



Aimee Taylor <btff@midcolumbiafisheries.org>

FW: 2024 Rimrock Grand Prix Recap/2025 Planning

3 messages

Shah, J (DFW) <Janell.Shah@dfw.wa.gov>
To: Aimee Taylor <btff@midcolumbiafisheries.org>

Tue, Oct 15, 2024 at 10:25 AM

Please find attached the synopsis re: 2024 Rimrock Grand Prix

Thank you and have a great day,

J. Shah
Area Habitat Biologist - Yakima County
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Phone: (509) 952-8147

From: Shah, J (DFW)
Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2024 4:07 PM
To: Hutton, Trevor (DFW) <Trevor.Hutton@dfw.wa.gov>; Downes, Scott G (DFW) <Scott.Downes@dfw.wa.gov>; Kline, Scott T (DFW) <Scott.Kline@dfw.wa.gov>; Schroeder, Scott D (DFW) <Scott.Schroeder@dfw.wa.gov>; Weaver, Bob S (DFW) <Bob.Weaver@dfw.wa.gov>; Miller, Avery S (DFW) <Avery.Miller@dfw.wa.gov>; Barik, Sanjay (DFW) <Sanjay.Barik@dfw.wa.gov>; Shaffer, Landon (DFW) <Landon.Shaffer@dfw.wa.gov>; Nelson, Jennifer L (DFW) <Jennifer.Nelson@dfw.wa.gov>; Reavill, David A (DFW) <David.Reavill@dfw.wa.gov>; Weekes, Cassandra L (DFW) <Cassandra.Weekes@dfw.wa.gov>; Zac Zacavish <zac@midcolumbiafisheries.org>; 'becca@midcolumbiafisheries.org' <becca@midcolumbiafisheries.org>; 'merrit@midcolumbiafisheries.org' <merrit@midcolumbiafisheries.org>; Alex Conley <aconley@ybfwr.org>; Rogala, Joshua A (DFW) <Joshua.Rogala@dfw.wa.gov>; Ward, Megan C (DFW) <Megan.Ward@dfw.wa.gov>; Ogburn, Megan R (DFW) <Megan.Ogburn@dfw.wa.gov>; Meyer, William R (DFW) <William.Meyer@dfw.wa.gov>; Torretta, Gary - FS, WA <gary.torretta@usda.gov>; Jiang, Kevin - FS, WA <Kevin.Jiang@usda.gov>; Haskell, Craig A <craig_haskell@fws.gov>; Kohr, Jonathan H (DFW) <Jonathan.Kohr@dfw.wa.gov>; Pardo, Janie - FS, WA <Juanita.Pardo@usda.gov>
Subject: 2024 Rimrock Grand Prix Recap/2025 Planning

Good Afternoon,

I hope everyone is having a great week! I am reaching out because this past weekend I worked the [Rimrock Grand Prix ORV race](#). As I've been with WDFW for about six months now I wanted to introduce myself to the Dust Dodgers (the organization that hosts this event) and be on site to make sure that the permittee was hosting the event within the provisions of their HPA; it was communicated to me that there have been issues in the past at this event and concerns regarding bull trout.

It was a pleasure meeting Jeff Baker (The President of Dust Dodgers) and the rest of the club members and learning more about this event and how we as natural resource workers can engage with outdoor enthusiasts to better protect our collective interests. I have a few takeaways that I wanted to share with potentially interested parties (internally and outside agencies).

While on site, I had a great interaction whereupon I showed Jeff and another club member spawning kokanee. They questioned the importance of staying out of the stream if the kokanee are going to die anyways (there were quite a few dead kokanee in the area), and I was able to show them redds and actively spawning fish, briefly explaining their life

history and the importance of keeping away from the redds and keeping sediment out of the stream to avoid suffocating the eggs. They were both very excited and called their kids over to see, and soon there was a small group of kids and adults checking out the fish. One of the event organizers stated that she now understood why we want them to stay out of waterways; it was very wholesome and emphasizes the importance of education, communication, and making this information accessible to groups with competing interests so we can meet in the middle and be the most protective for resources.

What Worked:

- Josh Ragala and team installed signage near Indian Creek and the western side of the course. Jeff/other riders expressed that it was a huge help with keeping riders out of the creeks. Thank you, Josh and The Megans!
- I organized a pre-event meeting that included WDFW and Forest Service personnel. It was very helpful for sharing lessons learned and for logistically planning how we would handle the event. I really appreciated the effort that Kevin and his crew made to help monitor the weekend. This is something we should continue to do before each event (and now that I know about the event sooner than 2 weeks beforehand, we will be better prepared next year).
- The most significant day is Saturday, as riders congregate and practice all day, but the tournament isn't happening. Race day is highly regulated and there is little opportunity for anyone to leave the course. The bulk of monitoring/educating should occur on Saturday, not Sunday.

Concerns:

- The "problem" areas that were of concern were: Indian Creek off to the far west of the course, side channels of NF Tieton, the islands, and riders getting very close to the creek edge and spraying dirt into the water. Dust Dodgers did a fantastic job policing their people, but there are only a few of them and tons of riders. These would be areas that I think we could/should almost completely flag off in future years. Post event monitoring indicates that riders largely stayed out of the watercourses and while on site I didn't see anyone enter any of the creeks/river.

Suggestions/Requests from Dust Dodgers:

- Dust Dodgers expressed that in recent years the check in process for competitors has changed. Previously Dust Dodgers checked in each rider and would explain the need to stay out of the creek/within OHWM. It is now Silverbeach Resort that is checking riders in, and Jeff expressed that this information may not be being relayed anymore. Jeff requested having either enforcement, compliance, or a biologist posted at the check in to educate on the importance of keeping out of the streams and off the islands.
- After watching the spawning kokanee, one of the event organizers asked if it would be possible to have an info table with a biologist near the spawning fish to do outreach. This would have two benefits: 1) education and 2) a physical deterrent that will keep riders out of the water and away from the banks. She emphasized that because of the number of riders, this would be the most efficient time and place for outreach, and she felt there was value in educating the younger riders.
- This event is only one weekend, and while the sheer number of riders that congregate is daunting, they are heavily policed within their own community. The Dust Dodgers expressed frustration that there are no other signs posted during the rest of the year that the reservoir is open to ORV. They suggested that it would be helpful if there were signs posted at Silverbeach Resort/staff were educated about the importance of keeping out of the creeks/within OHWM. I agree that there should be a more concerted outreach effort to the rest of the ORV community and not just at this one event.

Goals for Next Year:

- I would like to brainstorm and try to implement more education in this area in general, not just for this one weekend.
- I would like to implement more education at this event, which will require more coordination and assistance.
- Continue putting signs up in areas of concern
- Keep the internal pre-event meeting and also visit the site with Jeff Baker at least a week beforehand to look at conditions and help route the course in the most protective manner.

If you're interested in contributing to education and outreach and engaging with this event, please feel free to respond and next year during the planning process for this event I will include you. I appreciate anyone that assists; I truly believe that the only way we can effectively manage and protect resources is by working together and finding situations like this to partner with the public. Thank you so much to everyone that helped make this year's event such a success, especially on such short notice, I really appreciate you!

Thank you and have a great day,

J. Shah
Area Habitat Biologist - Yakima County
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Phone: (509) 952-8147

Shah, J (DFW) <Janell.Shah@dfw.wa.gov>
To: Aimee Taylor <btff@midcolumbiafisheries.org>

Tue, Oct 15, 2024 at 10:29 AM

Forwarding info/interest from Janie with USFS re: your request to discuss future motorized use at Rimrock. If not already included, Janie would be a valuable resource for these discussions. I will send an invite to you when I have capacity to schedule this discussion.

Thank you and have a great day,

J. Shah
Area Habitat Biologist - Yakima County
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Phone: (509) 952-8147

From: Pardo, Janie - FS, WA <Juanita.Pardo@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 11, 2024 11:04 AM
To: Shah, J (DFW) <Janell.Shah@dfw.wa.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]2024 Rimrock Grand Prix Recap/2025 Planning

External Email

Thanks for sharing Janell. Sorry I was unable to make it to meetings and the event but Kevin and our OHV crew had things covered.

I am forwarding your message to our district ranger to keep him aware and Special Uses team as they manage the permit for the event.

I would like to engage in further conversation with you about motorized use on the lake shore/beds, etc. This is all new to me as I have only been the recreation staff officer for 2 years and I was so surprised to see that the level of motorized recreation that occurs on the lake shore is "permissible". My first indication of this was at Horseshoe Cove Boat Launch. The mixed types of recreation on the beaches concerns me as I feel there is also some safety risks occurring by allowing mixed "beach use" with motorized users.

Perhaps we can develop a plan to manage OHV use, other types of motorized use and assess our concerns from a holistic perspective that provides for year round management and a sign plan that will be effective. It does feel like we are targeting the Dust Dodgers and their particular activity when we only pull out the stops for this event.

Let's plan on getting together this spring and discuss educational opportunities to inform user groups on how to recreate responsibly along our lakes and rivers.



Janie Pardo
District Recreation Staff

Forest Service

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

Naches Ranger District

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Caring for the land and serving people

From: Shah, J (DFW) <Janell.Shah@dfw.wa.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2024 4:07 PM

To: Hutton, Trevor (DFW) <Trevor.Hutton@dfw.wa.gov>; Downes, Scott G (DFW) <Scott.Downes@dfw.wa.gov>; Kline, Scott T (DFW) <Scott.Kline@dfw.wa.gov>; Schroeder, Scott D (DFW) <Scott.Schroeder@dfw.wa.gov>; Weaver, Bob S (DFW) <Bob.Weaver@dfw.wa.gov>; Miller, Avery S (DFW) <Avery.Miller@dfw.wa.gov>; Barik, Sanjay (DFW) <Sanjay.Barik@dfw.wa.gov>; Shaffer, Landon (DFW) <Landon.Shaffer@dfw.wa.gov>; Nelson, Jennifer L (DFW) <Jennifer.Nelson@dfw.wa.gov>; Reavill, David A (DFW) <David.Reavill@dfw.wa.gov>; Weekes, Cassandra L (DFW) <Cassandra.Weekes@dfw.wa.gov>; Zac Zacavish <zac@midcolumbiafisheries.org>; becca@midcolumbiafisheries.org; merrit@midcolumbiafisheries.org; Alex Conley <aconley@ybfwr.org>; Rogala, Joshua A (DFW) <Joshua.Rogala@dfw.wa.gov>; Ward, Megan C (DFW) <Megan.Ward@dfw.wa.gov>; Ogburn, Megan R (DFW)

<Megan.Ogburn@dfw.wa.gov>; Meyer, William R (DFW) <William.Meyer@dfw.wa.gov>; Torretta, Gary - FS, WA <gary.torretta@usda.gov>; Jiang, Kevin - FS, WA <Kevin.Jiang@usda.gov>; Haskell, Craig A <craig_haskell@fws.gov>; Kohr, Jonathan H (DFW) <Jonathan.Kohr@dfw.wa.gov>; Pardo, Janie - FS, WA <Juanita.Pardo@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]2024 Rimrock Grand Prix Recap/2025 Planning

[External Email]

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Aimee Taylor <bttf@midcolumbiafisheries.org>
To: "Shah, J (DFW)" <Janell.Shah@dfw.wa.gov>

Tue, Oct 15, 2024 at 10:44 AM

Thank you J. I would appreciate being in the discussion on future motorized use in the reservoir bed and any other discussions regarding education and outreach, public awareness, etc. when it comes to habitat with Bull Trout present. The Bull Trout Task force has a wide reach and may be available to assist at future events or during general OHV recreation season. Looking forward to it,

Aimee

[Quoted text hidden]

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Aimee Taylor (she/her), MS
Bull Trout Task Force Lead, Field Biologist &
Bull Trout Working Group Coordinator
Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group
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**From May through November I am in the field most days. I will respond to emails as I am able to. (I do not work Fridays this time of year)