

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF VALLEY CREEK

PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

Tuesday, August 2 | 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Stanley Community Center, Stanley, ID

WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

Mayor Herb Mumford of the City of Stanley welcomed everyone and provided opening remarks to set the context for the meeting.

Susan Hayman, facilitator, explained her role as the neutral facilitator. She provided an overview of the purpose of the meeting, the meeting agenda (included as Attachment 2), and the ground rules for participation.

PROJECT ORIENTATION

Keri York, Wood River Land Trust (WRLT), spoke to the history of Valley Creek and how the property came to be owned by the Wood River Land Trust. Keri reviewed the criteria of the State of Idaho grant that made the acquisition possible and reviewed the overarching goals of WRLT.

Keith Reese, Sawtooth Vision 20/20, described the relationship of the project to Sawtooth Vision 20/20. He said preserving Valley Creek from development was a high priority for Vision 20/20 from the outset. While Vision 20/20 has no oversight role with the new Valley Creek Preserve, it is supportive of its goals and desire to complement other community goals within the Sawtooth Valley.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Susan introduced the preliminary goal statements, which were developed using input from WRLT, the City of Stanley, and public input over the past several months. Preliminary goal statements were grouped within each of the following four categories:

- Administration (including safety, maintenance, and stewardship costs)
- Fisheries/Fish Habitat/Water Quality
- Public Access/Recreation Uses
- Education/Interpretation

The full list of preliminary goal statements is included as Attachment 3. Susan introduced the small group activity and invited everyone to provide feedback on these goal statements and suggest new goals where they saw fit. She introduced the discussion leaders for each of the small groups.

For the small group activity, participants were invited to sit at any of the four stations established about the room. Each station corresponded to a different topic and had a large sheet with the corresponding goal statements listed. Participants at each station discussed these goals, writing comments and ideas on the sheet provided. Each group met for 18 minutes, then everyone was able to rotate to a new group of their choosing. There were three rounds in total, giving each participant the opportunity to visit three of the four stations based on their own interests. See Attachment 4 for the transcribed notes.

After the small group sessions ended, the larger group reconvened. One person from each station reported back the main takeaways from their discussion. Common themes noted in the report out include:

- Fish, water, and wildlife goals should be the priority – public access should be managed to minimally impact these conservation values.
- There is some overlap in goals among the different topic areas.
- There is uncertainty around the definitions of “restore and enhance” (fish, wildlife, water) , and what restoration opportunities and priorities there might be.
- There are differing interpretations about what the grant criterion of “no additional development” means with regards to educational, interpretive, and other public opportunities within the preserve, but many participants supported some level of additional signage and a public path.
- It is a shared goal to create and maintain a safe and mutually-respective environment for Preserve visitors and adjacent homeowners.
- There are differing perspectives on whether the existing hot springs should be transformed into a public resource or closed for all (relationship to Preserve goals is unclear).
- Any signage should be done in conjunction with SIHA and other community groups, and should fit with the scenic nature of the property
- The WRLT and the City should ensure that the capability exists to properly manage in perpetuity all use, developments, and other aspects of a Preserve management plan.

WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS

Keri reviewed the plan drafting process including future opportunities for public engagement. She highlighted the following milestones:

- Public Meeting 1: Identify goals for the management plan (Today)
- Public Meeting 2: Define objectives and action items to work towards established goals (September 2016)
- Management Plan Draft
- Public Review
- Final management plan and implementation (Spring 2017)

Questions and Discussion

In response to a request to clarify what it meant by certain terms relevant to the goals (e.g. “development”), Keri said understanding the intent of the grant may be more useful than nailing down the definitions in forming goals for the plan; however, there may be opportunities to gain the desired clarification and WRLT will seek that information.

In response to a question regarding the timeline for the final plan, Keri replied that the process outlined in the diagram (see Attachment 5) will take place through the fall, winter, and next spring. Therefore, she anticipates that the final management plan will be completed in March or April of 2017.

Keri noted that there is an outstanding question regarding how Stanley residents can provide feedback if they cannot attend the public meetings. She stated that this question will be addressed soon.

After addressing these questions and discussion, Keri thanked everyone for their time and concluded the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1: Attendance
- Attachment 2: Agenda
- Attachment 3: Preliminary Goal Statements
- Attachment 4: Transcription of small group activity notes
- Attachment 5: Meeting presentation

ATTACHMENT 1: ATTENDANCE

1. Steve Botti
2. Hans Buhler
3. Mandy Clark
4. Russell Clark
5. Terry Clark
6. Harvey Dale
7. Dia Terese Danner
8. James Denhart
9. Gary Gadwa
10. Laurii Gadwa
11. Barbara Garcia
12. Ellen Glaccum
13. Ann Hill
14. Paul Hill
15. Jim Hosac
16. Susan James
17. Debra LaMorte
18. Ellen Liberteen
19. Amanda Matthews
20. Herb Mumford
21. John Phillips
22. Keith Reese
23. Lem Sentz
24. Jack Stevens
25. Charlie Thompson
26. Christy Thompson
27. Keri York

Facilitation Team (Envirolssues):

Susan Hayman
Betsy Kinsey



**Envisioning the Future of Valley Creek
Public Meeting Agenda**
Tuesday, August 2 | 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Stanley Community Center

Meeting Purpose:

- Clarify expectations for the Valley Creek Preserve management planning process, its relationship to Sawtooth Vision 20/20, and opportunities for public collaboration
- Share and collect public feedback on preliminary goal statements by topic area

Time	Topic
5:30 p.m.	Doors open – Informational Materials/Displays Available
6:00 p.m.	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening remarks and introductions – Herb Mumford, Mayor, City of Stanley • Meeting overview – Susan Hayman, Facilitator
6:15 p.m.	Project Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Planning Process – Keri York, Wood River Land Trust • Relationship to Sawtooth Vision 20/20 – Keith Reese, Sawtooth Vision 20/20 Steering Committee Chair
6:30 p.m.	Community Conversations – Susan Hayman Interactive discussion in small groups on preliminary goal statements for the following topical areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration (including safety, maintenance, and stewardship costs) • Fisheries/Fish Habitat/Water Quality • Public Access/Recreation Uses • Education/Interpretation
7:40 p.m.	Small group report-outs – Susan Hayman
7:55 p.m.	Wrap-up and next steps – Keri York
8:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Preliminary Goals for Valley Creek Preserve (based on perspective of Wood River Land Trust, the City of Stanley, and public input to date)

Goal for the Valley Creek Preserve Community Planning Process

- Create a comprehensive management plan that reflects the desires of the local community, consistent with the protection, restoration, and conservation goals of the Preserve.
- Create a community asset that connects with other natural, scenic, and historical attributes of the Sawtooth Valley.

Administration (including safety, maintenance, and stewardship costs)

- Create self-sustaining funding for ongoing management and stewardship of the Preserve
- Secure funds for restoration or public access elements (trails, parking, signage, etc.)
- Develop partnerships with state and federal agencies, local governments and organizations, and community groups for preserve management and potential long-term ownership
- Create and maintain a safe and mutually-respective environment for Preserve visitors and adjacent homeowners.

Fisheries/Fish Habitat/Water Quality

- Restore and/or protect fish and wildlife habitat
- Maintain or enhance current floodplain function
- Maintain or enhance current fish spawning and rearing habitat
- Salmon spawning may limit public access at certain times of year

Public Access/Recreation Uses

- Balance the need for public access with the need for resource protection and for not impacting adjacent private interests.
- Maintain appropriate public fishing access.
- Maintain appropriate public non-motorized access.
- Provide motorized public access that doesn't adversely impact adjacent landowners.
- Provide a public opportunity to utilize the hot springs resource within the preserve

Education/Interpretation

- Develop educational and interpretive signage focused on salmon habitat, conservation, Preserve history, and its connection to other attributes of the Sawtooth Valley
- Improve user experience through clear and adequate visual interpretive aids and signage

[Blue Italics indicate text added during discussion]

Administration (including safety, maintenance, and stewardship costs)

- Create self-sustaining funding for ongoing management and stewardship of the Preserve
- Secure funds for restorations or public access elements (trails, parking, signage, etc.)
 - *Restoration: are we referring to future or current conditions?*
 - *Develop a “grant task force”*
 - *[Fund a] Port-a-potty*
- Develop partnerships with state and federal agencies, local governments and organizations, and community groups for preserve management and potential long-term ownership
 - *Management – who?*
 - *“Potential” [crossed out]*
 - *NOAA, IDR&G, TPL (trust for public lands)*
 - *Utilize existing expertise (partners) to: assess impacts, interpret, fundraising, design and construction*
- Create and maintain a safe and mutually-respective environment for Preserve visitors and adjacent homeowners
 - *Greater than homeowners—including greater community and businesses*
- *Long term maintenance plan – including budget*
- *Employ adequate staffing*
- *Minimize improvements, (infrastructure, facilities) that require higher levels of safety, maintenance and stewardship costs*
- *Don’t build anything you can’t enforce, maintain and provide safe opportunities*
- *Provide access free to general public – donation*

Fisheries/Fish Habitat/Water Quality

- Restore and/or protect fish and wildlife habitat
 - *“Restore:” is there a need to restore now (should emphasis be on protect and enhance?)*
 - *Define restore*
 - *“Wildlife habitat:” [there is an] invasive species management connection*
 - *“Wildlife habitat:” think about elk habitat and effects to important habitat from city/ land transfer*
 - *[Account for] Pressure from surrounding area*
 - *What’s baseline/desired condition to restore to → If so, what?*
 - *Is system already functioning as well as it can?*
 - *Not a lot to restore → may be more about protection*
- Maintain or enhance current floodplain function
 - *“Enhance:” may affect people and activities*
 - *“Current:” natural*
- Maintain or enhance current fish spawning and rearing habitat
 - *“Maintain:” [what does this mean]??*
 - *“Enhance:” [through] active management*
 - *“Rearing habitat:” this goal may limit public access—at least seasonally*
- *Salmon spawning may limit public access at certain times of year*

¹ [Contextual words added by Facilitation Team]

- *“Limit public access:” connection to potential impact from tails, etc. (off trail) **
- *Change “times of year” to “times of year and certain areas” **
- *Redds*
- *Coordinated with IDFG*
- *Differentiate access between in-stream and land (including effects from adjacent near-stream)*
- *Maintain or enhance wetland function while actively managing beaver*
 - *Beaver can enhance water quality and fish habitat*
 - *Address potential for/be aware/prepare to deal with beaver activity and impacts*
 - *Restore water flow from Valley Creek to wetland; i.e. Area (under road)—to restore natural wetland health/flood plain function*
- *Protect the health of native fishery (e.g. concern with proposal to create a kid’s “fish pond”)*
 - *More protection than enhancement/restoration [fishery already in good shape]*
 - *What use is allowable within protection [what is meant by “protect”]?*
 - *What does “development” mean? (Is a sign-post development?)*
 - *“Maintain” or improve current native fish populations, “super-fish” [genetically superior]*
 - *More structures... more displacement of habitat*
- *Maintain or improve current water quality (public sanitation)*
- *Hot water * [effects on fishery]*
 - *‘Less is more’ -- don’t love it to death, etc.*
 - *Public access should not trump conservation values*
 - *[However...] Don’t want to totally exclude public, either (education opportunities) **

Public Access/Recreation Uses

- *Balance the need for public access with the need for resource protection and for not impacting adjacent private interests*
 - *Add “respecting” adjacent private interests*
 - *Provide effective signage to direct and facilitate public access*
 - *Coordinate with FS to provide adequate public restroom facilities and garbage disposal*
 - *Consider restrictions on public access to protect wildlife (no smoking, pets etc.)*
 - *Link Preserve to other trails and recreational resources and public needs (potties, dog parks, etc.)*
 - *Prohibit drones over Preserve*
 - *Coordinate with FS to provide appropriate partners for public access*
 - *Address needs/ requirements for handicap access*
 - *Evaluate easements over Mountain Village property to facilitate public access*
 - *Clarify what is meant by public access and permitted development (needs to be compatible with protecting spawning habitat, and public safety)*
 - *Address permitted bringing of pets into Preserve*
 - *Clarify primary goal(s) of Preserve—top priorities*
- *Maintain appropriate public fishing access*
 - *Need to clarify ‘appropriate public fishing’*
 - *[Add] “and recreational access”*
- *Maintain appropriate public non-motorized access.*
 - *Horses? Bicycles?*
- *Provide motorized public access that doesn’t adversely impact adjacent landowners.*
 - *Or spawning habitat*

- *Coordinate with County on maintenance of public access road*
- Provide a public opportunity to utilize the hot springs resource within the preserve.
 - *Health issues*
 - *Without additional development violating grant conditions*

Education/Interpretation

- Develop educational and interpretive signage focused on salmon habitat, conservation, Preserve history, and its connection to other attributes of the Sawtooth Valley
 - *“Preserve history:” why it’s a preserve; what that means; why WRLT became involved; what that means; what alternative could have happened; role of WRLT, Fish and Game, programs*
 - *How to respect and engage with the area*
 - *List of rules to keep the area pristine and for safety*
 - *Intended audience: For visiting families and children to complement the activities that visitors already do*
 - *Kind of engagement depends on the season*
- Improve user experience through clear and adequate visual interpretive aids and signage
 - *Does not currently exist, starting from scratch*
 - *Signs to get people to the creek or within the creek?*
 - *Highway directional sign? (no)*
 - *Careful to not get too many people*
 - *Keep engagement/ signage out of the preserve*
 - *Driving through Garden Valley, there are binoculars—stationary viewing points without disrupting habitat*
 - *User friendly for families and children*
 - *Safety*
 - *DO NOT OVER SIGN*
 - *Keep it simple*
 - *Subtle and discrete; should maintain sensitivity and flavor of local area*
 - *Messages to respect private land*
 - *Incorporate school kids here—this creek means a lot to the kids of Stanley*
 - *Come in small, intimate groups; creates greater impression on the kids that way*
 - *Kids would want to come back and when older*
 - *Good for economy*
 - *Boardwalks/platforms*
 - *Keep away from wetlands*
 - *Do not disturb habitat*
 - *Appropriately not obtrusive*
 - *Birding platform*
 - *Board walk, etc.*
 - *Potential walkways at historical center*
 - *Don’t want to see paths/boardwalk from the road, keep boardwalk in the grass*
 - *Is a guided tour or open walkway less obtrusive?*
 - *Maintenance concerns -- How will boardwalk hold up to flooding?*
 - *Use materials that require minimal maintenance*
 - *Could a trail connect to downtown/ Lower Stanley?*
 - *Use local sources of information*
 - *Good local relationships with tribes, particularly SIHA*

- Tribes are waiting to be approached in this process regarding valley management
- Still native land (emphasis that native use is not only in the past, but happens today)
- Local partnerships can prevent over-signage in the area; want to complement existing info
- Coordinate with SIHA, Fish and Game
- SIHA relationship easier to leverage if land is City owned
- Work with organizations that have already done this (e.g. Redfish Lake interpretive walk, advertising and interpretation)
- Messages to include:
 - Information regarding history
 - Tribes—history of camping, artifacts
 - Miners
 - Geothermal features
 - Social history
 - Stakeholders/ partners
 - Share information regarding effects of development that has occurred within the flood plain
 - Educate as many people as possible, broadly, on the relevance of the area, why it is special and important
 - Set precedent for how we need to treat resources/ Earth
 - Conservation and stewardship
 - Message is much more than salmon!
 - Water, geology, other wildlife
- Other Materials
 - Brochures with #s—self guided tour to minimize signs
 - Video for intro the area
 - Could display in Chamber Office and SIHA
 - Potential for social media to share videos, historical pictures
 - Reach people in the Chamber
 - Area should have a guide, pamphlet (more than signs)
 - Waterproof, reusable
 - A publication or book with lots of info that could be sold
 - Potential for funding the Preserve
 - Example: Middle Fork guide
 - Brochures for walking tour, self-guided
 - Would bring people to the creek
 - Expensive
 - Potential walkway tour
 - Naturalists to guide
 - Potentially less obtrusive
- Must play a role in preservation and protection
- Goal is not to bring more people in
- Business-owner goal: to bring people in, more jobs, help economy

Welcome!
Envisioning the Future of Valley Creek
Public Meeting



The slide features the Stanley logo on the left and the Wood River Land Trust logo on the right. The Wood River Land Trust logo includes the text "Protecting the Heart of the Valley Now and for the Future" with a small tree icon.

Valley Creek Preserve –
Idaho State Grant Criteria

1. No additional development will occur on the property in perpetuity.
2. Property will not be transferred to federal ownership.
3. Reasonable public access must be ensured (coordinated with IDFG).
4. All property taxes are paid to Custer County.

Valley Creek Preserve –
Wood River Land Trust Goals

1. Protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat
2. Preserve ecological function of salmon spawning habitat and riparian plant communities
3. Create a community asset that connects with other natural, scenic, and historical attributes of Stanley
4. Secure funding for ongoing management and stewardship of the preserve
5. Collaboratively seek funds for restoration and public access elements (trails, parking, signage, etc.)
6. Develop educational and interpretive signage at visible points for the public



Goal...

- Something we wish to achieve
- Aspirational
- Answers “what/why” rather than “how”

Tonight: Provide feedback on preliminary goal statements, and suggest any additional goals by topic area

How Small Discussion Groups Work...

- There are four groups
- We will have three rotations. Each rotation will last 18 minutes. Please stay with your group for the duration.
- You can choose which groups to visit, and in what order
- The discussion leader's role is to:
 - ✓ Keep the conversation focused and moving
 - ✓ Encourage everyone to participate
 - ✓ Assist in capturing thoughts on the poster paper
 - ✓ Help the last group choose a spokesperson to share key discussion points

There will be a brief (3-5 minute) report out from each group. The large group will have the opportunity to add key points to the report outs.