

Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Wild and Scenic Rivers Comprehensive River Management Plan

Tulalip Tribes Meeting

Tulalip, WA

December 11, 2019

Attendees: Russell Moses, Phil North, Kurt Nelson, Mike Seigny, Libby Nelson, Patti Gobin, Ryan Miller, Molly Alves, Sarah Lange, Melissa Shelley

Summary of Some Key Tulalip issues

Treaties as the supreme law of the land. Visually place Tribes front and center in the planning effort, telling the Coast Salish story at the beginning of all documents, and citing the obligation of the federal government to treaty tribes. Any plan moving forward should recognize and address treaty rights in a prioritized and proactive way. In the CRMP, emphasize historical, cultural/spiritual connections to this landscape, and the importance of treaty uses, including hunting. Educate the public about how this area has changed greatly in recent years due to expanding human use and the effects that has had on the area's natural resources and treaty uses, particularly elk hunting by tribal members. Provide public education about the negative impacts of too much human recreational pressure and associated impacts on treaty rights. Describe how this area has changed in recent years as recreation in the watershed has greatly increased, making it unsuitable for previous tribal treaty uses. Address how the USFS will protect, sustain and recover treaty use opportunities of this area in the future in keeping with their trust responsibility.

Include Wildlife as an ORV. The river corridor is a dispersal area for all wildlife, and important as primary productivity centers and climate refuge. In particular, the area is critical for elk and deer forage habitat in due to its low elevation. Tribal hunting numbers for this area are exceptionally low, with much of the animal harvest being done on private lands not accessible to the tribes. This reflects the poor forage habitat conditions on federally managed land. Describe how the Forest Service plans to bring elk and other wildlife back into this area and recover degraded habitat. Discuss the impacts to wildlife from recreation. Look at existing conditions on the ground to take stock and plan for wildlife habitat restoration opportunities.

Consider and evaluate the effects of climate change on areas resources into the future, and implications for management to maintain its ecological functions and cultural values.

Water resources and fisheries. Address the high stream temperatures of the Middle Fork River and consider a riparian management plan with more than just the large woody debris currently mentioned in the scoping packet.

Recreation and Visitor Use Strategy is critical to tribal interests. When developing the strategy recognize treaty obligations and address them appropriately. Recreation is a top growing economy in Washington and poses a threat to the protection of treaty resources and the exercise of tribal treaty rights when it is not managed sustainably or with tribal and ecological values in mind. Analyze impacts of recreation on wildlife and other ecological values of the planning area and surrounding area. Analyze trends in visitor use, including impacts of and current and potentially increasing public trailhead transit, and its impacts on tribal cultural and treaty uses. With the increasing recreational use, and its inherent conflict with tribal treaty rights, look at this area different than in the past with intentional rebalancing in mind.

Scale of analysis: Ensure the scale that is considered in analyzing potential impacts to the area is appropriate in capturing these impacts in a meaningful way (i.e., may be significantly larger than designated planning area).

Importance of this area for diversity of species and values: In interpreting consideration of the importance of this area *“for future generations”* Tulalip believes that its importance to generations of all living things needs to be considered, and not one that focuses only on human uses. For example, the existing Pratt bar pullout and recently installed trail bridge has resulted in that location no longer being viable for beaver relocation. Much of the area is currently degraded with regards functionality at an ecological trophic level and while it could be possible to maintain a visual beauty without such functionality, the Tulalip strongly recommends the need to restore functionality to this critical area.

Ensure that Cultural Resources, in the broader sense (not strictly archaeological), is adequately represented and addressed in the analysis. The Tulalip Tribes would like to continue exploring with the Forest Service whether this is best done by analyzing Cultural Resources as an ORV.. Sarah and Melissa will follow-up after looking into more information on what that process/analysis might need to include (publish vs protected records).

The Tulalip Tribes is not willing to address management by allowing for so called “sacrifice” areas, where it is determined that an area is already too disturbed or could be considered as a high use area, when designating such an area, formally or not, comes at the expense of tribal treaty and cultural rights and uses. We view disturbed areas or areas likely to come under additional human pressure and impact, as areas in need of recovery.