



Reiter Foothills Forest | Restoration and Planning

Reiter Foothills Forest in eastern Snohomish County has long been popular with outdoor recreation enthusiasts. The area is most popular with off-road (ORV) riders, but also attracts campers, hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, and hunters.

The Challenge

Reiter Foothills Forest has not been designated as a recreation site, yet users have created their own trails and structures, many of which are located in environmentally sensitive areas, such as stream crossings or on unstable slopes. These unauthorized trails have caused tremendous damage to the area's environment, natural resources, and habitats, and they threaten water quality in the area.

In addition, unauthorized trails and structures built for "extreme" activities pose serious safety issues to the public and liability for DNR.

Photos of Reiter Foothills Forest



Water quality is compromised when people ride through streams.



Environmental damage to forested wetlands.



User-built trails and structures create **safety and liability** concerns.

Planning

In 2007, the Legislature recognized the value of Reiter Foothills Forest to the recreating community and funded the development of a recreation plan. The plan will provide sustainable recreation opportunities that are compatible with the agency's obligation to manage state trust assets for future generations.

For the past two years, DNR worked collaboratively with a diverse group of more than two dozen partners in other state and local agencies, citizens, user groups, and conservation interests to develop the Reiter Foothills Forest Recreation Plan. A draft of the plan has gone through public review and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process. The final plan will be available this spring.

What's happening now in Reiter Foothills Forest?

Currently, volunteers and private entities are working with DNR staff to restore damage and design and, as soon as possible, complete the trails that do not require extensive permits. In the coming months, DNR will be working to obtain the permits required for more complex projects, such as bridges over stream crossings.

In the past year, volunteers have spent thousands of hours to help restore the damage at Reiter. Today, volunteers and staff have completed nearly half of the winter stabilization work to prevent sediment from running into streams. Volunteers will be key to the success of reopening Reiter.

DNR plans to reopen as much of Reiter Foothills Forest as soon as possible, providing we do so in a manner that promotes the sustainability of the forest and provides safe and enjoyable opportunities for the public.