

Trails open house

Attendance- Community members-10 Staff-2 Commissioners-1 Commissioner Candidates-1

Started with a verbal comment period and asked that all comments be written down to capture the intent or emailed after the meeting so verbal comments would not be misquoted or misinterpreted.

Verbal comments summary (Staff recollection)

- Parking lot connector trail needs improvement/maintenance
- Last Year trail construction intrusive and created a visual disaster
- Concern about human safety if horses are allowed on the ADA trail - divots and damage
- Steepness of the 2018 trail and erosion that is already occurring
- Signage — trail names and the length of the trail
- Mrs. Peterson - 2008 Trail Plan — “couldn’t see private property from the trails”/”100 foot buffer from property lines”
- Port o potties in the summer - referenced in an earlier plan and on the Trustland Trail amenities
- How to make a trail? Flag every 50-ish feet — can the community come look at the proposal prior to actually making the trails?
- Instead of felling trees, could they be topped, limbed, so woodpeckers can use the habitat?
- Why create more trails-data for justification?

Written Comments received that evening (Grouped by sheet of paper)

- The trail you made last year is an environmental abomination-Visual Disaster!/ Horses are using the ADA trail which makes it unsafe for those with disabilities/It’s habitat destruction for use by very few people
- You don’t adequately maintain what’s already done, you don’t have the staff to maintain more trails/ This expansion is not what this community wants. Stop! No more trails.
- You are destroying a beautiful area. We do not need more trails. There are plenty of trails on Whidbey./ This should be a walking trails only, no bikes, no horses, no dogs.
- No one in this room is supportive of trail expansion./This is intrusive, disrespectful of the land, habitat, and community vision. This is just to justify your jobs not to create a natural beautiful area of shared purpose.
- Respect buffers to private properties./ Don’t gravel every trail./ Plan for less “developed” trails /Notify neighbors of plans & meetings re Trustlands
- In favor of more hiking trails!-D. Stallard
- The trails work for me and I would like to see the new trail built. Current trails are a little too short for my liking, but I use it anyway. A 50 foot buffer seems reasonable to me.-Tom Walker

Emails-Pre and Post meeting (In order of receipt)

dirswprd@whidbey.com

From: reznep@frontier.com

Sent: Sunday, September 8, 2019 9:45 PM

To: South Whidbey Parks & Recreation District; comm1@whidbey.net; comm2@whidbey.net; comm3@whidbey.net; comm4@whidbey.net; comm5@whidbey.net; Helen Price Johnson; norm.smith@leg.wa.gov; Petersons Family; Thomas Vincent;

Patricia Guthrie; wean@whidbey.org; H.West@co.island.wa.us; s.bratz@co.island.wa.us;
billp@co.island.wa.us; sepahelp@ecy.wa.gov
Subject: Trustland Trails Park 2019 Proposed Trail Extension
Attachments: Trustland Trails-New Trail Concept.pdf

Mr. Coutts and SWPRD Commissioners:

Following is myopic letter about your 2019 proposed trail extension that you will be discussing at you September 25, 2019 Open House.

I will not be attending that meeting. Please print my open letter and have it displayed prominently. Since I am the neighbor who will be most directly affected by your new trail, I would like my input to be part of your discussion.

This letter will also be sent to the Island County Planning and Community Development Division, Washington State Department of Ecology, the Island County Commissioners Office, State Legislator Norma Smith, the local newspaper, our shared Trustland Trails Park neighbors, and Ms. Marianne Edain at WhidbeyEnvironment.org. So, if you forget to post my letter at your Open House, maybe one of these folks will do so.

Richard Panzer

To Whom It May Concern:

The South Whidbey Parks and Recreation District's "2019 Proposed Trail Extension" in Trustland Trails Park will come within 50 feet of the southwest corner of my property at 3402 Craw Road in Langley. The SWPDR's 2008 Trustland Trails Park Management Plan promised to never put a trail within sight of neighboring properties. With that promise in mind, the 2019 proposed trail extension, as it is drawn on the SWPDR's 2019 Proposed Trail Extension map (attached), will come too close to my land. I received the attached map in an email from SWPRD Executive Director, Doug Coutts, on September 3, 2019.

I oppose any development of TTP trails within sight of my property because I oppose the government breaking promises. Otherwise, I could not care less about whatever the SWPRD does with their land, as long as they comply with all the rules and regulations laid out by themselves and other government agencies. If the SWPRD had never promised otherwise, I would not object to them building anything anywhere on their own property. Nevertheless, the SWPRD did promise, in writing, in 2008, to never build anything within sight of my land; and, I hold them to that promise.

In 2018, the SWPRD willfully repudiated the 2008 TTP Management Plan and wrote a new Trail Management Plan to suit their agenda for future park development. It seems that in the minds of the people at the SWPRD, this nullified the original promises in the 2008 TTP Plan. As a TTP neighbor, however, I do not accept the changes in the 2018 SWPRD Trail Management Plan. I believe that promises should be valid forever, especially those made by "community leaders" to the people in the community. Nonetheless, it seems that nothing can be done here and now to enforce the SWPRD's 2017/2018 breach of their 2008 promises. No one seems to police the SWPDR's actions. This may be why they behave like autocrats and change their own rules at their whim. The SWPRD's actions remind me of the countless times that U.S. government politicians and agents repeatedly broke their promises to Native Americans.

It seems that the SWPRD takes their autocratic behavior beyond breaking and rewriting their own rules. They also seem to feel that they have no need to comply with county and state regulations. According to Mr. Bill Poss, Development Coordinator at Island County Planning and

Community Development, the SWPRD did not obtain any Island County Clearing and Grading Permits for the development of the TTP "2018 Additions" trail, as it is labeled on the attached map. Therefore, the SWPRD may be in violation of Island County Planning and Development regulations. Further, according to Ms. Annie Szvetcz, J.D. M.S., SEPA Policy Lead at the Washington State Department of Ecology, there are no SEPA documents at all in the SEPA Register from SWPRD. She further states that she assumes that the SWPRD 2018 Trail Management Plan itself is subject to SEPA review. So, the SWPRD may be in violation of the Washington State Environmental Policy Act regarding their 2018 TTP trail development and their 2018 Trail Management Plan. If the SWPRD truly failed to comply with Island County and Washington State regulations, they should be held accountable by the appropriate authorities. I formally request that the Island County Planning and Community Development Division and the WA State Department of Ecology investigate why no permits or SEPA documentation can be found for the SWPRD's TTP trail construction in 2017/2018 and their 2018 Trail Management Plan.

Is the SWPRD somehow exempt from obtaining permits and conducting SEPA? If so, I apologize for making such a fuss.

If they are not exempt, however, where are the documents for the 2017/2018 TTP trail construction and 2018 Trail Management Plan that cannot be found at the appropriate agencies? If not, where are the Island County permits and SEPA documents for the SWPRD's new construction at the South Whidbey Community Park in 2018? According to their public monthly meeting minutes from November 2018-February 2019, SWPRD constructed a new Campground Trail and a Community Park Trail at this park. Construction on a new Campground was also begun there. Finally, if the SWPRD is not exempt from obtaining permits and conducting SEPA--just like everybody else--where are the Island County permit application and SEPA documents for the proposed 2019 TTP trail extension construction project?

Signed,

Richard Panzer

3402 Craw Road

Langley, WA 98260

Tel: 425-483-8123

From: William Hallberg <W.Hallberg@co.island.wa.us>

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2019 10:15 AM

To: dirswprd@whidbey.com

Cc: Hannah Rae Liss <H.Liss@co.island.wa.us>; Sonja Bratz <s.bratz@co.island.wa.us>; Bill Poss <BillP@co.island.wa.us>

Subject: Trustland Trails and Proposed Camping Area

Hello Doug,

Thank you for meeting with us on Monday and showing us around the Trustland Trails. You had requested that I follow up with you summarizing what we saw and discussed.

Regarding the Trustland Trails trail addition Hannah Liss and I walked the general area where your trail addition will be taking place and we reviewed aerial imagery. The site is dominated by upland coniferous forest with an understory of Evergreen Huckleberry and Salal. We did not observe any wetland indicators or streams in the areas explored. Based on these observations I don't see the need for any critical areas permits. If during installation you notice any wetland areas or streams please do not intrude into these areas. If in doubt please feel free to contact us. I spoke with Bill Poss about whether

or not a clearing and grading permit (CGP) would be required. Based on our conversations and your low impact trail construction techniques, it is unlikely that the trail addition will meet any thresholds that would trigger a CGP.

Regarding the new trail at South Whidbey Community Park

Hannah Liss and I walked the entire new trail at the park. We noted an upland forest consisting of mixed coniferous and deciduous forest with an understory of Salal, Evergreen Huckleberry, Sword Fern, Etc. We did not observe any critical areas that would have triggered a critical areas permit. I also spoke with Bill Poss about this project. Based on the existing forest road route that you followed for the trail, minimal clearing, and small footprint of the trail, Bill did not feel that a CGP would have been triggered for this trail either.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

William Hallberg | Critical Areas Planner
Island County Planning & Community Development
1 NE 6th Street - Post Office Box 5000
Coupeville, WA 98239
Phone: (360) 240-5585 | Fax: (360) 679-7306

3

Email: w.hallberg@co.island.wa.us ** Effective

From: dirswprd@whidbey.com <dirswprd@whidbey.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2019 11:17 AM
To: William Hallberg <W.Hallberg@co.island.wa.us>
Subject: RE: Trustland Trails and Proposed Camping Area
Will,

Thanks for getting back to me, I certainly appreciate you both coming out to look at the projects and give us feedback on what if any, permits would be required. So to confirm, we are not required to have any county permits for the existing trails as well as for the proposed trail concept. If we do run into any area that look to be wetland we should avoid them and/or call you for clarification and assistance. Since you have determined that no critical areas permits will be necessary, does that mean that there are no SEPA requirements for these projects since SEPA is currently triggered by local jurisdiction review?

Regards,

Doug Coutts, CPRP
Executive Director
South Whidbey Parks and Recreation District
(360) 221-6488
dirswprd@whidbey.com

dirswprd@whidbey.com
From: William Hallberg <W.Hallberg@co.island.wa.us>
Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2019 11:51 AM
To: dirswprd@whidbey.com
Cc: Sonja Bratz; Hannah Rae Liss; Janet Wright
Subject: RE: Trustland Trails and Proposed Camping Area

Hello Doug,

With respect to the Trustland Trails, the areas we had observed appeared to be entirely uplands. The most recent trail segment would not have required a County permit and the proposed addition does not

appear to need any permits either. I can't speak to the other sections of trails as I did not view them but I would expect the same to be true there.

With respect to South Whidbey Community Park, the recent trail installation did not need a county permit. The camping area does need a permit and SEPA, as you know. So far all you have installed is a trail, and that by itself did not need a permit.

From a critical areas permitting perspective SEPA would not be required for the work I described above. I really can only help with critical areas related questions. Please contact Janet Wright for any questions relating to the proposed campground. Sonja Bratz can assist you with any further questions related to the complaint. They both have been CC'd on this email for your convenience.

Thanks!

Best,

William Hallberg | Critical Areas Planner
Island County Planning & Community Development
1 NE 6th Street - Post Office Box 5000
Coupeville, WA 98239
Phone: (360) 240-5585 | Fax: (360) 679-7306
Email: w.hallberg@co.island.wa.us

** Effective September 27th, 2019, my updated email address will be w.hallberg@islandcountywa.gov **

Email may be considered a public record subject to public disclosure under RCW 42.56

dirswprd@whidbey.com

From: pryority@whidbey.com

Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 3:47 PM

To: dirswprd@whidbey.com

Subject: Trustland trail meeting comments

Doug,

Thanks for the walk in the woods yesterday morning. I think we all got a better view of the project's magnitude. John Peterson and I spent time yakking on the connector trail while you, Tom & Lee were still at the trail junction, and we both thought the trail work was well done with few exceptions...good job.

As to a record of the items I brought up at Wednesday night's meeting:

- Map at kiosk identifying existing trails with mileage and difficulty ratings.
- Relocation of property line post near school with directional arrow to park parking lot.
- ADA directional signs where the Discovery trails take off to help unfamiliar ADA users
- Notification to adjacent neighbors once new trails are flagged for a 1 week review.
- Recycling receptacle next to trash can.
- Seasonal portable toilet.

Additional considerations brought about through Thursday's walk:

- Aesthetic team review after new trail work for accolades/critique and lessons learned.

- Volunteer work sessions to disperse branches and dead vegetation after trail work.
- Trail opening events. To inspire community participation and pride.

Thanks again,

Bob

dirswprd@whidbey.com

From: Cathryn Krauel <cathylahti@msn.com>

Sent: Saturday, September 28, 2019 9:57 AM

To: dirswprd@whidbey.com

Subject: Trustland Trails

Attachments: 2019-9-20 Trustland Trail Maps.pdf; ATT00001.htm

This is Cathryn Krauel. I live at 5827 Pioneer Park Place. The little ancillary trail ends at my property. I have horses and dogs and the access to the park is one of the reasons I bought this house. I love that you are expanding the trails and think you are doing a great job with the park. I am originally from Bellevue, Bridle Trails and was involved with the Lake Washington Saddle Club as we worked with the Park Ranger to maintain the park and to keep it open. I fell in love with Trust Land Trails as it felt like a small Bridle Trails park. I walk, run and ride in the park almost every day with my dogs & ponies. I was at the meeting Sept 25th and felt like I was definitely in the minority. Emotions were high for some angry neighbors that seemed to me a bit unreasonable and selfish.

The main reason I came to the meeting was to bring up an issue I have with my neighbor, Bob Pryor. He has his own trail system around his property. A few months ago he blazed a trail off the back of his property, parallel to my property line on park land to connect to the ancillary trail behind me. The one common ground we have was that we don't want the public trails to be too close to private property. Bob did exactly what we don't want you to do.

My question is: Is there anything that can be done about his trail? Is that legal?

If you look at the attached pdf he distributed at the meeting, the last page is his map of existing trails and he even put his new trail on there as if it has always been there.

I live alone and he is right next door, so I am concerned about creating a war with Bob and his wife. At the same time I find it hypocritical that he is so vocal complaining about trail development while making his own trails on park land.

I have emailed him to let him know that I support the Park and trail development and that I was not happy about his trail. He hasn't responded.

As far as the meeting, the only thing I would like to see as the trails are developed is a way for horses have a little path along the ADA loop so we can connect the newest trail over to the main trail off the School. Also: I agree that if I were to trailer my horse for a ride I wouldn't go to Trust Land Trails. It's too tiny, but it works great for a quick loop out of my backyard. Having horse trailer parking isn't a big issue. I support your efforts and appreciate what you are doing for our parks.

Kind regards,

Cathryn Krauel

dirswprd@whidbey.com

From: Victoria Castle <castlevic@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 5:39 PM

To: dirswprd@whidbey.com

Subject: Parks Trail Expansion

Hi Doug,

My husband Tim Morley and I are both in favor of the trail expansion at Trustland Trails and also the bond proposal for this fall.

Thanks for all you do.

[Victoria Castle](#)

dirswprd@whidbey.com

From: Ted Brookes` <tbrookes@whidbey.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 5, 2019 11:40 AM

To: dirswprd@whidbey.com

Subject: Park Maintenance & Improvements

Dear Doug,

I am writing this e-mail express my strong support and appreciation for the South Whidbey Parks & Recreation District in general, and the outstanding field maintenance and trail building being done by your personnel specifically. I hike the Community Park and Trustland trails with my dog twice daily, except Sundays. I am constantly amazed at how clean the trails are of forest debris and how clearly marked they are. Like most members of our community, I am very pleased with the new loop trails that were added in both park locations this past year. I have observed more people with their dogs using all of the trails than ever before, and comments to me about hiking said trails have been most positive.

Having said all of the above, I am aware of your plans to build a new loop trail on the Trustland property.

I regret I was unable to attend your recent "open house" meeting to voice my unqualified approval and encouragement for your plans. Thus, you can consider this e-mail as my official statement on the matter.

For me, it is extremely important for the Parks & Recreation District to provide the community, particularly the older generation, with as many opportunities to get outdoors and exercise as feasible.

Building new trails within park property is an excellent way to achieve that objective.

I really look forward to hiking the new loop trail when its completed while continuing to expand my enjoyment of the many things the park has to offer year round.

Sincerely & Respectfully,

Ted Brookes, CAPT, USN, (Ret)

238 Clover Court

Langley, WA, 98260

P.S. Please feel free to share my comments with the park commissioners. I will gladly reiterate those sentiments to them in person at your next public meeting.

Sent from my iPad