Pilchuck Recreation Association Newsletter

PRA – Pilchuck Rec Association www.pilchuckra.org P.O. BOX 2962
September 2022 Arlington, WA 98223

A Message from the Manager

Hello, and greetings from the "newish" Pilchuck Tree Farm manager. My name is Joel Dryden, and I started working for Pilchuck in 2017 under Allen Staringer. After a 3 ½ year training and transition period accelerated by COVID, Allen retired, and I took over his role full-time in January 2021. Before coming to the tree farm, I worked as a forester for the WA Department of Natural Resources for 8 ½ years. I grew up in the hills of southern Indiana and studied forestry at Purdue University.

I just wanted to say how much PTF appreciates the PRA's continued efforts to work with the tree farm to keep the sanctioned recreation organized and keeping up on communication and signage as needed. Thank you for your understanding and compliance when it comes to closures.

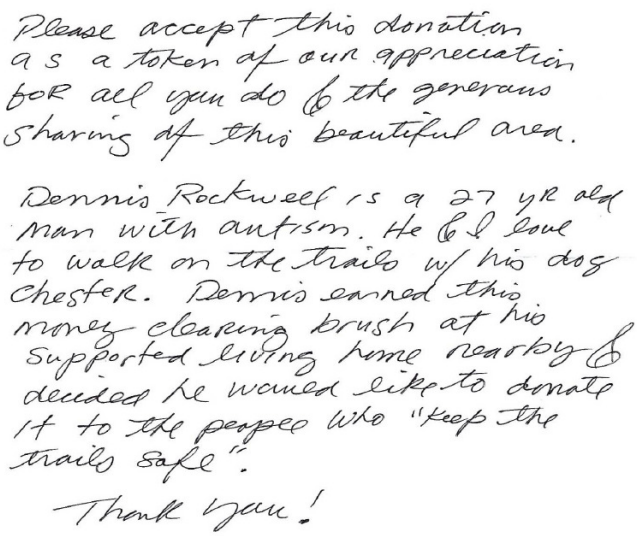
You may have noticed an increase of road work and rock trucks around the farm over the last couple years. We have been doing a lot of maintenance of existing roads and building a few new spurs here and there to have continued access to our timber. It is nice to catch up on some much-needed attention to our infrastructure. Our road network is one of our most valuable assets, because if you can't access your timber, you can't harvest it. Having a well-built road with proper surfacing and drainage helps shed the surface water and keep it from delivering sediment into streams.

I would like to make two important points to the recreation community that may not be familiar with what Pilchuck Tree Farm is. The first point is that we are a fully functioning farm that just happens to grow a very long-term crop; timber. We are growing and farming trees with the intent to harvest them. Almost everything done around the farm revolves around the management of our stands. Our long-term objective at Pilchuck is to sustainably grow trees on a 50-year average rotation. Some stands won't make it that long, and others will be held for longer for a variety of reasons.

The second is that we are a private landowner that voluntarily allows non-motorized recreation on our property. The use of the tree farm for recreation is a privilege and not a right. We are not a county park managed with public funds. The trails are maintained by hard-working volunteer groups. Since I have started working here, I have noticed an increase in users, and often wonder if they realize where they are. We are working to improve our signage to make users aware of who we are and what we do as a company. It's a work in progress that will eventually grow legs and come to fruition. Until then, I hope everyone can enjoy the farm for its simplicity amongst the busyness of the growing communities around us.

A Note of Appreciation

We received the following note with a donation to the PRA:



Please accept this donation as a token of our appreciation for all you do & the generous sharing of this beautiful area.

Dennis Rockwell is a 27 yr old man with autism. He & I love to walk on the trails w/ his dog Chester. Dennis earned this money clearing brush at his supported living home nearby & decided he wanted like to donate it to the people who "keep the trails safe".

Thank you!

A big thank-you to Dennis and everyone that helps the PRA keep tree farm trails open to recreational use.

Share the Trails

This May, Scott, Linda and I had the great fortune to be able to rides some of the most SPECTACURLAR Trails in Dixie National Forest near Bryce Canyon National Park. The views are absolutely breathtaking and if you don't have visiting this area on your bucket list….you should!

Both private horse owners and mountain bikers are allowed on National Forest trails, along with commercial outfitters, who provide guided rides on horse or mule.

Sadly, as in all places where there are multiple user groups, there are conflicts.

Especially on some of the trails that are narrow, as shown, with blind curves and steep and drop offs.





This area is Thunder Mountain, known for spectacular views.

It is also known for accidents between mountain bikers and horse riders. Last April, it was reported that 5 accidents caused injuries to both equestrians and cyclists, and scared the living *#$& out of every one.

And the fault is with both groups….yes, as much as you don't want to hear that, it is.

Horse riders don't allow bikers to pass on the trail, even in wider areas. Biker's eyes are focused on the ground with earbuds in place, and are after the speed.

Sound familiar? It should. It happens here too.

You know who loves the conflict? The commercial outfitters, they want us both off the trails. They pay for the privilege of running a commercial business in the Dixie National Forest. Private horses and mountain bikers interfere with their lively hood.

The same for the PTF. We interfere with their logging operations, we complain about the logging, trails blocked or disappearing after a cut, trucks on the road. This is their livelihood, what keeps them in business. We complain and they'll want us both off the trails too!

- Barbara Woo

Watch for Wildlife!

There have been several cougar sightings on the Victoria Tract. For more information, about animal encounters, consult WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife:

https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/species/puma-concolor#conflict

https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/species/ursus-americanus#conflict