

Motorcycle use in the Teanaway Community Forest
Discussion draft for Teanaway Community Forest Advisory Committee
December 11, 2014

Context: Of all the popular recreational uses in the Teanaway Community Forest, motorized recreation is the only use that was traditionally prohibited under previous owners and did not have its future use on the landscape explicitly protected by legislation. Given the complexity of the issue, the passion of stakeholders on all sides, and the desire of several committee members not to delay a decision on motorcycle use, DNR and WDFW have advanced “a straw dog” compromise concept to start conversation and give the committee something substantive to review. This document includes that concept, which was created for discussion purposes and does not reflect the policy preference or position of either DNR or WDFW, or the advisory committee. The advisory committee retains its full discretion to propose new concepts, edit this concept, or adopt it as-is.

Preamble: “After talking with all Advisory Committee members, we have concluded that there is no unanimous consensus on the issue of motorcycles in the Teanaway Community Forest. However, we believe there is a broad agreement of a majority of Advisory Committee members around a compromise. This is our first attempt at summarizing what we understand the Advisory Committee’s counsel to be:”

Proposal: The Teanaway Community Forest Advisory Committee believes that all recreational uses must be accommodated in a fashion that protects the watershed and key wildlife areas from degradation and does not present an obstacle to their restoration.

In addition, the Advisory Committee agrees that, though motorcycle use was historically prohibited across the landscape, there exists a large, passionate, and engaged user base that would like to ride motorcycles in an appropriate area of the forest.

Though motorized use was not explicitly protected in statute as an existing use that should be maintained like other recreational uses, the Advisory Committee has decided that motorcycle users may be given an opportunity to access the forest utilizing trails that meet all of the criteria outlined in the Teanaway Recreation Criteria Document. This trail system will minimize any stream crossings (through elimination and engineering), avoid key wildlife areas, and minimize conflicts with other recreational uses.

This access will be conditioned on the construction and policing of this new trail system, an education and self-policing campaign by WOHVA, and the good behavior of the motorcycle community across the rest of the Teanaway. If this agreement is not kept, or if serious environmental degradation results, then the State will withdraw permission for motorized access. If the committee adopts this proposal the agencies will immediately add this need among one of our near-term priorities.

Regarding the existing permitted use on Forest Service trails, the Advisory Committee advises that two trails be decommissioned due to the potential for resource degradation. The Advisory Committee suggests that one FS trail be maintained with appropriate improvements to prevent negative impacts that we are trying to avoid.

Besides these explicitly designated areas, motorcycle and ORV use will be prohibited elsewhere in the Teanaway Community Forest.”

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