

## **CPPC 6.30.2020**

### **Meeting Attendees:**

Kayla Gallentine, Brian Straniti, Darcy Batura, Jane Kiker, Patty O'Hearne, Nicky Pasi, Melissa Speeg, Mitch Long, Gary Berndt, Nancy Lillquist, Martha Wyckoff, Larry Leach, Jaime Bayse, Lyons, and Judy Hallisey.

### **Cle Elum Ridge Grant Scenarios**

A review of Affordable and realistic first acquisition scenarios, was presented including maps, funding match scenarios of 25%-40% depending on grants applied to (federal, etc.), and land acquisition choices. This led to a discussion of Land-Match credits. See Jane Kiker for more details.

The committee discussed saving the core areas for last to strengthen the case of acquiring less visible properties like Taneum (we don't want to lose it). Because the Taneum is so remote/dispersed it might be difficult to organize acquisition. In addition, the Cabin Creek Working Forest project is concurrent, and therefore right now might be a good time to acquire the core community use area (Cle Elum Ridge). The Ridge is under high threat (May also be highest threat for development), but it can also be used a carrot to rally the community to acquire more of the CCF.

#### **What is the time frame for this acquisition timeline?**

RCO programs are bi-annual (every 2-years), of which may happen this year. That funding would come through within 1-year after the submitted application is approved (next summer/fall). Usually, these grant a 3-year agreement period to acquire property after funding is granted. We need an application ready to go by September 2020.

Investors of the LLC have a preference favoring a systematic approach of community land transferal with a preferred starting point from the south.

For example, acquisition should start with 14, 15, 16 (project A/4), due to its recreation popularity, adjacency to Roslyn Urban Forest, Teanaway Community Forest, and accessibility. Maybe section 16 from the ridge combined with section 11 and or 13 from Taneum, you'd get a win from both the non-moto and moto recreation communities. From the Towns to Teanaway perspective, the highest priority blocks would be 5-9. The Rock is in section 9, which is a main viewpoint and shareholder tour spot. The community forest needs to spread the benefits around to the moto groups, and focus on the existing trails, rather than looking ahead to future phased trail work (ie the Cle Elum connections). But 9 is priority for the West Fork link with the TCF.

**Is the threat for development equal between 7,8,9 and 16, 15, 14 or is one area more at risk?**

Overall, the risks they face are about the same. However, we have seen many roads that go to the southern sections, and those property values aren't staying level – right now they are seeing a substantial property value increase. In addition, there is active development (including potential industrial) happening adjacent to parcels 14/15, so we might be right to target those first!

**Are there individuals/entities will to make project investment holdings?**

For now, the threat is out there someday. In the meantime, we are managing those sections and will not be selling to developing them. At some [point though, if other conservation groups might be considered for ownership/management transferal. If the conservation easement is created, then the threat is taken away. They were set up so that they could match up against each other. the conservation easement from Forest Legacy could be the match for the RCO grant

**Is the order of Roslyn ridge sale parcels (7,8,9) first a deal breaker?**

It's not out of the question but needs compelling argument due to concerns that ongoing parcel acquirement will slow down or stop. It's not a no go, but it's a strong preference. The advantage of pursuing the ridge first – fund raising is more likely to come through for highly visible and used spaces from different groups. However, we don't want the middle connecting parcels to go before the rest of the lands to the south.

We should move forward with another conservation easement (would reduce value that CCF has to pay for those sections/strip value for development/left over timber value etc). Kittitas Working Forest in Easton is example. A Forest Legacy proposal might be an appropriate approach to acquiring the ridge. It's essentially a DNR Grant application, funding would go to DNR to buy the easement from LLC. Is there compelling reason for acquirement to go through if no threat of development?

It was suggested that we hold off on the DNR easement until after it is purchased fee title, that way the easement will allow for protection in perpetuity. In exploring Conservation Easement and other creative alternative ideas, there may be other entities who could hold the Conservation Easement or find some addition new holding funds with Program Related Investments. If there's such urgency, are there other entities that could join in?

If we take off the risk of development, we could focus on local control. But will granting agencies see the viability of that? The RCO grant program doesn't place a huge value on threat of development (not essential under threat of conversation), however Forest Legacy needs that pressure. But there is the issue of it ranking higher for risk.

In regards to fuel break work valuing landscape, Taneum has a difficult topography for fuel breaks, but there is a lot of great fuel break work being done on Cle Elum Ridge. TNC just completed a mastication project up to mid-road with DNR and has funding to do an additional 500 acres. The Taneum currently has some small thinning projects taking place, but no official fire breaks.

There is a tentative scheduled (July 14<sup>th</sup>) tour of Vic Monahan's community/Monahan mountain which provides a viewshed into the Cabin Creek drainage. Application is due by end of August, need for letters of support (county, cities, Yakama Nation, etc.)

Once land is acquired, it would make sense to have a staff person to manage the community forest as parcels come online. PDA's usually have a paid staff person, sometimes half-time, sometimes county payroll (though this is not likely in Kittitas). We need more volunteers to expand our committee's workload, or fundraise for paid staff or consultants

### **Outreach and Engagement Group discusses Comms Plan**

**Accomplishments: one pager, website, survey, comms plan, social media in the works**

We need at least 2 weeks in phase 1 (initial outreach): project sheet, website, press release, social media presence (FB page, content), editorial meeting with Ellensburg newspaper.

We need to explore what businesses to contact throughout the county (sites with extended/accessible hours) who are open to hosting survey drop boxes:

-Cle Elum bakery and Owens Meats?

-Post Office in upper county, residents go there regularly. Don't forget about the Cities of Kittitas and Thorp, Roslyn, Ronald, and S. Cle Elum all PO.

-South Cle Elum post office

-Farm and Home in Cle Elum

-an address for mail in? email return?

-Suncadia?

The meeting ended with Delegating tasks for outreach. Contact Brian Straniti and Melissa Speeg for more details.

Is the group ready to go forward with

Host is sharing poll results

1. What is your vote

