



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

**P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
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GARY ROBINSON, DIRECTOR

**Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board
June 7, 2018**

**Senior Activity Center 6:00 P.M.
Preliminary Agenda**

1. Call to Order
2. Approve Minutes
3. Public Comments
4. Communication/Correspondence
5. Staff Reports
6. Request to use model electric powered boats on ACFL Lakes
7. Little Cranberry Beaver Update
8. Other Business

**If reasonable accommodation due to a disability is needed
contact Russ Pittis at 293-1918
48-hours prior to the meeting date.**

ACFL Forest Advisory Board Minutes

May 3, 2018

Members Present: Marty Laumbattus, Brian Wetcher & Sandra Starbuck

Staff: Dave Oicles & Jonn Lunsford

Minutes: The minutes of the April meeting were approved with the amendment to show that Brian Wetcher did attend.

Public Comments: None

Correspondence and Communication: None

Staff report: Dave reported on the quiet opening at Heart Lake. Two work parties on Earth Day weekend, one was the divers who helped by collecting garbage at the bottom of Heart Lake. They found a box of jewelry that was turned over to the police. Climbers also worked that day on Mt Erie, picking up trash, pulling Scotch Broom and pruning routes. Brian asked staff about any update on the missing person from last summer in the Whistle Lake area. The Board had questions about the person picking fern fiddleheads. Discussion ensued. Brian asked about the wolves adjacent to the ACFL south of the Little Cranberry area and asked about liability from the City's perspective.

Heart Lake Algae Update: Staff discussed the work that was done at the lake April 2 through the 6ths with all the way from set up, application of the nutrient inactivation chemicals, and demobilization. Dave explained his work with the Western Washington University about the survey for newt eggs. Discussion ensued about lake clarity and fish stocking. Staff thanked the Anacortes High School Broadcast Club for their help filming the event and the AHS Green Club for helping to monitor for milfoil on opening day.

Little Cranberry Lake Beavers: Staff discussed the work it is doing on a SEPA permit with the City Planning Department as part of the process to receive a Hydrolic Project Approval (HPA) from the State Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct maintenance on some of our bridges and beaver deceivers. Staff has also spoken with a State Department of Ecology biologist who complimented the city on the beaver habitat provided in the ACFL.

Other Business: Eric Sundblad, a member of the North American Model Boat Association, Pacific NW Chapter would like to run their electric model hydroplanes on Heart Lake and Little Cranberry Lake 5 to 7 times a year. He explained they can't run their boats if others are using the lake. Their model go up to 25+mph. Discussion ensued. Will be put on June agenda. Martha Hall asked the Board about wildlife viewers and critical areas during a discussion on Heart Lake use.

Questions about a lost dog that was found near trail 306. Questions about an injured eagle that was found at Little Cranberry Lake and retrieved with the help of WDFW staff.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm. Respectfully submitted: Jonn Lunsford

Interesting what difference a month makes. Heavy rain events in April with record rainfall, then record dryness in May with grassy areas turning brown and seasonal creeks drying up. Trails have dried out and parking lots are already getting dusty. It's looking to be another dry summer in the ACFL. Extra caution will be needed this summer with more emphasis on enforcing our "no smoking" policy and watching for illegal campfires and fireworks. Opening day of fishing at Heart Lake was very quiet, continuing the trend of less and less people waiting to fish there. The lake treatment for algae and milfoil has made the lake crystal clear so it's a great place to fish and swim again. Lots of wildlife and fish can be seen enjoying the lake's new water quality. The Kids Fishing Derby at Heart Lake is on June 2nd. The lake is closed to fishing from May 29th – June 1st. Adults 15 and over can start fishing again on June 3rd. Our successes for this month include:

- Removed downed trees and hazard trees off trails 212, 247, 21, and 233.
- A sink hole that was forming in the HL parking lot was dug out and filled with gravel.
- The remainder of the east section of trail 210 was repaired with gravel and turnpikes. The hiker-only section of the trail from the parking lot to the north end of the lake is now mud-free and dry. I may need to add turnstiles on this section to keep horse riders and mtn bikes off.
- On May 10th I took the WWU graduate student out on the boat at HL to take more water samples. The readings for pH, temp, O2, and clarity were all within normal range. There are still lots of zooplankton in the water enjoying the new algae growth. For now, the algae in the lake appears to be at normal levels. We will be testing again the week of June 4th.
- A huge Madrone tree that uprooted at Madrone Beach on Whistle Lake was cut up to make the site safe, as it was hung up and hanging over the popular swimming area. I have noticed a number of Madrone trees failing in the ACFL in the past year, perhaps due to drought conditions. In my sixteen years in the ACFL, it's always been rare to see a Madrone tree fail (uproot, loose limbs). The blithe that has been infecting this tree species for the last 12 years continues to decay and kill this tree all over the island and Pacific NW.
- All 3 lakes were tested for fecal coliform on May 16th and all tests came back normal.
- More bridge planks were made from a downed cedar tree on trail 23. The next bridge to be replaced is on trail 304.
- Trail pruning has begun, and seasonal staff member Julia Soes will start working weekends on June 2nd. Julia starts full time on June 15th, and Christopher Warmuth starts on June 18th for the summer. Both are college students so their start-dates are later than normal.
- The Memorial Day holiday weekend brought lots of folks to the ACFL trails, but with the cool weather, very few swimmers at Whistle Lake. No problems (campers, fires, etc) were found. Some people are actually beginning to put their dogs on a leash again when in the ACFL!

- A new bench was installed at the north end of Heart Lake to replace the old one that was rotting and also in the water due to higher than normal water lake levels. The new bench was installed farther away from the shoreline to hopefully keep in dry land all year long. Here's a pic:



- The Heart Lake toilets will be pumped out on May 31st due to them being full and getting ready for the Kids Fishing Derby.

- A new garbage can and recycle can were installed at the cliffs on Whistle Lake.

- We have the green light to start building a new trail access at the top of the Rock Ridge development. The trail will go from the development and connect with trail 129. The Fidalgo Trail Riders mountain bike group will be helping with this project which will be completed in June, before the wasp season is active.

- I've been doing a lot of other projects outside the ACFL that include watering and caring for 100 trees that were planted near the WA ferry dock, hauled 55 tires to Les Swab for public works, installed a wetland sign at Cap Sante, removed dead trees on Q Ave, Library, ballfields, and Causeland Park, helped water the downtown flowers, helped water trees on the GCT with volunteers, and helped remove trees at the Samish Longhouse for a water retaining project.

Anacortes Community Forest Lands Report

Jon Lunsford

May 2018

Time Change: Please remember, ACFL Advisory Board meetings start at 6pm.

Little Cranberry Area Beavers: Staff will update the Board on the permit status of projects we are preparing for work this summer/fall at the Little Cranberry area to replace “beaver deceivers” and culverts that help with storm overflow in the ACFL.

Model Electric Boat Request: The Board will continue their discussion of a request to use model electric boats on Little Cranberry Lake and Heart Lake. The group making the request has strict use restrictions on how they can operate the boats if other users are on the lake, but their vessels do operate at speeds over 25mph typically.

Heart Lake Algae Treatment: I decided to keep this great video link up another month of the Heart Lake algae treatment. Many thanks to the Anacortes High School Broadcast club. They did this story on Heart Lake with some helpful drone footage of the treatment. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZaqN2p63dA>

Wild Animal Refuge Signs: The City of Anacortes has posted Warning signs on 4 trails in the Community Forest Lands to alert trail users that there is a wild animal refuge in unincorporated Skagit County. The trails with the signs are in the southern end of the Little Cranberry area.

According to two police reports, in February 2012, a wolf from the refuge was captured in the ACFL. In October of 2017, a wolf escaped an enclosure and went on to private land adjacent to the animal refuge.

The signs read as follows:

Warning. There is a wild animal refuge in unincorporated Skagit County adjacent to the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. In the past, wolves have escaped their enclosure on to neighboring properties and the ACFL. Please stay on ACFL trails and use caution when walking with children and dogs. If you encounter a threatening situation call 911 immediately. Call ACFL staff at 360-299-1953 with questions.