Ten miles of horse trails is almost nothing. Can any plans be made to re-route some of those close to wetlands? State Parks must balance protection of natural and cultural resources with recreational use. The current preferred alternative trail plan provides as much recreational use for a diversity of users as is possible within the current park boundary. In the future additional trails may be possible but that is outside the scope of the current process.

Please put gate at the grave to stop people from coming down dirt road

Nisqually park #1 Eliminate roundabout. #2 Put in 2 long term lanes. #3 Roundabout would not be big enough for JQ_Qg 57 ft truck and trailers to safely turn

We frequently see bear and hear cougar where the proposed campground is. How will their habitat be preserved? Park development is likely to impact some habitat, but blocks of habitat are being maintained, primarily along the Ohop Creek and Mashel River corridors. State Parks is also restoring and improving habitat throughout the park, thinning Douglas fir plantations, planting a diversity of native tree and shrub species and removing invasive species.

Who will clean up after the horses? State Parks operations is working through this issue and will be talking with user groups. Will trails be wheelchair accessible? Proposed ADA trails include: all trails within and around the village center, the trail from the village center to the administration building and plaza, the Mashel River Overlook and loop trail, and the Nisqually and Ohop Creek overlooks and trail (those with ADA access will be allowed to drive down to the lower parking lot and walk the flat trail from there) The campground will have accessible routes of travel between facilities such as the ADA designated campsites and restroom facilities.

Loop the trails. No dead ends. The majority of the trails are loop trails. There are only two out and back trails. 1) the lower Nisqually-Ohop, ADA accessible interpretive trail. A loop trail is not possible here due to the sensitive nature of the environment and the narrow width of the land. 2) the future trail to Eatonville. In phase 1 of the trail plan, this trail dead ends at SR 7. Hopefully in the future an extension can be constructed to the Town of Eatonville.

Roundabout sloped center curbing The outer curb is a mountable curb. It is designed to be driven over.

Water troughs for horses

Car, horse overlap can a side trail be made for walkers and horses? With respect to the trail that leads down to the Nisqually River: Unfortunately, the existing road prism is not wide enough to accomplish this. Parks expects car traffic to be minimal.

Can you make the roundabout big enough for large horse trailers? Yes, it will be. See graphic that is saved to this webpage.

What is Planned for residents living on M. Prairie Rd? Parks will contact those who asked to be reached out to. Why a roundabout vs. middle turn lane? Need to be constructed. The roundabout will slow traffic to 15-20 miles per hour; very few collisions occur at slower speeds. Site distance will not be an issue and the roundabout will provide a continuous flow of traffic as drivers only need to yield before entering the roundabout. The roundabout will be constructed to WSDOT standards and will be designed to accommodate the largest driving vehicle.
It was concluded that a Roundabout is the preferred alternative to provide a channelized intersection. An alternative was explored during the PreDesign report in 2020. The disadvantages of a channelized intersection is that vehicles turning left or right to exit the park will encounter traffic moving at high speeds. Also, where the current entry to the park is located, there is limited site distance along the curve of SR7 meaning you cannot see far enough ahead when vehicles approach from the west. This limited site distance means the park entrance would need to be moved over to the east to be on a straight stretch of SR7, allowing drivers to see further in both directions. Moving the entrance would require a new road to be built connecting the park entry to Mashel Prairie Road. This road would need to snake through an area of the park that is encumbered by numerous wetlands and cultural resources. Pierce County would also require the old entrance to be vacated and abandoned, and everyone, including neighbors, would be required to use the new (and longer) entrance road.

In comparison, a roundabout can be located at the current park entrance and no additional roadway will be the safest intersection, accommodate increased visitation, and to control ingress and egress to the park.

Private drive across from camp entrance
Update: 5/17/2022. Answers to public comment are in red below.

I was not aware of the past meeting on the 28th but I would like to inquire about driving trails for people that drive horses. There are a lot of us that drive miniature horses as well as the larger ones and places to drive in this state are very limited.

I had brought this concept up at the original planning meetings prior to the park being opened. At that time it was well received and interest was shown.

As a senior this is the way I get to enjoy the outdoors and areas that I can't usually get to see. Please allow for driving space for the many that do own driving horses. It might be an asset for people to see the carriage and cart horses.

Thank you for your consideration. This use would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and would require a special activity permit.

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Thank you for the 2nd meeting on (4-28).

My thoughts after the meeting.

A lot of accommodations are being made for equestrians. As a cyclist and hiker, I am disappointed, but not surprised, the BCH has been well represented at the meetings.

With the now narrower pedestrian/equestrian only trails, I am concerned about pedestrian/equestrian interaction, especially young teenagers who may not know how easily spooked horses can be. We will be providing educational signage on trail etiquette. Will I as a pedestrian be able to take my disabled son on those trails with this new proposed softer surface with his wheelchair? Proposed ADA trails include: all trails within and around the village center, the trail from the village center to the administration building and plaza, the Mashel River Overlook and loop trail, and the Nisqually and Ohop Creek over looks and trail (those with ADA access will be allowed to drive down to the lower parking lot and walk the flat trail from there). The campground will have accessible routes of travel between facilities such as the ADA designated campsites and restroom facilities. Multi-Use trails will be a minimum of 10-feet wide and will have crushed rock surfacing or pavement. The trail along Mashel Prairie RD from the Village Center to the Administration Building will be paved, and the loop trail to the Mashel River overlook will also be paved. The equestrian and pedestrian only trails are located in the eastern and southern portion of the park where the terrain and trail conditions vary. Those trails will be evaluated to determine if they need crushed rock surfacing improvements, or if they are in good condition and can be left as dirt trails. Pedestrians are welcome on these trails, however, to preserve the integrity of the surrounding forest, the slope conditions of the existing trails will remain mostly unaltered, and will not be graded to meet ADA standards.

Will pedestrians be able to take their pets on those trails? Yes. Will equestrian riders be responsible for cleaning up after their horses? This question has come up a few times. State Parks operations is working through this issue and will be talking with user groups.
There was discussion about accessing Pack Forest from the park for equestrians. Will there be access for cyclists/pedestrians to do the same? When/if it does happen, then yes. It would be for all user groups. Gravel cyclists ride in both the Park and Pack Forest, and have for some time, using Hwy 7 as a link. It would be nice not to have to use the hwy, and I'm sure hikers would love to be able to do the same.

Will there be another meeting? Currently, there are no additional meetings planned. When completed, the final predesign report will be posted to this webpage.

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