



Friends of the Forest

Dedicated to the preservation of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands through education, outreach & stewardship.

May 4, 2023

To: Anacortes Forest Advisory Board
From: Asa Deane, Executive Director, Friends of the Forest
Re: Wildlife Sanctuary Comment for Ch 2 of Forest Plan Update

Dear Forest Advisory Board Members,

It's come to my attention that there's been some confusion regarding one of our comments on Chapter 2 of the Forest Plan update. The comment in question was in reference to the section on South Heart Lake Rd/Ray Auld Drive and reads:

- The term "wildlife sanctuary" should be removed. It has a very specific meaning and is not how the forest is currently being managed nor how Gus Hensler intended his donation to be used as he states it be deeded to the City for "park purposes" as well as a haven for wildlife.

I want to make clear that this was referring directly to the text of the Forest Plan and eliminating the wording "Wildlife Sanctuary" that is in parentheses when referring to the property donated by Gus Hensler and the Kiwanis Club. We were in no way suggesting to remove any sort of protections of the ACFL in part or in whole. The purpose of this removal is to allay any confusion in language for both the intent of the donation and the specific meaning of "Wildlife Sanctuary". The parameters for the donation of the land, while calling it a "haven for wildlife," do not specifically call for it to be managed as a wildlife sanctuary. Additionally, as stated in our initial comment, the term "Wildlife Sanctuary" has a very specific legal definition. In Washington State under RCW [16.30.010](#)(5), Wildlife Sanctuary is defined as "a nonprofit organization, as described in RCW [84.36.800](#), that cares for animals defined as potentially dangerous..." By striking those two words in this section, we remain in line with the land donor's intent while removing any potential legal confusion regarding the management of the land.

Sincerely,

Asa Deane

Executive Director, *Friends of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands*

611 R Avenue / P.O. Box 2213

Anacortes, WA 98221

360.293.3725

asa@friendsoftheacfl.org

Comments on existing plan for the ACFL

Please note page 4 of current plan which states:

"These community forest lands contain some of the most unique and complex living environments in the Puget Sound Region. Few cities are so fortunate to have such a resource, coupled with the broad-based desire of its citizens to conserve and responsibly use these resources."

In addition, you note the success of the Conservation Easement Plan.

In keeping with this, please, put the natural residents of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands first in your plans and actions; and manage the activities of people to minimize degradation of the natural habitat. Preserve what is **unique** about our forest lands. **Keep them Wild**; don't parkify them.

Little Cranberry Lake Area

The Closure of Little Cranberry Lake due to high bacteria counts, apparently from people feeding a pair of Canada Geese, thus training them to become "park geese" should have been a wake-up call to limit access by gating the road to the lake at the bottom, restricting the road to emergency and management use, rather than improving access.

That you have accepted money from someone to build any manner of dock, and from there see a need to pave the road is troubling, like a bribe for improvements that would hasten the arrival of milfoil to the lake. And, who pays for the paving of the steep one-lane road with a blind hill?

Do we really need to have another of our lakes impacted by milfoil? I fear that Little Cranberry Lake is sufficiently out of sight that any contamination would be ignored?

Note: there are many trail routes to the lake, driving up the road is not the only access.

As habitat for beavers is limited, what sort of agreement do you have with the state Dept. of Fish and Wildlife regarding management of the natural increase of the beaver population?

South Cranberry Lake Area

This area includes the old city dump which was capped to standards required at the time; but it is fenced to exclude people, dogs, etc. Parks and Rec. has acted as if there is no reason for the fencing! What would be required to merely open this area to the Public? Please check that out before spending our tax dollars on any more schemes for its use.

Whistle Lake/Fidalgo Ridge Area

Extreme summer use of the northwest corner of Whistle Lake has so degraded that area and the lake that the local dive shop stages an annual cleanup, yet that lake is gated to keep it pristine. Let's give Little Cranberry the same respect.

For the larger portion of the area, impact is low with the exception of motorcycle use which echoes most magnificently off the cliffs (eliciting lots of revving of motors) and should never have been allowed.

Heart Lake Area

Nothing is said about plans and policies for controlling the algae and milfoil beyond (p. 36 if manual methods of control are not effective, can use herbicides); there is nothing about where the money comes from!

South Heart Lake Road/Ray Auld Drive Area

Yes, work to retain public access to trail 247.

Mt. Erie Summit South/West Faces

If it is a mere 35 acres, this area encompasses only part of the cliffs used for climbing practice by various groups and individuals. Also, Trail #248 going up from Lake Erie has been used for accessing the climbing cliffs since at least the early 1960's when I used it while participating in Seattle Mountaineer's Climbing Classes.

Mt. Erie Conservancy Area

Trail 247 is a delightful nature walk and parts of it are used to access climbing areas. Fortunately I've never met a bicycle on that trail as there are places where getting out of their way would be "interesting" in the mountaineering sense of the word; and I'd like to watch (from a safe distance) when two bikers coming from opposite directions need to maneuver to pass each other; especially if one of them uses an e-bike as an enabling device. You obviously can't stop bicycle riders from going where they please, but encouraging it here seems unwise.

Respectfully,

Ramona Hammerly
Old Town Anacortes

I was sent the ACFL Plan update and it looks good. I agree with the principles wholeheartedly.

One thought. I was wondering if the group might consider how to proactively consider the rapid increase in E-mountain bikes and e-assist mountain bikes? They seem to fit somewhere between motorcycles and traditional mountain bikes that have been out on the trails for a long time. Both of mountain bikers and motorcyclers seem well adjusted to the trails and to hikers and horseback riders. However, as the plan discusses, use by locals is increasing because of increased population and development. Why does this matter when looking at E-bikes? I guess because they may increase riders on the trails a lot. And the way people ride is different. People may not be aware how much e-assist riding is increasing because they look exactly like mountain bikes. But I think they can increase erosion (although someone would have to look that up), and they definitely encourage people to speed - I have seen this a few times while walking or running on the trails.

I have heard arguments that e-bikes are a good thing because they increase access for all people and that is a good thing all around. maybe, maybe not. I'm not sure. I just think maybe it should be considered. I suspect it has been and I just missed the discussion :) I noticed it was not explicitly addressed in the Plan, and am thinking maybe it should be?

I would put in my own vote for caution surrounding e-assist bikes of all sorts. Maybe they could be allowed in the forest but limited to where motorcycles now go? that's a lot of access?

Thanks! Erika
Erika Shaw

- 1) Ensure that the City uses best available science. This includes incorporating projections for the impacts of climate change on the forest.
- 2) Advocate that the plan reflect the community values to protect forest habitats and manage the forest for both sustainability and climate resilience: an enduring, healthy forest.
- 3) Require the plan address current and future recreation demand and include management options to protect the forest, wildlife and ecosystem functions.

Clearly, motorcycle usage in the forest lands by burning fossil fuels with their stench, noise and damage they create on the trails does NOT protect the sustainable health of the forest and animals that live there.

Sincerely,
Rosann Wuebbels

Thanks for everything you do on behalf of the forestlands and recreation in Anacortes. Much appreciated! It must be quite the balancing act to try and keep various groups happy.

I'm happy to hear you're updating the Forestlands Plan. I'd like to put a vote in to prioritize the wilderness rather than the people in the plan. What we have is precious. If we take care of the land and its inhabitants, we are preserving a legacy that the people will enjoy for generations. If we allow development, more and more of people's desires will be granted at the cost of the forestlands, and that legacy will be lost. This island is blessed with room for everyone to enjoy everything. Let's create guidelines that keep the forestlands as wild as they can be.

I would love to see the forestlands benefit from a professional in natural resources. I'd love to see the criteria for the people from the city and the volunteers on the advisory board include active participation in and enjoyment of the forestlands.

Thanks much,
Mary Beth

Thanks for the opportunity to share comments on the ACFL plan update.

First, I should acknowledge that I'm new to Anacortes (19 months); not only that, I moved here after 27 years in "another state" (the one south of Oregon, and north of Mexico). That said, the ACFL was a crown-jewel reason my wife and I relocated here. Also, in my recent years in California I invested many hundreds of hours in state and regional (Sonoma County) parks, which informs my perspective.

I'll refrain from comments on e-bikes until the expected pilot report is issued. Here I want to comment specifically on the potential kayak landing at Little Cranberry Lake (which I visited on my first full day in Anacortes). In the broader ACFL context, this seems unwise and unnecessary given

the otherwise low-impact nature of this lake, and availability of developed boat landings at various other town and island waterfront access points.

In addition, I'm unclear exactly what the process is for a new use (of any type) being proposed within the ACFL. Who is able to propose a new use case? What are *a priori* filters or requirements for serious consideration? Are advocates required to be taxpaying, voting Anacortes citizens? Are advocates required to fund requisite pilot studies, with transparency to ensure that "strawman" locals aren't being fronted? To what extent is the "burden of proof" placed on advocates for change? Is the public engaged to review and comment prior to such pilot studies, including providing (as relevant) mitigation strategies, use constraints/conditions, time/day brackets, etc.? Where and how are such community inputs made publicly available? (Could a person seriously pursue an initiative such as "silent Saturdays" in certain ACFL areas? Asking for a friend...) I apologize in advance if I should already know the answers to these questions.

I know nobody's asking for input from "a self-imported Californian," but here it is anyway...after years of community and greenspace advocacy there, I can affirm that too often you only miss the water when the well runs dry. We can't un-expand a parking lot, un-duckweed a lake (fully and permanently), or un-cut trees that may be involved in expanding a use case that benefits relatively few, while diminishing the experience for many more (humans, and otherwise). I've seen far too much "privatized benefit/profit, and socialized cost and risk." Let's stay away from that mode!

Thanks for reading.

Todd Board

Anacortes (Old Town)

October 2, 2023

To: Bob Vaux and the ACFL Advisory Committee
Topic: Revision of the ACFL Plan
From: Martha Hall (2617 16th Street, Anacortes, WA 98221)

First a big thank you for setting aside the month of October to collect more comments on the revision of the ACFL Plan.

1. Many residents of Anacortes value the ACFL for many different reasons and in different ways. Some belong to "user groups" while others want healthy open spaces for other reasons. Many of us value the ACFL because it provides homes for many native species of plants and animals.

User Groups.

Many residents of Anacortes use the ACFL frequently; some do this almost daily or daily. Too often, the Anacortes Parks and Rec Department has focused on these people and what they often want which are often more of their kind of recreation and/or more facilities. Responsible management of the ACFL requires looking at the impacts of all of the things the various "user groups" may want and do. Our human uses impact the natural world in the ACFL, the plants and animals and the entire ecosystems. The current Plan is heavily focused on human uses.

This needs to change if the natural world in the ACFL will be protected and preserved for current and future generations.

Non-Users.

Many other residents seldom if ever actually "use" the ACFL yet they may value the ACFL as much or more than the "user groups". These people and their values and desire to have the ACFL remain as natural as possible should not be forgotten. Many of the non-users highly value and support with votes and donations many natural areas that they never "use" because they/we care about the many other species who must have these areas to survive. Humans may enjoy "using" these areas for recreation and fun, but for many other species, the ACFL is their "home". Many of us recognize the important "ecosystem functions" of healthy forests and wetlands. The value of these cannot be over-emphasized.

The natural world in the ACFL. Unfortunately the natural world, the wild plants and animals and the ecosystems they depend on, cannot speak up and comment. Many non-users as well as some "users" care deeply about this natural world. The current ACFL Plan fails to even contain an accurate description of this natural world. This is needed in the new plan. This should be the basis for all planning, management and human uses. The current plan fails to describe the "ecological functions" provided by the ACFL. This is needed in the new plan.

2. The Natural World in the ACFL: Its complexity, health protection and "management".

The ACFL contains many different kinds of ecosystems. The plant and animal species found in each of these ecosystems may be very different. Some are very unique. Some are fragile. Each may need to be protected and managed differently. Responsible management first requires an inventory and recognition that these exist and where and their importance in the ACFL Plan. The current plan fails to do this. Some ACFL users are very interested in special habitats and the plants and animals who live in these. I am. One of the main reasons I "use" the ACFL is my interest in seeing and learning about these. This user group as well as other users may damage these areas unless the Anacortes Parks Department manages them well.

The Anacortes Critical Area Ordinance (CAO) has special sections that apply to unique habitats, to fish and wildlife and to riparian areas. The value of the wetlands and lakes in the ACFL are recognized in this CAO. The next ACFL Plan needs to reference these sections of the CAO. The next ACFL also needs as goals these items: 1. a review of current compliance with the CAO, 2. a strategy for bringing trails into compliance if they fail to meet the standards. Staff and members of this Board also need to read and understand these sections of our CAO since these are the people who are advising and making decisions for the ACFL.

There is an extensive list of studies that have been done to learn the impacts of different kinds of recreation on fish and wildlife and plants. The Anacortes Parks Department and ACFL Advisory Board needs to compile a list of relevant studies and make them available. Staff and members of this Board also need to read and understand these since these are the people who are advising and making decisions for the ACFL. If this was done, more people would realize that impacts on wildlife vary according to many things including the type of use, the frequency of use, whether dogs are involved, locations of trails and trail density.

Rocky knolls like the ones on Sugar Loaf, the small ones above the east side and west side of Little Cranberry, the large one on Mount Erie, are especially fragile. Even walking and fishing can damage these. Unique species of plants and animals use and depend on these, like the tiny "naked broomrape" (Pojar 355) which I found one year on the knoll above the east side of Little Cranberry. Many of these areas have been degraded by user groups. The Anacortes Park Department has failed to adequately address this damage, prevent further damage and restore damaged areas. The new plan should have a special section on how the Anacortes Parks Department will manage rocky knolls to protect and preserve them for future generations.

Beaver ponds and waterways. The ACFL is an especially unique area of forests and open space because of the number and size of the beaver ponds and adjacent waterways. Scientists probably do not fully understand all of the "ecosystem services" provided by beaver ponds. Their impact on the water table, soil moisture and soil temperature may be well known but maybe not fully understood at the local level. How large of area in the ACFL is being impacted by the beaver ponds and how? We know beaver ponds can act as fire breaks and limit the spread and speed of wild fires. We know they can store large amounts of water during the rainy season and slowly release this during the drier seasons. We know beaver ponds provide homes for a larger number of species of plants and animals and these are more diverse than those found in many other ecosystems. Many species use and depend on the beaver ponds in the ACFL when nesting, in the winter, and when migrating. Lists made by local residents are amazing.

Beaver ponds also attract a distinct "user group" who is interested in this diversity of plants and animals, such as bird watchers, as well as other user groups who seem to choose trails that are next to beaver ponds like dog walkers. One of the main reasons I visit the ACFL is to bird watch. Bird watching comes with many negative impacts which can be reduced and mitigated if they are recognized and addressed. Many of the birds who use the beaver ponds are also hunted in nearby areas. When trails are too close to these habitats, this limits when and how much many species will use these areas. The trail system now runs next to the waterway between Big Beaver and Little Cranberry Lake. A trail is on both sides of this waterway in some places. This does not represent responsible trail management. Moving trails away from shorelines and creating a few special viewing areas for bird watching might reduce the impacts. At one time dogs were prohibited on the trail beside Big Beaver. Now dogs are allowed. Enforcement is lacking so it really doesn't matter. Correct location of trails is the solution.

Beaver ponds are constantly changing along with the weather and climate. The vegetation that grows each spring and summer dies and is deposited in the ponds. The natural water level of the pond may rise. Climate change and droughts may present new challenges to beavers and the Anacortes Parks Department. To flourish, beavers need adequate water in their ponds during the summer and fall and during droughts. Heavy rains provide the extra water needed when future droughts occur. Beavers need a place to store this extra water.

The Anacortes Parks Department's current trail system fails to recognize that water levels need to fluctuate. Some trails and bridges are too close to beaver ponds and their waterways. These flood. The priority should be the beaver ponds and their ability to store water, not the trails and bridges. These need to be moved away from the beaver ponds.

The ACFL Plan should fully describe all of the beaver ponds and explain their unique plants and animals and the "ecosystem services" they provide. This Plan should have a special section

on how the Anacortes Park Department will manage beaver ponds to protect and preserve them into the future.

The lakes in the ACFL. Like beaver ponds and waterways, the lakes in the ACFL provide unique and valuable habitat for plants and animals. Unfortunately the current ACFL Plan limits most of its discussion to human uses of these lakes. When doing this, it failed to adequately explain these impacts of these human uses and how these would be addressed, limited and mitigated.

Fishing probably can create the most serious and long lasting negative impacts. Yet these are ignored. Most of the established and numbered trails that are too close to the lake were probably first created by people who were trying to fish. People who now fish from the shoreline continue to degrade the shoreline by damaging and destroying shoreline vegetation including trees and leaving fishline along the edge which can kill birds. Fishing from boats displaces birds who might use the lake. Last winter I was watching trumpeter swans at the far end of Little Cranberry when a guy in a rowboat rowed from the parking area all the way down to where the trumpeter swans were foraging, scaring them so they left the lake. For species that are hunted, the ACFL could be a winter refuge but not if humans and dogs are along the shoreline or in boats on the water. Why are boats and fishing allowed on all of the lakes? Very few people fish so why not designate one lake and focus fishing there. Far more people enjoy lakes for other reasons such as wildlife watching. Why not designate at least one or two lakes as no fishing and no boats. The decision might be based on the value of the lake as wildlife habitat.

Now more people are using kayaks, canoes and paddle boards on the lakes. These uses too greatly decrease the value of the lakes for wildlife viewing by others and as wildlife habitat. Humans are always thinking up new things to do on lakes; teaching kayaking, yoga on paddle boards, playing with various kinds of motorized and/or electronically controlled toy boats.

Why not designate only one or two lakes as places for specific kinds of "boats" that have negative impacts on fish and wildlife.

These are my first comments
on the revision of the ACFL Plan.

Thank you for collecting more comments during October.

Martha Hall
pondfrog.mh@gmail.com

Good morning,

As a relatively new resident of Anacortes (June, 2022), The ACFL, and particularly Little Cranberry Lake have been my greatest discovery! This summer I have spent 4-5 mornings per week walking the extensive trail system and enjoying the otters, birds, frogs, snakes and ever changing flora along different trails. The trails are heavily used and much appreciated by neighbors and locals.

I have learned to avoid weekends when the parking lot is full, the trails are busy with walkers and bikers, the lake is used by paddle boarders, kayakers and people fishing. This small lake delivers a lot of value to a lot of users under the current plan.

I am reading and learning about the oversight, administration and management of this unique community resource, and want to add my voice as an advocate for preserving the remaining "wilderness" of this lake and forest.

Once lost, wilderness cannot be regained. Resident wildlife and this forest must be the primary consideration. Stretching and stressing nature to further accommodate ever-increasing human demands will destroy the thing we now enjoy.

Thank you for your consideration,
Deborah Switzer

To help and protect the ACFL, her inhabitants and guests from climate changes, fire and trail damage, we would like to propose a ban on motorized vehicles. By comparing the ACFL trails to a sidewalk, where bicycles and skateboards are not allowed, will help explain our concerns and objections.

A motorized vehicle is noisy, emits exhaust, can start a fire and the weight of the vehicle and rider causes trail damage. Most of the trails are narrow with blind corners and offer little or no room for passing, this creates the possibility for a hiker / motorcycle accident with limited access for emergency help.

The forest trails are used daily by individual hikers, dog walkers, hiking clubs, school children and families. An encounter with a fast moving motorized vehicle can offer only an unfavorable impact on their experience.

The forest needs to be protected for those who daily enjoy the beauty and solitude of her trails and for those unable to hike to know she is being cared for and will remain one the town's sources of pride.

Respectfully,

F. Dennis and Christy E. Giddings

I am unable to attend tomorrow's meeting to discuss the ACFL management plan and update. Speaking as a regular forest walker, bird-watcher, citizen-scientists, neighbor, and volunteer, I have one preliminary and all-encompassing suggestion. Overall, the Forests and their management tries to balance the desire for recreation and preservation. These are, in general, conflicting pressures. As we have seen recently, proposals for better boat access to Little Cranberry Lake and a bike park have been controversial. How can we reduce these conflicting expectations about recreation versus preservation?

To reduce these conflicting expectations, clearer guidance from the plan regarding what kinds of recreation will be considered seems important.

First of all, everywhere that the plan mentions recreation, it should use the term "low-impact" recreation. Parts of the plan use this term, but often the term is used without any qualification. This creates the greater likelihood that our citizens will think that higher impact sports and facilities will be considered.

A further step would be to define low impact recreation with a list of examples or guidelines. We might, for example, discourage any recreation that means building permanent structures. No observation platforms unless they serve to reduce human impact. No benches. No picnic tables or shelters or the concrete pads to support them. No boat ramps. Certainly no courts for various types of sports or courses for frisbee golf. No additional tracks for vehicles of various kinds. Avoid constructing hard surfaces of any kind.

This suggestion might save the ACFL Board time exploring options that conflict with the mission of preservation. We can help users understand the difference between a park and a preserve.

Thank you for your consideration. I DO hope to attend the next two meetings.
Sarah Pedersen

My husband and I live on 26th directly next to the ACFL. We regularly walk all the Little Cranberry lake trails, visit Heart Lake trails, and swim and recreate in both Heart Lake and Little Cranberry.

I really question whether any motorized vehicals should be allowed on the trails because of environmental air pollution and noise pollution. In our experience, motorcycle noise just feels jarring in the pristine environment of the ACFL. It just does not meet the purpose of the lands to provide beautiful and safe trails and environment for people to step out of our world of cars and noise pollution.

In regards to putting a dock into Little Cranberry, I have mixed feelings about the increase in the number of people who visit the lake. I do think having some built in steps down to the water for those who bring kayaks and stand up paddle boards would reduce soil erosion and make the descent to the water safer.

I noted in the plan there were plans to close 132 the small section on the north side of Little Cranberry. I think that is actually quite a good idea to prevent so much damage to the lake side shore there and the trail there is very rough and and pretty hard to navigate.

Thanks,

Moriah and Daniel Armstrong

My wife and I are very frequent users of the ACFL, sometimes hiking 4-5 days a week, often 5-10 miles per hike. We can access the ACFL on Trail #248 directly across the road from our home on Heart Lake Rd although we drive to other access points further from home. We have lived here for 27 years and have watched the evolution of the ACFL and cannot express strongly enough our love for these forestlands. Here are a few thoughts that we have regarding current ACFL management.

There is frequent and severe damage on trail #247 caused by motorcycles. The damage is east of the trail #248 intersection and is noticeable near trail #22. The most severe damage is on the climber's trail that takes off up the mountain above the home which I believe is owned by Frank Harkness at 5327 Campbell Lake Road. (Frank is not at issue, this is a reference point) Please find a way to block motorcycle access to these trails, clearly the signs are not enough to ensure cooperation.

There is apparently discussion of the creation of a boat launching facility on Little Cranberry Lake, we are very much opposed to any form of development on any of the ACFL lakes.

Speeding on Heart Lake Road through the forestlands has become intolerable. At times it is used as a racetrack. It appears that word has gotten out that this beautiful stretch of road is great fun at speeds which are often over 70 mph. Skagit county has records of speeds that, using a recording device, are 77 mph or faster. The speed limit in the forestlands should be 25 mph. Naturally enforcement is key regardless of the posted speed limit. If the Anacortes City Parks Department demands that the city provide enforcement of the speed limit the city will take notice. Please petition the city to both lower the speed limit and enforce the law.

Thanks for your time,
Paul Barron and Angie Partolan

Page 9: Recommend adding signage at the cliff-jumping spot stating the importance of keeping the water clean.

Page 12, Forest Management, Policy 1: change "The increased urbanization of this area..." to "The increased urbanization of the Anacortes area..." As it stands right now the urbanization implies the ACFL, which will not be urbanized.

Page 14, Trail System, Policy 2: Change "rehabilitate trails where horses, motorcycles or mountain bikes..." to "rehabilitate trails where users..." or add "hikers" to the current list as there is just as much damage caused by that subset going off trail or around puddles.

Page 16, Education: Add in "..., education about proper use practices, ..." after "encourages stewardship of our natural resources, ..." I think that one problem that we do face on the trails right now is over-emphasis on ecology and not enough education on proper use for user groups.

2023/24 ACFL Plan Recommendation/Comments

Josh Gates, President of the Fidalgo Trail Riders, a local mountain bike advocacy group

I'd like to weigh in please, on the proposed kayak chute for Little Cranberry Lake.

It's one of the crown jewels in our Forest Lands, and deserves great care and forethought. It's one of the few small lakes that is relatively undisturbed and a haven for wildlife and people alike. As stewards, we need to give careful thought to each change made, as these will have ripples of unintended consequences far into the future.

Do we really want more watercraft encouraged on this tiny lake? The strong possibility of bringing in invasive species? As I'm sure you know, Lake Samish in Whatcom county (as well as others) has a very strict protocol, inspecting and cleaning each watercraft before being allowed to enter the water, trying to keep at bay zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species. What protections would be put in place for this lake?

The parking lot is typically quite full on summer days even now--do we really want to encourage more of that? Cut down trees to enlarge it?

Nearly every other lake on our island already has a boat ramp--it's not like leaving this one lake quiet means there is nowhere for people to easily launch. And of course I don't need to tell you the problems these other lakes have with invasive weeds etc.

Please keep Little Cranberry Lake as quiet and undisturbed as we can.

It's lovely exactly like it is. And fragile. People can launch kayaks and canoes at the other lakes any time they want (except of course the times they're closed from human-caused problems.)

We're at a juncture when choices we make now will have huge consequences down the road. We look back on times that make us shake our heads at things humans did in the past. Clear-cutting the island, stripping salmon runs up and down the coast like mines playing out, polluting, etc. Today we do better because we know better. Please let us make wise choices now that we will be proud of. Resources like this fragile lake are now few and far between. There is little room for error and short-sighted choices that benefit only humans, but take a sad toll on the land and wildlife.

By the way, I should mention I'm an avid kayaker myself, but have never paddled on LCL. I love walking in the ACFL, and do often. I am always so overcome with gratitude every time I walk there. We are so lucky to live so close to this priceless gem and I appreciate how well it's loved and cared for. May we always make decisions that focus on the long term well-being and thriving of the land and water there.

Sincerely,

Peggy Woods