



King County

Parks and Recreation Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

King Street Center, KSC-NR-0700

201 South Jackson Street

Seattle, WA 98104-3855

206.296.8687 Fax 206.296.8686

TTY Relay: 711

November 5, 2009

Brian Wall
34349 SE 39th Place
Fall City, WA 98038

Dear Mr. Wall:

Thank you for meeting with Bob Burns and me to discuss the Snoqualmie Valley Trail access point at SE 39th. We appreciated hearing your concerns as well as your ideas to improve access and to regulate the trail access point. At the meeting, I told you that we would look into your concerns regarding premises liability, parking, hours of use, garbage, security/law enforcement and King County "presence" along the Trail. While there are different strategies and options to address these issue which we should discuss before implementing, here is what we have learned, and some initial thoughts about resolving the issues that you raised.

Liability

You voiced strong concerns about potential liability for any injuries the public might sustain while accessing the Trail over your property from SE 39th. We've learned that Washington State law—namely, Sections 4.24.200 and 4.24.210 of the Revised Code of Washington—relieves landowners of liability when they provide free public recreational access on or over their land. The statute provides protection for all conditions except "known dangerous artificial latent conditions" not posted with warning signs. The protection afforded by the statute is thus remarkably broad. I assume that you will want to review the statute with your attorney if you have not done so already.

Parking

Currently, the Parks and Recreation Division strongly recommends that Snoqualmie Valley Trail users park their vehicles at Fall City Park and walk, bike or ride their horse from the park up to the trail via SE 39th. It has long been our goal to keep parked cars off of SE 39th to avoid congestion and other impacts to neighbors. We do understand that some drivers ignore the signs we installed last year, and we feel that there may be an opportunity to engage the King County Roads Services Division as well as the King County Sheriff's office on this issue. We recently worked with them on similar concerns at another site between Issaquah and Hobart, where we were able to virtually eliminate all illegally parked cars through signage, physical barriers (bollards, blocks) and a short period of frequent patrolling and ticketing.

I would suggest a similar approach here – where we work with the Sheriffs office, Roads and neighbors to jointly identify improvements that would work on SE 39th. Additionally, we can work with the numerous user groups that access the trail at this location and educate them about parking and park rules.

Hours of Use

County parks are open until dusk, unless specifically authorized by the Parks and Recreation Division. While the Division makes exceptions for lighted facilities such as ballfields and community centers, as well as urban trails used for commuting purposes, the Division is committed to closing the Snoqualmie Valley Trail and others like it at dusk, due to the lack of lighting and resulting risk of potential collisions between various users—equestrians, bicyclists and pedestrians. We will work with both local and county-wide user groups to get the word out regarding hours of use, as well as posting signage at the SE 39th access point. A public meeting may be a good approach towards not only this issue but others identified above.

Garbage Removal

There are several ways the County could address garbage collection and control at the SE 39th access site. First, the County could install garbage cans or other receptacles at the access point, or on the trail itself – we can move forward with that immediately, however location is important as wildlife often disburses garbage and people who think that throwing trash near the trash can is close enough to putting it in the trash can often results in a larger problem. Additionally, various trail user groups might be willing to supplement the County's regular maintenance work by "adopting" the SE 39th access point and the Snoqualmie Valley Trail section through our successful Adopt a Park or Trail Program, which is similar to "adopt-a-highway" programs. By participating in this program, user groups help to increase public awareness of the importance of protecting our green spaces and natural heritage, generate pride in our park system, and demonstrate commitment to the community. Lastly, depending on budget considerations, we may be able to arrange for parks maintenance staff to more frequently patrol the SE 39th access point and pick up garbage as needed.

Security/Law Enforcement

We have a good relationship with the Sheriff's office and we work closely with them to address public safety issues and to enforce Parks rules, including violations of trail rules. We have worked with the Sheriff's office at several park and trail locations, where regular policing has helped to make the County more "visible" to recreational visitors. We will ask them about visiting the SE 39th access point as a regular part of their Fall City-area patrols. If it appears that illegal parking and Parks rule violations occur on a regular basis, then we will work with the Sheriff's office to coordinate enforcement. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Division will work closely with user groups (e.g. equestrian, cycling and hiking clubs) to increase awareness of the County's park rules, and to ask them for help in increasing compliance. Based on our past experience, recreational user groups tend to be very effective at self-policing. Again, this may be an opportunity via a public meeting with the Sheriffs office in attendance to inform and educate users.

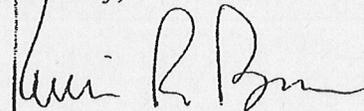
Brian Wall
November 5, 2009
Page 3

Regular Presence

Our trails crews have an ongoing maintenance schedule that requires them to frequently drive the entire route of the Snoqualmie Valley Trail. We can ensure, through changes in our maintenance schedule, that crews would more frequently visit the SE 39th access point to observe site conditions, maintain the site, and enforce park rules.

I want to once again thank you and your partners for meeting with us to discuss the SE 39th Place trail access point. As I have explained, I believe there is a tremendous opportunity for the Parks and Recreation Division, Rutherford Slough LLC, and Snoqualmie Valley Trail user groups to work together to better regulate and maintain the SE 39th trail access site to meet our mutual needs. I look forward to further discussions with you and your partners in Rutherford Slough LLC. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions before we meet again.

Sincerely,



Kevin Brown
Division Director

cc: Bob Burns, Deputy Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Andrew Marcuse, Senior Prosecuting Attorney

10/10/10
10/10/10
10/10/10

Dear Sir,
I am writing to you regarding the matter of the 10/10/10
I am writing to you regarding the matter of the 10/10/10
I am writing to you regarding the matter of the 10/10/10

I am writing to you regarding the matter of the 10/10/10
I am writing to you regarding the matter of the 10/10/10
I am writing to you regarding the matter of the 10/10/10

Yours faithfully,

Name
Address

John Doe, 10/10/10, 10/10/10, 10/10/10
Address, 10/10/10, 10/10/10, 10/10/10