Nisqually Day Use Improvements Predesign

Public Meeting March 3, 2022

Update: 4/19/2022

Answers to the questions are in red below. Note: Questions that were asked more than once are only addressed in one location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail Plan A, Day use, Alt 2, Smaller Amphitheater</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please, Please provide at least one access point to the river for horses. Benn riding there since I was a kid – it is magical and younger horse people need to experience it! Nisqually tribe – please let us use a small area.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Can we have more horse and pedestrian trails?</th>
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<td>The reality is that we have a finite number of acres to work with, around multiple sensitive areas, while attempting to accommodate 3 different user groups. We do have areas of Equestrian and pedestrian only, bike and pedestrian only, and pedestrian only. But to serve the highest number of users possible, we do also propose several miles of multi-use trails.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Horse &amp; Bike’s don’t mix very well.</th>
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<td>Why no access to water for horses?</td>
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<td>This is a common question and a difficult issue. The Nisqually River, Mashel River and Ohop Creek reaches associated with Nisqually State Park are critical habitat for several fish species including ESA listed fall Chinook, ESA listed steelhead, coho, winter chum, sockeye, and odd year pinks. Salmon are present year-round either as adults laying eggs in the gravel, juvenile salmon feeding on insects in the shallows, eggs incubating within shallow gravel nests, or a combination of all three. Protecting the rivers and creek and restoring their riparian zones are critically important for the health of these fish populations both locally and regionally. Managed access to the Nisqually and Ohop confluence area provides an opportunity for some educational and recreational use of the area while protecting natural and cultural resources. Equestrian access to the water and extensive pedestrian access are incompatible with resource protection in this area.</td>
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<th>Why are we letting the Nisqually tribe dictate what happens on State Park land?</th>
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<td>State Parks and the Nisqually Tribe have partnered on the development and management of this State Park. We have a collaborative decision-making process that is informed by many different groups, interests, and needs. Were this partnership to not exist, State Parks would still be driven by our mission which requires us to balance conservation, connection, and recreation in this park. This, as always, requires many challenging and difficult decisions. This has been a horse area many years even before WA State Parks bought it.</td>
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<th>Mounting blocks @ all tie up locations please.</th>
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<td>Putting speed limits on all downhill sections of the co-use trails would help reduce horse/bike conflicts where horses can be scared by speeding bikes coming towards them or up behind. Something like 5 mph for all users.</td>
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<td>1. Need more pedestrian only trails – now a very small %. More natural, don’t like wide and straight trails.</td>
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<td>2. Prefer native soil trail for pedestrian trails.</td>
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<td>3. This plan is heavy emphasis on bikes and stock. Little consideration for pedestrians.</td>
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<td>4. Bikes &amp; stock absolutely cause more trail damage.</td>
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Where proposed trails connect to neighboring properties, has there been consideration given to forming partnerships to create a larger trails system? Ex: trail to Eatonville & proposed trails to the south.

The Master Plan envisions a trail connection to the Town of Eatonville. We have had multiple conversations with Eatonville planners and hope to someday realize this vision. However, this will be a future planning effort and is not included in phase 1 of the trail plan.

- What trails will e-bikes be allowed on? Class 1 and Class 3 pedal assist e-bikes are treated the same as regular bikes and are allowed on all trails that regular bikes are allowed on. Class 2 throttle assist e-bikes are not permitted on state park trails. An information sheet for e-bikes has also been posted to this webpage. For additional information on e-bikes please contact Randy Kline, Statewide Trail Coordinator, at randy.kline@parks.wa.gov

1. Work to ensure horses & riders can ride to the river.
2. Repair the trail to the Mashel River. The steepness and instability of the bluffs along the Mashel River make safe access to the river challenging so it is not addressed in phase 1. This will be a future planning effort.
3. Outdoor interpretive center vs indoor
4. Eat Hwy/SR7 – Public horse tr/decommission Yellow/triangle Estate horse trail access @ triangle. Opt A keeps intact Trl.
5. Equestrian access to Pack Forest & to Eatonville Hwy. The acquisition of Pack Forest is in the parks long term boundary. Access to this property from the State Park will require 1) purchasing the land and 2) constructing a bridge. This is a long range goal, but is not included in Phase 1.

1. Access to public property across the Nisqually?
2. Who will clean up horse crap on the multi-use trails? State Parks operations is working through this issue and will be talking with user groups.
3. What plans does the Nisqually Tribe have for their property? The property formerly owned by Manke Lumber and now the Nisqually Tribe is within the long-term boundary of the park – an aspirational boundary that allows us to purchase or incorporate lands if/when they become available. Until that time, State Parks is unable to comment on the landowners’ plans.

Sad to lose access to Mashel River and assorted other trails currently available.

I feel like the group at the meeting is not representative of the local demographic. Horses are great but inaccessible to most people. A state park needs to be for more than horses. Local families will love this park and Eatonville needs camping for tourism. Into the future there will be far less people on horse than foot. The locals that are not at the meeting are younger and busy working. Horses = retirees.

Also love the pump track. Good location. Will be of value to Eatonville.

Needed Horse access to river.

Day Use Village Center alternative 2
Trail Plan Option A
Would like equestrian access to river. Fenced area?

Didn’t the original plans for park development include a much more expansive plan for equestrian trails? Yes, it does. Why is that no longer possible? It’s still possible, just not at this time. The equestrian facilities were originally planned on the property that is currently owned by Pack Forest. Due to the fact that its unknown when or if that property will be available, State Parks is working to provide some of the original vision in this phase of the project on current park property. Other equestrian facilities were planned for property that is currently owned by the Nisqually Land Trust.
After the completion of the original plan, it was determined that equestrian access in the Ohop Valley is incompatible with habitat restoration in that location.

Are these questions and answers going to be posted anywhere?

300 houses being built off SR 7

We are limited to a drive time for classes at Hope for Heroes Horsemanship Center where we serve 60 veterans each week and being able to take veterans out on trail rides is a huge part of our program. Losing this area to ride would be a great detriment to being able to service our veterans.

1. Horse trails should not be paved or graveled. It limits what you can do on it.
2. Long trails, people with wheelchairs and strollers won’t be using them so why spend the money to resurface when for horses a natural ground is better.
3. We need a designated horse trailer parking because of long rigs. We are looking at formalizing an equestrian trailhead near the Ohop Substation (where informal parking exists now)
4. We use to be able to ride in many areas but now we are very limited on where we can ride and out options are shrinking all the time. Even though it was the horse people who created the trails and have continues to maintain the trails for years.

Concern about keeping horse camp area free of non-horse camper.

Round-a-bout at entrance needs to have width around to accommodate truck/trailer. An outside lane that allows you to turn into the park and the inside lane for through traffic.
I like option A, see no need for the path down the power line past the yellow line unless it will be future trail to Eatonville.

Day Use – smaller amphitheater. More hands-on activities for kids which means more staff!
Splash pad.
Right of way signage Horse, People walking, biker.

Equestrian parking:
Present day parking is inadequate and not controlled (single cars use horse trailer spots.)
Parking for horse trailers is not like parking for RV’s spots need to be wider.
Number of spots should be 50 or more for future use.

I really love it. A park to meet future needs for local families and tourists. I think it will contribute greatly to the economy and education on the native history. I love keeping all trails multiuse to maximize accessibility (Trail Opt B) I love the playscape and Amphitheatre. Can’t wait to see it all come to fruition.

Is the equestrian campground going to be dedicated to equestrians only? Yes I’ve been to horse camps where non-equine are taking up the campsites.

What is the fee for camping? The list of fees is here: [https://www.parks.wa.gov/166/Camping-fees](https://www.parks.wa.gov/166/Camping-fees)

Why is all the single trail disappearing? It’s very limiting for riding.

Why decommission trails? Many of the trails that were constructed were either not approved and/or go through sensitive areas.

Why not incorporate with other trails.

Horse & trailer parking? Still at power lines.

In looking at the trail map will all single track trails be dismantled? Gravel footing for horses can be very unhealthy. I urge you to use ¾ minus gravel or sand footing. 5/8 minus is terribly hard on horses.

Why will the dirt single tracks be discontinued? I urge you to reconsider gravel for equestrians and finding another type of footing. Riding 6 miles on gravel is not my cup of tea 😊 State Parks has given consideration to this theme. It is not the intent to place large rock – the ¼” minus that is mentioned in the comment is what we intend. Having said that, when State Parks enters the design
phase, we will only consider gravel where it makes sense to do so. We are considering where appropriate to have trails of narrower width.

Keep it as is.

Not funded till 3rd phase. Round about @ entrance. What in mean time for added traffic & use for safety? State Parks is not expecting heavy traffic until the campground is built in phase 3.

Please install travel right of way signage now! Will the bike trails be open for e-bikes? Will there be more horse trailer parking than the existing day use? Yes

Horse trailer parking- rigs can be 40 ft long up to 50 rigs pull through. E-bikes scare horse. Bikers watch the terrain & don’t see horse coming. E bikes quiet & horse doesn’t hear it coming.

Will the bike trails be open for e-bikes? Will there be more horse trailer parking than the existing day use? Yes

Horses and bikes are not compatible on trail systems. Horses are “prey” animals and bikes are “predators”. Epically true with e-bikes because their top speed is 20 mph.

Instead of closing existing trails that are wet. Can they be designated as seasonal trails? The areas are sensitive year-round whether we allow seasonal or year-round use there is still impact to those areas. Cant horses be allowed to the O hops trail head? Can you further investigate E-bikes use? Some will give 99% electric with only 1% pedal.

Is there a way to ensure dedicated horse parking? Right now there’s lines but no signage so people trat it like regular parking. While I understand that state lands are for all there is a very pervasive scaling back of equestrians trail and acers which is a slap in the face given the long history of equestrians involvement in developing these trails. How is the impact of equestrians in sensitive areas any different than the impact made by deer or elk in those same sensitive areas? Horse poop is chewed up grass & water. And studies have shown that requiring certified weed fire Hoy makes no appreciable impact. I understand making things more accessible to everyone but it is quite obvious you area decreasing equestrian accessibility by decommissioning 5.5 miles of trails & not replacing it with new trails. Why does increased accessibility for others mean equestrians have to further restricted.