



April 26, 2022

**Carbon River Corridor Cooperative Action Plan Special Session
Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by Aaron Bert, Chair, at 6:02 p.m. via Zoom Webinar. A quorum was present. Chair notes that this is an open meeting and is being recorded.

ROLL CALL:

CAB Members present: Dean Absher, Derek Barry, Mary Brickle, Joan Cross, Angela Gallardo, Tom Utterback, Aaron Bert, Caleb Heimlich, Dean Burke

Staff members present: Roxanne Miles, Kimberly Freeman, Tiffany Odell, Cheryl Saltzman

CAB Member(s) absent: Robert Buck, Kendra Nguyen

Guest participants: John Selby (FHT Coalition) Dennis Engel (WSDOT), Greg Dudgeon (Mt. Rainier National Park), Steve Brown, Tom Shorey (Fruit Growers Supply Company) Julie Fonseca de Borges (NPS-RTCA)

CALL TO ORDER: Chair called the Carbon River Corridor Cooperative Action Plan Special Session meeting to order. The format will be as follows: Staff presentation, Board Q&A, Public comments, CAB discussion/recommendation. The Chair apologized to the Board for the late issuance of meeting information and indicated that the group could decide if a continuation is necessary at the end of the meeting.

MINUTES APPROVAL: Chair called for a motion to adopt the minutes. Board members approved the March 15, 2022.

Motion (Dean Absher) to adopt minutes as published, and seconded (Derek Barry). Minutes are adopted as published.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Roxanne shared that the 2021 Annual Report has been completed and is publicly accessible, and a digital copy of the report will be sent to the Board prior to May meeting. Roxanne thanked the Board for their work on Title 14, which was submitted to Council but has not yet been scheduled. Roxanne informed the Board that today's topic is a Cooperative Action Plan (CAP) which is different than anything brought before this board in the past. This involves three primary public land holders that have recreational responsibilities. The CAP is a collection of commitments individual agencies have made and is a good faith commitment by all the partners that brought it forward. After the CAB discussion, the Board will have the options of recommendation to adopt with comments, recommendation to adopt without comments, or recommendation not to adopt with comments regarding reason for declining.

CARBON RIVER CORRIDOR COOPERATIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP):

A. Presentation

Tiffany Odell introduced the participants from multiple agencies and said she might defer to them on specific questions if need be. Tiffany presented a PPT slide deck of the CAP, and summarized the Plan including the background, reasons for action, the planning area, and discussed the Steering Committee which is comprised of the major landowners in the area. Tiffany also outlined the process overview which including laying groundwork, planning, and finalizing to move forward. The public and stakeholder feedback fell into four categories:

partner coordination, recreational opportunities and facilities, informational and educational resources, and natural and historical conservation. Tiffany outlined the objectives of the action plan, and specific actions that would be taken:

Action Plan

P-1: Establish a structure for coordinated management – forming necessary agreements for public services and facilities, working together to seek funding to support actions in the plan, and working together to develop an emergency access plan through area.

P-2: Coordinate across partners to mitigate unsanctioned activities – taking action to address enforcement and emergency response issues that exist in the Corridor today.

R-1 – Expand recreational opportunities and access – specific recreational opportunities that we'll be working on over the next 10 years at specific sites and specific types of recreation.

R-2 – Develop infrastructure and expand visitor services to support increased demand – looking at how we find the locations to place infrastructure, working together to seek funding and assistance to do road repairs, making sure there are safe facilities for both motorized and non-motorized transportation through the Corridor, working together to improve signage for visitors, explore and increase opportunities for parking, and partnering to pilot a temporary visitor contact station in Wilkeson so people can stop for information and services before they get into the woods without services, including communication services, like cell phones.

I-1: Provide consistent and readily available visitor information – working together to make sure that people have the information they need to visit the Corridor. We would like to work with the Steering Committee members as a Coordinated Council in the future to develop coordinated, consistent messaging, improve way-finding signage leading to and through Corridor, and develop interpretative signage at visitor destinations to highlight best practices to be responsible user of the corridor and to share unique history of the area.

N-1: Characterize, conserve, protect, and manage natural, cultural, and historical resources and values; foster an understanding of historical uses – looking to improve the understanding of where public access is allowed and appropriate, work with Tribal Nations to address concerns and develop appropriate interpretive signage for Corridor, identify and conserve historic sites and mitigate hazards (this area is well-known historically for coal mining, and some of the relics of the mining industry still exists and poses hazards for people in the area), and acquire properties to protect critical wildlife corridors and endangered species.

Implementation Framework

We looked at examples of other coordinated partnerships and presented those to steering committees, reports are in the appendices. We decided that we would establish a Coordination Council, hire an independent coordinator to work with Coordination Council, and then have advisory groups, subcommittees, and work groups that would interact with independent coordinator. An enforcement work group has already been established looking at code enforcement issues, emergency response issues, and things in the realm of response and enforcement.

Benefits of having action plan and Coordination Council – sharing knowledge and resources; understanding roles, missions, capacity, and services; communicating efficiently between residents and landowners; opening opportunities for resources, support and funding; and working toward common goals. This helps with County Council's understanding for the funding requests or needs.

Staff Recommendation: Tonight, as Roxanne mentioned, this is a little different than a master plan specific to Pierce County's property. This is a cooperative plan, so we're not asking for recommendations in terms of what we can change in the plan, we are asking you to support Pierce County Parks continued involvement in implementing the Plan through participating on the Coordination council and advancing the actions in the Plan.

C. Public Comments – No public comments.

D. Board Discussion/Recommendation –

Q: Tom: Question to National Park Services – Does having a plan like this help with Federal funding for potential future capital improvements?

A: Greg Dudgeon responded that it is helpful in understanding priorities of shareholders and stakeholders and helps us shape where the asks go and what the asks comprise of.

Q: Aaron: What is the long-term? There are some actions being called out in terms of hard actions, and some aspirational, is there going to be a situation where these entities may have to pass additional legislation or harder policy decisions in order to advance some of these goals and objectives in the plan? The plan is calling for improvements in facilities, but the National Park Service has been struggling with funding and a backlog of maintenance issues. It looks like some of the long-term provisions for some of the maintenance and updates on trails would be a time horizon for 7-10 years, so I am assuming group is looking at funding strategies?

A: Roxanne: That is the intent of this plan. This is the least visited Mt. Rainier entrance, limited population, roads in dire need of repair. No roads, no broadband, no restrooms. With the weight of this plan, we can support each other. This helps get the agencies on the same page to move forward.

Q: Tom: It appears there's a lot at County level both infrastructure, roads, etc., and Sheriff-type issues. How would you describe them as stakeholders going forward?

A: Roxanne: I'm outside out my lane with bringing these other groups into this. We have work to do in this implementation and populating the work groups with folks with a very clear task to make it collective.

Q: Derek: Will this recommendation provide enough for you to go to Council, and will Council garner support with Sheriff's Office, and Dept. of Emergency Management, will it be handed down from Council and Executive Department? Or will this fall on Parks and Recreation?

A: Roxanne: Parks is an Executive Branch, as is the DM, and Roads, but Sheriff is under independent elected so that has some of its own nuances. As we went through budget process, we talked about this collaborative and project, and put some seed member toward that independent coordinator. The primary place for Council is awareness, and if we run into challenges, it will be nice to go back to this plan which you've adopted, and Council's adopted and be able to encourage departments to put the necessary resources into it.

Q: Dean A.: I like the plan. I also like the fact of keeping a balance between being detailed, but flexible, in allowing different groups to participated as needed, as well as subgroups, and I'd like that to remain in the plan moving forward.

Aaron: Would a board member like to make a recommendation on an adoption resolution of support?

Derek Barry moves to make a resolution the Citizens' Advisory Board is in support of this CAP and it should move forward. Caleb Heimlich seconds. No opposed, motion carries.

Any discussion on the motion on the floor for support of the CAP plan as is?

Q: Joan: I'd like to ask Roxanne if you're having trouble manning all the things you're doing now, will you have the man/womanpower to do all this?

A: Roxanne: We have built into our planning activities and moving forward, it is giving us a direction, but doesn't establish any specific Capital project. We need to identify what those are and move forward. On this call is John Laughery, regional manager for that area of the County. A lot of this is working in partnership with the agencies of the Plan. John will be doing some of the on-the-ground projects.

E. Guest Participant Comments -No guest participant comments.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, May 17th at ESB

MEETING ADJOURNED: The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.