

CHAPTER 9 – PARKS AND RECREATION

#	Page	Section/Policy	Proposed Amendment	Sponsor	Meeting
1	9-5	NEW Section Engagement and Coordination	<p><u>Engagement and Coordination</u></p> <p><u>Whatcom County remains committed to engaging and coordinating with cities, state, federal, and tribal governments on relevant parks and recreation matters. Many parks and recreation issues, such as public access to public lands, shorelines, waterbodies, and trail corridors, have regional and cross-jurisdictional significance. It is important to respect and uphold tribal treaty rights, and coordinate and engage with Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, and other Federally-recognized tribes to address any potential impacts or conflicts parks and recreation may have to cultural resources and areas of cultural significance.</u></p>	Galloway	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
2	9-7	NEW Policy 9A-13	<p><u>Policy 9A-13: Whatcom County should manage recreation on County-owned or managed lands in a manner that avoids or minimizes impacts to areas of known and documented tribal cultural use and protects historical, cultural, and natural resources. Whatcom County should consult with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and all interested federally recognized Tribes on all programs or projects that may impact Tribal resources. Tribal resources include Tribal cultural resources, archaeological sites, sacred sites, fisheries, or other rights and interests in tribal lands and lands within which a tribe or tribes possess rights reserved or protected by federal treaty, statute, or executive order. Work in partnership with Tribes to identify where recreation could co-exist that could support cultural education, stewardship, and shared understanding.</u></p>	Galloway	APPROVED AS AMENDED via MOTION SCOTW 4.7.26
3	9-10	Policy 9C-4	<p>The wet climate of Whatcom County may preclude <u>development, expansion, and/or</u> extensive multi-use of some trails or require seasonal limitations. <u>Development, expansion, and use of Ttrails routes</u> should consider soil conditions, steep terrain, surface drainage, <u>watershed health, natural and cultural resources</u>, and other physical limitations that could <u>negatively</u> impact the area's <u>environment from overuse</u>.</p>	Galloway	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
4	9-11	Policy 9C-11	<p>Spell out Army Corps of Engineers rather than ACOE</p>	Galloway	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
5	9-12	Policy 9C-23	<p>Investigate and identify feasible routing of the <u>Salish</u> Coast Millennium-Trail to increase non-motorized connectivity throughout the region. Work with relevant agencies to secure permanent recreational easements along the closed and abandoned roads in the area with</p>	Galloway	APPROVED AS AMENDED via MOTION SCOTW 4.7.26

			potential to be adapted to the <u>Salish Coast-Millennium</u> Trail. This includes closed parts of Gulf, Aldergrove, Point Whitehorn , Henry, and Lonseth Roads.		
6	9-13	Policy 9C-28	“Ensure adequate education and enforcement of County regulations to minimize activities such as illegal trail building, off-leash dogs in on-leash areas, and improper disposal of pet waste, <u>and incompatible uses that damage the environment.</u> ”	Galloway	APPROVED TO SEND TO PC 9/9/25 COTW APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
7	9-15	ORV Riding Areas	Recognizing that it is better to <u>The County should</u> regulate and manage where off-road vehicle (ORV) riding may occur, <u>prioritizing community and user safety and the protection of property, environment, and natural and cultural resources.</u> The County twice attempted to develop an area for exclusive ORV use, <u>but</u> . Both proposals were met with controversy and not pursued. However <u>Unfortunately</u> , ORV riding still occurs and in many instances on land not suitable for that use and without the owner's permission. The end result is that ORV riding is impacting neighbors, and <u>harming</u> the land <u>and environment</u> in which riding occurs, and is in general creating a problem for <u>conflict with</u> less intrusive recreational activities.”	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
8	9-15	Goal 9F	Coordinate with Federal, and <u>State, and Tribal</u> agencies to evaluate the feasibility of providing <u>additional</u> ORV opportunities in Whatcom County <u>that are safe to various user groups and do not damage the land, environment, and natural and cultural resources.</u>	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
9	9-15	Policy 9F-1	Recognizing that there will continue to be a demand for ORV riding, the County should, as resources allow, coordinate with federal, and <u>state, and tribal</u> agencies to better <u>educate user groups</u> , enforce existing ORV restrictions, and evaluate the feasibility of providing <u>safe and appropriate</u> ORV opportunities in Whatcom County.	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
10	9-16/17	Policy 9G-4	In light of lead contamination at the Plantation Rifle Range engage the public and relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement, to develop a plan for future use of the facility that protects the environment, meets community expectations for <u>safe</u> recreation, and provides for an acceptable level of cost recovery for operations.	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
11	9-18	Policy 9H-7	Continue to plan for full use of existing senior/community centers and explore partnerships to help absorb <u>expand services to meet</u> future need.	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26

12	9-19	Policy 9H-10	In collaboration with <u>cities, county, state, federal, and tribal governments, Tribes, County Agencies,</u> and stakeholders, develop long-term forest management plans to meet community management goals, protect the County’s financial interest, and foster responsible recreation within the Lake Whatcom Watershed, Stewart Mountain Community Forest, and Canyon Lake Community Forest. <u>Forest management goals should balance the County’s interest in supporting a sustainable local timber economy and safe recreation opportunities with enhancing carbon sequestration, ecosystem services, wildlife habitat, watershed health, forest health, climate resilience and reducing risks from wildfire and other natural hazards.</u>	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
13	9-19/20	Policy 9I-6	Experiment with novel public-private partnerships to provide facilities that will provide a quality experience to draw tourists to Whatcom County's parks. Some examples could be privately operated adventure tourism and locally sourced goods and services (e.g. farm tours, farmers market, <u>Nordic Fest,</u> etc.). Part or all of the "rent" provided could be by the provision of privately funded public use facilities such as toilets and shuttle buses used to service these private facilities.	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
14	9-20	Policy 9J-1	Designate high-value greenspaces and greenways for acquisition, conservation easements, or other reservation programs to enhance carbon sequestration and provide community benefits. Prioritize areas that provide co-benefits such as biodiversity, <u>watershed health, climate resilience,</u> recreation, and connectivity between habitats.	Galloway	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
Additional Amendments for 4/7					
15	9-3	Purpose	Collaboration between Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Department and Whatcom County Planning & Development Services Department will ensure that Parks & Recreation capital facility improvement projects identified in the CPROS Plan are consistent with Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Parks & Recreation Level of Service (LOS) standards (adopted in WCCP Chapter 4), along with a six-year financing plan for improvement projects (including senior centers) addressed as part of the WCCP Capital Facilities Element. <u>This chapter establishes policy direction. Specific projects, priorities, and implementation strategies are defined in the CPROS Plan.</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26
16	9-7	Policy 9A-8	Policy 9A-8: <u>Consider c</u> Conducting a fee study to identify fee-based barriers to public usage of regional parks, and develop potential alternative cost recovery methods to reduce entrance fees and other user fees. <u>Seek public input and review, and report to the County Council on the impact of current fees and insurance requirements on the use of county parks for events and festivals. Make recommendations on potential ways to alleviate barriers to the use of county parks for events and festivals.</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via “CONSENT” SCOTW 4.7.26

17	9-13	NEW Policy 9C-27	<u>Policy 9C-27: Continue to explore the development of paths and trails that connect communities across Whatcom County and which support development of the community's active transportation and recreational trail networks, such as the Nooksack Loop Trail and the Bellingham-Mt. Baker Trail.</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
18	9-13	NEW Policy 9C-28	<u>Policy 9C-28: Join ongoing coordination and planning efforts with nonprofit organizations, land trusts, state, federal, and tribal governments regarding the Pacific Northwest Trail, a congressionally-designated National Scenic Trail that connects across Whatcom County from the saltwater shores of the Salish Sea to the Pacific Crest Trail at the Okanogan County border via Lake Samish, Blanchard Mountain, the Mount Baker National Recreation Area, Heather Meadows, North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and the Pasayten Wilderness.</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
19	9-13	Policy 9C-27 (renumbered to 9C-29)	<u>At regular intervals, t</u> The WC Parks and Recreation Department should report <u>annually</u> to the Whatcom County Council on progress implementing the Regional Multimodal Pathways identified in this Chapter.	Scanlon	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
20	9-14	Policy 9D-2	Plan for the need for community parks <u>as undeveloped areas of county increase in density in LAMIRDS and unincorporated UGAs not associated with cities</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
21	9-15	NEW Policy 9E-6	<u>Policy 9E-6: Support the development of public access to freshwater shorelines, including at Lake Samish (Dittrich Park) and Lake Whatcom (South Lake Whatcom Park), as opportunities to expand recreational access while protecting environmental resources.</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26
22	9-22	Map 9-2	<u>Change "Coast Millennium Trail" to "Salish Coast Trail"</u> <u>Change "Coast Millennium Alt. Trail" to "Salish Coast Alt. Trail"</u> <u>Change "Coast Millennium Trail Constructed" to "Salish Coast Trail Constructed"</u>	Scanlon	APPROVED via "CONSENT" SCOTW 4.7.26

TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS FOR 5/19/2026

*Note: this amendment was originally listed in the attachment titled "Technical Amendments for 5.19.2026."
It has also been included here for clarity.*

4	9-7	Policy 9A-14	Reconsider Policy 9A-14 Policy 9A-14: In partnership with Tribes, consider land back and/or co-management opportunities on County owned or managed lands.	Galloway	MOTION APPROVED TO STRIKE POLICY SCOTW 5.19.26
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