must remain on trails designated for motorcycle use in the ACFL Trail Plan. Off-trail riding is prohibited.
- 8) Motorcycles cannot exceed 25 mph on trails designated for motorcycle use.
- 9) Motorcycles must be handled with extreme caution. Riding unsafely in any way is strictly prohibited and will be enforced. Motorcycles must ensure that all other trail users they meet will be safe from collision or fear of collision. These trails are heavily traveled by pedestrians of all ages.
- 10) Motorcycles must be handled with extreme caution in environmentally sensitive areas. Wetland areas and erodable trails must be protected from impact. Trail plan amendment will be required if impact becomes great.
- 11) Upon meeting a hiker, horse, mountain bike, or other motorcycle from the front, a motorcycle must stop, move to the right (or downhill side in the case of meeting a horse) and allow safe passage to the other trail user(s).
- 12) Upon meeting a hiker, horse, mountain bike, or other motorcycle from behind, a motorcyclist must kill the engine, announce his/her presence and ask that the other user move safely to the right or uphill side to allow safe motorcycle passage. Only when the other user is safely out of the way may the motorcycle proceed.
- 13) Maintain at least two motorcycle lengths between riders when traveling in groups.
- 14) Motorcycles must be banded in such a way that they will have little or no adverse impact. It is unlawful to cause the following impacts:
 - severe erosion
 - damage to vegetation bordering the trail
 - damage to vegetation in meadows or mossy outcrops
 - damage to trails such that trail use by other users is hindered
- 15) The ACFL recommends that all motorcycle users obtain and read the Washington Off-Road Vehicle Guide from the Washington Department of Natural Resources. This guide provides information important to all motorcycle trail riders.

2. Signage

Enforcement of the Trail Plan requires proper signage. The following sign design should be ordered and used to mark all access points, trail intersections, and where trail use could be confusing.

Trail Designation Sign Design

Example:

Dimensions: 8½” x 11” or 8½” x 14”

Material: Aluminum printed with Design.

Color: White characters on brown background

Slashes: White non-removable adhesive tape

Posting Height: 5 feet

A number of other signs are also needed. Private property boundaries must be signed where ACFL trails run onto private land and signs are needed for those locations where trail users must leave bikes, horses, and motorcycles, and walk to view points or lakes.

Sugarloaf Intersection Design

Please...

To protect the Native Wildflowers Walk Gently to the Viewpoint. Bikes, Horses, and Motorcycles are Prohibited beyond this point. ACFL

Routed on wood or printed on aluminum

200 Foot Lake Edge Boundary Sign Design

200 Foot Shoreline Boundary
Motorcycles Prohibited Beyond
This Point. ACFL

Routed on wood or printed on aluminum

Signs will be put up with the help of volunteers from the different user-groups.

3. Enforcement

The entirety of the *ACFL* lies within the Anacortes city limits. Thus, all city, state, and federal laws that apply within the city limits of Anacortes can be enforced within the *ACFL*. Exception to this would occur only where differences from city laws are specified in this trail plan or other *ACFL* documents.

Enforcement of the law will be provided by the Forest Lands Manager or any other on-duty law enforcement agent employed by the City of Anacortes. Trail users found to be violating the Rules and Regulations specified in this plan or the laws of the City of Anacortes can be cited and fined.

4. Brochure

It is vital to the success of this trail plan to provide for the public a condensed version of this plan. A brochure must be provided free of charge to interested trail users. Contained within the brochure should be:

- explanation of how the trails are signed
- rules and regulations
- trail designations
- suggestions for minimum environmental impact
- user group representatives listed as contact persons
- location of the Forest Lands Office/Forest Lands Manager

These brochures should be made available within all map sets sold from the Forest Lands office at City Hall, User Group representatives, and at well-used trail heads. The brochure should be prepared by the Forest Lands Office, and published as soon as possible after the adoption of this trail plan.

User-Group Representatives

For each user-group (horse riders, hikers, mountain bikers, and motorcyclists), a volunteer representative shall be appointed by the Forest Board and Forest Lands Manager. The job of the user-group representative is to:

- a. be available to the public for answering questions specific to their group.
- b. be available to represent their user-group at Forest Board meetings when issues affecting the trail plan arise.
- c. have available brochures to distribute to their user-group.
- d. be available to organizer volunteer trail maintenance work parties with their user-group, when needed in the ACFL. All maintenance projects must be approved by the Forest Lands Manager.

B. Trail Maintenance

1. Maintenance Standards

Trail maintenance shall follow standards for Recreation Trail Maintenance as shown in the booklet available from the State of Washington Department of Natural Resources or other recognized trail manuals. Resources will be available at the Forest Lands Office.

2. New Trails

New trails may be built if such construction is deemed necessary by the Forest Lands Manager in cooperation with the Forest Advisory Board. User-group representatives must be contacted and have opportunity to comment on the proposal. New trails must be built to specifications available in the resources at the Forest Lands Office. New trail construction can be completed by user-group volunteers or crews arranged and supervised by the Forest Lands Manager.

3. Work Crews

The ACFL encourages and depends upon volunteer help in maintaining trails. Volunteers wishing to help with trail work must contact the Forest Lands Manager prior to starting any projects. The Forest Lands Office will be able to supply a list of the areas needing work the most, and resources on trail maintenance. The Forest Lands Office may also be able to supply some of the equipment needed. Non volunteer trail maintenance is also done, by employees of the Forest Lands Office and contracted work crews such as the Washington Conservation Corps.

4. Yearly Trail Maintenance Record

To facilitate trail maintenance, a good record of those areas needing trail work or having had trail work completed will be kept by the Forest Lands Office. This record will provide information for volunteers and the Forest Lands Office on the status of the trail system on a yearly basis. Such a record will show the continual trouble areas, which user-groups are causing the most damage, which user-groups are contributing the most volunteer trail maintenance, what types of trail maintenance is most successful etc... The record shall be updated yearly.

CITY OF ANACORTES

CONSERVATION PLAN

- Complete version of ACFL Management Plan (May 1991) with Conservation Plan available at City of Anacortes, Parks & Recreation Office

FOREST INVENTORY

- Complete version of ACFL Management Plan (May 1991) with Forest Inventory available at City of Anacortes, Parks & Recreation Office

Heart Lake Management Plan

Heart Lake Management Plan

Introduction

In 2002, the State of Washington deeded Heart Lake State Park to the City of Anacortes. 436 acres including the lake and land surrounding it was transferred to the City with a number of conditions regulating its use as a recreational area.

The State Parks and Recreation Commission divided the land at Heart Lake into three separate areas noted on the attached map:

Natural Forest Area: the land along the southwest portion of the lake, stretching along the southern edge including one area on the east side of Heart Lake Road.

Resource Recreation Area: the land along the northwest portion of the lake and most of the area east of Heart Lake Road except that area designated as Natural Forest or Recreation.

Recreation Area: the current parking lot at Heart Lake and the former overflow parking east of Heart Lake Road.

In their deliberations, the Heart Lake Management Plan Committee decided to treat the lake surface as a fourth and separate area for review. Management of the lake surface shall take into consideration the environmental sensitivity of the adjacent upland areas.

In December of 2003, the City began work on a management plan by seeking input from the community about use of Heart Lake and the surrounding land. The results of that input and numerous meetings by an eight member planning committee are contained within these pages.

State regulations for the former State Park listed a variety of permitted and conditional activities. The Committee spent significant time reviewing each of these to determine if they were appropriate. The State did mandate that all trails be non-motorized. The Committee agreed not to challenge the State regulations during the planning process.

This management plan is intended to become an amendment to the existing Anacortes Community Forest Lands Management Plan drafted in 1991, and to follow the same rules expressed in that document unless otherwise noted.

Committee members:

Doug Colglazier - Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Denise Crowe - ACFL Trail Committee

Marty Laumbattus - ACFL Trail Committee

Bart Lovric - Whidbey Island Roostertails Racing Club

Alan Mazonson - Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Geri Rubin - ACFL Trail Committee

Bruce Rustad - ACFL Trail Committee

Dan Senour - ACFL Trail Committee

Buzz Bannister - Whidbey Island Roostertails Racing Club (alternate)

History

Before becoming a State Park, Heart Lake was managed by the State Department of Natural Resources as school trust land. While long considered a back up water supply for the City of Anacortes, it was also a recreational resource used year round by Fidalgo Island residents and attracted large crowds from around the region for the opening day of fishing season.

Local citizens became concerned about the future of the lake when the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposed leasing the lakeshore for condominium development in 1977. This set off a flurry of local activity by community members to pressure lawmakers and State officials to preserve the lake and surrounding forests.

On Valentine's Day 1980, then Washington State Governor Dixie Lee Ray signed a bill permitting Heart Lake to become a State Park. It was not until over a year later that the price of \$2.5 million was agreed upon between the DNR and the State Parks and Recreation Commission for the transfer of the land into the park system.

In 2002, the City of Anacortes and State Parks and Recreation concluded their long-standing discussions regarding transfer of the land and the lake. Governor Gary Locke signed the deed transferring the Heart Lake State Park to the City on March 29, 2002. The deed contains a reversionary clause, which allows the State to retake control of the land if the City violates conditions of the transfer. The City formally took control of the former State Park on June 1, 2002.

Natural Forest Area

The Natural Forest Area is comprised of approximately 75 acres. It covers the old growth forest in the southwest area of the lake and extends across Heart Lake road to include a small grove of ancient forest just east of the road.

Trail Use: All trails in the Natural Forest Area are for use by hikers only. Horses, mountain bikes and motorcycles are prohibited. Off trail use is prohibited. Harvesting of edible berries from the trail is permitted for non-commercial use. Gathering of other edibles (i.e. mushrooms) is prohibited. Cross-country skiing and snow shoeing on those trails are permitted winter recreation activities.

Conditional Uses: Interpretive Trails and signage; filming; special events; interpretive kiosks; and non-motorized paved trails for ADA access. Activities listed as “conditional uses” are those uses that need to be approved by the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board in advance.

Future Trail Plans: The existing loop around the lake could be made more explicit on ACFL maps, and maps at trailhead kiosks could also be improved to show a clear route. This could also include renumbering the loop route or giving it a “name” to assist trail users. The trail could have interpretive signage at the trailhead to educate hikers regarding the old growth forests in the area.

A future plan on both how to best cross Heart Lake road in this loop route, or to allow non-motorized users to safely transit the road corridor is encouraged. Side trails on this loop route should be reduced.

Management Authority: Under Council form of government, the City Council has the ultimate legal authority and sets policy direction for the City. The Mayor is charged with management responsibility for administration of all City assets under the direction of the Council. The City Council must approve all contracts, asset sales and use policies. Within this framework, it is recommended that the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board suggest use policies and effectively guide management of the Natural Forest Area. As an amendment to the existing Anacortes Community Forest Lands Management Plan drafted in 1991, this plan will follow the same rules expressed in that document unless otherwise noted.

Resource Recreation Area

The Resource Recreation area is comprised of approximately 292 acres. It includes the northwest corner of the former State Park, the road corridor, and the entire area east of Heart Lake Road except that zone previously noted as Natural Forest Area.

Trail Use: All trails in the Resource Recreation Area are open to hikers, horses, and mountain bikers. Motorcycles are prohibited. Off trail use is prohibited. Harvesting of edible berries from the trail is permitted for non-commercial use. On trail cross-country skiing and snow shoeing are permitted winter recreation activities.

Picnicking is permitted; users are asked not to disturb native plants and pack their trash out. Picnic tables and picnic structures are not recommended for this area.

Conditional Uses: Filming; equestrian hitching posts; and paved non-motorized trails for ADA access. Activities listed as “conditional uses” are those uses that need to be presented to the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board prior to approval.

Future Trail Plans: Interpretive information and signage may be included in a future trail plan. Sanitary vault or composting toilets may be constructed in this area if needed.

Roads shall be limited to those already existing in the Resource Recreation area and parking would be limited to that which already exists along Heart Lake road.

Management Authority: Under Council form of government, the City Council has the ultimate legal authority and sets policy direction for the City. The Mayor is charged with management responsibility for administration of all City assets under the direction of the Council. The City Council must approve all contracts, asset sales and use policies. Within this framework, it is recommended that the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board suggest use policies and effectively guide management of the Resource Recreation Area. As an amendment to the existing Anacortes Community Forest Lands Management Plan drafted in 1991, this plan will follow the same rules expressed in that document unless otherwise noted.

Recreation Area

The Recreation Area is comprised of approximately 8 acres. It encompasses the existing parking lot and the former gravel parking lot and overflow parking area east of Heart Lake Road.

Trail Use: All trails are open to hikers, horses and mountain bikers. Motorcycles are prohibited. Off trail use is prohibited. Harvesting of edible berries from the trail is permitted for non-commercial use.

Information/Education Facilities: A rustic type of amphitheater in the parking lot area that could seat up to 30 people and be used for environmental education was approved as a conditional use. It could be covered. The committee encourages any covered facility to have a multi-use function (i.e.: both picnic and interpretive/educational) and to be limited to the appropriate size and scale for the area.

Permitted Uses: Snow shoeing (on trail); wind surfing; swimming; sailing; hand launch areas; launch ramps; floating dock (instead of pier); Cross country skiing; kayaks and canoes; hiking; mountain biking; equestrian trails; interpretive signs, trails, or kiosks; vehicle parking; roads (review location concerning environmental issues); equestrian facilities (allow parking and hitching post); paved non-motorized trail for ADA purposes (review location concerning environmental issues); composting or vault toilets (review location and design concerning environmental issues).

The committee noted that they have heard from the public that they would like to recreate at the lake (fishing, swimming, picnicking, etc.). The committee encourages “rustic” facilities to accommodate these activities.

Conditional Uses: Organized non-profit group activity, interpretive centers; environmental learning center; filming; and special events. Activities listed as “conditional uses” are those uses that need to be approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission in advance. Harvesting of shellfish, fish, and algae will be coordinated with the State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.

Children’s play area: It should be in keeping with the surrounding area and could incorporate a natural theme or could be an artistic piece that was designed to be suitable for children to play on.

Camping: The committee opposed developing camping at the lake without supervision by full-time staff. The committee decided that camping could occur in self-contained units, in the current parking lot area by special permit only. Staff must be present during the event. The Committee did not wish to see the development of a special camping area with individual campsites.

Beach Use: The Committee would like to accommodate use by the public and separate this from vehicle traffic; this is raised out of a concern for safety of all users. They expressed a vision of a clean sand or grassy area for picnic blankets, etc. by the edge of the lake and an overall reduction of the current gravel parking lot. If grass is used, there was a desire to see that it not be fertilized or irrigated, etc. as to minimize impact on the lake's ecosystem from excess nitrogen.

Boat Launch: Consideration should be given to moving the current boat launch to the east – southeast side of the parking lot. The Committee received comment that the west shore of the parking area is shallow and preferable for wading. Relocating the boat launch would better separate boaters from other users at the shoreline.

Prohibited Uses (from list provided by the State): Wood debris collection; snowmobiling; mushing/sled dogs; off trail skiing; alpine skiing; white water boating; mooring buoys; jet skiing; Nordic track skiing; rock climbing; skiing facilities; sports fields; paragliding; off trail use; ocean beach driving; orienteering; metal detecting; indoor accommodations; haying; mushroom harvesting; grazing; farming or orchards.

Management Authority: Under Council form of government, the City Council has the ultimate legal authority and sets policy direction for the City. The Mayor is charged with management responsibility for administration of all City assets under the direction of the Council. The City Council must approve all contracts, asset sales and use policies. Within this framework, it is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission suggest use policies and effectively guide management of the Recreation Area. As an amendment to the existing Anacortes Community Forest Lands Management Plan drafted in 1991, this plan will follow the same rules expressed in that document unless otherwise noted.

Lake Surface

Heart Lake is approximately 51 acres in size. It is bordered by Heart Lake Road to the east, has a large gravel parking lot on its northeastern shore, second growth forests to the north and northwest, and a significant grove of old growth trees to the south and southwest. Fidalgo Island residents have used it as a popular recreational destination for boating, fishing, swimming, mini-hydroplane racing, bird watching, and occasional ice-skating when the winter weather permits. Management of the lake surface shall take into consideration the environmental sensitivity of the adjacent upland areas.

Dock: A floating dock adjacent to the Recreation Area for non-commercial recreational use is approved provisionally with need for future discussion on location and style of dock. Consideration on the style of dock should be given to those having minimal environmental impact.

Combustion Engines: The use of combustion engines shall be discontinued on the lake, after December 31, 2007. The Committee cited the small size of the lake, the current 5 mph speed limit and the availability of other forms of non-combustion engines.

Whidbey Island Roostertails Racing Club: Starting in 2005, the Roostertails shall race one weekend per year. Their use shall phase out after December 31, 2007. This only applies to the Whidbey Island Roostertails Racing Club and does not allow other mini-hydroplane racing on the lake. The Committee would like to see this racing weekend occur on the same weekend as the Oyster Run as to consolidate the noise to one weekend per year.

Opening day of fishing on the lake: The committee acknowledges the public input to have a year-round fishery on the lake to minimize the impact of opening day. The committee asks that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission or Forest Advisory Board investigate this in the future.

Management Authority: Under Council form of government, the City Council has the ultimate legal authority and sets policy direction for the City. The Mayor is charged with management responsibility for administration of all City assets under the direction of the Council. The City Council must approve all contracts, asset sales and use policies. Within this framework, it is recommended that the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board and Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission jointly suggest use policies and effectively guide management of the lake surface. As an amendment to the existing Anacortes Community Forest Lands Management Plan drafted in 1991, this plan will follow the same rules expressed in that document unless otherwise noted.