

## **Everett Branch Council Meeting Minutes**

Everett Branch Committee, April 29th, 2025

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6:00 p.m. In-Person & Virtual

Meeting called to order by Nick Mayo, Everett Branch Chair

### **Participants:**

Nick Mayo, Everett Branch Chair  
Robert White, Everett Branch Chair Elect  
Lydia Gillis, Everett Branch Vice Chair  
Billy Anthony, Everett Treasurer  
Jared De Aragon, Everett E&I Director  
Janelle Schank, Everett Treasurer  
Michele Rushworth, Sea Kayaking Chair  
Rachel Shafer, Nordic Skiing Chair  
Sam Benefiel, Communications Director  
Kellie Benefiel, Youth Programs Coordinator  
Rodica Manole, Climbing Chair  
Erin Shannon-Starup, LOTM Co-Chair  
Matt Suprenant, Scrambling Chair

### **Motion**

The Committee approved the meeting minutes from January 28, 2025.

### **Introduction**

As a reminder, the March executive committee meeting was moved to April to accommodate the open house event at EWC. Subsequently, the May executive meeting will be held in June.

## **Committee Statutes and Updates**

### **Sea Kayaking**

The Basic SK Course is currently underway with 15 students. The lecture portion of the course is complete, with the students all passing their open water day over the weekend at Bowman Bay. The next step will be for them to participate in two student paddles at 7 nautical miles, which will allow them to graduate. One student in particular is very experienced and may be a promising trip leader in the future, and so is taking some more advanced training. Plans are also coming together for summertime weekly skills practice events.

In order to become a trip leader, prospectives must have completed a number of Mountaineers paddles, and then take an Incident Management Class, which the sea kayaking committee will hold in late May. Afterwards, they will need to complete two supervised paddles with two separate mentors, and the committee will vote on whether

the prospective leader needs more training or will become an approved trip leader. There are currently 4-5 individuals working through the requirements to become a trip leader.

### **Climbing**

Basic Climbing and Leading On Rock are both in progress, with Intermediate Glacier slated to begin on May 20th. The AMGA Snow Skills Clinic was successful.

From a budgeting perspective, the Climbing Committee will push for quality over quantity when budgeting for BCC in the upcoming fiscal year, possibly budgeting for around 34 students. BCC accepted most of the students that applied for 2025, and there have been some challenges with particular students, so the committee hopes to avoid this in the future. This may also be due to receiving fewer applicants than usual for the course.

### **First Aid**

There have been 3 successful classes so far this year, with a total of 58 graduates. The last class will be taking place next weekend, and it is currently full with a waitlist. The committee has been working with Base Medical again this year, which has been going much more smooth than the previous year.

Beck will be stepping down from the role of First Aid Chair, and the Executive Committee has been advertising a search for a new chair, co-chair, successor(s), etc. Committee members are encouraged to reach out to Nick & Robert with any suggestions for individuals who would be ideal for the role and are interested in leading the FA Committee. Most of the work is consolidated into a 2-3 month period when all of the courses are taking place, and the rest of the year, the workload is much slower.

### **Scrambling**

The Scrambling Course is well underway, with the Rock and Snow field trips recently completed. One lecture and one final field trip remain. 19 of the 21 students are still progressing through the course, and are quality students with lots of enthusiasm, so hopefully they will continue on to BCC. Matt notes that Scrambling has also seen fewer people compared to previous years, so there may be less trickling through in the future.

The Scrambling Reunion will be held at the Baker Lodge during the second weekend of August. All are welcome!

### **Nordic Skiing**

There are three new ski leaders for 2025: Nancy Jordan, Adam Hinz, and Nina Kilham. The committee had a great ski season and successful classes, with 8 students graduating from Skate and 29 graduating from Classic. After reflecting on the year and

anticipating high demand, the committee plans to offer the same courses next year, with similar offerings & times. Rachel attributes the success of the classes to the great group of volunteers, many of whom are no longer associated with the Everett branch.

### **Equity & Belonging**

At the end of the last board meeting, the name of the committee was changed to “Equity & Belonging”. Ramki will be taking over for Robert as the new E&B Chair on the Board of Directors very soon.

### **Youth Programs**

The first Youth activity took place last weekend — a successful day hike to Heybrook Lookout with a full roster. The next event will be an indoor climbing day with youth & parents, taking place the afternoon of May 24th at the Seattle Program Center. This will not be listed under general Activities, but can be found on the Everett Events page or Everett Youth & Family Activities page.

Sam notes that these events are outside of the typical framework that other branches are using, since they have established programs such as Explorers, Pathfinders, etc., as well as paid Mountaineers staff running these programs. Everett needs to run “standalone” activities for now, since the Youth Program is starting from scratch. The long-term goal will eventually be to have more dedicated enrollment programs, and possibly a summer camp, but for now the committee is focusing on recruiting volunteers and garnering interest among youth participants and their parents.

Part of the reason these events can’t be classified as activities is because youth participants would not have the necessary Mountaineers badges/prerequisites required to register on the website. For example, for the upcoming climbing event, it couldn’t be listed as a climbing activity because no one would be able to sign up without a top rope belay certification. For now, these will instead be classified as seminars/lectures.

There are currently a handful of individuals interested in becoming Qualified Youth Leaders, but it’s clear that outreach outside of our branch will be necessary to support the program. The hope is that parents will volunteer to become QYLs if their kids are already participating. Kellie proposes sending out flyers to local school districts to spread the word about the program & possible summer activities. These flyers may be seen by hundreds or even thousands of families across the region, and may even help the Everett branch grow, not only in terms of youth program participation, but membership in general.

There is a concern that membership may be out of reach for some families. Everett School District is a lower income district, so the price of membership may be a barrier to

entry for some, unless there's a way to subsidize that cost. There was talk of putting on an open house style gathering, but since those types of events are very difficult, that idea is being tabled for now. Some other ideas include more local, low-stakes activities that are family-oriented and require little to no resources to hold. Kellie also recommends leveraging connections in the community to help run events, such as partnering with Vertical World North. Nick will connect Kellie with Anique Johnson to start the conversation about collaborating.

Outdoor Youth Connection funding from Dennis Miller is available, but since it must be spent in a single fiscal year, the committee is holding off for now. Funds aren't currently needed with these smaller standalone events, but perhaps next year when the program has more momentum and there is more time to figure out how the funds could be used.

### **Lookout & Trail Maintenance**

After a significant amount of work from Dan and Erin, the Co-Assemble Crew Leader Course is now live. The course is on-demand, and serves as the first step to funnel potential stewardship leaders into Mountaineers-wide committees. The course covers tools and how to use them, assessing trail conditions, trail work terminology, safety, and emergency preparedness.

Course-embedded stewardship is finishing up this weekend, and was mostly a success. After some reflection of trying this new process, both pros and cons were identified:

Cons: Since the LTM Committee is not part of the course creation process for all the different courses that are being embedded with stewardship opportunities, it's difficult to ensure that dates work with them all. Rather it works well to send out an email to all registered students letting them know they have priority to register for a set of trail maintenance activities. There was also a significant amount of time spent reviewing, removing, and emailing participants who signed up without reading the post/prerequisites. Many people thought they were entitled to sign up since stewardship was a graduation requirement for their course.

Pros: In general it has worked well, and has created quite a few stewardship activities. Participants were also much more motivated to sign up when they were already familiar with others from their cohort. The hope is that this will encourage participants to come back and volunteer in the future.

A major hiking trail re-route was completed at Lord Hill's Riverview, as well as a rebuilding of Lower Midway. There is also a decommission event happening this Sunday, to remove the Big Meat trail that has been illegally built by mountain bikers several times over.

A Sawyer crosscut logout has been posted for Three Fingers, led by four qualified sawyers. The National Trails Day event is set to occur on June 7th at the Neiderprum

Trail in Darrington, in collaboration with USFS. WA State Parks has requested help at the Mount Pilchuck lookout. Dates have yet to be determined, but will most likely occur after memorial day when USFS has opened the road to the trailhead.

### **Treasurer Update**

The budget worksheet is expected to be sent out around May 9th. Once that happens, Billy will forward on to committee chairs. The deadline to submit final budgets is July 11th.

When sending a reimbursement request, be sure to include the Everett Treasurer email address ([everettbranchtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:everettbranchtreasurer@gmail.com)) so that it has visibility from several people and doesn't get missed, and so that all requests can be tracked in one space.

Monthly reports have been added to the Finance folder in Basecamp, as well as the updated midflight which can be found in the Budget folder. Everything up to February has been uploaded, and future months will be added as they are received.

Robert notes that the tariffs may affect our books, or partnerships with companies like Black Diamond.

### **Update from Board**

The Sexual Harrassment/Sexual Assault Committee was approved to be a subcommittee. Recruiting for future Board members will begin in May, with a live post being sent out.

The Mountaineers Gala was extremely successful, raising over \$580,000.

### **Motion**

The Committee approved Sam Benefiel and Kellie Benefiel as Youth Program Committee Co-Chairs.

### **Everett Social Event Planning**

The Open House at Edmonds Waterfront Center last month was very successful and had a great turnout. The hope is to do more events similar to that in the future. Aside from paying for a monitor to help connect to the audio & projection system, the space was free and the setting was very nice.

At Lydia's suggestion, a standing "happy hour" event will take place once a month in Everett. As far as selecting a date, there is some discussion on which would be

preferable: having it be on the same day every month, or changing up the date each month. If it's held on the same day each month, people may be more likely to remember the event since it's already on their calendars and they can get into a routine of attending. If the date is changed each month, then those who already have prior commitments on the selected date will have more options to join in the future. The ultimate goal is to not require a host and have minimal effort required in coordinating the event, and have attendance from executive committee members sprinkled throughout.

The social events will be scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday of every month, with the first event taking place on May 20th at Sound 2 Summit Taphouse at the Everett waterfront.

### **Honoring Indigenous Names**

The topic of updating route/place names with indigenous names has been brought to the E&B committee, but is still currently in the funnel to be discussed. Robert suggested that working directly with staff may be more efficient than waiting for committee process.

### **Other Topics**

There is some interest in starting a Bikepacking course/committee, and Ivan and Albert were named as possible leaders. The search is still on for a Hiking/Backpacking chair.

The climbing committee is considering making their E&I/E&B coordinator position redundant now that Everett has a branch-specific E&B Chair. Rodica will bring this to a vote within the next committee meeting, and requests Jared's presence to help fill in the admin tasks if the position is dissolved. The E&I/E&B Coordinator does not exist in any other committee, but was deemed necessary at the time due to the sheer size of the committee and courses.

Robert will start attending committee meetings to get a review of what is currently happening in each committee, and would like to take some time during the next executive committee meeting to address 2026 operational strategies and leadership roadmaps.

### **Next Steps and Meetings**

The next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 24th, 2025 at 6pm.