

Mt. Emily Recreation Area (MERA)
Joint Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Agenda

- Convene @ 6:00 PM- Daniel Chaplin Building Conference Room at 1001 4th street

- Public comment- (3 minutes per individual)

- **Kathy Webb, cross county skier.** Work at hospital. Love the area. At upper MERA at 202 and 203 split, the skiers are having an issue with tracked vehicles creating ruts that is making it dangerous. Need to “snow plow” for skiers to stop. Issue is on steeper sections of road. There is no place to get around other tracks. Ski trails should be 8-10 feet wide. Need to make shared recreation safer for everyone. Propose an amendment. Tracked vehicles don’t need 202 fork and can use 203 road and have 45 miles of routes to access.
- **Meg Cooke – skiers for safe recreation.** Been told can’t close road 202 (Mt Emily Road). County commissioners have the authority to close roads for safety. Have off road map that can be amended. Master Management Plan – Identifies some motorized access on lower portion of the property. 203 provides access to the forest. There is now more snow mobile use since wheeled vehicles are not allowed. The banks are very steep and deep making it dangerous. Want to enforce only local use.
- **David Kommosi, skier.** Worked for a land management agency for 40 years. Watched areas get ignored and get worse and worse. In favor of restrictions of tracked vehicles.

- Approve Minutes of last meeting November 1, 2022 Tyler made motion to approve.

Katrina second. All in favor.

Topics

- **New coordinator introduction- Doug Wright.** Josh Ford is the new recreation coordinator.

- **Track Trails Proposal- Eric Valentine. Oregon Parks River.** Based in Portland but covers statewide. Have a proposal for “Tracked Trails” in MERA. No cost to MERA. Started in North Carolina and spread up and down the east coast. Starts with a sign and has info to encourage discover of wildlife. Kids can record what they did and report back and earn cards with a carabiner. Four types of brochures. First 8,000 brochures are free. After that, county would have to pay for brochures. Would want to use the Red Apple Trail. Install sign and identify trails that they can use. JB motion to approve based on a 2-year trial basis. Elaine Second. All in favor.

- **Red Apple Forest Improvement project/Area closure update- Doug Wright.** The whole area is open to use. Have issues with accessing cultural sites, over the snow, with the warmer weather. Need colder conditions to continue working. Have about 2-3 weeks of work left to do. Wait and see. Could potentially finish in July/August. Will likely be open for the rest of the winter. Could potentially finish with hand work to protect cultural sites. Need to work with SHPO and Tribes.

- **Non motorized Parking Fee Program Report- Tyler Brooks.** Committee met twice. Committee recommended a parking fee program. Would be on lower staging areas and Mt Emily Road. Concern...Don't want to price people out of it. But if done well could be ok. Ian talked about Hood River Program. JB If marketed correctly could work well if it is convenient. Mark – what dollar amount? Probably \$5 per day, \$30 per year. Tyler Motion: the subcommittee recommends that the county move forward with implementing a parking fee program at the non motorized trail heads on MERA and Mt Emily Road. Second by Jordan. All in favor. Further discussion, was the county would start working on a parking fee and run the details past the Advisory Committee.

- **Trail amendments to Fractured Zone- Ed Mosiman.** Want new entrance. Existing trail has some uphill sections. Allows separation from uphill and downhill traffic. Would be more of a modern trail design which allows people to climb up and ride downhill. 70-yard trail to

connect to other trails. Want to clean up/rehab trails that aren't being used. Pretty easy to build. Very sustainable trail. Would want to try to build in the spring. Potential to flag trail and give people a week or two to review. Sean motion to approve trail pending flagging the trail and allowing a walk thru for committee members and general consensus. Scott Second all in favor.

- **Improvements to Honor Roll Jump line- Ed Mosiman.** Want to build more progressive jumps for people to learn how to jump. About 3 feet high. About 15 feet long.

- **327 Extension construction- Mark Barber.** This will make 99% of single track trail loop. Finally have cultural approval. Will work on this summer.

- **Chairman Nominations- Forrest Warren,** Motion Ty, Katrina Second. All in favor.

- **Coordinator's plans and direction- Josh Ford,** trying to get agenda out 2 weeks before meetings.

- **MERA Master Plan –** Looking at process to update plan. Will work on section by section. Will approve each section and move onto next session. Potential for public input.

Discussion about proposal to close road 202. About 4 miles. Doug: need a formal process. Need to research road jurisdiction. Want to create a sub-committee to look at the issues. Want to make it an agenda item for May. Motion by Elaine second by Katrina to move forward. All in favor.

Future Business

-**Advisory positions to expire/ renewal Dec. 2023-** Josh Ford. Have open seats for motorized and livestock.

-Need to update map.

Next meeting- Tuesday, May 2, 2023

Meeting Schedule; First Tuesday of May, August, November

Adjourn at 7:44pm