

<b>UAF North Campus Subcommittee Agenda</b>  March 4, 2003; 12 p.m. (noon) Facilities Services Conference Room, RM 122	No agenda available
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## **UAF North Campus Subcommittee Meeting**

March 4, 2003

Notes

### **Meeting with Facilities Services, March 4, 2003**

On Tuesday, Mar 4, Rich Boone and I met with Ed Foster, Superintendent of Operations, and Darrin "Bear" Edson, Grounds Supervisor, to begin a dialog regarding management of the North Campus Area. Our goals were to:

1. begin involving Facilities Services personnel in the master planning process since they are the ones who will be responsible for carrying out maintenance and construction projects in the area;
2. establish procedures for work requests in the North campus area, especially during this time when the master plan is not completed;
3. discuss the possible hiring of a natural resources manager
4. discuss the current list of project requests

Currently, Ed Foster receives most of the requests for work in the North Campus area and coordinates his staff to work with faculty, staff, students and community personnel in carrying out various projects. He has encountered conflicts with various user groups even on projects previously approved by the Master Planning Committee mostly because all of the

users had not been identified. Hopefully, we will improve that situation with the master plan. He has also encountered activities such as unauthorized vehicle access, snow machine access, non-approved trails maintenance activities, unsafe construction projects and is seeking guidance from the North Campus Subcommittee on methods of reducing such activities.

Bear is the person on the front lines. He supervises a crew of full time and student employees whose responsibility is campus grounds maintenance. When a directive comes down to remove a bunch of trees, smooth out trails, improve access, install barriers, etc., Bear and his crew are responsible for completing the work. He would like to attend the NC Subcommittee meetings to become better informed and possibly provide expertise on the “realities” of implementing our plan.

Below are some action items for the subcommittee:

- a. Rich and I enthusiastically supported Bear’s request to come to the meetings on a regular basis. The subcommittee can, if desired, formalize that request by adding a Facilities Services representative as a permanent member of the subcommittee or by establishing a non-voting, advisory position to be filled by Facilities Services Personnel (1).
- b. We recommend that all requests for maintenance or construction work in the North Campus area be routed through the existing work order system. This system is available to everyone with a UAF web site access and will provide a permanent record of work requests and actions taken by Facilities Services personnel to complete, revise, deny, etc. the work.

Establish a link on the NC subcommittee website directing people how to submit work orders.

Develop forms for use of the area, one each for research, education and outreach/recreation. Who gets these first, Ed, or the committee? Should these, somehow be incorporated into the work order system

or separated(2)

- c. We recommend that Ed Foster (and other Facilities Services personnel, as needed), compile all work requests and meet with the NC Subcommittee a minimum of 3 times each year, possibly monthly, to discuss/approve/deny submitted work requests. The question for the subcommittee is, how far we should micro-manage the requests. Should all requests be approved/disapproved by the subcommittee, or only major construction projects, or whenever Ed decides he needs advice? I can see this relationship evolving over time, and at least until a master plan is completed, perhaps we recommend that all requests come through the committee. That way the committee can learn more about the needs in the area and possible conflicts, and Facilities Services can understand the desires of the NC Subcommittee. (2)
- d. Ed suggested that we think about the natural resources manager (forester, land manager) position. He would like to compile a JEF (job evaluation form) that costs nothing to produce but would give all of us a better understanding of what we would want this person to do. I suggested it was a bit early in the game since we have no approval for this position, but Ed suggested it doesn't hurt to work on a job description and revise it as we go along. He said it would be very beneficial to the hired person to be in on the master planning discussions as early as possible (4)
- e. Current work requests: Ed has two projects he wants to complete this summer:
  - 1. continue annual mowing of trails for ski maintenance,
  - 2. Ed has been working for the past year to rectify a hazardous situation. The (Trails Committee, Ski Club?), in an attempt to eliminate snow machine traffic from the trails in winter, erected barriers at major entrances. According to Ed, the barriers are too low and create a winter hazard when they are buried by snow and cannot be seen. Facilities Services has been slowly replacing the barriers with taller ones (railroad ties) and wishes to complete all replacement this summer. Carol Adamczak later pointed out to me that the horse riders have a hard time negotiating those taller barriers and prefer

the shorter ones. We need to resolve this issue and approve or disapprove this work.

3. Ed has received a list of project proposals from the Ski Club relating to trails construction and maintenance projects. Previous committee discussions have basically divided the projects into two camps: maintenance and construction. Previously, the NC Committee recommended that all construction projects be put on hold until the master plan is complete. This list would include:

In addition, some committee members recommended that some of the trails maintenance projects could be accomplished if Ed and Bear had the time and finances to manage them. However, this list was generated with a single use in mind without attention to educational and research needs. Even the maintenance projects might interfere with these programs. For instance, one of the trails maintenance projects is to level the hilly, thermokarst pits near Smith Lake/potato field to make it safer and faster for skiers. Steve Sparrow told me this area is heavily used by soils classes as classic examples of the effects of land clearing. There are several more examples, but the bottom line is, the requested maintenance projects need scrutiny from all sides to make sure educational programs and research projects are not impacted.

These conflicts led to the conclusion that all proposed trails projects need to be delayed until a comprehensive trails plan is completed. We need to know the extent of permafrost, exactly where the problem areas are with tree roots, etc. Rather than complete piecemeal maintenance projects that might have serious impacts on other uses in the area, we recommend delaying all maintenance projects with the exception of annual mowing until a trails maintenance assessment can be completed. As part of the baseline data-gathering process, we need to contact specific users of the trails, have them accompany (Peter? Mike? A member of the committee?) along the trails and map problem sites, identify hazards, detail wet

areas, identify areas that should not be disturbed because of their importance to classes, etc. This needs to be repeated in spring, summer and fall to ensure that problems buried by snow now are revealed.

What all this boils down to is:

- a) Should the committee delay all maintenance and construction projects with the exception of the two identified by Ed Foster as needing immediate attention?
- b) We need to complete a trails assessment including all user groups.
- c) Who should do all that?

Finally, we also discussed potential actions to be taken if violations occur to university regulations in the North Campus area such as unauthorized vehicles, tree cutting, etc. I suggested it was not in our job descriptions to become cops, but we should be diligent in notifying Security about infractions in this area. Like the work orders, notification of authorities would provide a written record of violations and may help the NC Committee manage the entire area better. We need to contact Security to identify university regulations that already impact that area and include them in the master plan. These may also be posted on our web site or even in the information kiosks so people are aware of the regulations.

I will compile people's thoughts so we can continue this dialog over the next few weeks. At the next meeting we do need to address:

1. Ed's summer work request
2. Delay of decisions regarding submitted trails maintenance and construction projects.