

**OREGON STATEWIDE NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, March 5, 2003—10:00 a.m to 3:00 p.m.**  
**OPRD Salem Headquarters (Yaquina Bay Room)**

**Meeting Notes Compiled by Terry Bergerson**

**Participants:** OPRD: Mike Carrier; Kathy Schutt; Terry Bergerson; Sean Loughran; Steve Brutscher. Oregon State University: Michael Wing, Assistant Professor, Forest Engineering Department. Non-Motorized Steering Committee Members: Ric Balfour, International Mountain Biking Association; Steve Bosak, Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation Dist.; John Barnes, Oregon Dept. of Forestry; Dr. Minot Cleveland, Oregon Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity; Ernie Drapela, Oregon Recreation Trails Advisory Council (ORTAC); Mel Huie, METRO; David Lewis, Oregon Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee; Dan Miller, NPS Rivers & Trails Program; Joan Ottinger, Office of Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Prevention; Mike Reedy, ORTAC; Gail Throop, U.S. Forest Service; Jack Wiles, OPRD; Margaret Wolf, Bureau of Land Management. Steering Committee Members Absent: Chuck Frayer, U.S. Forest Service; Jim Renner, Historic Trails Advisory Council; Zane Smith, Citizen Member; Bruce Ronning, ORTAC.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Kathy Schutt, OPRD Planning Manager, welcomed the Non-Motorized Trails Advisory Committee and apologized that Director Carrier was unable to make the beginning of the meeting. He was called over to the State Capital, but could possibly show up later in the day to address the group. On Mike's behalf, Kathy stated the agency's appreciation for each of you to volunteer your valuable time and expertise towards this important planning project. She further stressed the need to develop a statewide plan that can maintain flexibility for use in a variety of different situations in the future. The plan should give us parameters, grant evaluation criteria and standards that we can work with in addressing real-world trail management situations in the coming years.

Kathy stated that she would lead the Steering Committee through today's discussion regarding a proposed Statewide Non-Motorized Trails Planning Methodology. Next, she led an introduction of all meeting attendees.

**2. Meeting Objectives, Agenda and Steering Committee Responsibilities**

Kathy stated that today's meeting objectives include:

1. Bringing Committee Members up-to-date on statewide trail planning progress;
2. Reviewing a proposed non-motorized planning framework; and
3. Identifying potential problems/weakness and improvements to the proposed non-motorized trails planning framework through a structured brainstorming session.

She then submitted and summarized the following meeting agenda.

<b>Statewide Non-Motorized Trails Plan Steering Committee Meeting Agenda (3/5/03)</b>	
10:00 a.m.	Welcome from the OPRD Director—Michael Carrier
10:05 a.m.	Introductions and Meeting Objectives—Kathy Schutt
10:15 a.m.	Statewide Trails Planning Process—Terry Bergerson
11:00 a.m.	Regional & Statewide Issue Identification Process—Kathy Schutt
11:30 a.m.	Statewide Trail User Survey—Terry Bergerson
12:00 p.m.	Lunch—Yaquina Bay Room
1:00 p.m.	Statewide Trails Inventory—Terry Bergerson
1:30 p.m.	Developing a Statewide Trails Vision—Sean Loughran
2:00 p.m.	Developing a Trails Planning How-to-Manual—Terry Bergerson
2:30 p.m.	Benefits of Recreational Trails—Sean Loughran
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Next, Kathy stated that early in the planning effort, OPRD had established 3 separate Steering Committees (motorized, non-motorized, and water) to assist with the concurrent planning process. Steering Committee Members were selected to ensure adequate agency/organizational and geographic coverage and trail-user group representation.

Non-Motorized Trails Steering Committee Members (Committee Members) are assigned to assist OPRD with the following tasks:

- Reviewing the basic planning framework;
- Determining the basic plan outline;
- Identifying significant regional and statewide non-motorized trail issues and solutions;
- Recommending actions that enhance non-motorized trail opportunities in the state;
- Reviewing survey methodology and instruments; and
- Recommending a set of project evaluation criteria for the OPRD administered Recreation Trails Program (RTP) Grant Program.

### **3. A Proposed Statewide Trails Planning Process**

Terry Bergerson, a Statewide Outdoor Recreation Planner with OPRD, has been assigned as the project coordinator for the statewide trails planning effort. Terry gave a Power Point presentation summarizing the proposed Statewide Non-Motorized Trails Planning Methodology. [Download the presentation.](#)

He stated that the proposed methodology would be used as a straw man (focus point) for today’s meeting discussion. A set of reading materials was distributed to Committee Members prior to the meeting. Some of these materials will serve as proposed models for use in specific planning components such as the 1994 Montana Statewide Trail Inventory.

#### 4. Regional & Statewide Issue Identification Process

Kathy Schutt led the group in a review of a proposed regional issue scoping workshop framework for the Non-Motorized Trails Plan designed to identify key:

- non-motorized trails issues;
- non-motorized trail needs; and
- trail development opportunities.

The proposed workshop schedule includes meetings at the following locations in the 6 trails planning regions.

STATEWIDE TRAILS PLAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP SCHEDULE		
Date	Location	Facility
4/1/2003	La Grande (Union)	<a href="#">The Union Hotel</a> 326 N. Main Union
4/2/2003	Burns	<a href="#">Harney County Courthouse</a> Basement Meeting Room 450 N. Buena Vista
4/3/2003	Bend	<a href="#">Aspen Hall</a> 18920 Shevlin Park Road
4/15/2003	Klamath Falls	<a href="#">Klamath County Museum</a> 1451 Main Street
4/16/2003	Grants Pass	<a href="#">La Quinta</a> 243 NE Morgan Lane
4/17/2003	Bandon	<a href="#">Best Western Inn at Face Rock</a> 3225 Beach Loop Road Bandon
5/20/2003	Lincoln City	<a href="#">Driftwood Public Library</a> 801 SW Highway 101
5/21/2003	Portland (Aloha)	<a href="#">Historic Jenkins Estate (Stable)</a> 8005 SW Grabhorn Road Aloha
5/22/2003	Eugene	<a href="#">City of Eugene Public Works Bldg.</a> 1820 Roosevelt Blvd Building 2 Conference Room

## **Workshop Format:**

**Daytime sessions** (11 am to 4:30 pm) will be open to all public-sector recreation providers within the region. These providers include all federal and state agencies, county, municipal, port and special district recreation departments, and Native American Tribes.

**Evening sessions** (6 pm to 8 pm) will be open to the general public including interested members of the public, trail user groups or clubs, commercial organizations (e.g., guides, outfitters, sports equipment retailers), or any other organizations of persons interested in providing trail-related issues, needs and opportunities within the planning region.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- OPRD staff asked the Committee Members to assist in the process of getting the word out about the upcoming trails issues workshops.
- There was a general discussion about who should be invited to the afternoon provider sessions. Some members felt that we should broaden the afternoon participant list to include private-sector entities such as guides and outfitters. Another potential method would be to bring guides and outfitters from across the state together for a one-day session addressing trail-related economic development opportunities in the state. Another member felt that if we gave special consideration to the needs of the guides and outfitters, why wouldn't we also do this for large volunteer groups? There was general consensus that the workshops were an information gathering tool—and not a decision-making instrument. The planning process could not include special workshops for all interest groups. The OPRD proposed public-sector provider sessions and general public evening sessions should provide adequate opportunity for all to bring their issues to the table.
- Many of the evening session attendees will wish to provide comments in more than one of the three trail areas (e.g. cross-over users such as non-motorized and water trail users). The workshop design must allow for people to provide comments at more than one station during the 1 1/2 hour evening session. Suggest an open-house format with 3 stations with several recorders.
- Committee Members felt that there should be a mechanism for identifying priority issues at both the afternoon and evening workshop sessions. Meeting attendees at both sessions should be given an opportunity to assist with regional issue prioritization through use of colored dots. Resource managers would also be interested in issue priority differences between the daytime (public-sector) and evening (general public) workshop sessions.
- The Committee Members will be responsible for determining top regional and statewide issues. OPRD staff will present a consolidated list of issues to Committee Members in a future meeting. The consolidated list will include

1. A prioritized list of issues identified in the afternoon and evening workshop sessions for each trails planning region;
2. Regional and statewide categorical analysis of all issue comments gathered during the workshops and through the interactive feature on the Trails Planning Website;
3. A summary of what issues current trail users feel are most important in the state (from the statewide trail user survey).

Steering Committee Members will vote to identify a final set of top regional and statewide issues.

## **5. Statewide Trail User Survey**

Terry Bergerson led the group in a review of a proposed statewide trail user survey methodology. A mail survey will be developed for assessing the opinions of approximately 1,500 Oregonians (500 for each participation group) who have participated in trail and non-motorized boating activities in the state during the past 12 months. The survey design will provide statistically reliable results for each of the 3 participation groups allowing for analysis at the statewide level.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- The primary survey population should include Oregonians who are currently involved in non-motorized linear activities on designated recreational trails in the state.
- The current user sample should not include those currently involved in non-motorized linear activities on streets, sidewalks, or roadside bike lanes (part of the transportation system). Such individuals may, however, be included as non-users if we decide to broaden the sample to include a non-user component.
- There was interest in identifying barriers to trail use among the current non-user component. We need to identify what is impeding recruitment—whether its safety concerns, distance from home, accessibility or trail length. From a health perspective, we want to know why people aren't out there being active. Such information could be used to help people overcome perceived barriers and to encourage those who haven't even thought about walking on a recreational trail. Barriers information could also be used by our partner organizations in their efforts to promote physical activity participation in Oregon.
- There was also an interest in assessing the importance of trails and the perceived value that trail users feel trails bring to their communities and to the state. We may want to look at what cities such as Bend, Portland and Eugene have gathered in community surveys relating to perceived importance of trails. Such information would be valuable when communities ask for more funding for trail projects.
- We may want to investigate buying a question or two in some of the national surveys related to health and wellness such as the annual study conducted by the national Center for Disease Control (CDC) to gather information specific to the state of Oregon.

- A Committee Member stated we should consider not including a statewide user survey in the planning process. The problem with a statewide survey is that it may not provide results that are usable to land managers or recreation providers at the local level. A general discussion followed. The trail project coordinator argued that using a mix of various types of public input strategies in the plan's public involvement process will greatly increase acceptance of the plan's findings. Including a carefully crafted and statistically reliable user survey in the public involvement process will greatly increase support for the final planning product. Such statistical accuracy cannot be provided by qualitative involvement methods such as issue scoping workshops, where we are unable to state that the opinions of all interest groups are equally represented in the findings. Finally, it was suggested to put a sample questionnaire in the trail planning toolbox to provide an opportunity for trail organizations to gather local survey information, and to continue with the statewide survey.
- The survey should also address the need for additional sources of trails funding in the state. We should look at both existing revenue generation methods and those successfully used in other states (e.g. fee demo program, add on to outdoor sporting goods, and so forth). In addition, the survey should examine trail users willingness to pay for their trail use. The survey should also provide information relating to prioritizing how trail users would like to see trail funding spent (e.g. maintenance, rehabilitation, new trail development).

## **6. General Comment On Planning Timeline**

Following lunch, a Committee Member requested time to discuss the planning horizon for the non-motorized trails plan. Since the time and expenses associated with the planning effort are substantial, we must consider whether a 5-year shelf life for the plan is reasonable or not. In the current funding situation, we must not assume that sufficient funding will be available for updating the plan every 5 years. A recommendation was made that we seriously consider the merits of a longer planning horizon. The state trails coordinator stated that there are no minimum time requirements associated with state eligibility for federal Recreational Trail Program (RTP) — only that we have a "current trails plan" in place. In addition, survey results are often usable up to 10 years after data collection.

A suggestion was made that we strive for a 10-year plan with a 20-year outlook similar to the Pennsylvania Greenways Plan included in the reading packet so that we can better address long-range planning ideas. If so, we will want to have the flexibility to periodically update portions of the plan if necessary (e.g. when data is in need of review). The plan will also need to be adaptable and dynamic—to keep it active and effective in making things happen throughout its shelf life.

## **7. Conducting a Statewide Trails Inventory**

Terry Bergerson led the group in a review of a proposed statewide trails inventory methodology. The Statewide Trails Inventory is intended as a systematic review of the public trail system in Oregon. The overall goal is to develop a database of trail information that can be used by government agencies, public libraries, and recreationists

for trip planning and management purposes. The database will be designed to be compatible with potential development of a recreational-trails geographic information system (GIS). Development of such a recreational-trails GIS will not be included as a part of this planning effort, but may be taken on as an active project in years to come. Another potential inventory component could be a non-motorized statewide vision map, including existing and proposed trails that could make up a statewide system. The map could show the backbone, or spine, of a statewide trails system that could be linked to regional or local trail systems.

The initial point of discussion was to identify a basic trail definition. A proposed definition is:

*Recreation trails in Oregon are used by a variety of outdoor enthusiasts, both in urban areas and the backcountry. For the purposes of this inventory, a "trail" is defined as a regularly maintained recreation pathway typically used by hikers, cross-country skiers, equestrians, bicyclists, and/or motor vehicles less than 50 inches width. The trail should be purposefully planned and constructed for recreation purposes.*

Non-motorized trail uses include backpacking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, horseback riding, in-line skating, skateboarding, running/walking for exercise and walking for pleasure.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- Include paved and unpaved trails managed or administered by public-sector recreation providers in the inventory (ranging from those in communities to those in more remote settings which are constructed for recreational purposes). Do not include roads, sidewalks or roadside bicycle lanes in the inventory. In urban settings, the inventory should include the off-street trail system. It should not include the on-street systems, which are typically presented in a bicycle and pedestrian plans. But, keep in mind that the off-street system can include some street crossings and sidewalks.
- Many National Forest trails used during winter months are not used for recreational purposes during the summer months (linear corridors). Such winter trails include actual constructed trails and also include a lot of roads. For consistency with the motorized inventory, we should not include such winter-use roads in our inventory.
- A map of the Portland Metro area regional non-motorized trail system was provided as an example of a regional trail system. This started a discussion of which specific categories of recreational trails to include in the inventory. Trails of national, state, and regional significance must be included in the inventory. We may also consider dropping down to include community trail level—but not below. Examples of community-level trails are those that run from the north end to the south end of a community, but not outside the community. Regional trails

are those that go beyond city boundaries, such as those trails linking two or more communities.

Michael Wing, an Assistant Professor from Oregon State University's Forest Engineering Department, gave a brief description of the inventory project. His comments are summarized as follows.

I think if we look around the state we would find that people do have many trails currently mapped on GIS. But, we would never know unless we asked. There would be some challenges in getting trails data pulled together, but once we got through this process the GIS system could be permanent, shareable with other agencies, and a great tool for recreationists looking for trails related information. With the advent of the internet, we now have a delivery medium for end users to download and print maps. This project seems to be a very good application for GIS. It would allow you to organize your information and encourage a united effort to make a statewide trail system GIS a reality.

Our first step is to simply conduct the trails inventory. If our ultimate goal is GIS, we should start the process with the inventory database in mind. At this point, we can identify which trails are currently in GIS and which are not. Over time we will develop a container for those trails. The inventory would allow us to go right into the next project—constructing the trails GIS.

After completion of the inventory, we could develop non-motorized statewide, regional and community system vision maps from the information gathered. Such maps would encourage the development of trail connectivity throughout the state. Vision maps could help identify where additional trails are needed and help prioritize where state and federal maintenance dollars are spent. Such maps could also assist providers in making their case for trail connectivity during the grant application process.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- We will have to draw the line somewhere on what types of trails to include in the inventory. The inventory should make a clear distinction between intra-community and inter-community trails. For instance, if a community has a 2 mile circular path and they want to connect that trail to a river front path that goes over to another area or creates a different configuration, then it begins to approach this inter-community type of trail. Such inter-community trails could be given additional consideration during the RTP grant review process.
- There was general agreement among the Committee Members that we should develop the trails inventory database to be compatible with future development of a recreational-trails GIS.
- OPRD staff should continue to work on identifying the specific types of non-motorized trails to include in the inventory.

## **8. Developing a Statewide Trails Vision**

Sean Loughran, OPRD State Trails Coordinator, led the group in a general discussion of the non-motorized trails planning vision. Sean pointed out that Oregon has a great history in terms of protecting natural resources and recreational trail development and promotion. Specific examples include the Trails Act in 1971, the Bicycle Bill, the 1988 Beach Bill, Senate Bill 100-which created the Land Use Planning System in 1973 and the Transportation Planning Rule.

The concept of connectivity is a common theme running through past statewide non-motorized trails plans. Its important during this current trails planning process, that we honor the ideas presented in past statewide trails plans. The 1995 Oregon Recreation Trails Plan served as an instrumental tool in guiding trail development in the state. Specific examples of successful connectivity projects included connecting downtown Portland to the Springwater Corridor, connecting the Ashland Bear Creek Greenway to the Pacific Crest Trail and the Jacksonville Woodlands project. Such projects connect communities to their environment physically, intellectually and spiritually. Our hope is that this trails plan can further the connectivity effort. We look forward to working with the Committee Members to craft the vision for the next iteration of the statewide non-motorized trails plan.

## **9. Developing a Trails Planning How to Manual**

Terry Bergerson led the group in a general discussion of a proposed Trails Planning How-to-Manual. To encourage trail connectivity at the local level, OPRD has received permission from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to adapt the document entitled *Creating Connections: The Pennsylvania Greenways and Trails How-To Manual*, for use in the state of Oregon. The purpose of the manual is to encourage citizens, civic organizations, governments and private enterprise to collaborate more effectively on trail development. The manual is intended to provide information and resources specific to Oregon for trail planning, acquisition, construction and management. The completed document could be available as a stand-alone document and as an Appendix in the non-motorized trails plan.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- Several Committee Members stated that the document was a quality product and would provide a powerful tool for local trail development efforts—especially for small communities in Oregon. It will take some fine-tuning to make the document applicable for use in Oregon, but all the principals are in synch with the trail philosophy in our state. There was some concern that work on the How-to-Manual could be substantial, and should not delay the overall non-motorized planning effort.
- We may consider asking a number of specific experts in areas such as Oregon land use planning law, transportation planning, and trails planning to review specific sections of the document to revise the document for use in Oregon.
- The How-To Manual should specifically address what we have seen as limitations in past small community RTP proposals. We should encourage small communities to use the Manual to assist them in making the case that their trails project makes sense within the context of the community.

- This manual would be most useful to intra-community trail planning efforts—in communities such as Aumsville or Milton-Freewater—where they are more concerned with providing trail opportunities for those within the community than linking existing trails to an outer trail system. The How-To-Manual should help spark the idea at a volunteer meeting like "here's how we can develop a trail." Such ideas are how trail planning projects start to happen.

## 10. Benefits of Recreational Trails

Sean Loughran led the group in a general discussion of adding a "Benefits of Recreational Trails" section to the plan. Sean mentioned that we have an opportunity to tie our plan to the findings of the new Statewide Physical Activity Plan and the relationship between physical exercise (trail use) and resulting health benefits (e.g. reducing obesity and chronic illness). Other benefits typically associated with recreational trails include quality of life, economic, transportation, education, and psychological and physical restoration. Sean asked for suggestions on how we could address such benefits in the plan in a way that is beneficial to professional, agency, and lay planners involved with trail planning within their communities.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- We should be concerned with how such information could be used at the local level to help make the case that trails are important and should be on the table when funding decisions are being made. Such information could offset the belief that trails are simply a part of the community infrastructure.
- We may want to ask survey respondents to reinforce what we know about the benefits of recreational trails. Such information could be used as leverage when going to the state legislature with trail-related funding requests. Such statistics will help to reinforce our "benefits of trails" argument and demonstrate that the public perceives trails as being highly beneficial for a variety of reasons. Such survey information is critical in making a strong case for trail funding.
- The Executive Summary should lead off with a description of the benefits of trails and make the connection to the health of Oregonians and the nation. It can also be argued that, in the current economic situation, trail development should be seen as a viable economic strategy. Such arguments will help to move trail development onto the front page.
- The trails plan provides a great opportunity for us to focus on health benefits and the growing literature on the relationship between daily exercise and obesity. The Oregon Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity and the Office of Chronic Disease Prevention believe that focusing on increased physical activity and healthy eating are much needed long-term solutions to the obesity problem. Trail development will help build the *Active Community Environments (ACE)* that the CDC is promoting as a key strategy for addressing the obesity problem. Active communities are places where people of all ages and abilities can easily enjoy physical activity as a part of their daily lives. Trail development is a key strategy in creating active communities, where the active choice becomes the easy choice. Finally, we need to encourage collaboration to create Active Community Environments—our vision is that Oregonians value and enjoy physical activity during their daily lives and communities

can and will support physical activity. The process of working together with recreation providers will strengthen the overall effort of developing Active Community Environments.

- A Committee Member stated that the push for increasing Wilderness Designation in Oregon may have a negative impact on trail access (other than hikers). In the plan, we need to put this push for Wilderness Designation into an overall context from a trail-user perspective.
- Include a literature review of certain key concepts related to trail benefits. Make sure the review gives a complete picture of what trail development can offer as a rural economic development strategy. Such information needs to be quantified with hard data to make a stronger case for trail development.
- A Committee Member pointed out that an Oregon recreation delegation had shared the Oregon Statewide Physical Activity and Nutrition Plans with the state's Congressional delegates in a recent trip to Washington D.C. He stated that the plans really raised some interest among the Congressional delegates. These plans are great tools for leveraging recreation and trail-related funding and allow us to create a vision of where we want to go in promoting physical activity and health in the state of Oregon. He was very appreciative of the fine work that went into the development of these two valuable plans.

## **11. Final Thoughts from the OPRD Director**

Mike Carrier apologized for not being able to being able to make the beginning of the meeting. His comments are summarized as follows.

I would like to thank each Committee Member for agreeing to participate in the planning process and for bringing to the table your expertise and passion for outdoor recreation and trails. I just wanted to say thank you for your participation. It fulfills a number of promises that are interrelated and touch on the things that you've been talking about here in the last few minutes.

First, it fulfills the promise of Measure 66. The voters had a vision, I believe, that OPRD could really step up and be sustained in a way that we could provide leadership in outdoor recreation. That leadership starts with planning and ends with a real product—not just this plan—but also the great projects that will be envisioned and enabled through this planning effort. Those of you who have been in this business for a while really understand the importance of that collaboration in planning.

Second, it fulfills the promise of our Commission when it adopted Target 2014, which clearly stated the agency's role in promoting outdoor recreation including planning and vision.

Third, it fulfills the Governor's Agenda of stimulating Oregon's economy. You all know full well that the opportunity to attract new business investment in this state depends on the "quality-of-life" our state offers and the ability of businesses to attract a talented workforce. What attracts a talented workforce is a high quality-of-life—which is keenly expressed through the kinds of outdoor recreation opportunities we provide.

Finally, it helps to fulfill the promise of Oregon's land use planning laws. We have created these islands of residential life that are disjointed and segregated from the high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities that this state has to offer. This trails plan will help to create a bridge from where we live to where we play, recreate and renew ourselves.

That's my vision of what I hope you will accomplish with this trails plan. I'm just so appreciative that you came to this meeting and you are going to be working with us.

#### **11. Final Comments from Committee Members**

Mike used a phrase that we haven't mentioned the entire meeting and I think it reflects why we are here—"a passion for trails." We wouldn't be here unless we had a passion for trails. I want to go back to a term used earlier—initiative. In our reading materials, there is a document entitled the "Chesapeake Bay Trails Initiative." It's not called a plan, but rather an initiative. Maybe we need to start looking for terms signifying a more aggressive approach towards making the case for recreational trails in Oregon.

There was a general consensus among the group that we should consider a change in the title from the word plan to the word initiative.

**Meeting Adjourned at 3 p.m.**

**Next Meeting—September 2003**