

**Clallam County Trails Advisory Committee (TAC)
February 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

A. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting was called to order and conducted via video/phone conferencing.

Members Present: Andy Stevenson (Chair), Gordon Taylor (Vice-Chair), Jennifer Reandeau, Justin Zarzeczny, Gary Gleason, Dick Gritman, Kat Sample, Charlie Commeree, Erik Rohrer, Bill Biery, Jim Mraz, and Lorrie Mittman.

County Representatives: Steve Gray, County Public Works Dept. (Ex-officio TAC member)
Mike French, County Commissioner
Jeff Ralston, Trails Maintenance/Volunteer Coordinator

Guest Speakers (Discussion Item F.1): Related to Discussion Item #1: Jeff Bohman, President, Peninsula Trails Coalition (PTC) and Steve Durrant, Consultant

B. MODIFICATIONS/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

Add nominations and vote for the 2023 Chair and Vice-Chair under business items.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Member Taylor motioned to approve and Member Gritman seconded approval of the December 7, 2022, meeting minutes as submitted, which were approved without objection.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Introduced and welcomed Jeff Ralston who is the new County Trails Maintenance/Volunteer Coordinator. He started in mid-December. Jeff previously worked on the Thursday trail crew as a volunteer for 8 years.
- Introduced and welcomed Mike French, Clallam County Commissioner (District 3), who will serve as the County Commissioner liaison to the Trails Advisory Committee. Commissioner French noted that he has always been a huge fan of the Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT).
- Welcomed Meggan Uecker, City of Sequim, Kenton Hotsko, PTC Trail Maintenance, and Rich James, PTC Board Member and also former County Transportation and ODT Planner.
- Member Mittman announced upcoming February ODT trails events including the February 18 Run the Peninsula and the February 25 Frosty Moss.
- Chair Stevenson indicated he has observed a decrease in maintenance response this winter on the ODT-Spruce Railroad trail segment citing numerous trees across trail, which is unusual for Olympic National Park (ONP). Requested contact be made with ONP.

E. TRAIL PROJECT AND MAINTENANCE REPORTS

1. ODT improvement/expansion project updates.

ODT-Forks to La Push: Member Gray noted that the County Commissioners approved extension of the \$250,000 2022 County Lodging Tax Grant that is being used as match to the County's state grant for trail corridor acquisition for this segment. He also noted that County Commissioners approved the 2023 Lodging Tax Grant for another \$250,000 to also support land acquisition and, if funding remains, for ODT trail maintenance such as widening/resurfacing up to a mile section of older trail in eastern Clallam County or replacing the Whiskey Creek Bridge on the Olympic Adventure Trail.

Member Gray provided updates related to continued negotiations of trail corridor acquisition related to the over six miles across Rayonier properties. He also noted that FHWA-Western Federal Lands is gearing up to conduct topographic survey work west of the Bogachiel River Bridge to the ONP boundary.

Chair Stevenson asked in terms of future timber management whether Rayonier would be cutting up to the trail or to the edge of the proposed trail easement boundary. Member Gray responded that the County is requesting to purchase a 150-foot trail corridor and not requesting any restriction outside of the corridor related to timber harvesting.

Dean Creek Bridge: Member Gray noted that the Jamestown S' Klallam Tribe has a final design for the replacement bridge abutments and has submitted for a Hydraulic Permit approval from the state.

Other Discussion: Member Mittman inquired about the need for addressing the crossing of Bagley Creek related to safety. Member Gray indicated that this issue is an identified project in the RAISE Grant Application. He also welcomed input for any short-term recommendations (e.g., additional signage, fencing). Chair Stevenson recommended Committee members think of short-term recommendations and schedule as a future agenda discussion item.

2. *County Volunteer ODT/OAT Trail Crew Maintenance Project Reports*

Two work parties were held in December and three in January. Four of the work parties were held on the OAT including: (1) tread work and curb log replacement in the vicinity of M.P. 1; (2) tread, drainage, and curb log work east of Joyce Piedmont Road crossing; and (3) drainage and curb log work east of the Graul Ramapo Road trail crossing. In January, the volunteer crew also did fence repairs east of the ODT-McDonald Creek Crossing.

Jeff Ralston reported that upcoming work party efforts will include continued drainage/tread work east of the OAT- Graul Ramapo Road trail crossing plus installation of one or two 1 or 2 culverts and curb logs. The County delivered three yards of gravel to support the project. He also noted that more tread work will be done in the vicinity of the recent clear-cut area around M.P. 14, with the County delivering 10 yards of gravel. Jeff noted that prior to COVID work parties of 20-25 people were common during nice weather, but during COVID dropped to an average of 6 to 7 people. He was happy to report that work parties over the last two weeks had 12 volunteers and that tomorrow's work party would have 14 volunteers.

Member Mittman suggested using PTC social media about the Thursday crew to get more recruitment and volunteered to help coordinate.

3. *County ODT/OAT Maintenance Project Reports:*

Member Gray reported that Jeff has been working in the field since his hire in mid-December doing a wide variety of trail maintenance activities.

4. *Other ODT/OAT Reports:*

Member Taylor noted that PTC is using their power broom now for trail sweeping in preparation for the Frosty Moss. Chair Stevenson noted he has been impressed with trail conditions over the winter.

Chair Stevenson asked for any upcoming timber cuts on state forest lands along the Olympic Adventure Trail. Member Zarzeczny, Dept. of Natural Resources, responded that sales are happening, but there are no definite start dates at this time to report. Discussion followed.

F. DISCUSSION AND BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. *Puget Sound to Pacific (PS2P) Collaborative:*

Member Gray introduced this discussion item noting that three partnering non-profits—Bainbridge Island Parks and Trails Foundation, North Kitsap Trails Association, and Peninsula Trails Coalition are working with interested local and state agencies across Clallam, Jefferson and Kitsap Counties to prepare an application for a federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant. The focus of this application is for “planning and design work only (i.e., not acquisition or construction)” related to gaps in the Sound to Olympics Trail and the Olympic Discovery Trail. He introduced Jeff Bohman, PTC Board President, and Steve Durrant, Consultant for the PS2P Collaborative to provide an overview of the RAISE grant application in progress.

Mr. Bohman began to first state that this is the 35th anniversary of PTC and that they are planning to hold a big celebration on October 1. He then provided an overview of the PS2P Collaborative. He noted that PTC and two other non-profits committed \$50K each to hire a consultant team to work with jurisdictions to prepare the RAISE application. Steve Durrant, Consultant, followed to provide an overview of the RAISE grant application and requirements. The application is due February 28, 2023.

Discussion and Q/A followed including:

- Will RAISE grants be a potential funding source for future construction phases. Response: Yes.
- Can surveying be done under this RAISE grant. Response: Yes.
- Who will be the lead applicant for the RAISE application? Response: Still working on that. Lead applicant must be a qualifying jurisdiction. Considerable committee discussion followed.

Member Commeree motioned that the Committee vote to encourage the Commissioners to be the lead applicant. Chair Stevenson requested to hold the motion for discussion and explained why this grant was important and a unique partnership/grassroot effort. He then went back to the motion and requested it be amended: to advocate to Commissioners to accept the responsibility of lead applicant; that this Committee firmly and completely endorses this application; and that the Commissioners firmly and completely devote the resources, the time and the energy necessary to get the best application put together. Member Commeree accepted amendment. Members Taylor and Gleason seconded the motion.

Commissioner French indicated that his first preference is that Kitsap County be lead in that they have more bandwidth and a lot more need to do the trail planning to make connections happen. He also heard there may be a potential lead partnership between the City of Bainbridge Island and City of Port Angeles as a viable option. For his voice, if no one puts their name as lead applicant, yes, I want Clallam County to be that lead applicant. Believes the application is extremely promising. Member Gray added that County staff is already been working with PTC and their consultant team. He indicated that the County Commissioners will be getting a similar briefing on the RAISE Grant application on February 13 with a request for the County to provide a letter of support as co-applicant and perhaps now lead applicant.

The motion passed with all in favor.

2. *2023 Chair and Vice Chair Nominations*

Chair Stevenson asked for self-nominations with preference that someone else assume the chair position. There were no nominations.

Chair Stevenson agreed for last time to be chair.

Call for nominations for vice-chair. Current Vice-Chair Taylor indicated willingness to continue. willing.

No further nominations were made, and Chair Stevenson and Vice-Chair Taylor terms were extended for 2023 with no one in opposition.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

H. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:55 p.m.