



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

**P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
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**Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board
February 13*, 2020**

6pm

1701 22nd Street (Senior Activity Center)

Preliminary Agenda

***(Please note regular meeting date has been changed)**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Election of 2020 Board Chair
- III. Approve Minutes
- IV. Public Comments
- V. Communication/Correspondence
- VI. E-bikes: Accessibility Permit Option
- VII. Staff Reports
- VIII. Other Business

**If reasonable accommodation due to a disability is needed
contact Mac Jackson at 360-293-1918
48-hours prior to the meeting date.**

ACFL Forest Advisory Board Minutes

January 9, 2020

Members Present: Sandra Starbuck, JoAnn York-Gilmore & Brian Wetcher

Staff: Steve Phillips, Bob Vaux and Jonn Lunsford

Meeting called to order: 6:00PM by Chair Brian Wetcher.

Minutes: December 5, 2019 minutes approved as submitted.

Public Comments: Local mountain biker Tim Maricich requests that staff look into an accessibility program that would allow for those needing assistance while bicycling to permit e-bikes as an option. Staff agreed to research and follow up at the February meeting.

JoAnn York-Gilmore advises that the Parks Commission will be continuing its discussion of e-bike use on parks trails.

Stacey Curtis requests that all future Trail Committee meetings be advertised to the public in advance of the meetings. Staff agreed to this.

Communication and Correspondence: Vaux thanked Lunsford for his 19 years of exceptional ACFL management, as Vaux is now assuming that role as Lunsford enters his second year as Parks & Recreation Director.

Vaux mentioned the release of the report from Transition Fidalgo & Friends: A Monitoring Program for the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. All are encouraged to read the document. Lunsford praised the work of the group in cooperation with City of Anacortes staff, and explained the monitoring may be expanded into the ACFL lakes. There has also been some discussion of a volunteer coordinator stipend for the project.

Board will vote on its 2020 Chair at the February meeting.

Friends of the Forest Executive Director Asa Deane talked about the FOF hike coming this Saturday.

Staff reports: Phillips highlighted his written report. Questions were asked regarding enforcement policy. Lunsford mentioned that the primary goal of the ACFL staff is to educate first.

Vaux mentioned that the Planning Commission will most likely be recommending the Critical Areas Regulations to the City Council before the end of January. It is also likely that Planning and Parks staff will take up work on an ACFL Anacortes Municipal Code project that has evolved out of this process.

Other Business: Due to staff travelling to Olympia on Feb. 6th, the Board was asked and approved moving the February meeting to Thursday, Feb 13th. It will be held at the Senior Activity Center as per the norm.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:37PM

Respectfully submitted: Bob Vaux

Report for the February 2020 Forest Advisory Board Meeting

Bob Vaux, Assistant Director, Anacortes Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation Department is fielding some consistent complaints about out of season motorcycle use of the ACFL trails. We are working with the Police Department on tracking what appears to be some local residents. It would be very helpful for us if folks would first dial 911 when encountering these rogue riders, and then they are certainly welcome to call our office.

The Planning Commission did unanimously recommend the Critical Areas Ordinance to the City Council on Jan 22nd. The recommended draft does not reduce any of the various user groups or their access to the ACFL. We anticipate an ACFL Municipal Code project coming soon that we will be working on with Planning staff.

City of Everett Park Ranger David Green met with Jonn Lunsford, Brian Tottenham and myself to review Everett's handling of homelessness relevant issues. He had some great insights. We are working on following up with Mayor Gere and PD Chief John Small.

I have been increasing the frequency of my trips into the ACFL, both on and off work. Hoping to help with enforcement issues as well as rememorize the trail numbers. Recent field visits have included hazard tree evaluation along the east side of the Parkside neighborhood as well as some drainage questions below the south slopes of Mount Erie. Both issues are on-going.

Steve Phillips and I have been meeting regularly, both in the office and in the field. We typically come up with a handful of questions for Jonn, who patiently addresses them and then asks us nicely to get out of his office.

I really enjoyed the Anacortes Trail Riders work party Steve wrote about in his report.

Faithfully Submitted,

Bv /January 28, 2020

ACFL Maintenance Report JANUARY – 2020 by Steve Phillips

January 28, 2020

Happy New Year! Winter is in full swing, bringing us snow, rain, full creeks, and road closures. I spent some time this month helping the Maintenance crew with snow removal at our various city facilities. But I also got to experience some winter magic in the snowy forest. I saw snowshoe and ski tracks on several trails.

Beavers have been doing some work to clog the outflow of Heart Lake (Ace of Hearts Creek). With the help of Parks Maintenance Foreman Brian Tottenham, I have been clearing branches as they accumulate here. I have also been maintaining the functionality of the beaver deceiver at the 32nd street wetland and keeping an eye on water levels there. The Cranberry Lake dam outfall has also been building up some debris, which I now maintain to keep clear.

Snow required road closures on Mt. Erie Road (closed 1/13 – 1/21); Cranberry Lake Road (closed 1/15 – 1/20). Tragically, on 1/14 there was a traffic fatality on Heart Lake road, as reported in the Anacortes American.

Violations

Motorbike violations continue. We are experiencing calls from the community and continue to encourage people to call 911 rather than the Parks Front Desk. We have police help on this issue.

Please help me remind fellow trail users that dogs must be on leash at all times in the ACFL.

Trails – Drainage, erosion, bridges, fallen trees

Drainage issues are becoming more and more clear after the rain and snow, followed by more rain that have visited us in the last month. It is hard to maintain a puddle-free walking surface, but I had some community help (see below) this month.

A neighbor to Trail 121 has identified a minor drainage issue that may need addressing. It is similar to many of the issues that exist in the Heart Lake area.

Trees have been falling with wind, snow, and rain, but thanks to user reports I have been able to remove them in clusters to make more efficient work of them. I had fellow Park Maintenance Worker Sky Guthrie's help one particular day, when we cut and removed some larger trees blocking trails. After the snow melted, I had the help of AJ Yost to remove trees and debris on Mt Erie road, also to drag fruiting Cotoneaster branches ¼ mile out of the forest. Thanks guys!

Thanks to a City Hall call from a neighbor near Trail 208, I was alerted to some exposed rebar adjacent to the trail in places. Rebar was used in the past to anchor logs, which bordered the trail and contained gravel which was added to top-dress the otherwise muddy trail sections. As these logs rot, the rebar has become exposed. I removed some rebar yesterday, where the logs are firmly anchored and the rebar posed a hazard, and will keep an eye on it elsewhere. It's especially a problem where puddles form on the trail, then walkers step on the worn trailside logs rather than walking through the puddles.

Invasive Species

I need to add English Laurel to the list from last month. It has made its way into the ACFL. So far I have only encountered it in the Ace of Hearts watershed near Trail 23, but now I'll be on the lookout for it elsewhere. It stands out this time of year, like Holly, because it is an evergreen and grows taller than Salal.

I found a forest opening near Sugarloaf that has about 50 Scotch Broom individuals. This may be a good volunteer project.

I also found a sizable stand of Holly along Trail 28 that needs removing. This may be a re-occurrence of a past population.

Miscellaneous Good News

Red-legged frogs have begun courtship calling in the secluded wetlands of the woods.

Asa Deane of the Friends of the Forest and I enjoyed a windy, rainy, and slushy hike up Sugarloaf. Even the nastiest weather conditions are suitable for a hike in the ACFL with good company!

Last Saturday, 8 volunteers from the Fidalgo Trail Riders joined Bob Vaux and me. Using hand tools, the group helped to relieve some drainage issues on Trail 10 and branching out from there, completing loops around Big Beaver Pond and Little Beaver Pond. If you noticed more hikeable conditions there, you have them to thank. This was the first project of two (so far) scheduled this quarter, and I appreciate the group's enthusiasm for maintaining quality conditions for all user groups.

An open-to-the-public work party is scheduled for Saturday, February 8 from 9am-11am. We will meet at the Heart Lake parking lot. We will be cleaning up litter along Heart Lake Road, so let's hope for great weather!



Fidalgo Trail Riders Work Party, January 25, 2020