

Media Release: Enthusiastic Response from Community for Ferry County Rail-Trail Survey Provides Valuable Input

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Republic, WA) – An enthusiastic response from the public to a survey prepared by Ferry County’s Rail Corridor Committee (RCC) showcases that people primarily walk, bicycle, and cross-country ski along the 24.8 mile non-motorized Rail-Trail that runs from Republic’s West Herron Creek Road north to Danville near the Canadian border.

In response to the question, “in what ways might you use (or want to use) the Rail-Trail,” the top five responses from the 341 respondents were: walking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, nature observing/birding, and family outing.

As one survey respondent states, “I believe it [the Rail-Trail] is the best thing to happen to Ferry County in years. Many times my grandchildren and I have walked the trail. The kids love it; they get to see so much wildlife.”

“The Rail-Trail sets a great example for the county in terms of fitness and health and also fosters a stronger sense of community (i.e., family outings, group walks/runs/bike rides),” another respondent adds. “It offers a high value for businesses as well,” adds another respondent. “The Rail-Trail will draw tourists to visit and explore Ferry County, and as such it is a critical missing piece of our economic-development infrastructure.”

In terms of landscaping and design elements that would enhance people’s experience on the Rail-Trail, the top five responses were: surfacing, toilet facilities, trailhead parking, mile markers, and benches.

The survey is just one of several tools the RCC is using to solicit public input on the planning and development of the Rail-Trail.

“We really thank the community for responding so strongly to our survey,” states RCC Chair Bobbi Weller. “The survey and planning document are just one of several projects we’re working on for the Rail-Trail. We also have developed several trailheads with parking, installed seasonal portable toilets along the trail, and are moving forward with a major grant to platform the signature piece of the Rail-Trail – the trestle over Curlew Lake.”

The trail, open to the public for all non-motorized recreational use -- including pedestrian, cycling, and equestrian use -- meanders along Curlew Lake, through the

communities of Malo, Curlew, and Danville, and along the Kettle River, with trailheads (with parking) at Herron Creek Road, Blacks Beach, Kiwanis Road, and the Curlew Siding.

The vision statement for the trail states: "A multi-use non-motorized rail-trail that is a signature destination in Ferry County that highlights our cultural heritage and natural beauty, offering a fun, safe, healthy community connector as well as a first-rate recreational experience for the enjoyment of both local residents and tourists."

The RCC is an advisory committee that reports directly to the Ferry County Board of County Commissioners charged with the planning and development of the non-motorized trail.

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Detailed Survey Results:

Total Responses: 341

County of residence:

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Ferry: | 91% |
| Okanogan: | 1% |
| Stevens: | 3% |
| Other: | 5% |

Age Breakdown:

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Under 25: | 5% |
| 26-35: | 10% |
| 36-45: | 11% |
| 46-55: | 18% |
| 56-65: | 36% |
| 66 and older: | 21% |

Ways use (or plan to use) Rail-Trail:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Walking: | 84% |
| Bicycling: | 61% |
| Cross Country Skiing: | 42% |
| Nature/Birding: | 41% |
| Family Outing: | 40% |

Landscaping Design Elements that Would Enhance Experience on Rail-Trail:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Surfacing: | 96% |
| Toilet Facilities: | 75% |
| Trailhead Parking: | 62% |
| Mile Markers: | 59% |
| Benches: | 52% |