

**Teanaway committee begins work on recreation plan**

Meetings, field trips planned over next 12 to 18 months

**By NICOLE KLAUSS**

staff writer

The Teanaway Community Forest Recreation Planning Committee met on Thursday to discuss the planning process for the next 10 to 15 years, and will determine what types of recreation will be provided in the forest and where. Members will identify opportunities for connections across the landscape, identify partnerships and volunteer opportunities, and will set priorities for implementing the plan.

Specifically they will look to maintain and expand opportunities like birding, hunting, hiking, fishing, horseback riding, camping and snowmobiling while ensuring watershed protection.

The committee has 12 to 18 months of work ahead, said DNR assistant region manager Doug McClelland, who is retiring today, but will continue assisting in a volunteer capacity.

Over that time there will be 12 to 14 meetings, about three hours each, and additional field trips. Once the group has developed a recreation management plan, both state agencies will have the final decision on approval.

McClelland encouraged everyone to make the meetings and to communicate with their organizations and constituents throughout the process.

"This is a time for you to step outside of your specific interest and communicate so you can provide their insights," he said as he explained expectations for the group.

**LEGISLATIVE ASK**

Doug Schindler, a committee member, spoke about the upcoming legislative session and budgets. The two agencies are asking for $757,000 in operating funds and $1.48 million in capital for the Teanaway and recreation process, said Schindler.

"We've got our work cut out for us in convincing the Senate and the House to fund this," he said.

Schindler said Sen. Judy Warnick, R-Moses Lake, and Rep. Tom Dent, R-Moses Lake, are supportive of the request, but added more people need to show support. He encouraged committee members to get their organizations to write letters of support and to start spreading the word about the importance of the funding.

"We're really going to need a lot of people to lean in on this," Schindler said.

**MEMBERS**

Committee members introduced themselves and talked about their connection to recreation in the Teanaway.

Andrew Cromarty, a local landowner, said it will be important to have shared interests and get over disagreements quickly.

"We have an opportunity to create something unlike anywhere else, and I think it's important we take the opportunity to be creative and to think outside the box," he said.

Martha Wyckoff, a neighboring landowner, said her goal is to make the Teanaway a place for education.

"We need an economic focus and community outreach to a much larger audience than just here to make it a great community forest, ... I think we have a resource and asset here that is unlike anywhere else," she said.

Members of the Teanaway Community Forest Recreation Planning Committee include: Dale Bambrick, fish biologist; Paul Jewell or substitute Laura Osiadacz, Kittitas County Commissioners; J.J. Collins, county resident; Kitty Craig, the Wilderness Society; Halstrom, Friends of the Teanaway; Andrea Inler, Washington Trails Association; John Littell, Kittitas County resident; Wayne Mohler, Washington State Snowmobile Association; Mike Reimer, off-road vehicle interests; Phil Rigdon or substitute Tom Ring, Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources; Doug Schindler, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust; Tom Tebb or substitute Sage Park, Washington Department of Ecology; Martha Wyckoff, a neighboring landowner and family farmer; and Kathy Young, Back Country Horsemens of Washington.

The committee will meet next from 6-9 p.m. Feb. 9 at the Putnam Centennial Center in Cle Elum.

To get updates on the recreation planning process, visit [www.dnr.wa.gov/TeanawayRec](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/TeanawayRec).