

Navigation Summit Minutes

November 17, 2018

10am-3pm in Classroom

Tacoma Program Center 2302 N 30th St, Tacoma, WA 98403

Facilitator: Nick Block (Staff)

Attendees: Joel Heidal, Jim Heber, Alan Davey, Travis Prescott, Brian Starlin, Marilyn Wright, Mike Kretzler, Troy Hubbs, Paul Thomson

Coffee & Pastries (9:30-10am)

Welcome & Introductions (10-10:15am)

Review of Seattle GPS Navigation Pilot (10:15am-12pm)

- Seattle branch shares results with the group
- Feedback & Questions
- Seattle started the process of adding GPS/Tech in 2015
 - Demonstrated the components of altimeter and GPS
 - Students still focused on map and compass
- With the 2018 pilot, students are now using their own gps and altimeter
 - Map and compass are still the foundation
 - Students are shown how to use Gaia and PLB(With GPS functionality)
 - At the field trip, students do a small amount of navigation via GPS and Altimeter, but it is limited.
 - At some point, students are told their GPS has died and they must now rely solely on map and compass
 - The course has 4 components
 - e-Learning workshop
 - Online GPS module
 - In-Person Workshop
 - Practice and prep for field trip
 - Field Trip
 - Similar to the original field trip but adds additional tools (gps & altimeter)
 - Less large group briefings, break into small groups that work together for the day
 - The course now awards the Navigation badge and the GPS badge
 - It now takes a bit more time to complete the entire course (6-8 hours additional time)
- [Brian's Slideshow Linked Here](#)
- How many students does each branch have every year? What would be the ideal size
 - Seattle: 280
 - Need to add much more capacity

- Olympia: 50
 - Meeting the demand for the most part
- Everett: 100
 - 150 to meet demand
 - Trying to add the additional 50 spaces this year
- Kitsap: 40
 - Majority of waitlist is from other branches
 - If other branches expand they should be okay with meeting Kitsap specific demand
- Tacoma: 100
- **The club-wide annual Navigation capacity is around 570**
 - To meet the current demands, **we need to add about 200 more spaces per year**
- Foothills would like to initially run about 30 students in the first year of their program

New Technologies from other branches (12:00-1pm)

What new tech are you using in your nav courses? How is it working? What do you plan to implement in the future?

- Different apps - Topo vs. Gaia
 - Topo may be simpler to use, it also is free
 - Gaia has more features, is more widely used, and we have a pro deal
 - There are many apps but need to stick with one for standardization for ease of teaching
 - For Seattle, Gaia is currently the standard option
- As a group, we need to define the relationship between map & compass and GPS
 - Some people have concerns about using GPS as a replacement for map & compass
 - We need to make sure we are emphasizing the importance of traditional nav in the course
 - We also recognize the reality that GPS and Smartphones are not going away
 - How do we prepare our students for navigating with traditional and modern tools, and ensure they understand the fundamentals and do not rely too much on technology?
- **Foothills Avalanche Based Navigation**
 - Jim presented on his course and invited others to use it in their programming
 - Uses a variety of tech to understand slope angles and help plan for travel in avalanche terrain

eLearning Review (1-1:30pm)

Updates from each branch

Seattle

- Working to revise the e-Learning
 - The original program was developed for specific platform, but it needs some updates and needs to be rolled into the same e-Learning platform as other Mountaineers courses
 - Dilek is working to rebuild these in our e-learning system and make some changes
 - This will provide some branch flexibility, for example:
 - If a branch does not wish to include a component such as GPS in their course, they can remove that module from their e-learning, while other branches could leave it in
- We are still working to incorporate the GPS online module into the LMS
- In the GPS pilot nav course:
 - Found that the e-learning course is too complex, need to simplify to increase engagement and reduce material
 - Need to track progress
 - Issues with students not finishing. Lots of prodding and reminding to get people to finish the course

Kitsap

- Primary Workshop is e-Learning

Olympia

- Has been reviewing the Nav course Dilek is creating

Update from staff

- Dilek Bulut is the e-learning developer on staff
 - Contact Dilek to get login credentials for e-Learning or any other questions/feedback
 - She is the best person to discuss e-Learning changes with
 - dilekb@mountaineers.org
- Dilek is working to finish the Navigation course. She was given a grant-funded project called "Protecting Public Lands 101", part of the Outdoor Advocates Network
 - This project had a tight deadline and the Navigation course had to be paused
 - That project is now completed and she is working hard to complete the Nav course ASAP

New Field Trip Locations (1:30-2pm)

Updates from branches

Everett

- Camp Brinkley area is what we've been using (Rider Ridge)
 - They are getting ready to log the area
 - May not be usable as a navigation field trip anymore
- Next fall/winter Everett might need a new location

- Lot of areas nearby that could still work, but would be looking for some recommendations from other branches

Olympia

- Currently using Kennedy Creek owned by Taylor Shellfish
 - Last winter they logged half the area
 - Oly built a longer nav session through the remaining woods but terrain was steeper and unpleasant. Less secure and safe but it worked
 - Just heard that the remaining woods have been logged
- Scrambling to figure something out for a new location but not sure what to do

Foothills

- Getting close to identifying a location
 - Finalizing the process
 - Found another area that is reasonable but two locations for the different parts of the FT are not connected
 - The location is off of exit 25 I-90
 - DNR has been helping Paul T. with this

Seattle

- Still using Heybrook Ridge
 - Heybrook is FS land but Parking is on private land
 - The land owner is aging and if he land owner passes the parking area may no longer be available as the owners family does not seem keen on letting us use it
- Looking at Index County Park as an alternate location
- Looked at Discovery park but terrain was too steep and probably won't work well
- Would like another alternative, open to suggestions from the group

Kitsap

- Using a section of land
 - Going to be in trouble because leapfrog section is getting overgrown and dangerous
 - There are plans to log the solo-exercise area soon
- Need to find something ASAP but no idea where to go
- Hoping to find something nearby, possibly on the Gold Mountain Trail

Tacoma

- Using the Irish cabin property
 - This area is working well and not changing

Navigation Field Trip Location Requirements:

- Distance
 - Need a minimum of $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mile of distance in the field trip
- Elevation
 - A few hundred feet of elevation would be ideal to demonstrate altimeter use
 - Minimal elevation is needed
- What else?

Equivalency (2-2:30pm)

- **Seattle's** program has an open course that is ongoing
 - Participants go through the program and then get a badge
 - Links to page on how to apply that includes
 - Interview
 - Teach at a workshop and a field trip
 - Attend an instructor training
 - Brian can share his equivalency page link as well as the questionnaire (Survey Gizmo)
- **Everett** runs a one day equivalency course doing everything at once
 - Had an equivalency page on the website but was turned off

If you'd like to run an equivalency program:

- Consider setting up a "course" page on the website similar to Seattle
 - You can use this to track people and their status
 - You can also pull this information later to contact people for instructor opportunities
- Create a survey application
 - Review Seattle's Survey Document
 - Contact staff if you want access to your own survey
 - info@mountaineers.org
- Require equivalency applicants to:
 - Attend an instructor training
 - Teach at workshop and a field trip

Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

- Staff can run reports on past instructors and course graduates
 - You can reach out and target those people to try and bring them back
 - Ask staff for that information
 - info@mountaineers.org
- Rewards such as gift cards, gear, etc., thank you notes
 - Most branches are not using a rewards system
 - Everett provides occasional meals after trips for instructors
- Badges expirations are a good tool to keep people coming back
- Create an Instructor badge to go on profiles
 - Volunteers LOVE badges!
 - This is an easy win that costs nothing for committees
- Training people how to be a better instructor can help retain leaders

Instructor Training

- The organization is looking into how to better prepare instructors (train the trainer)
 - This is a long-term project, nothing is expected to be completed anytime soon
- The online leadership e-learning is now available but covers admin information, not how to teach
 - This does help reduce the amount of time leaders need to spend giving info to new instructors, more time to spend on training how to teach
- PSIA trainings have resources (Jim has materials)
 - This training provides an excellent example of how to train instructors
- Create a flowchart that shows what courses you might want to take
 - Based on your interests/branch
 - Could help direct new instructors to what direction they would like to go across all activities
 - This is a great idea that needs more thought on how to implement
 - Probably not feasible anytime soon from a staff perspective
- Should we develop course prerequisite progression?
 - Instead of assuming someone knows nothing everytime, add on to each prior course
 - Students would come to each Nav course with experience from the last module
 - Instructors would then understand what level of experience someone has, and could more efficiently train students

Next Steps (2:30-3pm)

- **ACTION ITEM** Attend Seattle's GPS field trips
 - Navigation Chair's Interested in how GPS in Nav is working should try to get to one of these
 - Contact Brian Starlin for dates
 - It is highly recommended that all chairs do this to better understand how the Navigation group as a whole can address the issue of modern navigation tools
- **ACTION ITEM** Review the Minimum Standards document
 - Think about what changes you'd like to see, or questions you have for the group
 - Let's discuss this next time we meet
 - Come prepared with suggestions for editing
- **ACTION ITEM** Field Trip Locations
 - Stay in communication with each other about locations and ideas
 - Contact staff if you identify a location that may be suitable
 - Staff can assist with contacting Land Managers to see what our access issues are
 - Contact Sara Ramsay for this
 - sarar@mountaineers.org

- **ACTION ITEM** Recruitment & Retention
 - Review the section on this to get ideas
 - Consider a rewards program
 - Talk with your branch chair or treasurer to understand what kind of funds you might have for this
 - Use Salesforce reports to contact past leaders, course graduates, etc.
 - Staff can generate this for you
 - Contact Amanda Virbitsky
 - amandav@mountaineers.org
 - Use this report to target contact, recruit them and bring them back

Adjourn (3pm)

- When do we meet next?
 - The group decided on the following:
 - Meet once a year in-person but stay active online
 - A mid-year conference call could be helpful
 - Conference call in May
 - Meet Mid-November next year
 - Should we meet the same weekend?
 - Nick will send doodle polls for call and next meeting