

## **Mount Spokane Master Plan**

### **Community Event #1 – June 1, 2024**

#### **Comments**

##### **Introduction**

Community Event 1 was held at the Wonder Building in downtown Spokane on Saturday, June 1 from 9-11:30 a.m. The event was organized to be “drop in” and included multiple stations to learn about Mount Spokane State Park, connect with recreation and interest groups, and to provide input about the future of the park. The stations included several staffed by State Parks including:

- Historic Preservation
- Interpretation
- Trails
- Natural Resources
- Community Relations

Many recreation and interest groups also hosted tables including:

- Spokane Winter Knights – Snowmobile
- Washington Trails Association
- Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park
- Inland Empire Paper Company
- Visit Spokane
- Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
- Spokane Mountaineers
- Friends of Mount Spokane
- Back Country Horsemen of Washington
- Spokane Nordic Ski Association

In addition to asking visitors to identify one word or phrase defining their relationship to Mount Spokane State Park, each station posed variations of the following questions:

- What do you like about (X)?
- What would you like to see in the future?

While each station focused on a specific activity or group, in some cases visitors provided comments about other topics. These have been included in the appropriate topic sections. For example, if someone commented about Bear Creek Lodge at the Trails Program station, the comment was moved to the Bear Creek Lodge section of this document. In addition, those comments that were mentioned more than once are asterisked according to the number of times they were noted.

##### **MOUNT SPOKANE STATE PARK**

What one word or short phrase defines your relationship with Mount Spokane State Park?

- Great community
- Fun
- Escape
- Happy
- Rejuvenation

- Nature
- Beautifully wild
- Solid
- Skiing is believing
- Adventure
- Spirit refresher
- Outdoors
- My happy place
- Local getaway
- Lost on my mountain bike
- Home
- Local
- Peaceful
- Proximity

## **BEAR CREEK LODGE**

What would you like to see happen here?

- Interpretive- Welcome Center; base parking for shuttle service for users
- Welcome center, parking and shuttle area; museum for history
- Develop this gem with the essence of its historical significance to the parks and the outdoors; keep it simple
- Restore and maintain historic facilities and redevelop for use as a visitors center and expanded administrative office
- It's a great resource for the park; make it an entry, staffed if possible, with public restrooms, perhaps a small history/nature display, access to info about the park; I like the idea of a base for a shuttle, esp in winter but year round would be good. Put in a café. Keep snow tubing if feasible
- Loved the campground; visitor center, restaurant and venue
- Consider expanding metal detecting at Bear Creek Lodge and other areas. We like to help identify harmful metal in and around trail – garbage removal
- I'd like to change the name of Bear Creek Lodge; that's not the name of the creek but I'd like to see that changed; the lodge should not have a beer bar. The camping area by the creek should remain. Other aspect, like the sledding hill, might be good but rooms for rent and restaurant do not seem appropriate; increased access to more area would be good; maybe an area for pets (dogs) could be free to run around freely inside fences
- I'd like to see the \$30/year and especially, \$10/day could be reduced or eliminated; improve access to huckleberry picking; better trails for hikers and bike riders
- I would like to see park fees for local residents stay affordable; trail usage limited to approved vehicles – no RAZORS, MOTORCYLES, etc.
- Bear Creek Interpretive Center w environmental learning, children's area, mountain history and native cultural component; area for lunch for skiers and school groups: Name: Mt Spokane Lodge

- Oral history – ski pioneers are in their 80s so better hurry
- Space for private vendors to provide rental equipment (mt bikes, XC skis, snowshoes) convenience store, restrooms
- Restaurant/café plus lodging for overnight stays; how great for a weekend of summer or winter activities to be able to stay at the park overnight
- General store for condos and visitors
- Espresso/café/burritos
- Prepacked hiker lunches
- Partner with school districts/library
- Bear Creek Lodge vision -visitor center, trailheads
- Redevelop Bear Creek Lodge

## **EQUESTRIAN USE – BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN**

What do you like?

- The views
- The variety of trails

What would like to see in the future?

- More land open for metal detecting to clean up trails for horses
- Education – how to use the trails; what to be prepared for (seeing horses/bikes); who has priority over what trails
- Education/signage – right of way, speed limits, cleanup of trails – animal waste
- Improve Selkirk Lodge for expanded, all-season use
- Pick up horse poop and carry it out\*; poop spreads noxious weeds/stinks and gets in your shoes
- Education of all user groups on trail etiquette and right of ways; keep trails clean and open for all

## **VISIT SPOKANE**

What do you like?

- All season use \*\*\*\*
- Easy access and diverse options for recreation – at reasonable pricing \*\*
- History of mt Spokane \*; Francis Cook park, 2-lane road, keep the rustic
- The trails in the summer
- Multi-season trails
- Ski and mountain bike trails
- Camping
- Groomed xcountry trails and hut

What would you like to see in the future?

- Public transport to mt Spokane from Spokane and Spokane valley \*\*

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- Less car traffic, develop winter and summer shuttle for visitors \*\*
- More wildfire mitigation work \*
- Don't cut more trees or expand the north slope ski runs – save the watershed \*
- Affordable overnight accommodations – M-Su
- Better maintenance on access roads
- Road improvements between Nordic and alpine areas
- No more development of ski and snowmobile areas; no more cutting down of old growth pristine forests
- More campgrounds – prefer tent
- Better camping
- Road improvements
- Lodging -open Bear Creek!
- Faster chair lifts
- Update, improve and expand Selkirk Lodge (Nordic area) for all season use
- Some trails hiking only and no bikes
- Better road
- More camping
- Full moon hikes; other tour activities, night sky tours led by parks, include underserved communities – eliminate barriers, get influencers here

## **TRAILS PROGRAM**

What do you like about trails?

- Generally like the trails \*\*\*
- Trails are essential for many different activities in all seasons
- Nordic trails are great for horse riding – wide easy grades
- Lookouts, cabins, chalet, hiking with friends
- Lots of trails
- More MTB specific trails within ski area
- User specific trails – MTB, horse, hike – all across Mount Spokane State Park
- Trail education stations – trail etiquette
- Trail 130
- All the great hiking trails

What would you like to see in the future?

- Circumnavigation trail at higher altitude than TR BO (hiking and biking) \*\*\*
- More contour trails \*\*
- More trails from Vista House North toward Lift 4 (summer use)\*
- Separate bikes from hikers \*
- Work on Ragged Ridge\*
- Shuttle from Bear Creek to the top\*
- Trail users accessing the Inland paper company land just east of the park find the existing process to recreate on that private land cumbersome\*

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- No more ORV trails, housing development
- Re-open Xcountry MTB trails in Nordic area
- Inland empire paper property – recreational
- Easier access to maps - maps of Selkirk trails and info
- Better signage (navigation) around Kit Carson
- Raise awareness among user groups on shared trails
- Increased area for metal detecting – they pick up sharp metal, protecting horse hooves and bike tires
- Expansion of MTB trails – more green, primarily blue trails, 290; 140 are very difficult, not for everyone
- Consider hiker-only trails – advocate to separate MTB and hiking
- Repave road from saddle to Lodge II
- Improve trail markings, signage, kiosks
- No bikes on Trail 110
- Separate trail to summit from hikers and snowshoe
- Educational hikes from Bear Creek
- Bike-only trails (bikes really tear up the hiking trails)
- Trail 100- too steep and hard to maintain walk or jogging pace
- Small signs at Logging Road Trail about trail respect – MTB awareness of others – slow down – have spotters for blind spots, be polite, smile!
- Alternative trails to summit
- More green and blue MTB trails
- No E-MT bikes

## **HIKING - WTA**

What do you like?

- Good maintenance of existing trails – thanks to WTA and others
- WTA builds sustainable trails
- Love the trails
- Good trails
- Troutman
- Good trails- well marked

What would you like to see in the future?

- Keep wild areas wild\*
- Security at parking (cams?)\*
- Add trails inside the ski area – both hiking and biking
- Keep lightning down
- Keep the viewshed for people who “travel” with their eyes
- Consider climate change
- Fix the road!
- More land open to metal detecting

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- More bears
- Trails with more gradual ascents and descents. Some trails for physically disabled
- More MTB trails separate from hiking trails
- Circumnavigation contour trail at elevation
- Trail for hikers to summit
- Trails to Nordic area
- Repave road on top of mtn
- Trail maps at trailheads
- Hikes from Bear Creek Lodge with education and LNT
- Informing people if horses use the trail

### **HIKING – MOUNTAINEERS**

What do you like?

- Love 4-season use
- Everything
- Multi-use/multi-season trails

What would you like to see in future?

- No more development of the ski and snowmobile park. Keep trails and the wild areas. \*\*
- Do not cut down pristine old growth forests\*\*
- Overnight backpack camping \*
- No e-bike on single track trails\*
- Develop parking and access at Day Road\*
- Better multiuse ROW education
- Shuttle from Bear Creek – reduce cars
- New trail – circumnavigation contour trail @ elevation
- More ranger presence on trails
- Restaurant
- Amenities for elderly, disabled
- How to manage over use
- Segregate trails for specific uses
- Recognize the different needs for trails – bike, horse, hike
- Restrict e-bike use on trails
- More camping – tent
- Yes e-bike! Need speed limit and right of way education/signage

### **MOUNTAIN BIKING - EVERGREEN**

What do you like?

- Multi-season XC/gravel, bike/ski trails\*
- Enjoy bike access\*
- The mountain – looking at it as far away as Davenport

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- Hot water at Bald Knob campground
- Control speed/e-bikes
- Downhill bike signs
- Cool temperatures and views and alpine ecosystem
- EV is a great partner

What would you like to see in the future?

- Shuttle to reduce traffic\*\*\*\*\*
- Blue trail circumnavigating mtn\*\*
- More signage for intended trail use\*\*
- Education – who has right of way for user type\*\*
- The ugly new ski runs\*
- Safety (for hikers) \*
- Less tech [nical] trails\*
- More trails to accommodate users\*
- Signage at bottom of high-speed downhill trails (warning to other users)
- More MTB specific trails; consistent with Parks on building better system of MTB trails, intermediate trails, “Not upper 290”
- User group-specific trails – horse, MTB, hike, etc
- Keep trails from eroding
- Lightning
- New visible buildings painted white
- No more cutting down of forests
- More signage for bike level of trails
- Expand and improve Selkirk Lodge
- Add blue trail to/from summit
- Trail access to lodge
- More trails for uphill riding and more less technical trails
- Beginner trails from summit
- Develop plan for future MTB trails on mtn
- Master plan on consistent trail maintenance of trails – scheduled trail maintenance “monthly”
- Expansion of downhill MTB trails into ski area for potential lift accessed biking

## **NORDIC AREA**

What do you like?

- Continue good grooming\*
- Everything
- Twin Lakes and access to “wild”
- Lodge
- World class ski area; love the grooming
- Nordic kids program, great community, trail maintenance
- Trail variety, views

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- The community
- We love everything!
- Nordic kids
- Quiet open wild spaces to explore on skis, and that it's affordable
- Great groomed trails
- No chairlifts 😊
- The No-Fuss lodge 😊

What would like to see in the future?

- Ski in/ski out cabins\*\*\*
- More parking, larger lodge\*\*
- Parking- maybe use a shuttle from Bear Creek Lodge\*\*
- Shuttle from downhill area to Nordic\*\*
- Improve-enlarge lodge\*\*
- Improve/enlarge lodge, restrooms\*
- Food vending machines
- Short loop trail for skijoring (inner trails)
- Record oral histories – founders are in 80s
- Protect the cultural sites of the original people who are still here and treasure the mountain
- 7 days a week grooming
- Support/add biathlon
- Summer MTB trails
- Improved outreach on education
- Cabins, more parking, more trails
- More snowshoeing
- Ensure future access to trails
- No E-bikes (snow)
- Metal detecting across Nordic
- Nordic rangers

## **INTERPRETATION**

What topics do you want to learn about?

- Wildlife plan and protection\*\*\*\*
- Indigenous uses, stories \*\*
- Habitat preservation\*
- Spokane Tribal history
- Mushrooms (foraging guide)
- Ski history
- Ethnobotany
- Old Man's Beard
- Wildflowers

- Wolves and coyotes
- Gen-flora
- Beavers, chipmunks
- Phenology (environmental changes by season)
- Astronomy and geology
- Wildlife (fire?) awareness/preparation
- Francis Cook story, locations
- More informational signs/photos about the history of Mount Spokane at the individual locations (Vista House Old ski lodge foundation, plane crash sites, etc.)
- Oral histories of mtn founders

What specific locations, features or buildings do you want to know more about?

- Fire lookouts\*\*\*\*
- Bear Creek area\*\*
- Snow play area
- Interpretive center -history and Tribal/cultural history
- Lunch area for student groups
- Vista House
- Other historic structures
- CCC camp

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

What do you treasure most about the natural environment at Mount Spokane?

- Everything – the multiuse/multisport\*
- Single track\*
- Please keep trails maintained but wild
- No more development of ski and snow mobiles
- Keep old growth pristine forests
- Lots of trees and undeveloped areas
- Nice place to go in summer when it's hot
- Alpine meadows
- Try to clear some of the deadfall to improve backcountry access
- Horse Mtn and Ragged Ridge areas
- Huckleberry picking and just plain seeing it from a distance
- Forest health
- Thin to win!
- Peace
- Wildlife
- Reduce fuels, so won't burn up

## **FRIENDS OF MOUNT SPOKANE**

What do you like about Mount Spokane State Park?

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- Love the access
- All the work that goes into making Mount Spokane such a wonderful place
- Love all the trails for running
- Nordic area for hiking and horseback riding
- Nordic trails, huckleberries and mushrooms
- More MTB trails (that aren't just for downhill)
- I hike, Nordic, alpine ski, gravel bike, mtn bike, berry pick
- Decades of awesome nature recreation

What would you like to see in the future?

- Fix the upper road \*\*\*
- Better/more camping\*
- Bike lifts \*
- Glading skiing at downhill area\*
- More trails integrated into the ski area – both hiking and biking
- Separation of hiking and biking trails
- More XC MTB trails on Nordic side
- Keep wild areas wild; no more development of ski and snowmobile areas
- Less ski development
- Overnight horse camping
- Collaborate on a hang glide & paraglide launch on Mount Spokane (landing outside of park boundaries centeroflife.org)
- Circumnavigation trail at elevation, contour single track (like 130 between CCC/Bald Knob)
- More camping

### **EMPIRE PAPER COMPANY LANDS**

What would you like to see in the future around the State Parks/Empire Paper Company partnership?

- Stop dumping pollutants in the river

How do you use the land now?

- XC skiing, mountain biking, running, foraging

What would you like to see in the future?

- Keep wild areas wild – no development \*
- Gravel mtn biking – very important\*
- Conservation easement support\*
- Repave road on top
- Open your roads for hiking with interpretive signs
- Hang glider launch
- Cat skiing

- Connect Spirit Lake to Mount Spokane with trails

## **DOWNHILL SKI AREA – MOUNT SPOKANE SKI AND SNOWBOARD PARK**

What do you like?

- Love uphill ski ability\*\*
- Great adaptive and disabled skiing
- Affordable recreation for our community
- Love the youth programs – summer and winter
- Friendly mountain close to town
- 7 decades of amazing recreation and nature
- It is the best ski area!

What would you like to see in the future?

- Improve glading and forest management\*
- Lift replacements \*
- Bike lift capabilities on chairlifts\*
- Chairlift down to the condos and new parking area
- More tree skiing
- Repave road from saddle to Lodge II
- More trails to summit for hiking and snow shoers
- Easy access to snowshoe trails
- Events at Vista House
- Concession agreement – Bear Creek
- Shuttle between Nordic and downhill
- Groom trail between Nordic and Mount Spokane ski area lodge; also use for summertime trail – old powerline between Saddle to Lodge I

## **SNOWMOBILE – WINTER KNIGHTS**

What do you like?

- You saved us!
- The view of Mount Spokane from the entire region
- The wildlife unhampered
- Night sky – dark
- No more clear cuts
- Close for a day ride

What do you want to see in the future?

- Actual designated off trail “tree” riding in winter
- Continue groomed trail from Ch. 4 north and loop around ski hill, keep in park boundaries, create a rideable snow berm from ski hill to Saddle to complete groomed snowmobile loop
- Many users share the trail but not all pay for grooming – equity

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- Lots of side-by-side use – what are implications?
- How are e-bikes considered relative to motorbikes (trac) and side-by-sides?
- More trails
- Trails that loop at higher elevation for longer riding season (Bear Cr Lodge melts out early to ride current loop)
- Repave road on top – Saddle to Lodge II