Kinnikinnick Native Plant

P O Box 1092, Sandpoint, ID 83864
NativePlantSociety.org

October 17, 2017

Planning and Zoning Commission
City Council
City of Sandpoint
1123 Lake Street
Sandpoint, ID 83864

Re: Sensitive Flora of the University of Idaho property on N. Boyer

Dear P&Z Commission, Mayor and City Council,

Thank you for involving the public in decisions affecting the future of the University of Idaho property on N. Boyer.
The future of this property will affect many in the Sandpoint area. Two organizations, Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society and Master Naturalists are focused on a small portion of the property, which is near Sand Creek, because it has great ecological value.

In spring, 2017, members of both the Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society and Master Naturalists searched the wetlands on the University of Idaho property near Sand Creek for sensitive plants. These are plants that are not found broadly, are registered in the Idaho's Natural Heritage database and are considered worthy of protection. This was a follow up to the Kaniksu Land Trust Bioblitz the previous year. Three were found. They are: *Thalictrum dasycarpum* (purple meadowrue), *Viburnum opulus* var. *americanum* (American cranberrybush) and *Sanicula marilandica* (Maryland sanicule/black snakeroot).

Highbush cranberry (*Viburnum opulus* var. *americanum*) - NatureServe is the international organization that tracks the conservation status of all known plant species. The NatureServe Explorer lists this species as SX for Idaho, meaning that species is presumed extripated (eliminated) from the state. New populations (including the population on the U of I Sandpoint property) have been have recently been discovered within the state that will hopefully result in an upgrade of the species status for the state. It warrants protection as more is learned of it.

Purple meadowrue (*Thalictrum dasycarpum*) - Idaho Native Plant Society's Rare Plant Conference reviewed the conservation status of this species within the state and determined the species should be ranked as S1 (critically imperiled - the rarest category for a plant species). This species was only known from seven populations until the discovery of the population on the U of I Sandpoint property. The U of I Sandpoint population is the largest and healthiest population within the state.

Black snakeroot or Maryland sanicle (*Sanicula marilandica*) - Idaho Native Plant Society's Rare Plant Conference reviewed the conservation status of this species within the state and determined the species should be ranked as S3 (vulnerable - meaning it's rare within the state). This species has just over 30 known populations within the state - all from Boundary, Bonner, and Kootenai counties.

As you are very aware, the U of I property has a 'high,' flat plateau, with a steep slope on its east side, and a low, wet area near Sand Creek and the 'lake.' Retaining the existing trees and foliage on the steep slope is important for the creek and wet areas below. It prevents erosion, and sediment contaminating the creek. The wet areas, which have the wealth of native flora that typify that ecosystem, are fragile. Human traffic will be very destructive. That too can impact water quality, as well as degrading the most urban, healthy wetland currently in Sandpoint.

As a result we strongly recommend:

1. The contemplated trail be built on the edge of the flat plateau adjoining, but not on, the steep slope.
2. Vegetation on the slope be preserved, including minimizing its use by people on foot or wheels.
3. The wet, low areas be carefully protected, and serve an educational purpose with professionally conducted, infrequent field trips.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Thacker
Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society President

Oct 10, 2017

Sandpoint Planning and Zoning Commission
Sandpoint City Hall
1123 Lake Street
Sandpoint, ID 83864

To whom it may concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Inland Empire Christmas Tree Association (IECTA) in support of protecting and maintaining the Grand fir and Corkbark fir Seed Orchards which are located at the University of Idaho research station in Sandpoint, ID. These seed orchards, which were established in 1983 and 2000, respectively, are not found anywhere else in the U.S., and offer the best genetic Christmas tree characteristics for these two species of trees, including disease resistance, needle retention and beauty. These majestic trees also provide a beautiful park-like setting for the residents of Sandpoint to enjoy walks, picnics, and bike rides.

The members of our organization are very dedicated to the upkeep of the seed orchards. We annually schedule workdays for the membership to maintain the orchards and help keep the grounds in good condition. We have also provided interpretive signs for each orchard outlining the research that was conducted to provide these exceptional trees and explaining how the seed is used to provide quality seedlings.

We support the protection and management of these seed orchards for the benefit of IECTA, the public and the City of Sandpoint. As far as we know, this grand fir seed orchard is the only one of its kind in the country, and the seed from it is highly sought after by Christmas tree growers from coast to coast. From our perspective, these orchards provide some of the best seed in the country, and at the same time bring a beautiful green area to enjoy for all those who visit.

In closing, we desire to be an active partner with the City of Sandpoint to protect the seed orchards and provide an open space valuable to the many that reside in and visit Sandpoint. It would be unfortunate to lose this valuable resource in which years of effort and funding have been invested.

Thank you for your consideration of the IECTA views and concerns for this important property.

Sincerely,

Paul Brusven

Paul Brusven, IECTA President
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