

# First attempt at creating guidelines for recreation in Teanaway Community Forest

by Jim Fossett  
jim@nkctribune.com

TEANAWAY – Thursday, July 10, the Teanaway Community Forest Citizens Advisory Committee took a field trip and then gathered at Swauk-Teanaway Grange to talk about what they learned. Their mission this time around?

To come up with suggestions for the recreation section of the grander forest management plan they must propose to the state by June 2015.

On the field trip the committee made three stops: Middle Fork, Teanaway Butte and Teanaway Campground, visible from Teanaway Road where it forks to the West and North regions of the river valley.

At each stop several experts or locals with intimate knowledge of the region addressed the group and answered questions.

Kicking off the first lecture at the Middle Fork waypoint, Fish and Wildlife's Mike Livingston emphasized enforcement is an issue.

"Primarily because there are access points all over the Teanaway. There is also a history of other issues, including garbage, fires, signage, camping – and trail and road use."

Retired U.S. Forest Service veteran **Tim Foss** pointed out, "For us, about 75% of our challenge has been keeping spinning tires off wet trails."

Foss also advised the group that volunteers are key to maintaining recreational areas.

"Forest Service volunteers over the years have put in thousands of hours and done a great job."

Cle Elum's **Lauren Shuck**, an avid outdoor recreationist with local knowledge of the region, spoke to the group at Teanaway Butte about hiking.

"It's important to have trails showcasing the geol-



AT THE TEANAWAY CAMPGROUND, advisory committee members heard from several speakers addressing camping challenges and other needs in the Teanaway. Most everyone stood for over an hour in 90-degree heat at each waypoint on the field trip to listen to speakers. N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo • 2014



AFTER THE FIELD TRIP, the advisory committee returned to Swauk-Teanaway Grange for rounds of breakout sessions in which they discussed recreational needs in the Teanaway Community Forest. N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo • 2014

ogy, wildlife and flowers of the region. Most hikers prefer loop-based trails. Access to the Teanaway from Cle Elum and Roslyn would be good, too."

**Mike Reimer**, recently appointed to the committee to fill the vacancy created when Ronald's **Steve Justham** resigned, represents the ORV community. Speaking at Teanaway Butte, he said, "We have to include ORV users. We're part of the community and frankly we're tired of operating as outlaws. I believe through education we can

minimize impacts."

## All Recreational Interests Addressed

By day's end it appeared the committee had a firmer grasp of recreational needs and challenges in the Teanaway.

Before the field trip was over representatives from all the interest groups lobbied the committee on everything from snowmobiles to hiking and biking, to camping, hunting, target shooting, fishing, bird watching, rock hunting and orienteering, whitewater

kayaking and swimming, waste management, restrooms and sewer treatment, horseback riding and motorized vehicles of every sort, signage, enforcement, parking and permits for group events.

A westside expert even talked about issues relating to accessibility to the community forest for the physically challenged.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) technical specialist **Rory Calhoun** was the last speaker to address the group at Teanaway Campground, the



final stop on the field trip.

"You'd be surprised at what you can do to make the forest accessible to all, and it's my job to advise the committee and help get grants if dollars are needed to get the work done."

### **Return to Base**

When committee members returned to the Swauk-Teaway Grange they broke out into three groups to brainstorm suggestions for how the recreation section of the management plan might

advised the group she would collate suggestions offered by each committee member into one document and distribute that for review before the next meeting. She said those suggestions would, after a rehash, form the basis of a document she would post on the community forest website for public consumption and feedback.

She encouraged the committee to exchange ideas or meet on their own time to discuss the various suggestions on the table.



**CLE ELUM'S LAUREN SHUCK** was one of several speakers at Teaway Butte. She talked about hiking and trails.

N.K.C. TRIBUNE/Jim Fossett photo • 2014

come together.

Several members of the general public who did not exercise the option to participate Thursday have asked this question: "So now what's going to happen? What can we expect in terms of recreation guidelines?"

Stakeholders in the process indicate the answer to that question is: "It's too early to tell."

However, as to progress made on the recreation portion of the management plan as a result of July 10's activities, Department of Natural Resources manager **Kelly Heintz** had this to say.

Heintz was a breakout group facilitator who traveled to the Grange from Mount Si where she works.

"After a full day of exploring, the committee worked really well together in small groups to pull out the most important outcomes they would like to see.

"I appreciated the way they worked together. They listened well to each other and everyone contributed to the discussion.

### **Next Meeting**

The committee next meets on Thursday, August 14, at the Swauk Teaway Grange, 1361 Ballard Road, Cle Elum. Time to be announced.

The public is invited to view proceedings and to offer written suggestions online via the community forest website at any time, Wilson said.

### **Law Enforcement: Increased Presence in the Teaway?**

Teaway farmer **Bert Quicksall** and his son **Josh** commented they'd "never seen so many law enforcement officials in the Teaway before this summer."

They asked how many DNR and Fish and Wildlife agents had been assigned to patrol the Teaway.

Fish and Wildlife's **Mike Livingston** said there are three officers from his agency in Kittitas County and two Department of Natural Resources officers charged to cover the agency's entire southeast region, including



would like to see.

"I appreciated the way they worked together. They listened well to each other and everyone contributed to the discussion.

"I am very optimistic that this committee will come out with strong well-crafted recommendations."

### **What's Next?**

After the committee adjourned for the day, facilitator **Lisa Dally Wilson**

three officers from his agency in Kittitas County and two Department of Natural Resources officers charged to cover the agency's entire southeast region, including the Teanaway.

He said what the Quicksall's likely have been observing is an increased presence on weekends and holidays, part of the interim management plan both agencies have agreed to carry out.