

Ginkgo Public Comments

February 2025 – March 2025

The roadways in the Ginkgo park allow people access to many acres of land which would otherwise be inaccessible if closed. Keep it open to those who are not financially able to take weeks off to walk the area. ¹

A quicker and existing trail connection to CTP trail from Huntzinger is using the old Doris road through GPUD parcel past the entrance of Getty, and then through BLM parcel.

The proposed ALT 3 trail is an unfunded unicorn where access will NEVER be resolved , while the existing DORIS trail just needs access agreements and improvement.

Regards ²

Lauren,

I submitted my comments to a "valid" email WSP provided at the time. Your response is not even consistent to the link provide which provides mail or the eis email address.

Can you even attach documents to the "WSP public comment form"? I suspect the Kittitas County letters were NOT submitted through the allege public comment page you ASK that be used. The question is why my comments as submitted are not included in the record, even though some of the comments appear to be broken out in a WSP summary sheet. Will WSP include the document in the record?

Regards ³

Chairman

The Recreation Drive issue will be a tough one but there are three additional concerns not being addressed in the CAMP process, that are low hanging fruit to improve public recreational access.

I am asking for BOCC support for the following during the Thursday Feb 27,2025 Ginkgo CAMP EIS review..

First: WSP owes a strip of land along Vantage Bay and Huntzinger road. A public trail should be completed to the end of Vantage Bay/top of the hill.

Second: a 6 vehicle parking lot should be constructed at the top of the hill with a trail to the Columbia River shoreline and then south on mostly GPUD land to the Wanapum RV park.. This trail was proposed in a GPUD relicense study but not included in Recreation Plan. The phase one concept is available from GPUD in their Trail Recreation Study.

Third: a six car parking lot should be constructed south of the Getty entrance on GPUD land which provides access to the "Doris Road" across BLM land to the CTP trail. The CTP then provides access to the Beverly Bridge Crossing. Park at Getty with the kids, push you bikes up Doris Road and then haul ass to and across the Beverly Bridge where Mom picks you up in

Beverly. (Today I have the right, not to park, but to walk across GPUD land to the BLM ownership on Doris road. Public Free Access on licensee fee owned land at ANY FERC licensed hydroelectric project: Rock Island, Rocky Reach, Chelan, Wells.....)

Regards ⁴

Hello, I'm a kittitas county resident who uses this road to access public lands. I hope it can stay open and continue to provide recreational opportunities for other outdoor enthusiasts. ⁵

Keep public land ⁶

Please do not close Recreation Drive Trail, or provide an equal or better alternative for access to these state lands. This is an area I frequent and hold dear, and believe we can find a proper solution for enforcement and access. ⁷

Please continue to maintain Recreation Drive and the access it gives the public to 59,000 acres of public land. Too much of America's public land is inaccessible to the public. Shouldn't be that way. ⁸

I oppose closure of the road. Access to the WDFW lands is vital for the public. There are other alternatives to closing the road that should be utilized. ⁹

This area has to have its access protected. Public access is an important part of American life and the loss of access would immediately affect the quality of life of those who use it for recreation. It is an important area for hunters and the loss of access to food would be a tragic hit to the hunters and anglers like myself that use the area for feeding family, friends, and community members. ¹⁰

Keep roads accessing public land open to the public. ¹¹

Please don't shut down access to these public lands. ¹²

These public lands are important to the geological history of Washington! They are used by many people and the citizens of Washington will suffer with the closing and selling off of these lands. ¹³

Hello,

My name is [x], I am a married father of a 15 year old, and although we live in Lake Stevens, WA (Snohomish County), my family and I travel frequently to the east side via I-90 to visit family. We enjoy Washington State Parks and spend much time outdoors in nature, enjoying the wild beauty that nature has to offer. My son was in Boy Scouts and is a Junior Park Ranger. I am a backcountry bowhunter, hiker, camper, and all around outdoorsman. Please don't restrict access to Gingko State Park. I am happy to volunteer time and energy to support this park if need be.

Thanks for reading. ¹⁴

Access along this corridor is critical and needs to be maintained so the access beyond stays ¹⁵

Please keep access to Recreation Drive Trail open. It offers access thousands of acres of public land. If enforcement is the concern, let's work on a collaborative way that volunteers, state park, wdfw, and local law enforcement can collaborate to resolve concerns. Thank you! ¹⁶

I am writing to you today to ask you to NOT restrict or eliminate access to over 59,000 acres of public land. Restricting/ eliminating the public's access to public lands should always be a last resort only after ALL other options have been exhausted. Even then, it shouldn't be an option. There are plenty of individual volunteers as well as organizations that are willing to help address current issues to eliminate the need/ consideration of closing roads or restricting access. Thousands of people use this access and these lands in appropriate and respectful ways. Do not let the actions of a few bad actors drive decisions that will negatively affect the much larger majority of responsible citizens. ¹⁷

Please do not take our public lands. Closing these roads never stops and it makes enjoying our outdoors that much harder. ¹⁸

Plea do not close the trail. I want access to remain open. ¹⁹

Please keep this access open to allow 59000 acres available to public recreation. It is very valuable area to the public and would be devastating to see it go away. ²⁰

Do not close recreation drive trail. It provides vital access to public lands used by many stake holders. ²¹

I'm writing to urge adoption of a management plan that keeps Recreation Drive open to the public. This road has been historically used by both private land owners to access their property as well as a diverse contingent of outdoor recreation user groups to get into and out of the thousands of acres of public lands that adjoin Ginkgo State Park.

Recreation Drive serves the role of providing access to the public for us to practice long standing outdoor based recreation traditions. Activities like overlanding, angling, birding, hiking, bike riding, horseback riding, camping, wildlife viewing, trail running, and hunting - including hunting by tribal members exercising their off-reservation treaty rights. By closing Recreation Drive, Parks would be de facto limiting access to the public's ability to recreate outdoors on WDFW managed lands.

Maintaining access to the public lands that we all own is fundamentally important. Doing so can be accomplished while also upholding Washington State Parks' mandate to safeguard the resources under its stewardship. Rather than resorting to shutting down an important thoroughfare, I encourage Parks to more earnestly explore alternative options that could help it expand its capacity to effect education and enforcement along Recreation Drive. In lieu of hiring more enforcement rangers, which may be challenging to accomplish, such options might include partnering collaboratively with non-profits and volunteers to monitor the use of the road and report violations in real time. Has there been any effort to foster partnerships or establish mutual aid agreements with adjoining agencies that already field fully commissioned law enforcement officers trained in natural resource protection? Has there been any attempt to secure grant moneys or explore cost-share programs to help gain better compliance from the public? Closing a public road that a lot of people use should only come after all other options to effect resource protection have been exhausted.

Recreation Drive is consistently one of the safest access points to and from WDFW managed lands due to the composition of its soil substrate and the fact that it often times remains snow free when other Green Dot managed roads are not. Whether for routine agency administrative duty, or for urgently needed emergency services, this road provides a crucial public safety function by providing direct access to certain portions of the Whiskey Dick and Quilomene Wildlife Areas.

As we survey the current political and economic climate of public lands management, both on the state and federal level, several things are clear. One, local sentiment matters. When land managers behave in ways local communities don't support, those communities feel left out. This breeds resentment against an agency, which is hard to undo and can last for generations. Two, public land management agencies should strive to find ways to collaborate and support each other. By closing Recreation Drive, you wouldn't only deny access to the public that uses WDFW lands, you would also limit the ability for WDFW officials to access and administer their own lands. It is clear that adjoining land management agencies, local government, and a robust coalition of local and statewide recreation groups oppose the closure of Recreation Drive. For the sake of everyone who loves not just the outdoors, but who loves the coulees and ridges west of

the Columbia, we're in this together. The last thing we need is Parks vs. WDFW, or Parks vs. Kittitas County. Be a good neighbor. Show your support to the communities that support you and surround you. Let's find ways to protect the resources of the park and keep Recreation Drive open.²²

Please close the road down. One can access the neighboring properties from the Beacon ridge road. Currently the road is behind a locked gate and you need to call for the code. Closing the road will benefit the local wintering wildlife which everyone seems to forget about. Please close the road.²³

Recreation Drive Trail—a vital access route into 59,000+ acres of WDFW public land. That's 59,000 acres of rugged primitive beauty, high functioning shrubsteppe habitat, low road density, and abundant wildlife that everyone in the state owns. And it directly abuts HUNDREDS of thousands of more acres of WDFW, DNR, and USFS lands.

Because of the spectacular access offered the Recreation Drive Trail has historically been used by birders, horseback riders, angler, overlanders and OHV drivers, wildlife watchers, botanists, hikers, photographers, campers, stargazers, wildlife watchers, trail runners, and... hunters. Many public land users that wouldn't normally necessarily flock to a state park for the weekend have come to the park to for the access it provides to the vast and wild landscapes managed by WDFW.

Closing the road isn't the solution. Collaborative management, interagency partnerships, and volunteer programs could help keep this critical access point open while addressing issues.²⁴

Keep the road open to the Ginkgo/Wanapum state park. 59,000 acres of public land should be open to all users: hikers, bird watchers, mountain bikers, hunters, trail runners, etc²⁵

Thank you for the opportunity to state my concerns regarding the Classification of Recreation Drive Trail in Ginkgo Petrified Forest. The problem statement is that this area is a rare and fragile ecosystem that has seen decades of abuse from recreators. It is one of the few places that qualifies as a Natural Area Preserve under WA State Parks designation. Such special designation is reserved for the "preservation of rare or vanishing flora, fauna, geological, and natural historical features" - a perfect summary of Ginkgo Petrified Forest. Here a fragile ecosystem of rare and sensitive plants inhabit the shallow lithic soils. Threats from wildfires, invasive weeds, and climate change are compounded by off trail use. Motorized vehicles, OHVs, etc have left scars on this fragile shrubsteppe ecosystem that will take decades to heal. In addition to the environmental sensitivity, this area deserves a higher level of protection because of its geologic and cultural significance. Scattered artifacts of our first people are abundant with many cultural sites recorded within the park boundary. The nationally significant "in-place" petrified trees and scattered pieces tells a story of a much different ancient ecosystem and the transformation of wood into stone. Continuous abuse, theft, and vandalism are desecrating what is left of a cherished story that needs to be told for generations to come.

Alternative 2 Limited Access is the only option to protect an area of such significant status. It will greatly reduce (not eliminate) the theft of petrified wood and desecration of cultural sites. No longer will trailers be filled with petrified wood and hauled off site. I do acknowledge the need for additional investments for this new management as infrastructure (signs, gates) will need updating. I'd argue that proper monitoring and adaptive management will be needed with any alternative thus not specific to only this alternative. Additionally, I question the anticipated expenses for "robust permitting" for scientific studies as adjacent lands managed by WDFW see very low requests for scientific studies.

Alternative 1 is not an appropriate action as it will continue to cause degradation of cultural, paleontological, and environmental resources. Recreation Drive Trail will continue to degrade and widen with regular use. The proposal of Caronite posts will not deter trail widening or off trail

use as it has proven ineffective on the adjacent Green Dot roads. This No Action alternative as pointed out in this SEPA analysis is not effective in protecting cultural and paleontological resources or sustainable for emergency and administrative purposes. There will be significant costs and impacts associated with a “Not Classified” management of Recreation Drive Trail. Alternatives 3 & 4 are versions of the improper recreational management that has led to the degradation of Recreation Drive Trail, destruction of fragile shrubsteppe ecosystems, theft of cultural and geological treasures, and vandalism to gates, locks, signs, and fences. This was the historic management of this park that simply cannot return. A “Resource Recreation” classification will only lead to further significant resource damage and destructive off-trail use by vehicles.

Private landowners and the recreating public can still access the Green Dot roads north of the park via boat, Pump House Road, Whiskey Dick Creek Road, Whiskey Dick Ridge Road, and Jackknife Ridge Road during most of the year. Fortunately State Parks has developed other nearby areas (Interpretive Center, Trailside Museum, and the paved Interpretive Trail) for the mobility impaired to experience the wonders of this area. The area surrounding Recreation Drive should be classified as a Natural Area for the greatest protection of our cultural, geologic, and natural wonders.²⁶