

W.A.K.E.

Whatcom Association of Kayak Enthusiasts

P.O. Box 1952

Bellingham, WA 98227

www.wakekayak.org

March 11, 2003

Ms. Patricia Decker
Waterfront Futures Project Director
Waterfront Futures Project
1801 Roeder Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

Re: Written Comments for Waterfront Futures Project

Dear Ms. Decker:

We are writing to voice our club's desire to include a Bellingham Bay Water Trail in the Waterfront Futures Project. The Whatcom Association of Kayak Enthusiasts (WAKE) is an organization of 115 members supporting human-powered kayak activities in the Bellingham area. Club activities include monthly meetings held at the Fairhaven Branch of the Bellingham Public Library, free kayaking trips, kayaking safety classes, and upkeep of the Lummi Island Department of Natural Resources (DNR) campsite. The Lummi Island DNR site is one of many sites on the Cascadia Marine Trail that stretches over 140 miles from Olympia to Point Roberts and includes many sites in the San Juan Islands. The Bellingham Bay Water Trail we propose would connect to the Cascadia Marine Trail.

Our thoughts for a Bellingham Bay Water Trail include existing launch sites at Marine Park, Boulevard Park, the south end of Cornwall Avenue, the Squalicum Marina boat launch, and the Little Squalicum Park beach at the west end of Roeder Avenue. The Water Trail could also include a public launch site in the Chuckanut Bay Marsh and Tidelands and Chuckanut Island. A secure boat storage facility and a low floating dock at the Squalicum Harbor and/or Marina would be a major enhancement to the Water Trail. A low floating dock would facilitate launching human-powered boats, in particular rowing sculls. The Water Trail sites should be identified by signs, and should also be indicated in City of Bellingham guides such as the Parks & Recreation Department's "Parks, Trails & Natural Areas Guide Map." We do not propose overnight camping at any of the Bellingham Bay Water Trail sites; however, the Port and City could encourage local restaurants, hotels, motels, and bed-and-breakfast establishments to list their phone numbers and addresses at the secure boat storage facility so that visiting boaters may find food and lodging. We are convinced that a Bellingham Bay Water Trail would be a low-cost boost to Bellingham's economy by fostering tourism, human-powered water sports, and small businesses serving these activities.

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Our club is solidly behind this vision. WAKE will enthusiastically turn out volunteers to help the Waterfront Futures Project build and maintain the proposed Bellingham Bay Water Trail. We look forward to working on the Waterfront Futures Project in any capacity you think fit.

Sincerely,

THE WAKE BOARD

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