

**Mt. Emily Recreation Area (MERA)**  
**Joint Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**May 4, 2021**

**AGENDA**

- Convene **6:00 PM**
- **Attendance/ Introductions:** Attendance/ Introductions: Sean Chambers, Chris Evans, Mark Barber, Elaine La Rochelle, Meg Cooke, Hazel Livermore, Raymond Johnson, Logan McCrae, Bill Gamble, Forrest Warren, Jon Paustian, Katrina Gaines
- Guests: Sean Learner, Ed Mosiman, Lannce Colburn, Amy Yielding
  
- **Public Comment (10 Minutes):**  
Bart Barlow – Lower Hotshot trail. Last year fixed 3 corners. Someone removed geo-fabric and pipe and messed up the corner. Bart repaired it but was wondering why corner was destroyed.  
Sean Lerner – There is a lot of traffic going up Owsley Canyon and feels unsafe riding a bike on the road with vehicle traffic. Would like to see an alternative route to separate uses. Sean Chambers has been looking at options. Chris Evens may be some funding opportunities to develop something adjacent to the roadway. “Share the Road” signs could help.
  
- **Minutes** of Last Meeting 2-3-2021  
**Bill Gamble motion to approve. Jon Paustian Second. All in favor.**

**TOPICS**

- **Winter Recreation- Closure of 202 Mt Emily Road to motorized access**  
Cross-country skiers would like to close Mt. Emily Rd from the 203 intersection up to top of Mt Emily Rd during winter conditions to motorized equipment such as snowmobiles or tracked machines. When the snowmobiles come through, it makes it too icy to ski. Skiers do not like the ruts. Snowshoes also create issues and can post hole the ski track.

Union County Public Works controls the use and considers Mt Emily Road a multi-use public access road. There is a lot of historical use by snowmobiles.

Might be able to do some education about sharing. Think a trail should be developed for snowshoes so they do not use Mt Emily Road. Link trail could make a good snowshoe route and reduce amount of use of road.

- **Sunscreen dispenser at Owsley Trailhead**  
Amy Yielding. Sister passed away 3 years ago from melanoma. Would like to help raise awareness of melanoma and encourage use of sunscreen. Got a donation from the Hospital. Have found sunscreen dispensers and sponsors to pay to purchase and maintain them. Either Amy or someone from Blue Mt Singletrack Trails Club would maintain them. Looking at putting at Owsley

Parking area. Touchless battery operated. Would remove in the winter. Doing one at another city park in La Grande.

**Hazel made Motion for trial of one station at Owsley Canyon until winter. Meg second. All in favor.** Need to work with Sean Chambers for installation.

- **Oregon State Parks – Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant proposal-proposal ideas**

Blue Mountain Singletrack Club wants to develop a downhill mt. bike trail that would go from Mt Emily road to top of Red Ledge. Sean Chambers is wondering if there are other trail projects to submit a larger grant. Otherwise Sean Lerner will submit it by the club. Application is due by June 15. Did not get funding for trail kiosk that was discussed in last meeting. Ian said RTP Grant can fund CXT Vault toilets at Trailheads. Need to improve ADA access to existing vault toilets.

*Note: grant was not submitted and scope project needs more development.*

- **Forest Management Update-**

- Red Apple Forest Improvement Project – expanded area to treat all of the area south of Igo Land and east of Archer Lane. Put out to bid this summer and carry out project in winter when there is snow on the ground.
- Mainline Firebreak  
Complete early June, late snow slowed progress, 201 Mainline Road remains closed to protect road until firm.
- 3120 Firebreak  
Completed, will burn slash once it snows.
- Bill Logan and Sean are working together on an application to do some more project work on fire prevention in the area.

- **Trail Adoption Update- Sean Lerner BMSTC**

Have about 35 people who have adopted individual trails on MERA. People are excited to help out. Zig Zag, Rough Riders and Sasquatch have been worked on. Have purchased snow groomer for skiers. Had above average snowfall in the spring so really put it to use. Learned a lot. Groomed Archer, Upper Hotshot and MERA Loop. It was a huge hit. Hikers and skiers both loved it. Looking to get more funds to expand next year.

- **Training-**

Working on setting up equipment training for volunteer operators of excavators and skid steer. Also looking at setting up chainsaw training. Also want to do trail maintenance training. Looking at doing a 1 hour safety and trail building class at the start of the next work party on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- **Volunteer Trail Work Days**

Non-motorized May 22 at Owsley Canyon Trailhead

## Motorized June 5 at Fox Hill Trailhead

- **Projects Update**  
Shelter for winter skiing. BMSTC have funded it. Built it last week. Waiting for roofing materials and should be finished next week.
- **Other Business-**
- Date of Next Meeting: August 3 at 6PM  
Meeting Schedule; First Tuesday of February, May, August, November
- Public Comment (10 minutes):  
Bart Barlow – Question and discussion about submitting RTP Grants.  
Question about livestock grazing. There were 2 proposals...sheep grazing or having more sections, which will need more fencing. COVID has made this difficult to move forward.  
Non-motorized trail guide is almost done.  
Should look at putting in a new trailhead to provide access to MERA because County is getting some funds for infrastructure.
- Adjourn **7:30 PM**