

***Friends of the Bluff –
a Community
Stewardship Group in
Spokane, WA***

Diana Roberts, PhD

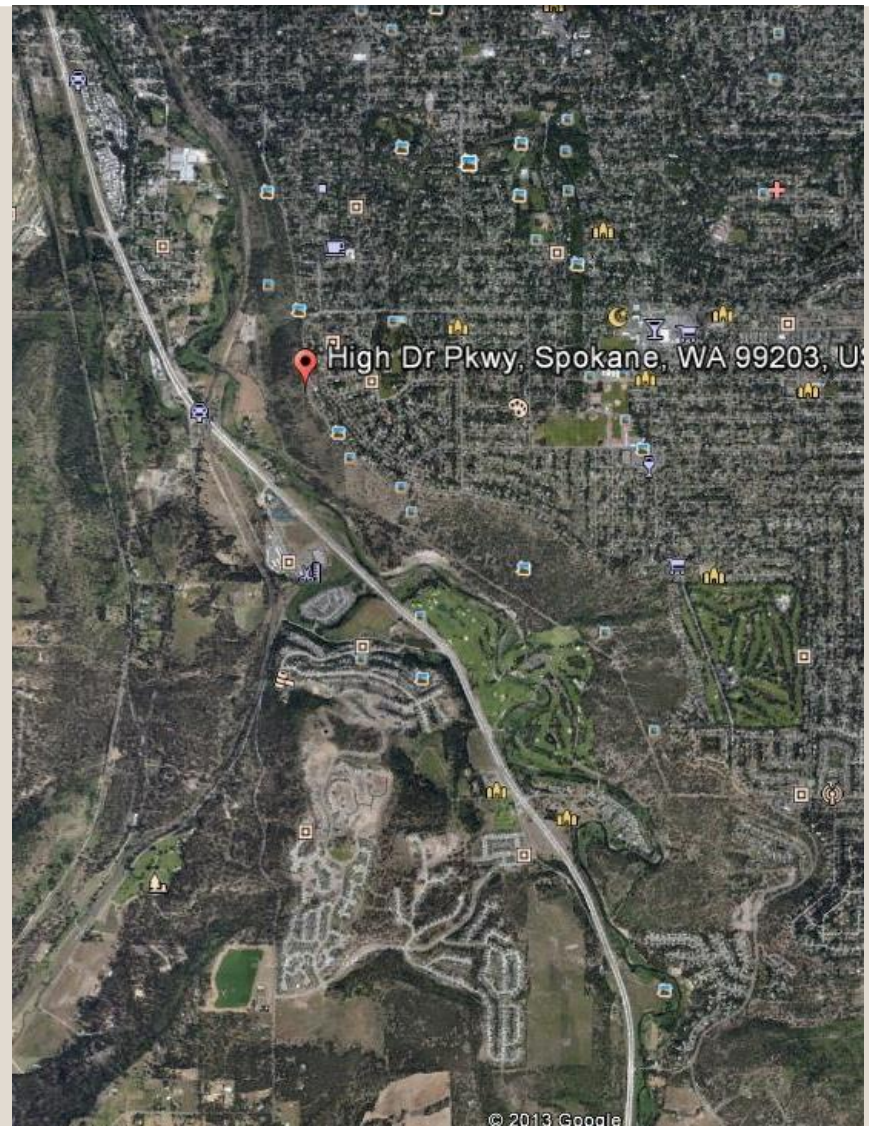
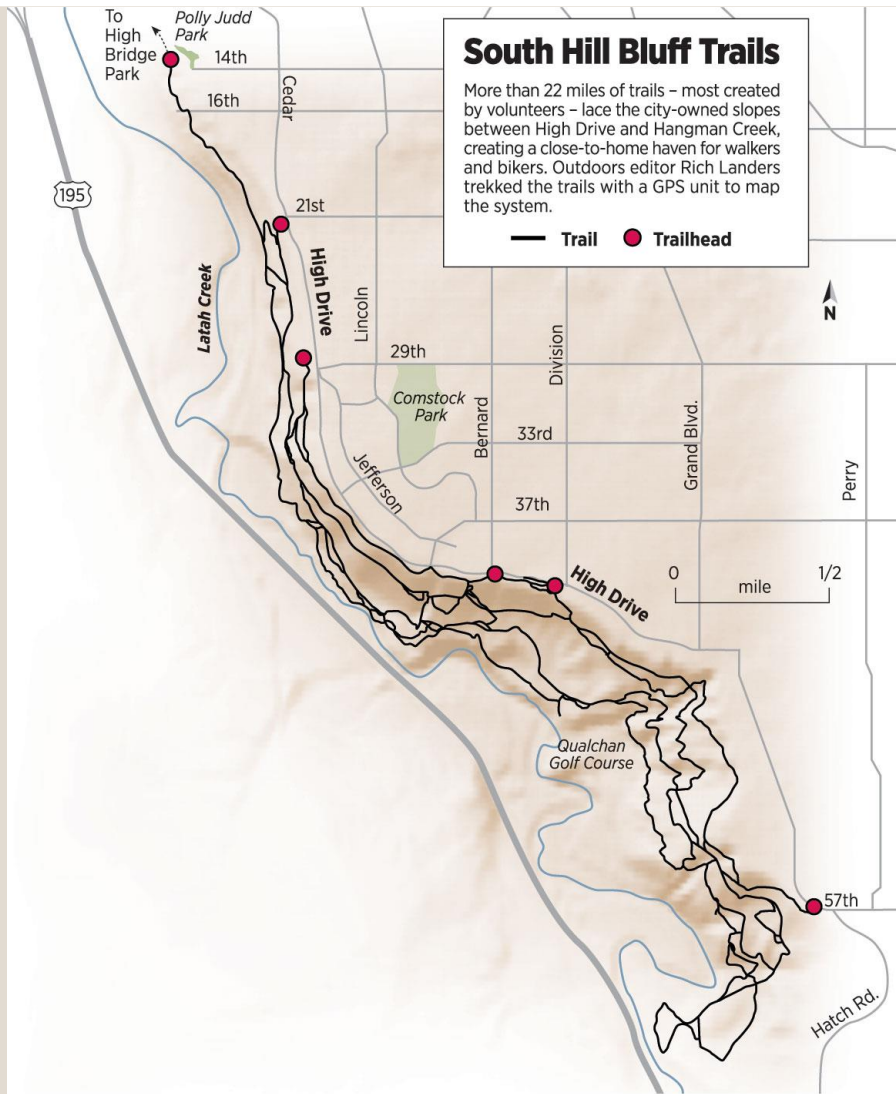
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High Drive Bluff Park



Friends of the Bluff group initiated 2010 Priorities developed 2011

- 1. Sustainable trails**
- 2. Forest health &**
- 3. Weed management**
- 4. Litter removal**

**Today's Goal –
Discuss a Big
Unanswered
Question...**

04/30/2012

A group of people are working on a trail in a wooded area. One person is using a shovel to dig, while others are observing or working nearby. The ground is rocky and covered with dry grass. The background shows tall trees and a clear sky.

Sustainable trails

**Independent
trail builders...**

- Teaching skills
- Trail maintenance
- Re-route steep trails
- Closed fall-line trail

Weed management

- Relocated & dispersed skeletonweed biocontrol insects
- Cut spotted knapweed along trail
- Release
- 20% ...
- ... city to spray
- ... approach most
- ...
- Education of users against introducing new species

**Don't abuse
volunteers!**



1.6 tons

**When is
litter ... Art?**





Doo Crew – helps keep area clean for everyone

- 
- 100 dog walkers/week pick up
 - 3/4 ton dog poop annually
 - Crew appreciates tied bags
 - This effort is appreciated by many!


04/30/2012



Fire risk reduction & Forest health



- **Fall 2011 - 2 educational workshops**
- **Volunteers thinned & pruned 1-acre demonstration area**
- **Minimal negative feedback**

- 
- Lop and scatter branches
 - Combine science + aesthetics
 - 6 mths later area looked good
 - 18 mths later looked great!
 - 4 years later superb, Arrow leaf balsamroot strong competitor with weeds

04/30/2012



Spring 2012 formed a Firewise Community



- 7 of the group attended Volunteers in Pruning workshop
- Thinned & pruned 6.2 acres along High Drive
 - Top 100 ft to reduce potential for blowing sparks
 - Easiest section first for PR effect
 - Participation small in 96F heat
 - *Did I emphasize “small”?*

Treatment protocol

- **Volunteers cannot fell trees >4" diameter**
- **Thinning & removal only prior to gall rust cessation**
- **Pruning & removal prior to bark beetle flight ended**
- **Prune & drop after that**
- **Branch removal in October**

08/12/2012

Community Firewise Day October 13, 2012

- 67 people hauled up branches





2-3 days chipping for Urban Forestry






2013 Community Firewise Day



Other community groups coming forward...



Contract thinning & pruning
\$89,000 awarded to City from WA Jobs Bill
via DNR (Guy Gifford)

- **Treat 100+ acres in most difficult area**
- **Connection with Friends of the Bluff**

Emphasis on education

- Before
- During



Educational hikes - 75 people Guy Gifford (DNR)





**Education
effective...**

**Jack Nisbet
(author & naturalist)**

95% Positive feedback on forest treatment



2012 Value

Source	Value	Total
Work events	\$8,700	
Oct 13 Community event	\$4,020	
Board meetings	\$1,920	
Doo crew	\$1,200	\$15,840
WSU Ext - educator time, supplies, listserv, tools	\$15,660	
Donations	\$1,577	
Firewise Community cost share	\$2,800	
DNR	\$89,000	
		\$124,877



2013 Accomplishments

- Elected Board with term limits
- Contributed \$18,760 in-kind to City Parks
- Communicated with FoB group via email listserv (225 subscribers) and Facebook page (255 likes)
- Organized 32 meetings/events with 222 participants
- Thinned/pruned 6 acres along High Drive
- Represented Bluff users to City Engineers
- Native grass & shrubs plantings for restoration
- Conservation Futures application



2014 – the Year of Admin...



**Admin or
Impetus...?**

- **Develop MOU with City**
- **Insurance**
- **501c3 status?**
- **Who will bank our \$\$?**
- **Board by-laws**
- ***You cannot anticipate everything...!***

Or, the year of conflict...

- Two board members: conservation issue
- - private phone call
- - 'A' sent email
- Board off
- - B agreed, /
- - A never attended
- Board.
- - Energy sucked out of Board
- Board approved Bylaws
- - A resigned at this point
- - Other collateral damage...

**New community groups:
Focus on Admin or
Impetus....?**

We are “stewards of the Bluff...”





Mission Statement

The mission of the Friends of the Bluff is to steward the High Drive Bluff through volunteer efforts, community partnerships, and education. We conserve the area in a natural, sustainable state for multiple users who respect the resource, each other, and wildlife.

