

Agenda

Checkerboard Partnership

March 26, 2024 – 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Session Objectives:

1. Cle Elum Ridge Update
2. Teanaway Comm. Forest Update
3. Funding Update

Attendees: Mitch Long, Darcy Batura, Larry Stauffer, Nicky Pasi, Gary Berndt, Judy Hallisey, Patty O’Hearn, Catherine Waterston.

Cle Elum Ridge Community Forest Update

- MOU signed between KCT, TNC, DFW, DNR, Kittitas County
 - The MOU working group met in March with service provider partners including DFW law enforcement, DNR wildlands fuels and fire, public works, and waste management. Kittitas Sherriff couldn’t attend due to a shooting event in Ellensburg.
 - The group heard about management of trash, which is much higher than the national average, with a lot of trash coming from visitors and recreation. All departments are seeing pressure from increased recreation.
 - Next meeting is April 24th and will include the Sheriff and search and rescue staff.
 - The group will also discuss potential motorized use at the next meeting. Marc Toenyan from the Northwest Motorcycle Association will attend. The group is in the information gathering stage.
 - There are concerns on recreation impacts to traffic and roads, particularly on the weekends. Concerns over maintenance of County roads and emergency response. There are similar concerns around housing developments in the area. “If they build it they will come, if we don’t build it, they still will come.”
 - If the Cle Elum Ridge transfers into state ownership, it will flip a switch on recreation. We need to understand how to best prepare for this. The MOU group is considering parking, headquarters for search and rescue, and other public benefits.
 - Interaction with short-term rentals. The County has put together an advisory committee on short-term rentals. The group has heard that they are going to put out an additional call for committee members. The CPPC should think about how to stay engaged with that process.
 - The CPPC will continue to be a good sounding board for community needs.
 - KCT had initial meeting with DNR and DFW to talk about what the community partnership will look like moving forward. Clarifying KCTs role in supporting the community forest effort, local community involvement, and overall management of the forest.
- Public Funding Update

- We haven't heard yet if our Forest Legacy Large Landscape funding request was successful. Another round of funding is opening next week and the team is deliberating the best approach.
- We did hear that the LWCF Funding is official. This \$12million funding award will permanently protect the 30,00 acres in the Taneum watershed. Press release [here](#).
- We plan to do a communications push when the transaction work to the Forest Service is complete.
- Private Stewardship Fund Update
 - TNC released an RFP to help scope the development of a private fund that could support the ongoing operations and maintenance costs associated with the addition of Cle Elum Ridge to the Teanaway Community Forest.
 - Sustainable Northwest was selected and the project is underway.
- Outreach Subcommittee Meeting
 - We discussed creating a short teaser video for TCF that can be shown at Roslyn theatre and used in social media. Intent is to get more people to view outreach materials already developed. There is a possibility of a broader film night in advance of the Trail Fest event by Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust. The outreach subcommittee will evaluate a proposal submitted by North 40 Productions that includes campaign suggestions on how to reengage the community on the project.

Teanaway Community Forest

- Teanaway Advisory Committee meeting – next meeting is April 18th.

Funding

- KCT held fund remains stable, no withdrawals. KCT exploring a short-term CD but needs board authorization.
- RCO Community Forest Phase II grant application is underway, due May 1st. KCT board is requiring DNR co-sponsorship of the application. KCT and DNR are working together on this.
 - Do we need to engage any/all public lands commissioner candidates on the project? Hillary Franz is supportive of the project and this application will be submitted soon. We are working on who at DNR can serve as a champion for this project. DNR submitted the Forest Legacy grant application and will need match.
 - Window for tours is limited. We will revisit candidate tours in June/July.
 - We will take cues from the YBIP lands subcommittee as well.
- RCO Community Forest Program was successful in receiving funding for the remaining projects in the last round this legislative session.
 - There is a caveat with the Climate Commitment Act and the ballot measure this Fall that aims to revoke the CCA. All funding that depends on CCA won't be granted unless the CCA is upheld this Fall.
 - There will be an outreach campaign around this.