

SEATTLE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

John Floberg, Chair • John Small, Vice-Chair
Gordon Bradley • Tom Early • Leif Fixen • Matt Mega • Jeff Reibman • Erik Rundell • Peg Staeheli

The Urban Forestry Commission was established to advise the Mayor and City Council concerning the establishment of policy and regulations governing the protection, management, and conservation of trees and vegetation in the City of Seattle

December 11, 2013

Meeting Notes

City Hall Room 370
600 4th Avenue, Seattle
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attending

Commissioners

John Small (JS) – vice-chair
Tom Early (TE)
Leif Fixen (LF)
Donna Kostka (DK) non-voting
Erik Rundell (ER)
Peg Staeheli (PS)

Staff

Valerie Pacino - OSE
Jennifer Wieland - SDOT

Guests

Jill Simmons

Public

Steve Zemke

Absent- Excused

John Floberg (JF) - chair
Gordon Bradley (GB)
Matt Mega (MM)
Jeff Reibman (JR)

NOTE: Meeting notes are not exhaustive. For more details listen to the digital recording of the meeting at: <http://www.seattle.gov/urbanforestrycommission/meetingdocs.htm>

Call to order

John Small will chair the meeting in John Floberg's absence.
Valerie Pacino filling in for Sandra Pinto de Bader as OSE staff.

Chair report

No chair report

Project update – decision making toolkit for tree removal or preservation when tree-sidewalks conflicts exist

SDOT wants input from the UFC on:

- Best practices research areas. Commissioners suggested research on the following topics:
 - Transit conflicts
 - Visible intersections
 - Hard woods versus soft woods

- Which trees to plant in light of climate change
 - Which trees to plant based on what is readily available in local nurseries
 - Root training
- Cities. Commissioners provided the following feedback:
 - JS suggests identifying cities with similar geometric layout and historical development, rather than more obvious similarities like climate.
 - LF can provide SDOT with contacts in Boston.
- o Locations for case studies
- o Other suggestions
 - SDOT should include Seattle Public Schools in its IDT
- o As commissioners have ideas for other best practices research areas or cities, email Jennifer Wieland.

PS is acting in advisory and quality assurance capacities on SDOT project, so she may need to recuse herself from UFC votes as needed.

SDOT is willing to present to UFC draft best practices research in January or February, draft of toolkit in February or March, and draft operational plan in April or May.

2013 Annual Report – review and discussion

- Add: under Urban Forest Stewardship Plan section, add a couple sentences about meeting with BIMIP. Peg to provide, though she sent meeting notes to Tracy and Sandra.
- Edit: in DPD Proposed Tree Regulations section, change, “Unfortunately, due to staffing issues, DPD halted work in 2013” to “Unfortunately, due to resource allocation and staff capacity, DPD halted work in 2013.”
- Add: Conclusion

2014 Work Plan – review and discussion

Seattle Urban Forestry Commission 2014 Work Plan - see Track Changes edits in document.

Discussion

- In 2014, meeting with Port of Seattle is important, because they have so much land.
- Add canopy to Freight Master Plan? Maintenance needs.
- Link freight and UFC websites.
- Consider what incentives are required to have industrial areas plant more trees.
- LF to get notes on DPD’s tree protection ordinance from Brennon.
- Ask DPD to attend January meeting to explain its interpretation of code.
- Consider cool GIS project – tree canopy by census block; include as layers economic diversity and cultural diversity.

UFC Meeting Schedule 2014

January

- Ask DPD to attend January meeting to explain its interpretation of existing tree code.
- Add to January agenda: develop more robust plan for UFC community outreach and stakeholder engagement (i.e., join in ReLeaf events, SDOT tree-sidewalk conflicts public outreach and education).
- First of two sessions on race and social justice, debrief Race field trip to PSC. *Also possible in February, but this first session should be early in the year.* Consider how UFC does and can affect race and social justice causes in Seattle. Consider who to invite to follow-up meeting: speaker(s) should reflect on how different cultures perceive trees and cities (Asian/Native American possible). Schedule second of two sessions later in the year.

- Ask SDOT tree-sidewalks conflict group to present on draft existing and best practices research. *Also possible in February.*

February

- Plan session on UFC collaboration on Bike Master Plan implementation, bike access routes, greenbelts, and multi-user trails. Invite:
 - o Someone from SDOT BMP Implementation Committee
 - o Cascadia Bicycle Alliance
 - o Bike Advisory Group
 - o Commute Seattle
- Plan field trip to SODO industrial area – considering constraints in Ballard (BIMIC); character of industrial area redevelopment; stadium district, including possible new stadium. *Also possible in March.*
- Plan meeting with Port of Seattle.
- Ask SDOT tree-sidewalks conflict group to present on draft toolkit (solutions and approaches to implementation). *Also possible in March.*

March

- Ask Jana with ReLeaf to attend, update on budget, staff capacity, outreach plans, etc.
- Ask SDOT tree-sidewalks conflict group to present on draft case studies. *Also possible in April.*

April

- Ask SDOT tree-sidewalks conflict group to present on draft operational plan. *Also possible in May.*

May

- Ask SPU to attend and report on its tree canopy inventory.

July

- Plan meeting re: funding requests for next budget: SDOT, Parks, SPU, consider another flight assessment of canopy.

August

- Plan for writing position paper.

September

- Plan update on waterfront/sea wall redevelopment project.

October

- Plan joint meeting.

December

- Ask SPU to attend and report on its tree canopy inventory.

Public comment

Steve Zemke:

- Loss of Conlin forces UFC to reassess roles, allies, political support. Strongly suggest seeing how Mayor-elect can be stronger ally.
- UFC needs clearer lines of influence. Look to Portland as example. UFC and OSE should take the lead as the trees' protectors.

- There is a large swath of state land, including along the I-5 and I-90 corridors that would benefit from more trees. UFC should advise City Council and the MO on the best way to collaborate with WashDOT on this action.

Next month's agenda items

Adjourn

Community input:

From: Howard Langeveld [<mailto:hlangeveld@comcast.net>]

Sent: Monday, December 02, 2013 10:21 AM

To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Graves, David; Acosta, Rachel; Michael Yadrick

Cc: 'Mark Ostrow'; 'QAGreenways'

Subject: mountain bikes in natural areas

Gentle People

I am a mountain biker and I oppose the use of mountain bikes in the natural areas of Seattle. I am also a forest steward at the SW Queen Anne Greenbelt. Last year I was working on a forest steward trail and I starting hearing a distressed chirping. I looked up and saw the sound was coming from a cute little humming bird. I immediately started looking around and I saw the bird and 6 little beaks coming out of a tiny little nest 4 feet off the ground. I left the site alone until mid-July when the birds were no longer using the nest.

The first mention in literature of Greenbelts is by Moses in the Bible. Later Queen Elizabeth established Greenbelts in and around London in the 1500s. Seattle established Greenbelts in the 1970s. These areas were to remain undisturbed and provide a place for nature to soak up the pollutants in the air in the water and provide a sound damper between urban noises and residential area. They were also established to provide biodiversity and a place for people and native animals rest and be quiet. Resting, safe and quiet areas are necessary for wild animals to raise their young. There are very few places in Seattle where this can be done. Mountain biking in natural areas would remove safety and quiet, it will cause erosion and biodiversity would be more difficult to maintain. Nesting areas and food source areas would be lost For these reasons I oppose mountain bike courses in the natural areas of Seattle

Best Regards

Howard Langeveld

From: Janine Blaeloch [<mailto:blaeloch@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, December 09, 2013 10:23 AM

To: Bagshaw, Sally; Godden, Jean; Rasmussen, Tom; Conlin, Richard

Cc: McGinn, Mike; Williams, Christopher; Graves, David; Acosta, Rachel; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra

Subject: Natural Areas merit continued protection

Dear Councilmembers:

I am writing as coordinator of Lake City Greenways to express concern regarding the possible introduction of mechanized recreation uses, such as mountain biking, in Seattle's Natural Areas. While we believe that access by bicycle to Seattle's parks is extremely important—and something for which

Seattle Neighborhood Greenways and Lake City Greenways are actively advocating—this does not translate to access within sensitive areas by mechanized transport for recreation.

We understand that at a recent Seattle Parks Board meeting, the Acting Superintendent opined that as park user demands change, park regulations must change in response. In some cases this may be so, but it is also important to remember that the sanctity and intrinsic value of some public spaces must be protected permanently, as a matter of both need and principle. It is not always easy to hold the line on these issues in the face of demand by user groups, but it is worth doing. As Seattle continues to grow and grow, the importance of Natural Areas only becomes greater, both for the survival of wild flora and fauna and for our own sanity.

Introducing mountain bikes into Natural Areas would doubtless require vegetation removal, widening of paths, and features to reduce conflicts between users. The new use would also have long-term impacts on soils and other natural elements. Not every space is appropriate for every use, and these special areas are a prime example.

Again, while we strongly support enhancing bicycle access to parks, and use of bicycles in parks that can accommodate them, we urge you not to change the code with regard to Natural Areas.

Thank you for your consideration.

Janine Blaeloch
Lake City Greenways
[206-498-6695](tel:206-498-6695)

From: Brian Ramey [mailto:brianramey@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 10:55 AM
To: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra
Cc: Deputy Mayor Donno Kostka; Rundquist, Nolan
Subject: RE: UFC - FW: More thoughts on SDOT sidewalk/tree conflict study

Sandra,

Thanks for the note.

See an old email exchange below, 2010. This email is just a “touching bases” again to make sure that when people plant their own trees on Public property (without the proper permits) and the new tree is directly over a neighbor’s side sewer line, they should sustain some liability for the breakage of that sewer line..... I could not get the city to stop my neighbor from cutting down the old trees and planting new ones over my sewer line.

Nolan is I believe doing his best to avoid this problem. I am very supportive of any measures to add more tree canopy to the city...

See below

Lake Union Neighbors
Brian Ramey
117 East Louisa Street, #187
Seattle, WA 98102
(206) 271-4744

brianramey@comcast.net

“We may see that progress is not the accelerating speed with which we multiply and subdue the Earth,
nor the growing number Of things we possess and cling to.
It is a way along which to search for truth, To find serenity and love and reverence for life, To be part of an enduring harmony.”

David Ross Brower (1912 – 2000)
A Founder of the Sierra Club

From: brianramey@comcast.net [<mailto:brianramey@comcast.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2010 3:34 PM
To: Nolan Rundquist
Cc: Judy Brown
Subject: Re: Trees for Neighborhoods, a program of the Office of Sustainability and Environment

Nolan,

Thanks,

As stated before, I would appreciate any emphasis you can put on the avoidance of planting the trees over sewer lines. I know that if your office is involved and no unauthorized species are planted the problems will be minimal. However, when rouge tree planters are active, it can cost a home owner \$10,000 to repair the sewer line after a tree root's have destroyed the pipe.

Brian

----- Original Message -----

From: "Nolan Rundquist" <Nolan.Rundquist@seattle.gov>
To: brianramey@comcast.net, "Judy Brown" <Judy.Brown@seattle.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2010 10:17:09 AM
Subject: RE: Trees for Neighborhoods, a program of the Office of Sustainability and Environment

Hi Brian

When my inspectors go out to mark potential planting sites, they check a map (like the one attached) to determine the general location of underground utilities. When we provide the training class for DON, prior to tree distribution in the fall, we also provide an web address for project leaders to double check side sewer locations for their project.

We probably don't get them all located precisely, but we're trying to give it our best shot.

The web site for side sewers is: <http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/sideseewercardsv2/>

NR

Nolan Rundquist

Nolan Rundquist, City Arborist
Seattle Department of Transportation

From: brianramey@comcast.net [<mailto:brianramey@comcast.net>]
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2010 2:16 PM
To: Brown, Judy
Cc: Rundquist, Nolan
Subject: Trees for Neighborhoods, a program of the Office of Sustainability and Environment

Judy,

This is an email in follow up to my telephone call last week.

The trees for Neighborhoods program is a great idea and one I fully support.

My concern as I expressed to you last week is that the guidelines and instructions to citizens about where to plant the trees needs to account for the location of sewer lines. Some trees are thirsty for the products of sewer lines on private and public property and it would be wise to caution people about avoiding planting over these lines.

My neighbor cut down the existing street trees that Arthur Lee Jacobson said were unique and valuable and replanted with crabapple trees. She did this over my sewer line. I am now waiting for the required \$5000 or up billing to her when my sewer line is broken and the roots of these trees invade it.

Would you let me know what will be done to educate people about the problem of planting trees directly over a sewer line?

Thank you,

Brian Ramey

From: M [mailto:m.etaoinshrdlu@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 12:39 PM

To: Acosta, Rachel; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Graves, David

Subject: Developing mountain bike trails in Seattle parks natural areas (Re: FW:)

Dear Ms. Acosta, Pindo de Bader, and Mr. Graves

This is regarding development of natural areas and green space in Seattle.

Undeveloped green space as natural areas and wildlife habitat should be the top priorities for what little such space remains. This priority consequently provides for the maximum opportunity for tranquility, little of which exists in our urban environments.

I.

The mountain bike (MTB) trails proposal for Cheasty Greenspace [beaconbikepark.com/index.html] seemingly takes very nearly the entire green space, but for the unidentified blue patch. Aerial and contour view shows little habitat would remain undisturbed by (or not in view of) MTB activity. Apparently every pedestrian trail would be viewing a MTB trail.[1]

II.

Further, city parks and green space patrons should primarily be neighbors--visitors arriving on their own power--closely followed by city residents, who are the ones paying, after all. So if most MTB users would arrive by motor vehicle (or transit), then particular location is not particularly relevant.

II.A.

For MTB trails courses,

--> what might the availability be of relatively vacant land in developed or such as formerly industrial areas?

After all, MTB trails courses do not necessarily need to be located in wildlife habitat.

III.

I strongly urge that all daylighted streams and undeveloped Environmentally Critical areas be exempted from development.

IV.

Undesirable activities can be significantly reduced by judicious application of good design. Development is very much not the only solution.

V.

---> What is the city Parks and Recreation Department policy on development of green spaces or natural areas?

As you know, Parks policy significantly limits any development.[2] Further, "Natural areas are characterized as being largely undeveloped landscapes, thickly vegetated with native plant communities, and used primarily for passive recreation. Natural areas are considered to have **limited or minimal human disturbance** and provide habitat for plants, mammals, reptiles, birds, insects, amphibians".[3]

Designated habitat may further limit trails. Have a look at the habitat areas at Sand Point Park, as well as along Thornton Creek and its (minimal remaining) headwaters of seasonal wetland(s) still extant.

V.A.

MTB trails courses in natural areas are quite not "Restoration and protection of environmental quality [...] Reinforcement of natural systems".[3]

Further, MTB trails courses (and closely related BMX) are explicitly athletic activities. Consequently, their trails courses are athletic facilities. Consequently, development of such facilities would necessarily allow development of other athletic facilities in natural areas and green spaces. I found no provision in "Best Management Practices, Natural Areas" for athletic facilities in natural areas.[3] I would very much appreciate further information.

VI.

Acquisition of green space and natural areas was sold to the voters on the premise that these lands would be preserved for their explicit purposes[3]. Rather than taking allocated green space or natural areas, facilities development should necessarily be provided in parks, or on lands acquired for parks facilities development.

By the Parks Department's own stated policies, excluding from green spaces and natural areas the active use that is MTB trails courses should be a slam dunk.

I would appreciate further information on Parks policy about this issue and the City's Greenspaces Policy (1993).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely
Malcolm Taran

1^

map at <http://beaconbikepark.com/index.html> and
<https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Cheasty+Greenspace&hl=en&ll=47.561817,-122.296672&spn=0.023631,0.028024&sll=47.613028,-122.342064&sspn=0.377719,0.44838&t=h&hq=Cheasty+Greenspace&z=15>

2^

Parks Classification Policy

[Section] 4.7 Natural Area/Greenbelt

for [...] wildlife, habitat[,] and other natural systems support [...]

for low-impact use. Minimal infrastructure [...]

[p.8]

[...] established for the protection and stewardship of wildlife, habitat[,] and other natural systems [...]

Some natural areas are open for low-impact use. Minimal infrastructure may include access [...] where it will not adversely affect habitat or natural systems functions. Larger natural areas may have **small sections** developed to **serve a community park function**.

[p.8]

[2009. seattle.gov/parks/Publications/policy/parks_classification_policy.pdf]

Tree Policy

To maintain, preserve and enhance the urban forest within parks.To increase the overall tree canopy, tree health and tree longevity within parks and to ensure that parks trees are managed in a manner that is consistent with other departmental and municipal policies.

[\[seattle.gov/parks/Environment/treepolicy.htm\]](http://seattle.gov/parks/Environment/treepolicy.htm)

[Section] 3.0 Definitions]

[...]

3.6 **Undeveloped landscape** is park property that contains native or volunteer (self-propagated) plants and is **not intended for recreational use except along designated trails**. Undeveloped landscapes include **any property that was acquired as a "Greenspace" under the City's Greenspaces Policy** (1993). Undeveloped landscapes are usually not as intensively maintained as developed landscapes.

[p.3]

3^

Best Management Practices, **Natural Areas**

5.1 Definition of Resource 5-1

Natural areas are characterized as being largely undeveloped landscapes, thickly vegetated with native plant communities, and used primarily for passive recreation. Natural areas are considered to have limited or minimal human disturbance and provide habitat for plants, mammals, reptiles, birds, insects, amphibians and sometimes fish in an urban setting. In contrast, developed parks have formal landscapes and include active recreation for sports.

5.2 Goal Statement 5-1

Our goal is to develop a sustainable resource that protects, optimizes, enhances, and increases our natural environments. These environments will provide opportunities for observing and enjoying urban wildlife, engaging in environmental education, and participating in restoration activities.

5.4 Policies and Guidelines 5-3

[...]

Sustainable Infrastructure Initiative (SII): [...]

[...]

- Restoration and protection of environmental quality

[...]

- Reinforcement of natural systems

[p.5-4]

5.5 Planning and Design [p.5-5]

Planning and development checklist for Natural Areas

[p.5-6]

5.8.5 Trails

[...] manage a trail system that provides inviting and safe year[-]round access to parks and natural areas for people of all abilities that is aesthetically and functionally integrated into the surrounding landscape, that promotes the protection of our natural resources and is linked to other Departmental and Citywide environmental stewardship opportunities.

[p.5-39]

[2005, seattle.gov/parks/projects/BMP/chapter5.pdf]

[end]

From: Donna Kostka [mailto:donna4510@comcast.net]

Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2013 1:35 PM

To: Wieland, Jennifer

Cc: Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra

Subject: More thoughts on SDOT sidewalk/tree conflict study

Jennifer – On December 11 at the meeting of the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission, you presented an overview of

SDOT's sidewalk/tree conflict study and invited comments. Subsequently, I've had further thoughts:

I hope SDOT uses this study to educate the public that sidewalks are public domain and as such the public has a responsibility to clear snow/ice during storms and to keep passage fully accessible and clear for pedestrians year-round. The research phase of your project could inquire about enforcement policies on these topics elsewhere. I'd recommend contacting Minneapolis regarding snow/ice removal and Copenhagen and its suburbs in Denmark regarding keeping shrubs pruned.

I'm sending this to Sandra for distribution to the remainder of the commission. As a new appointee, I am not yet on general distribution. Thank you for considering these thoughts. Donna

Donna Kostka

From: Dan Keefe [mailto:papadan44@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 24, 2013 10:09 AM
To: Bagshaw, Sally; Rasmussen, Tom; Godden, Jean; Conlin, Richard; Acosta, Rachel; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Graves, David
Cc: Ruth Williams
Subject: Natural areas and mountain bikes

Dear city council members, and responsible parks and urban forestry commission personnel:

The purpose of this email is to register my personal support of Thornton Creek Alliance's (TCA) position regarding the potential changing of the City's rules and BMPs establishing the purpose and uses allowed in Seattle's numerous Natural areas to accommodate mountain bike trails and subsequent use. Below are statements from TCA that represents their stance or position on preserving Seattle's natural areas and minimizing mountain bike use which I strongly supports.

"In Seattle's quest for urban density, forested land is at a premium and valued for increasing habitat and the tree canopy. Natural areas should not be degraded with additional compressed and dead soils. **Forest restoration should be the priority.** Mountain biking does not require a forest, and adding this new use to the natural areas does not make them available to a new group of users (since bicyclists are able-bodied) as the newly required ADA standard trails will do. As yet there has been NO discussion about how to have these two user groups work together."

"Last month Dr Steven Handel, director of the Center for Urban Restoration Ecology at Rutgers University, spoke here in Seattle. He was asked about this conflict. He said one of the main issues is the increase in compressed, dead soils that results when you add and widen trails. He also said that the only way to keep everybody on the trails and out of the plantings is to use fencing."

"We at Thornton Creek Alliance have asked that the code remain unchanged. If that cannot be done, we requested that at a minimum clear and specific parameters should be set, so that mountain biking will be allowed only at a couple of the largest natural areas with considerable space, limited habitat potential, and not considered Environmentally Critical Areas. Additionally, since the vast majority of the area in the Thornton Creek natural areas is listed as Environmentally Critical, we requested that these natural areas be exempt in their entirety from active uses."

It is my sincere hope that both TCA's and my concerns will be seriously considered and, as compromise may require, that the small natural areas in the Thornton Creek drainage be exempt from any deleterious rule changes and that these changes be only applicable to larger, less critical Natural areas. Additionally, I would also support bike trails to the boundaries of the Natural areas but not go into them as is supported by Seattle Neighborhood Greenways.

Sincerely,
Dan Keefe, President
Meadowbrook Community Council

From: Kristin Distelhorst [mailto:kristin.distelhorst@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, December 26, 2013 5:38 PM

To: Bagshaw, Sally; Acosta, Rachel; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Graves, David; Rasmussen, Tom; Godden, Jean

Subject: Re: Amending existing city policy to allowed different users in open spaces and developing trail standards for mountain biking in some of Seattle's natural areas.

Dear Stewards and Supporters of Seattle Parks open spaces:

I am concerned to learn that a proposal is being considered to change the uses and substructure of some of Seattle's natural areas for mountain bike users.

Please consider the following questions as you debate this important issue:

1. The Parks Department currently defines its natural areas as being "largely undeveloped landscapes, thickly vegetated with native plant

communities, and used primarily for passive recreation. Natural areas are considered to have limited or minimal human disturbance and provide habitat for plants,

mammals, reptiles, birds, insects, amphibians and sometimes fish in an urban setting." (5.1 Definition of Resource)**What would motivate the Parks Department to want to change that definition?!**

2. Must natural areas serve all users? Are natural areas at all appropriate for recreational uses?

Do resources currently exist for specialized recreation for runners, bicyclists, swimmers, bmx and mountain bike riders, skateboard users, dog owners, soccer players, ultimate Frisbee players and others?

3. Should the Parks Departments dedicate itself to preserving and maintaining passive quiet open space in the dense urban environment of Seattle? YES

My weekly hiking group uses the local natural areas all winter for hiking when we cannot hike in the mountains.

4. What increased liability would ensue with the interaction between walkers and mountain bikers?

Any mountain bike trail should not have to share with any other users to minimize liability.

5. At the very least mountain biking should be allowed only at one or two of the largest natural areas that have considerable open space, limited habitat potential, and are not considered Environmentally Critical Areas. Only those one or two areas should have a change in their codes; a change of codes should not be extended to all natural areas.

Respectfully,
Kristin Distelhorst
Seattle, WA

From: N Rauhauser [mailto:rauhauser@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, December 27, 2013 9:51 AM

To: Bagshaw, Sally; Acosta, Rachel; Pinto_de_Bader, Sandra; Graves, David; Rasmussen, Tom; Godden,

Jean

Subject: Mountain biking in Seattle's natural areas

Hello,

I understand you are considering whether to change the rules of usage of Seattle's natural areas. I encourage you to allow them to remain quiet, natural sanctuaries for plants, wildlife and people. I fear that changing the rules to allow more development, such as for mountain bike trails, would open the door to runaway development of many of our precious places of nature in the city.

I understand there is a proposal to build a mountain bike trail in Cheasty Greenspace to draw people there in order make it a safer place. I totally 'get' the safety issue. Can safety through higher usage alternatively be accomplished by developing educational field trips from Seattle's schools to the natural areas? It would be a great way to familiarize children with the natural world, and start them down a path of respect for plants and wildlife, as well as teach them about ecology such as the role of trees in the oxygen/carbon cycle.

If changes must be made, is there a way to keep the existing rules yet allow EXCEPTIONS to a very small number of the areas?

I am a volunteer forest monitor for Green Seattle Partnership and EarthCorps. I cherish the quiet natural areas I'm helping to restore. I also hike every week with friends and in the winter when we can't go into the mountains it is wonderful to be able to hike in some solitude among the large trees in city and regional natural areas.

Thank you all for the work you do for the city. And happy new year!

Sincerely,

Nancy Rauhauser

2024 NE 113th St

206-367-4133
