

**Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation (OARR) Strategic Plan
Trust Beneficiaries Meeting**

January 11, 2024 | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Final Summary v. 2/28/2024

Attendees

Beneficiaries:

Bruce Leiper, Clallam County Fire District 4
Meghan Dunn, Snohomish County
Russ Pfeiffer, Mount Baker School District
Robyn Denson, Pierce County
Rod Lamb, Whatcom County Parks
Rod Fleck, City of Forks
Amy Cruver, Pierce County
Dana Rosenbach, North Mason School District
Ben Pacheco, Clallam County District Fire 4
Asa Leckie, Skamania County District 3
Michael Bello, Pacific County
Dan Huff, Clallam County
Lee Tisher, Wahkiakum County
Mark Ozias, Clallam County
Laura Osiadacz, Kittitas County
Alex Wisniewski, Kitsap County

Irene Weber, Kitsap County
Bobby McCalden, Pe Ell School District
Lori Zoller, Klickitat County
Matt Comisky, American Forest Resources Council
Haylee Anderson, Kitsap County
Richard Mahar, Skamania County District 4
Connie Beauvais, Port of Port Angeles
Paul Jewell, Washington State Association of Counties
Marcia Kelbon, Jefferson County Fire Protection District 2
Gregory Bellamy, Clallam County Fire District 5
David Durante, Sno-Isle Libraries
Tom Lannen, Skamania County

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR):

Andrea Martin	Jayana Marshall	Steve Ogden
Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn	Kyle Pomranky	Mark Arneson
Sarah Ogden	Courtney James	Laurie Bergvall
Ben Cooksey	Brody Coval	
Doug Kennedy	Stephanie Margheim	

Triangle Associates (facilitators):

Thomas Christian	Alex Sweetser	Madeline Brooks
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Welcome and Introductions

The workshop facilitator introduced the DNR staff and the Triangle Associates facilitation team (Triangle). A meeting recording and presentation slides can be viewed on the [OARR webpage linked here](#). The facilitator asked participants to introduce themselves and their affiliation.

The facilitator reviewed the meeting materials and agenda for the meeting, which included a presentation, a Q&A, and two discussion sessions. The objectives of the meeting are for participants to:

- Hear an overview of the OARR Strategic Plan and how recreation is currently managed on DNR trust and non-trust lands.
- Discuss how to manage the growing demand for access and recreation while meeting responsibilities to trust-beneficiaries.
- Listen to an overview of the draft goals for the plan, developed after engaging Tribes and Board of Natural Resources.
- Provided input on how to achieve the draft goals.

Update and Overview of DNR OARR Process/Timeline

Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn, Recreation and Conservation Division Manager, gave a presentation on DNR-managed lands, responsibilities to trust beneficiaries, Tribes reserved rights to state lands, and the Multiple-Use Act that allows recreation on DNR-managed lands. See the presentation linked on the OARR webpage.

Andrea Martin introduced herself as DNR's Statewide Recreation Manager. She reviewed trends in outdoor recreation across state-managed lands in Washington. From 2019 to 2020, visitor use has increased on DNR-managed lands more than on lands managed by other Washington state agencies. DNR is acquiring data for subsequent years, and observations suggest that current visitation levels remain higher than pre-2019 levels. Andrea explained DNR's Recreation Program is funded through a patchwork of sources and many of the sources are highly uncertain since they are from the Legislature, competitive grants, and waning gas tax revenue. At current levels, DNR does not receive enough funds to maintain existing recreation infrastructure or managed current use levels. Andrea reviewed DNR's current recreation planning hierarchy and how one purpose of the OARR Strategic Plan is to fill the need for a statewide strategic plan to guide landscape level plans.

Andrea gave an overview of the OARR Strategic Plan engagement process (see slide 21). DNR will hold public meetings in January and early February and statewide partner workshops in March 2024. She noted this strategic plan is a priority of the Commissioner of Public Lands, and DNR intends to publish the final draft with the Commissioner's signature late this year. Public review periods are anticipated in late summer or fall of this year.

Andrea reviewed the OARR Strategic Plan's Purpose Statement and Goals. The meeting facilitator opened the floor for Q&A based on the DNR's presentation.

Q&A

- **Goal Priority:** In response to questions regarding goal priorities, DNR explained the goals are not ranked in order of importance and all goals in the strategic plan are equally important. All goals should be met through this plan, and each will be addressed with equal weight.
- **Actions to Achieve Goals:** In response to a question about prioritization of actions to meet the OARR Strategic Plan goals, DNR noted situations may arise where actions to meet different goals need to be prioritized during implementation. However, the goals do not represent an implementation plan. Instead, DNR will collect ideas on how to achieve these goals through outreach with Tribes, beneficiaries, recreation partners, and the public. DNR will take this

feedback to generate strategies that will inform future actions and initiatives, which will be prioritized by the agency after the OARR Strategic Plan is complete.

- **Funding Actions:** In response to a question about how funding availability influences what work DNR does, DNR explained that currently the availability of grant dollars does influence the priority of agency actions. However, DNR is exploring multiple funding sources to have more control over the actions they prioritize, especially around maintenance of recreation assets. DNR noted this is an area for growth as DNR's Recreation Program looks for various sources of funding moving forward.
- **State Agency Coordination:** A participant suggested DNR partner with Washington State Parks to provide more recreation opportunities and focus recreation locally.
- **User Groups:** In response to a question about how DNR is engaging with all user groups, DNR explained planning occurs on multiple levels (statewide, landscape, and local) and this is the agency's first statewide recreation and outdoor access strategic planning effort. DNR is focusing statewide engagement with three groups: 1) Beneficiaries, 2) Tribes, and 3) Recreation partners and the public. Beneficiaries include junior taxing districts, counties, and local communities. DNR is engaging with as many groups as possible and is highly receptive to ideas and feedback about additional groups to engage with.
- **Working Forests Language:** Participants recommended the OARR Purpose Statement be updated to include information about DNR's trust responsibilities to maintain working forest lands for beneficiaries. One of them recommended adding "protects, *without diminishing*, working forests" to the statement. DNR welcomed the feedback noting these are draft goals, which can be updated.
- **Balancing Land Use:** A participant noted that working forests should not be exclusively used for recreation since recreation and timber are not mutually exclusive uses. If appropriately planned, additional areas can be opened to recreation access without impacting harvest for beneficiaries.
- **Education on Working Forests:** A participant recommended including a goal to educate recreation users about working forests and the importance of DNR-managed lands for local communities. DNR suggested this could be a strategy under Goal 3.
- **Goal 3 Clarification:** In response to a question, DNR clarified the term "barrier" in Goal 3 has a broad meaning to include a range of social conditions that make it challenging for communities to access the outdoors.
- **Tribal Agreements:** In response to a question, DNR acknowledged they are unsure if Tribal engagement will result in formal agreements with Tribes. DNR and Tribes share similar concerns about recreation impacts to natural resources. DNR has existing access agreements with Tribes that do not require legislative approval, but other forms of formal agreements may need a decision from the legislature.
- **Tribal Rights:** In response to questions, DNR explained that Tribes have expressed concern with the amount of recreation visitation occurring on DNR-managed lands and associated impacts to wildlife and Treaty Resources and other reserved rights. DNR aims to better understand where people recreate and where impacts may occur to better address these tribal concerns.

Discuss Management of Recreation on Trust-lands

The facilitator opened a discussion for trust beneficiaries to consider the questions listed below:

- How can DNR manage growing access and recreation demand while meeting trust responsibilities?
- What does success (in the OARR Strategic Plan) look like?
- What issues need to be addressed to achieve success?

Feedback was tracked through a Mural digital whiteboard. A final copy of the whiteboard is [linked here](#) for reference and attached at the end of this summary as *Attachment A*. Responses included the following high-level themes:

Economics and Revenue Generation

- **Alternative Revenue Sources:** Generate revenue from recreation and explore additional revenue sources such as collecting more funds from recreational permitting, generating funds from carbon banking, and collecting increased state funding from general tax dollars, the Discover Pass, or Gas Tax revenue. DNR noted some of these suggestions may require change by the Legislature.
- **Climate Solutions:** Explore using a variety of tools including land acquisitions, legislative statutory changes, and board policy changes, where possible and applicable to implement carbon banking and sequestration for revenue generation. Ensure implementation of this policy does not impact harvest of and/or revenue generated from existing working lands for beneficiaries, especially junior taxing districts where possible.
- **Balance Rural and Urban Benefits:** Balance recreation access and revenue generation to meet the unique needs of specific counties. Identify costs that can limit recreational access to DNR-managed land for local communities.
- **Endangered Species Act (ESA) Encumbered Lands:** Ensure counties with encumbered lands due to endangered species listings do not experience further negative impacts to revenue generation by potential changes to recreation management or DNR's land management policies.
- **Maintaining Working Forests:** Identify properties better suited for recreation to ensure timber harvest properties can be managed efficiently. Note that disrupting timber harvesting cycles can lead to lack of sustainable funding in the future.
- **Local Services:** Create funding for local emergency medical service (EMS), search and rescue (SAR), and law enforcement, to support an increased recreation related demand for local services.

Education

- **Trail and Recreation Etiquette:** Install more kiosks and signage and implement education programs to educate users on proper trail etiquette.
- **Unauthorized Trails:** Reduce non-authorized trails and pathways to reduce environmental impacts and potential public abuse of the land.
- **Trust Land Education:** Educate land users about trust lands and beneficiaries, specifically to highlight importance of revenue generation for rural communities.

Climate

- **Carbon Sequestration as Revenue:** Explore monetizing carbon sequestration efforts to increase revenue generation for beneficiaries, ideally reducing reliance on timber sales for revenue generation, while still maintaining trust revenue generations obligations. Investigate if carbon sequestration revenue can be generated on recreation-focused lands for the Recreation Program budget.
- **Working Lands:** Make assurances that carbon sequestration and recreation do not encumber working lands.

Discuss How to Achieve Goals with Initial Strategies Proposed by DNR

The facilitator gave a brief overview of strategies DNR has heard from engagement to-date. Then, the facilitator asked beneficiaries to consider the following questions for each of the goals:

- What actions should be taken to achieve each goal?
- What issues need to be worked on to achieve success?

Feedback was tracked through a Mural digital whiteboard. A final copy of the whiteboard is [linked here](#) for reference and attached at the end of this summary as *Attachment A*. Responses included the following high-level themes:

Goal 1:

- **Define Terms:** In response to a question about the meaning of this goal, DNR clarified that to “actively” address, there is a need for current and accurate data on the issue.

Goal 2

- **Working Lands Management Education:** Develop education materials about DNR land management responsibilities and activities (such as its sustainable timber harvesting program, including Threatened and Endangered species habitat protection; other revenue generating activities, such as agriculture, clean energy, and other leasing programs; and DNR’s trust beneficiary obligations), wildfire risk management, enforcement and how these obligations create opportunities for recreation.
- **Define Uses:** Define the appropriate “etiquette” DNR would like to see for different landscapes, uses, and/or groups.
- **Collaboration:** Collaborate with libraries to expand education outreach on DNR-managed lands, its land management responsibilities and activities, by utilizing **any data available on Discover Pass usage as well as data from** users of the “[Check Out Washington](#)” library program. This data could be used to **tailor education outreach toward** groups that recreate on DNR-managed lands. Outreach strategies could include partnering with recreational user groups to host events and boost educational outreach.

Goal 3

- **Data on Access Barriers:** Gather data to understand barriers to equitable access and conduct an assessment to identify vulnerable communities. Consider whether some rural counties, local governments, or other tax districts would qualify as vulnerable communities.

Goal 4

- **Local Enforcement:** Balance and minimize the burden of enforcement on local jurisdictions and/or financially compensate local jurisdictions for their role helping protect natural resources, particularly those forested natural resources which create elevated recreational experiences enjoyed by many users.

Goal 5

- **Maintain Fiduciary Responsibilities to Beneficiaries:** Maintain land for working forests and revenue streams for trust beneficiaries. Avoid impacts to revenue due to recreation management and increased access.
- **Recreation Revenue:**
 - Look at mechanisms to generate revenue from recreation to support recreation management.
 - Use a portion of the DNR management fee to support recreation.
- It was suggested that recreation be managed by local jurisdictions, through Trust Land Transfer and other similar processes to change land use designations while DNR pursues properties ideal for revenue generation.

Goal 6

- **Define Terms:** Define the specific climate impacts to be mitigated in this goal.
- **Long Term Planning:** Build long-lasting (75-100 yrs.) infrastructure to reduce maintenance costs.
- **Carbon Reduction and Offsets:**
 - Create a program for the public to voluntarily pay for or donate money to purchase carbon offsets for recreational travel.

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

DNR shared the next steps for engagement in 2024 which include public planning meetings in mid-January and February, a recreation partner workshop in March, and a public review period in late summer or fall. DNR invited attendees to participate in the public meetings by registering on the DNR webpage, [linked here](#). Following the meeting, DNR will post the meeting slides and recording on the DNR OARR webpage.

DNR thanked attendees for their time and the input they provided to the OARR Strategic Plan. Any questions or follow-up input can be sent to the following email address: OARRPlan@dnr.wa.gov.

DNR Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation (OARR) Strategic Plan

Beneficiaries Meeting - Discussion

January 11, 2024

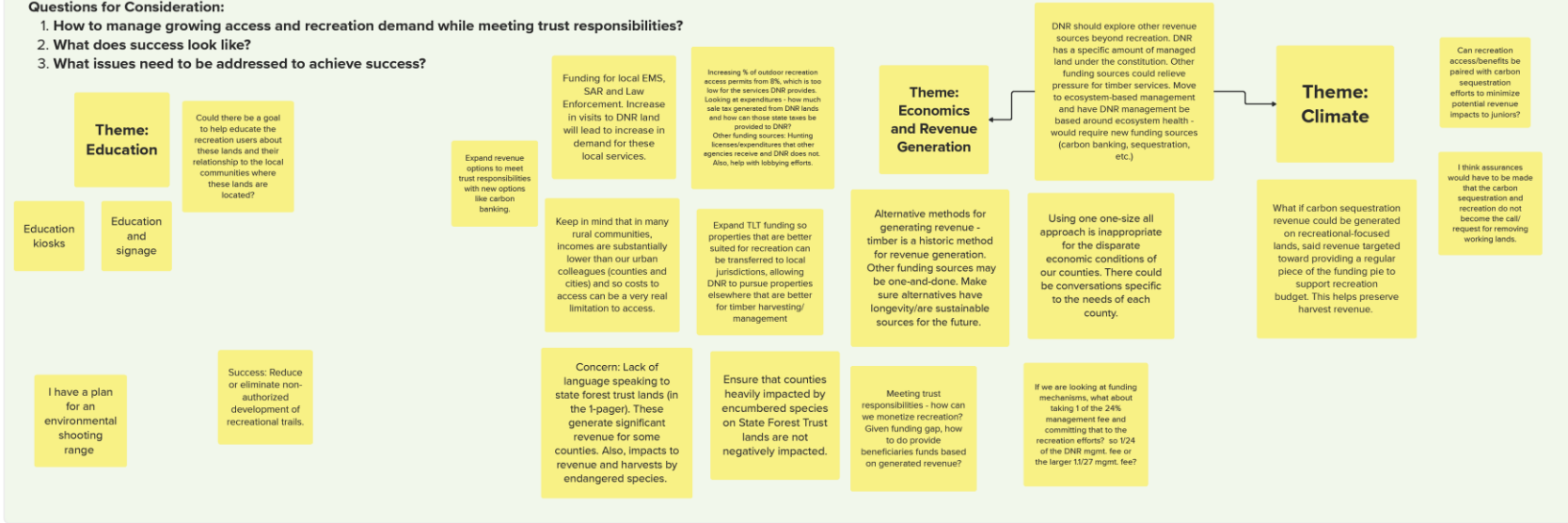
Discussion 1: Management of Recreation on Trust-lands



WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Questions for Consideration:

1. How to manage growing access and recreation demand while meeting trust responsibilities?
2. What does success look like?
3. What issues need to be addressed to achieve success?



Discussion 2: How to Achieve Goals with Initial Strategies Proposed from DNR

