

**Concept Proposal for Addition of Multiple Purpose Perimeter Trail and Bicycle Only Trails to  
Gibbs Lake County Park**

***Preliminary Draft for Presentation to the  
BOCC on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (Approximate Time is 10am)***

**Background**

The existing 7.5 miles single track trails at Gibbs Lake County Park were built in part, and have been maintained primarily by trail enthusiasts organized under the Quimper Trails Association (QTA). The QTA was formed in March of 2000 by bicyclists and equestrians, and holds an open ended agreement with Jefferson County for trail maintenance and construction. County Staff, Americorps Volunteers, and other volunteers have also worked on the trail system since the inception of the park.

The existing trail network is multiple purpose, low maintenance, year round, two directional, and is enjoyed by hikers, runners, equestrians, and bicyclists alike. This trail network is high quality, unique, and is an invaluable resource to our community. It was created and has been maintained at minimal cost. The Quimper Trails Association is currently building an additional 1.5 miles of multiple purpose single track trail, bringing the total inventory at the park to 7.5 miles.

**Problem**

Equestrian trail riders, bicyclists, hikers, fitness walkers, and trail runners need dry, accessible, and well maintained single track trails in our area. Such trails are beneficial year around, and especially in winter when the high country is snowed in.

The sport of bicycling has progressed rapidly in the last ten years. Advances in equipment and rider's skill levels have resulted in new modes of bicycling that often involve steep, fast descents, jumps, aerial tricks, ramps, and banked turns. These modes are only possible through dedicated, purpose built facilities. There is both a demand for, and a shortage of such facilities in our local area.

**Opportunity**

Gibbs Lake County Park was expanded in 2014. It now includes land suitable for creation of both a multiple purpose single track trail, and a variety of bicycle only skills trails. The proposed areas have excellent topography, are well drained, contain appropriate soils, and were disturbed by clear cut logging in the 1990's and in 2001. The trail construction will occur in Zone 8 of the Gibbs Lake Master Plan. This zone is designated for timberland and trails.

The project can be completed at minimal cost through the cooperative efforts of the bicycle and equestrian communities, the Buckhorn Range Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen and the Quimper Trails Association. The trails will be maintained by the Quimper Trails Association.

While there is currently enough parking for single passenger vehicles, horse trailer parking is limited to two or three trailers in the main parking lot. At present the configuration of the main parking lot does not clearly delineate how cars and horse trailers should park so as to avoid boxing in a horse trailer. The configuration of the main parking lot should be analyzed as soon as possible, and modified to improve

trailer access if appropriate. The overall parking capacity should be monitored both before and after project completion. If the parking is inadequate, then the main parking lot should be expanded.

A park neighbor has maintained an existing logging road as a multipurpose single track trail in the 'new' property. This trail is approximately .6 miles long and is ideal for incorporation into the proposed perimeter trail.

Another existing logging road extends north from Beausite Lake Road and can also be incorporated into the perimeter trail.

#### **Goals and Solutions:**

- Build a multiple purpose single track trail along the perimeter of the 'new' property, approximately 3 miles long for hikers, bicyclists and equestrians. Incorporate existing trails by linking them together to form the perimeter trail.
- Build approximately 2 miles of specialized, bicycle only, one way single track trails with unique features including ramps, jumps, banked turns, and drops for example.
- Build a bicycle skills area designed to assist rider development along a progression of skills including a pump track, varied drops, balance logs, and jump lines, approximately 2 acres in size.
- Maintain the integrity, character and essential goals of Gibbs Lake County Park.
- Create modestly sized, widely dispersed, and appropriately designed facilities that maintain and promote the existing character, goals, and values of Gibbs Lake County Park.
- Build slowly, according to plan, and in phases. Monitor and address potential issues as they arise.
- Follow the existing Gibbs Lake County Park Master Plan. Build only in appropriate areas designated as active use by the Plan.
- Protect the natural environment, wetlands, cultural and historical elements, and habitat.
- Improve the natural environment where possible by removing noxious weeds, thinning dog hair trees, planting native plants, and building according to best practices as established by the International Mountain Bike Association. Consult with expert trail designers, foresters and biologists as needed.
- Build for low maintenance, safety, crime reduction and prevention, and minimal user conflicts.
- Build according to appropriate IMBA standards to help insure safety.
- Concentrate access into existing parking lots and facilities. Expand parking capacity if needed, especially for horse trailers. Ensure existing parking is properly configured and delineated.
- Provide buffers to neighboring property owners and Beausite Lake County Park facilities.
- Encourage use by people of all ages and skill levels by providing a progression of difficulty, by which beginners can improve their skills, and experts can find challenges and enjoyment from the experience.
- Sign and map the facilities to reduce user conflicts, increase access, and in case of emergency. Communicate with first responders regarding the best emergency access points.
- Designate a project lead: Jim Shaver, president of QTA, charged with implementation. Designate project partners from the Buckhorn Range Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen, as well as running and hiking groups, if possible. Establish communication between all partners as plans proceed.

- Ensure that trail maintenance is done with the least possible impact on native plants, especially when trimming the trail corridor.

### **Benefits**

- Increased opportunities for active exercise in a natural environment for local citizens as well as visitors.
- Modest increase in visitation to the area, with potential economic benefits for local businesses.
- Social and community benefits of having a place where people are together and engaged in positive activities.
- Benefits for youth, participating in an active pursuit, place for local youth bike teams to practice.

### **Budget**

- 100% volunteer labor, serving under the existing volunteer program.
- QTA's in-house funds for expenditures on tools, supplies, and fuel are \$750.
- Jefferson County funds for expenditures on tools, supplies and miscellaneous are: \$1,500.
- Total construction budget is \$1,250.

### **Schedule**

- This project will take approximately three to five years depending on the strength of the volunteer corps.
- The project will be phased, allowing for orderly development and the opportunity to assess and address issues as they arise.

### **Public Involvement Plan**

- Outreach to neighbors and Camp Beausite NW
- JCPRAB – February 3 and March 2
- BoCC – March 28
- Newspaper article
- JCPRAB April 13, and May 4 (possible action)