Unity Lake
State Recreation Area
Interpretive Plan
Interpretive Plan
for
Unity Lake State Recreation Site

Submitted by:

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Acknowledgements

The following people were instrumental in creating this plan:

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Our thanks for all your time and effort. It was a pleasure working with all of you.

Sincerely,

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Glossary of Terms

The following terms are used in this document:

Visitor Information Network
This refers to all of the information that supports a visitor’s interpretive experience at Unity Lake State Recreation Site. Components of such a network typically include:

- ‘Didjaknows’ – these are tidbits of interpretive information; the type that piques curiosity and makes a person want to know more. These essentially market the interpretive experience.
- Interpretation – informal education strategies, such as signs, exhibits and presentations that typically focus on history, natural history and management.
- Orientation – strategies designed to provide overall orientation to a visitor to a location and increase awareness of visitor opportunities in that area. This is typically in the form of a map.
- Wayfinding – strategies focused on guiding that person to all interpretive sites and features, i.e., showing them the way. It includes maps, directional signs, orientation panels and similar strategies.

Media Prescription
This is the set of recommendations for interpretive and wayfinding strategies in the planning area, such as talks, presentations, exhibits, signs, kiosks, brochures, and interpretive trails. It typically identifies and describes the strategy, identifies the location for the strategy and provides a description and concept to provide information to the designer.

Strategy or opportunity
This refers to a sign, brochure, presentation or some other technique for communicating information.

Sustainable Tourism
Sustainable Tourism as defined by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is:

"the optimal use of natural and cultural resources for national development on an equitable and self sustaining basis to provide a unique visitor experience and an improved quality of life through partnership among government, the private sector and communities."

It has also been defined as an approach – always trying to provide tourism in an ecologically and sociologically friendly manner so as to sustain the cultural and natural environment, the people who live there, and the qualities of the environment they value as part of their home.

Universal Design Standards
This is as set of standards for the design of facilities, sites, products, services and environments that accommodate the widest range of potential users, including people with mobility, visual and auditory impairments and other special needs.
Executive Summary

Introduction

In anticipation of upgrading the visitor experience at Unity Lake State Recreation Site, classified as an Interpretive Level 1 site according to the Regional Interpretive Framework, OPRD contracted for this interpretive plan to be prepared. The planning process was participatory, involving OPRD staff at the state, regional and local levels through a series of meetings and review opportunities. The process began with an identification of desired outcomes for the interpretive experience, identifying the target audiences to be served, identifying key parameters affecting the development and functioning of the interpretive network and identifying key features that created good interpretive opportunities. The next step focused on developing the themes to be communicated and the information network storylines and delivery strategies to communicate those themes.

Objectives

Working from the mission statement of OPRD, which is “to provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations,” the following objectives and desired outcomes were developed to help guide development of the information network:

Information Network Objective #1:
Increase public support and strengthen the constituency for OPRD in general, and for the efforts at Unity Lake SRS specifically.

Support for efforts at Unity Lake SP can be accomplished in part simply by upgrading the interpretive and recreational opportunities available to the public. Support for OPRD comes from making visitors aware that the opportunities they are enjoying are made possible by OPRD. Put in terms of desired outcomes, we want the following to occur as a result of implementation of the plan:

1-1: An increase in awareness and approval of OPRD as the entity responsible for the interpretive and recreational opportunities provided at the site.

1-2: An increase in satisfaction by visitors as a result of the upgraded and expanded interpretive opportunities at Unity Lake SP.

1-3: An increase in the number of people volunteering time and/or donating money to State Parks in general and to Unity Lake State Recreation Site specifically to support interpretation.

Information Network Objective #2:
Contribute to the overall experience at Unity Lake State Recreation Site.

Put in terms of desired outcomes, we want the following to occur as a result of implementation of the plan:

2-1: An increase in the number of people taking advantage of interpretive opportunities associated with the Recreation Site.
 Audiences

Key audiences to reach in order to achieve these objectives and desired outcomes include boaters, anglers, campers, children, residents, and independent travelers. These groups were analyzed to determine the package of opportunities that would be effective in attracting and holding members of each group. Analysis of these groups can be found in Section 2 of this report.

Parameters

Although all factors noted in this report are significant, the following points are critical to understanding the project.

- Funds for implementation and ongoing operation and maintenance are likely to be limited.
- No staff will be available for interpretation and orientation.

The complete parameters section can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Interpretive Opportunities

The key interpretive feature is the lake and associated ecosystems. Together, they create the opportunity to interpret the following stories:

- The impact of creating a large body of water in a semi-arid area on the flora, fauna and human activity.

The complete opportunities section can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Information Network and Delivery Strategies

Based on analysis of the key audiences, parameters, and opportunities, a concept for the interpretive network was developed that fits the situation now, but has flexibility to be modified as necessary to adapt to changes. The information sequence prescribed for the proposed network flows from orientation and wayfinding to interpretive overview to detail as participants move through their experience. This is the most effective sequencing for this type of communication network because it matches the way visitors use information. The key features of the proposed communication network include:

- Guide to the Trails of Unity Lake
- Thematic Overview panels
- Natural History panels

The complete descriptions of the Information Network and the design concepts for the Delivery Strategies occupy most of this plan.
The first steps should be simple, easy to accomplish, provide a big bang for the buck and effective in making progress toward the Desired Outcomes. That way, participants remain motivated to keep going. Given the situation, the following steps are recommended as highest priorities:

- Develop the Web Site for Unity Lake SP;
- Develop the Guide to Trails of Unity Lake State Recreation Site;
- Construct an information kiosk near the two major restrooms;
- Design, fabricate and install trailhead identification signs;
- Conduct a site analysis and any other work necessary to allow selection of precise location of Natural History Interpretive Panels;
- Eliminate the campsite that prevents access to the existing interpretive overlook and the trail connecting the day use and camping areas;
- Prepare a contract and let an RFP for the design and fabrication of the Thematic Overview Panels, Natural History Interpretive Panels, Unity Lake State Recreation Site Orientation Panel and the Regional Orientation Panel.

The complete set of priorities can be found in the main report. Please note that the plan should be re-evaluated on a periodic basis to determine if changing audiences and/or circumstances warrant a change in the planned network and priorities for development.
Section 1: The Plan

Introduction
Objectives and Desired Outcomes
Themes
Implementation Plan
Design Concepts for Delivery Strategies
Cost Range Estimates
**Introduction**

This interpretive plan is a blueprint for the information networks – interpretation, orientation and wayfinding information – necessary to support visitor experiences at Unity Lake State Recreation Site. The plan consists of the following key parts:

1. **Objectives and Desired Outcomes:** These identify the impacts on visitors that are to be achieved through the interpretive network.

2. **Themes:** These are the key messages to be communicated. The interpretive stories are selected and developed to communicate the themes.

3. **Delivery strategies:** These are the media – signs, exhibits, publications, etc. – and other strategies for communicating the interpretive stories and the orientation and wayfinding information.

4. **The 10-year Implementation Plan:** This is the schedule for developing the components of the information network.

**Project Background**

Unity Lake State Recreation Site is located near the town of Unity, Oregon on Hwy. 245, approximately 50 miles east of the town of John Day. OPRD operates the Recreation Site under lease from the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). The Recreation Site features a 35-unit campground with RV hook ups and 2 small cabins. The Day Use Area includes several picnic sites, restrooms and a boat ramp. The Recreation Site is very popular with anglers because of the scarcity of bodies of water suitable for boating in the region. The Recreation Site is open seasonally from April 1 through Oct 31.

The site is considered an Interpretive Service Level 1 according to the OPRD Regional Interpretive Framework. This is the lowest level designation for interpretation in the state park system. Level 1 sites can include an informational kiosk and some free standing interpretive signs, but no programming or interpretive staff presence.

Although the entire BOR site contains a dam and other areas accessible to the public, this plan only addresses the Recreation Site because that is the extent of OPRD’s responsibility. Interpretation of the dam and other areas of the site is the responsibility of BOR.

**Planning Process**

Developing the plan occurred in two major phases:

**Phase I:** Establishment of the foundation information on which the planning decisions were based. Foundation information includes objectives and desired outcomes, profiles of target audiences, parameters affecting the development and functioning of the interpretive program and identification of the key visuals at Unity Lake State Recreation Site that create significant interpretive opportunities.

**Phase II:** Development of the plan. This included developing the complete theme hierarchy, identifying and describing the components of the interpretive and orientation network, developing cost range information and developing a 10-year Implementation Plan.

**Organization of the Document**

This document is organized into two sections. Section 1, the Interpretive Plan, contains the objectives and desired outcomes that established the focus for the information network; the themes to be communicated; the delivery
strategies for communicating the themes; and the implementation plan. Section 2 contains the foundation information on which the planning decisions were based. That information includes the background for the objectives and desired outcomes, the profiles of target audiences, key parameters affecting the implementation and functioning of the interpretive strategies and the inventory of interpretive opportunities.
Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Introduction

The objectives and desired outcomes were derived by constructing a hierarchy beginning with the OPRD mission statement and management goals of the Recreation Site. That information can be found in Section 2: Foundation Information.

Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Information Network Objective #1:
Increase public support and strengthen the constituency for OPRD in general, and for the efforts at Unity Lake SRS specifically.

Support for efforts at Unity Lake SP can be accomplished in part simply by upgrading the interpretive and recreational opportunities available to the public. Support for OPRD comes from making visitors aware that the opportunities they are enjoying are made possible by OPRD. Put in terms of desired outcomes, we want the following to occur as a result of implementation of the plan:

1-1: An increase in awareness and approval of OPRD as the entity responsible for the interpretive and recreational opportunities provided at the site.

1-2: An increase in satisfaction by visitors as a result of the upgraded and expanded interpretive opportunities at Unity Lake SP.

1-3: An increase in the number of people volunteering time and/or donating money to State Parks in general and to Unity Lake State Recreation Site specifically to support interpretation.

Information Network Objective #2:
Contribute to the overall experience at Unity Lake State Recreation Site.

Put in terms of desired outcomes, we want the following to occur as a result of implementation of the plan:

2-1: An increase in the number of people taking advantage of interpretive opportunities associated with the Recreation Site.
The following Primary Theme, Themes, Sub-themes and Supporting Stories were developed through an iterative process involving OPRD staff from the Regional and State offices.

Organization of Themes

The elements of the theme hierarchy in this plan reflect the direction for theme development in OPRD. There are four types of themes in this hierarchy:

Primary Theme
This is the key concept reflecting the significance of the Recreation Site.

Themes
These are the ideas or concepts that together support the Primary Theme. Ideally, all visitors will understand at least one of the themes based on their specific area of interest (cultural history, natural history, etc.)

Sub-themes
These are the ideas or concepts that support a theme.

Supporting Stories
These are the stories that communicate a sub-theme or theme.

Primary Theme

A large manmade body of water such as Unity Lake, located in a semi-arid region creates significant changes to the natural environment and patterns of life.

Selection of Primary Theme

The primary theme links the key tangible resources of Unity Lake State Recreation Site with intangible concepts to convey the major reasons why this property is significant and why it is a Recreation Site. The primary theme is intended to answer the questions, “why is this Recreation Site?” and, “what is significant about this Recreation Site?” The intent of communicating the primary theme is to establish a sense of value among users of the Recreation Site so they support the work of OPRD. The following Primary Theme reflects the significance of the site and they key stories that can be told there.

Themes

**Theme 1:** Development of Unity Lake caused significant changes to the natural environment.

Sub-theme 1-1: Different habitats support different species of plants, birds and wildlife; the addition of Unity Lake to the area added an aquatic and wetland habitat not present before, thus expanding the array of birds and wildlife living here.

Examples of Supporting Stories:
- The presence of waterfowl and other birds needing large bodies of water as part of their habitat. Examples include gulls, terns and any of the waterfowl that can be found at Unity Lake;
- The presence of birds and wildlife that need riparian areas or wetlands for habitat. An example is the marsh wren.
- The presence of plants found in riparian areas and/or wetlands, such as reeds.

Sub-Theme 1-2: The building of the dam and flooding of the valley eliminated riparian areas along the stream and habitat for range flora and fauna.
Theme 2: Development of Unity Lake caused significant impact on human activity in the area.

Examples of Supporting Stories:

- The availability of water for irrigation is a key factor in the array of agricultural products produced in the area.
- The availability of a large body of water with fish in an area where such resources are scarce has attracted boaters and anglers from around the region.
- The availability of a Recreation Site near Unity has contributed to the quality of life for the residents.
Visitor Experiences after implementation

Introduction

This section contains narratives of the visitor experiences that will be available after the plan is implemented. It is followed by a list of key actions to take and a description of the delivery strategies identified in the narrative. Figure 1 on page 14 identifies the general location of fixed information and interpretive strategies identified in this plan.

Visitor Experience

Pre-Visit and Approach

Before coming to Unity Lake State Recreation Site, visitors can gather information about the site from the Web Site, the Unity Lake State Recreation Site Orientation map/brochure and other publications in Visitor Centers, Welcome Centers and hotels in the region. Before leaving on their trip travelers can download the Orientation map/brochure and driving directions from their location.

Awareness and wayfinding signage at key decision points, including the junctions of Highways 26 and 7, Highways 245 and 26, and Highways 7 and 245, will guide people to the Recreation Site.

Arrival

Upon entering the site, an OPRD State Park identification sign will welcome visitors to the Recreation Site. Signage along the access road will direct them to the cabins, camping area, boat ramp and day use area. The unobstructed views within the Recreation Site will eliminate the need for extensive directional and wayfinding signage.

Day Use Area

Upon entering the day use area, visitors have clear visual access to the parking, picnic areas, boat ramp and restrooms, and an information kiosk associated with the main bathroom (near the boat ramp). The kiosk contains the Unity Lake SRS Orientation Panel, with a brochure holder for distributing the Unity Lake SRS Orientation map/brochure and another for distributing the Guide to Trails of Unity Lake. For visitors on their way somewhere else, a Regional Orientation Panel orients them to State Parks within a 100-mile radius of the Recreation Site.

A cluster of low angled Thematic Overview interpretive panels just to the west of the restrooms, oriented toward the reservoir, provides the visitor with an introduction to the story of change to the cultural activity and natural history of the area when the dam was built. This cluster also marks the beginning of the trail along the edge of the reservoir linking the day use area with the camping area.

Along this trail visitors have access to low-angled Natural History interpretive panels that highlight different habitats and focus on birds and wildlife they might see in those habitats.

Visitors using the day use area will also have access to the trail system from the trailhead at the southeast corner of the east parking area. A sign will identify the trailhead.
Figure 1: Location of Interpretive Opportunities

Key
- Information kiosks
- Natural History Interpretive Panels
- Thematic Overview Panels
- Trailhead Sign
From the camping area, visitors will have easy access to an information kiosk at the restrooms with the same information as the one in the day use area. A trailhead is immediately adjacent to the kiosk and will be clearly marked with a sign. The Unity Lake SRS Orientation Panel contains the trail orientation information. A cluster of low-angled Thematic Overview panels, oriented toward the reservoir, will also be located in this area.

In the northwest corner of the camping area, a sign will mark the trailhead for the trail connecting the day use and camping areas. One of the Natural History Interpretive Panels will also be located at that site.

The following are the key actions to be taken to develop the complete information network.
1. Develop the Web Site for Unity Lake SP;
2. Develop the Guide to Trails of Unity Lake State Recreation Site;
3. Construct an information kiosk near the two major restrooms;
4. Design, fabricate and install trailhead identification signs;
5. Conduct a site analysis and any other work necessary to allow selection of precise location of Natural History Interpretive Panels;
6. Eliminate the campsite that prevents access to the existing interpretive overlook and the trail connecting the day use and camping areas;
7. Prepare a contract and let an RFP for the design and fabrication of the Thematic Overview Panels, Natural History Interpretive Panels, Unity Lake State Recreation Site Orientation Panel and the Regional Orientation Panel.
Although the stated title is ‘10-year Implementation Plan,’ we are interpreting that to mean ‘Long-Range Implementation Plan’ because what can be done in a year depends entirely on how much money is allocated. The entire interpretive network recommended in this plan could be developed in 1 year or 20 depending on funding. With that in mind, we are presenting an implementation plan categorized into manageable and complete chunks, labeled in terms of Phase and Priority levels. Complete refers to the fact that all parts of a given strategy, and in some cases multiple strategies, have to be completed at the same time in order to provide a complete experience. For example, all thematic overview panels have to be completed at the same time.

The following implementation plan assumes that the site brochure and web site are not going to change.

Phase I: Basic Network

The following delivery strategies, organized by state of experience or location, represent the basic network that should be implemented now while funding and approvals are being sought.

Actions recommended
The focus of actions during this phase is on the orientation and wayfinding network and on basic parts of the interpretive network:
- Build the information kiosks;
- Design, fabricate and install the Unity Lake SRA Orientation Panel;
- Design, fabricate and install the OPRD Regional Orientation Panel (it is likely that a usable version of this panel will already have been designed for Sumpter Dredge SHA or Kam Wah Chung SHS);
- Design and print the Guide to Trails of Unity Lake.

Phase Two

Actions recommended
- Design, fabricate and install the Thematic Overview panels

Phase Three

Actions recommended
- Design, fabricate and install the Natural History Interpretive Panels
**Objectives**
After interacting with the web site, visitors will:
- Be interested in stopping by Unity Lake SP if they are in the area;
- Know the major themes associated with the interpretive network;
- Have a simple map of the area with directions to the site (downloaded as a PDF).

**Themes**
All themes will be communicated at some location within the Web Site, but mostly within the sections that provide detail on the story.

**Description and Concept**
The home page must market the Unity Lake experience, but also market the Web Site in order to motivate viewers to keep moving through it. To do so, the home page and every linked page must be captivating and user friendly. The home page should be dominated by visuals of different types of visitors enjoying different opportunities associated with Unity Lake State Recreation Site, such as boating, fishing, having a picnic, viewing interpretive panels, walking the trails and camping. Captions should be brief, identifying the opportunity and providing a clue on where to get more information about that opportunity. The home page could also have “didjaknows” to pique interest in the interpretive stories told at Unity Lake. Links should provide access to the remainder of the information on the site, including:
- Driving directions and printable map;
- Downloadable version of the Unity Lake Orientation map/brochure;
- An overview of the story;
- Contact information;
- A list of sources for more information.

**Unity Lake State Recreation Site Orientation map/brochure**
This is the standard OPRD map/brochure for the site.

**Unity Lake State Recreation Site Orientation Panel**

**Locations**
- In the information kiosk
- At the trailhead for the trail system

**Objectives**
After interacting with this panel, they will:
- Be aware of the interpretive opportunities at Unity Lake SP;
- Be aware of the recreational opportunities at Unity Lake SP including the trail system;
- Be motivated to participate in at least one of the interpretive opportunities.

**Description and Concept**
One possible design approach is to create a “visual menu” of the interpretive and recreational opportunities at Unity Lake SP. Use a stylized oblique aerial perspective of the site as a backdrop for enlarged images highlighting visitors enjoying different opportunities, including boating, fishing, picnicking, camping, walking the trails, etc. Use “didjaknows” accompanying the activities to identify the interpretive opportunities while piquing interest about the story.
Regional Orientation Panel

Location
- In the information kiosks

Objectives
After visitors finish with this panel, they will:
- Be aware of the State Parks in the region and what each has to offer;
- Be aware of State Parks along their route after they leave Unity Lake and what each has to offer;
- Be motivated to stop in at one or more State Parks on this or future trips.

Description and Concept
One possible approach is to use a stylized map of eastern Oregon to highlight State Parks in the region. Associated with each State Park would be images of visitors engaging in interpretive and/or recreational opportunities in that park. Supporting text/captions would highlight the key opportunities at each park.

Thematic Overview Panels

Location
Near the two major restrooms

Objectives
After visitors finish with these panels, they will:
- Be aware of the impact of the dam on the natural environment on the flora and fauna.
- Understand the building of the dam and creation of the lake was a BOR project;
- Understand that BOR still manages the lake and dam;
- Be motivated to take the nature trail.

Themes
All themes will be covered in these panels.

Natural History Interpretive Panels

Location
Along the trail connecting the day use area with the camping area

Objectives
After visitors finish with these interpretive panels, they will:
- Be able to name at least 3 species of birds and wildlife that can be found in the area;
- Understand that different habitats support different species of plants, birds and wildlife;
- Know that there are rattlesnakes in the area, how to minimize the potential for contact and how to take appropriate action if they encounter one;

Description and Concept

Panel 1: This panel focuses on the impact of the dam on the natural environment on the flora and fauna. One possible design concept is to use a before and after image of the area as it would have looked from this vantage point as a backdrop for enlarged images of some of the displaced species of plants, birds and wildlife (the first image) and those that inhabit the new environments created by the lake (second image). Text focuses on the changes in inhabitants, while encouraging visitors to walk the trail to see some of the new inhabitants.

Panel 2: This panel focuses on how the presence of a lake has affected human activities in the area. One possible design concept is to use a bird’s-eye perspective of the lake and surrounding area as a backdrop for enlarged images of people using the lake in different ways, including taking water for irrigation (highlight the produce/livestock also), boating and angling on the lake and picnicking and camping in the Recreation Site.
• Be motivated to spend time searching different habitats for some of the species of birds and wildlife that occur here.

Themes
• **Theme 1**: Development of Unity Lake caused significant changes to the natural environment.

• **Sub-theme 1-1**: Different habitats support different species of plants, birds, and wildlife; the addition of Unity Lake to the area added an aquatic and wetland habitat not present before, thus expanding the array of birds and wildlife living here.

• **Sub-Theme 1-2**: The building of the dam and flooding of the valley eliminated riparian areas along the stream and habitat for range flora and fauna.

Description and Concept
These panels focus on identifying the species of birds and wildlife that can be found in different habitats in or near the Recreation Site. Each of the signs will be oriented toward and focus on a different environment. Highlighting several different environments will help send the message that different habitats support different species.

Each panel will use the scene in front of the sign as a background for highlighting species a visitor might see in that habitat and how to identify that species. It will also include information on clues to the presence of wildlife (wildlife sign), such as tracks. Habitats highlighted by different signs include:

• **Aquatic**: highlight waterfowl, grebes, terns, gulls and other water birds that might be seen on the lake. Emphasize that these species would not likely be here without the lake.

• **Riparian**: highlight marsh wrens, rails, warblers, yellowthroats, red-winged blackbirds and other birds that prefer this type of habitat. Include mammals and other wildlife that use the riparian area and include their tracks.

• **Range**: highlight pronghorn antelope, hares, shrikes, hawks, sparrows, sage thrashers and other species that frequent this habitat. Use a sidebar for safety information regarding rattlesnakes;

• **Woodland (trees)**: highlight woodpeckers, owls, hawks, and other species that need trees for perching, roosting and nesting.

Note that the information on these panels needs to cover the information presented in the trail guide to ensure access by people of all abilities.
Guide to Trails of Unity Lake

Objectives
After interacting with this booklet, visitors will:
• Be inspired to walk one of the trails;
• Be aware of how to avoid rattlesnakes;
• Be able to name at least 3 species of birds and/or wildlife that live in the area in which the trail is located.

Themes
• **Theme 1**: Development of Unity Lake caused significant changes to the natural environment.
• **Sub-theme 1-1**: Different habitats support different species of plants, birds and wildlife; the addition of Unity Lake to the area added an aquatic and wetland habitat not present before, thus expanding the array of birds and wildlife living here.

Description and Concept
This is a simple guide to the trails, with black and white illustrations depicting the birds and wildlife or signs of wildlife that people might see along the trail. Information should include:
• A map of the trails;
• Distances, trail difficulty and time required for different combinations of trails;
• Trail logs with interpretive tidbits;
• Potential hazards (general);
• What to take along;
• A key to wildlife signs;
Cost Range Estimates

Introduction

As with construction of anything from an exhibit to a house, accuracy of the estimate is relative to the accuracy and detail of the design. An interpretive plan does not include designs, but rather design concepts, and those are limited to the interpretive strategies rather than infrastructure. Consequently, it is not possible to develop estimates with any meaningful degree of accuracy. However, it is possible to make some basic assumptions for interpretive panels and other strategies in order to develop cost range estimates that can be useful for budgeting.

Basic Cost Information

Interpretive Panels
A typical, digitally produced, laminate panel containing about 9 square feet of surface (2’ x 3’), with extruded aluminum frames and metal posts will cost between $2500 and $7500 for all design, text writing and fabrication. Shipping and installation are not included because those costs vary significantly with location of the site. The variation in cost is primarily due to the design. Signs with original artwork and complex text are going to cost more than signs with embedded photos and limited text. Interactive and 3-dimensional elements negate this price range. Additional panels with the same design can cost as little as $1000. Typically if you order more than 3 signs, the unit cost per sign goes down.
Specific Cost Range Estimates
The following are cost range estimates based on the information available at this time. All panels include design, layout, resource acquisition, text writing, digital file preparation, graphic production, mounting system and installation on-site. Costs are based on current (2009) material prices. The final project cost will vary depending on the length of time that passes prior to the project moving ahead.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Orientation Map/Brochure</td>
<td>Exists – standard</td>
<td>$2200-3500</td>
<td>One page both sides; folded; 4-color; 2000 copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide to Trails of Unity Lake</td>
<td>$3,500 to $5,000/panel</td>
<td>$4,500 to $6,000/panel</td>
<td>Additional panel at $1000, primarily for the mount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity Lake Orientation Panel (2 needed)</td>
<td>$3,500 to $5,000/panel</td>
<td>$4,500 to $6,000/panel</td>
<td>Additional panel at $1000, primarily for the mount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Orientation Panel (2 needed)</td>
<td>$3,500 to $5,000/panel</td>
<td>$4,500 to $6,000/panel</td>
<td>Additional panel at $1000, primarily for the mount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Overview Panels (2 sets of 2 panels)</td>
<td>$3,500 to $5,000/panel</td>
<td>$9,000-$12,000</td>
<td>A cost break usually occurs if 3 or more panels are involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural History Panels (5)</td>
<td>$3,500 to $5,000/panel</td>
<td>$15,000-$23,000</td>
<td>A cost break usually occurs if 3 or more panels are involved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 2: Foundation Information

Background: Objectives and Desired Outcomes
Audiences
Parameters
Inventory of Interpretive Opportunities
**Background: Objectives and Desired Outcomes**

**Introduction**

The goal hierarchy reflects the following structure:

1. **OPRD Mission Statement**
2. **OPRD Centennial Horizon**
3. **Principles**
4. **Resource Management Goals for Unity Lake State Recreation Site**
5. **Interpretive Network Goals**
6. **Information Network Objectives and Desired Outcomes**

The hierarchy is developed in this manner to clearly show the link between recommended actions associated with developing a network of orientation and interpretive opportunities and the mission statement and resource management activities of OPRD.

**Background**

**OPRD Mission Statement**

The OPRD mission statement is:

*To provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.*

Unity Lake SP does not contain outstanding cultural or natural resources. Rather it is an exceptional recreational site from the perspective of boaters and anglers. Bodies of water similar to Unity Lake are scarce in this region so it attracts anglers and boaters from a wide area. It also serves as a local park for picnicking and recreational activities for nearby residents.

**Centennial Horizon**

From an interpretive perspective, no actions affecting this Recreation Site are noted with the possible exception of Principle 4, Action 1, which focuses on teaching families and children outdoor recreation skills. However, that action falls in the category of recreational programming rather than interpretive programming.

**Resource Management Goals**

There are no specifically articulated management goals for Unity Lake State Recreation Site. However, the following general management guidelines, derived from the Mission Statement, are applicable:

1. Manage natural resources to protect wildlife habitat.
2. Be a good neighbor by offering quality interpretive and recreational opportunities to the local residents and by minimizing the negative impacts of park use on the lifestyles of the neighbors.
3. Maintain and enhance appropriate recreational opportunities.
4. Increase public support for Unity Lake SP. This includes continuing to develop and/or maintaining quality interpretive and recreational opportunities of interest and developing and maintaining a good orientation and wayfinding network.
Objectives and Desired Outcomes are determined by viewing interpretation as a tool to help achieve the site’s Resource Management Goals through changes in visitor knowledge, attitudes and/or behaviors. This approach is based on the following concept:

*Information is a tool to cause impact on the recipient of the information.*

Information obviously can change knowledge, but through that change, attitudes and behaviors can be influenced. So whether a change in knowledge is sought as a means of enhancing a visitor experience, as a means of influencing attitudes to influence opinions, or as a means of directly influencing behavior to minimize negative impacts on a resource, communication can be used to help achieve desired impacts. The desired changes in behavior, attitude and knowledge represent the Desired Outcomes of the communication effort and are the justification for the time and effort spent developing and maintaining the information network.

Based on this approach, the next step in the process is to define specifically what attitudinal and behavioral changes are desired as a result of a visitor being involved in the interpretive part of the visitor experience at Unity Lake SP. This set of impacts, termed Desired Outcomes, can then be used to develop a network of interpretive and wayfinding strategies that focus on achieving those outcomes while also enhancing the recreational experience.

To arrive at the Objectives and Desired Outcomes for Unity Lake SP, the following question was asked: “*How can an information network help achieve the Resource Management Goals?*”

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**Deriving Objectives and Desired Outcomes**

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Audience Profiles

Introduction

One challenge with planning the interpretation for a park or site is in understanding the different audiences who will be using the interpretive opportunities. The goal is to build profiles of the different audiences to determine the type of experiences, including interpretive experiences, they are willing to “buy” with their time. Consequently, the focus of the profiles is on types of characteristics shared by different categories of visitors that affect the communication process. For example, a key characteristic of family groups is the different levels of education and interest inherent within such a unit, which requires creating opportunities where all members of the family can be involved at the same place and time.

The following represent brief profiles of different visitor types that are likely to visit this site. Since it is not an interpretive site but rather a recreational site, Falk’s categories of museum visitors – used to categorize audiences for Sumpter Dredge, is not applicable.

Visitor Types based on learning styles

According to most experts, most people have a specific style of learning that he or she prefers. David Kolb has identified 4 different basic learning styles typically represented in our society. The following visitor types, with key characteristics noted, reflect Kolb’s work:

1. **Social Learners:** These people learn through discussion. They do not like signage, computer work, computer assisted instructions and environments where they cannot talk to others. They will typically arrive in groups (so they can talk with each other), and are more likely to go on guided interpretive walks or attend programs, especially if they are interactive. This type of learner would prefer to interact with staff, which will not be an option most of the time. They will be pleased when interpretive programs are presented.

2. **Observers:** This type of person learns by observing and tends to avoid social interaction. *(Typical classrooms were set up for this type of learner.)* As a consequence, they don’t like being asked questions. These types of learners are likely to prefer self-guided opportunities that don’t require hands-on manipulation, but rather ones where they can come to conclusions through observation.

3. **Hands on:** This group likes to figure things out themselves, especially if it involves hands-on activities. They don’t like long lectures; information without graphics; or being told the answers. Due to issues with potential vandalism, the only “hands on” activities are likely to be using touch and other senses to explore differences in plants and other aspects of the natural environment.

4. **“Jack of all Trades:”** This learner likes to have options and does not like to be limited to one learning style. They also do not like formality.

The key to accommodating different learning styles is in the delivery strategies. For example, if you had a specific set of exhibits designed to communicate a key point where a person could read about it or get involved in a hands-on opportunity, or ask an interpreter about the topic – all in the same place – you would have created a situation where learning styles would not be a barrier. The implication for the interpretive network is that we will try to design a network where the same information is
Other Key Visitor Types

The following visitor categories, with key characteristics noted, will also be considered in developing the interpretive network:

1. **Visitors from out of the area:** This refers to leisure-oriented travelers, such as vacationers and day-trippers, and also other travelers with some discretionary time to spend, such as people visiting friends or relatives in the area. They are likely to know a lot less about the story than residents, so interpretation for this group must start at a more basic level. They will also need more extensive orientation and wayfinding information than residents, and will be interested in places they can visit after they leave the site.

2. **Families:** Families are a special type of group due to the challenges that arise out of the variation in educational and ability levels. The key is to develop opportunities that allow people of different levels of education and ability to learn to be occupied at the same time and place, ideally with the same opportunity.

3. **Those with disabilities (which encompass seniors):** The intent of ADA provisions is to promote equal access to the built environment for those with impairments. Braille and audio supposedly address the needs of those with visual impairments; elevators, lifts, grade and surface of trails, and other modifications to the physical environment address the needs of those with mobility impairments; and visuals and text, including captioned multi-media programs, address the needs of those with auditory impairments. However, most of the ADA provisions focus on physical access to information, not content. They also do not address the needs of these audiences at the experiential level. We prefer to use a **Universal Design Approach**, which focuses on creating experiences that can be enjoyed by all parts of the target audience, including those with impairments. This approach involves integration of multiple delivery strategies that include all senses. The result is an overall experience with opportunities that meet the needs of the few while enhancing the experience of everyone.

A Universal Design Approach also benefits our aging population because it is physical limitations that are the core of the issues that seniors have with interpretive and recreational experiences, such as deteriorating eyesight, hearing and physical capabilities, not their age. When this project moves to the design phase, this approach should be used by the designer.

4. **Children:** Children are a challenge because they cannot learn the same way adults learn. Whereas adults can learn by processing incoming verbal information based on existing knowledge, a child up to around the age of 8 is primarily focused on acquiring information first hand. Since they have not completely mastered the symbol system we call “language,” and because they have not completely developed the connection between their right and left brains that allows for higher order processing, they use a human’s primary information-gathering tools – their senses. That is why opportunities to touch, smell, taste, see and hear are critical to an effective experience for children. This is an important point because we often
focus on the need for activities to be interactive, and believe we have accomplished our goal if they can push buttons. Although the opportunity to interact in such a way increases the attraction power of an opportunity, if it is not an opportunity to discover information first hand, it is not nearly as effective in terms of gathering and processing information.

5. **Campers**: The key distinguishing characteristic of this group is that they are available for evening programs.

6. **Area Residents**: The key distinguishing feature of this group is that they are likely to be repeat visitors. Fixed interpretive opportunities may be of interest on their first visit, but not on repeat visits. However, they are a more likely audience for events.

7. **Anglers**: The key distinguishing characteristic of this group is that their chosen activity is their highest priority. Consequently, they are not likely to pay attention to interpretive opportunities unless they are accessible at times they cannot fish. However, the rest of their families, if they accompany the angler and stay on shore, are a potential target audience for opportunities that are for daylight hours, such as interpretive trails.

8. **Boaters**: The key distinguishing characteristic of this group is that their chosen activity is their highest priority. Consequently, they are not likely to pay attention to interpretive opportunities on land unless they are accessible at times they cannot boat. However, they may have time while boating to indulge in interpretive opportunities, such as might be offered in a guide to Unity Lake from the water.
Parameters

Introduction

Parameters are those conditions under which an interpretive program must be developed, such as monetary constraints, and under which it must function, such as climate. Identifying parameters ensures selection and design of interpretive and wayfinding strategies and infrastructure that are effective and realistic, not idealistic. In reviewing the parameters, it is important to remember that they represent what is, not what should be or what is desired.

Key Parameters

Budget

B-1: Funds for implementation and ongoing operation and maintenance are likely to be limited, especially since this is an Interpretive Service Level 1 site. This has several implications:

- Low maintenance opportunities should be prime components of the basic program.
- Low cost opportunities are likely to be the only type considered for funding.

Vandalism and Theft

V-1: Vandalism and theft are potential issues. Outdoor signage, kiosks, brochure racks and other structures should be constructed of vandal-resistant materials.

Environmental Conditions

E-1: Summers are likely to be warm and winters relatively cold and wet. Exterior informational and interpretive opportunities must be either stored during winter months or constructed of materials highly resistant to the anticipated weather conditions.

Policy and Legal Issues

PL–1: All operations must comply with ADA rules and regulations. All significant areas of the site will be accessible to all people. Also, all information presented within the interpretive network will be accessible in some way for those with disabilities.

Staffing

S-1: Staffing for interpretation and orientation will not be available. Interpretive opportunities will be limited to non-personal strategies such as signs and self-guided trails.

S-2: A park host is stationed in the campground during the summer. This person could stock publications such as a trail guide without a lot of effort (compared to someone driving from John Day).

Physical Infrastructure and Layout

PI-1: The site has developed walking trails. A guide to walking trails, with interpretive information, would be a low cost interpretive opportunity.

PI-2: The Camping and Day Use Areas are split. Duplicate site orientation information may be required.
PI-3: The Day Use Area contains the boat ramp for the lake. Because of the congregation of boaters in this location, it is a good place to reach them with information or interpretation, although it would have to be an opportunity that didn’t require much time since their focus is on getting their boat into the water and getting out on the lake.

PI-4: The restrooms are centrally located between the Day Use Area and Campground, and are situated so they are on a high point with a good view of the lake. This would be a good place for thematic overview panels and perhaps site orientation.

PI-5: All the potential sites for an overlook at the edge of the campground looking over the lake are currently occupied by camping sites. If an easily accessible cluster of interpretive signs overlooking the lake is to be located in this area, it will likely require a slight reconfiguration or elimination of some camping sites.

PI-6: The trail system starts in the Camping Area. If this were to be used for interpretation, it should be extended to the Day Use Area so a trailhead is clearly visible and easily accessible at that point. Regardless of whether interpretation is offered along this trail, this extension is likely to increase use of the trail.

PI-7: The trails are not fully accessible. If interpretation is provided along the trail it also needs to be provided in a manner that does not require accessing the trails.
In general, people become more interested in a subject when they can see something related to it, and they are more likely to believe what they can see than what they only hear or read. Therefore, the more an interpretive presentation – whether on a sign, in an exhibit, in a personal presentation or in a trail guide – connects with and uses actual artifacts or features in conveying information, the more effective the presentation will be. Consequently, the inventory of interpretive opportunities focuses on inventorying artifacts and features available for use as supporting visuals for interpretive opportunities in order to develop themes and storylines based on what visitors can see or experience. Note that the inventory of interpretive opportunities is like a menu – just because it is possible to tell a particular story does not mean that it should be told.

Based on the existing features and history of the Recreation Site, the following are the most suitable stories for the interpretive effort. They are not the only stories, but they are the major ones:

1. The impact of water projects in arid and semi-arid country. This includes not only the impact on flora and fauna, but also impact on human activity and lifestyles.

Table 1 contains the key features and associated stories that could be told using that features.
Table 1: Stories and supporting features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story or sub-story</th>
<th>Features supporting the story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact of water projects in arid and semi-arid areas.</td>
<td>• Unity Lake (artificial)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wetland habitat</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wetland vegetation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Waterfowl</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The Recreation Site</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The boat ramp</td>
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<td>• Irrigated areas using water from the lake.</td>
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