

**OREGON STATEWIDE WATER TRAILS PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, March 12, 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; Tim Wood; Steve Brutscher; Terry Bergerson; Sean Loughran. Water Trails Steering Committee Members: Sue Abbott, NPS Rivers and Trails Program; Ernie Drapela, Oregon Recreation Trails Advisory Council (ORTAC); Bruce Ronning, ORTAC; Cindy Scherer, Alder Creek Kayak; Larry Miller, OPRD; Wayne Shuyler, Oregon State Marine Board; Chuck Solin, ORTAC; Reed Waite, Washington Water Trails Association. Steering Committee Members Absent: John Lilly, Oregon Division of State Lands; Rhine Messmer, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife; Gail Throop, U.S. Forest Service; Margaret Wolf, Bureau of Land Management.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Steve Brutscher, OPRD Rivers Program Team Leader, welcomed the Water Trails Advisory Committee and apologized that Director Carrier was unable to make the start of the meeting. Next, Steve introduced Tim Wood, OPRD Assistant Director, to say a few words to the group. The following is a summary of Tim's greeting.

I would like to express our appreciation for assisting OPRD with the water trails planning effort. We have a very important statewide trails plan underway—with an integrated approach which simultaneously addresses motorized, non-motorized and water trails planning components. Ultimately, we will end up with a plan that integrates planning results and recommendations into a single planning document. I know that you all have considerable demands for your time, and really appreciate the commitment you are making to this planning effort.

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

I just wanted to stop in and say thank you for agreeing to serve and work on this important plan. The planning process is parallel to the efforts that are going on with the Land Board and the whole issue of navigability, which is very much an issue in the future of recreation opportunity on rivers in the state of Oregon. River-related recreation in the state has incredible potential, but we have much work to do before we can assure access to the public. This plan will really lay the foundation for helping the Land Board and other recreation providers in the state address the issue of what is the future of water-based recreation and water trails in the state. I know that you are all busy, and we really appreciate your agreeing to serve on this committee. Completion of this water trails plan is a top priority for our agency. We are very excited about being able to provide such leadership within the state—we couldn't do it without your help.

Steve stated that he would lead the Steering Committee through today’s discussion regarding a proposed Statewide Water Trails Planning Methodology. Next, he led an introduction of all meeting attendees.

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

Steve 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.

He then submitted and summarized the following meeting agenda.

<b>Statewide Water Trails Plan Steering Committee Meeting Agenda (3/12/03)</b>	
10:00 a.m.	Welcome from the OPRD Director—Michael Carrier
10:05 a.m.	Introductions and Meeting Objectives—Steve Brutscher
10:15 a.m.	Statewide Trails Planning Process—Terry Bergerson
11:00 a.m.	Regional & Statewide Issue Identification Process—Sean Loughran
11:30 a.m.	Statewide Trail User Survey—Terry Bergerson
12:00 p.m.	Lunch—Yaquina Bay Room
12:45 p.m.	Defining a Water Trail in the State of Oregon—Steve Brutscher
1:45 p.m.	Statewide Trails Inventory—Terry Bergerson
2:00 p.m.	A Water Trail Toolbox—Terry Bergerson
2:15 p.m.	Developing a Statewide Water Trails Vision—Sean Loughran
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Next, Steve 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 (Committee Members) were selected to ensure adequate agency/organizational and geographic coverage and trail-user group representation.

Water Trails Steering 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 water trail issues and solutions;
- Recommending actions that enhance water 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 Water 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 Chesapeake Water Trails Vision.

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

Sean Loughran, OPRD State Trails Coordinator, stated that before getting into the specifics of the framework, there were a few suggestions that came up at last week's Non-Motorized Steering Committee meeting that are relevant to the Water Trails planning discussion. The suggestions included considering:

- a 10-year plan rather than a typical 5-year plan; and
- using the term "initiative," rather than simply a "plan".

A Committee Member stated that there must be some sort of methodology to increase the timeline such as was done in OPRD's Target 2014 Plan. If it can be done for OPRD's overall agency goals, maybe we can attempt something more long-range than a typical 5-year trails plan to better address long-range planning ideas. The other consideration is the term initiative. It's a little more proactive, aggressive and determined than simply calling it a plan. An initiative, when based on a lot of citizen participation, brings a lot more interest with it.

(Note: OPRD staff reviewing the minutes point out that we want to choose another word than initiative. The word initiative has a special meaning in Oregon associated with statewide ballot measures and could cause conflict or confusion when used in the context of trails planning. OPRD may suggest another word with a similar meaning.)

Next, Sean led the group in a review of a proposed regional issue scoping workshop framework for the Water Trails Plan designed to identify key:

- water trails issues;
- water trail needs; and
- water 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:

- It is not our expectation that Committee Members attend these workshops. On the other hand, for nearby workshops, it would be a good learning experience if you were able to attend.
- OPRD staff asked the Committee Members to assist in the process of getting the word out about the upcoming trails issues workshops. If you are associated with any groups with an interest in water trails, or other recreation trails, the more people that you can ask the better information we will receive.
- A Committee Member cautioned that any prioritization method used in the evening sessions (especially if lightly attended), has the potential of being skewed as a result of overrepresentation by certain user groups. The information gathering process is very useful, but during a ranking process they are only asked to rank the issues that are in front of them, and not those issues that have not yet been raised.

An OPRD staff member pointed out that during the planning process we have 3 separate opportunities to prioritize issues including the daytime public provider workshops, the evening general public workshops, and asking survey respondents to rank order of importance of a list of issues gathered through the public outreach process.

Another Committee Member argued for prioritization during the evening sessions in order to be equitable with the input from the daytime sessions. But, the Committee Member cautioned that OPRD needs to be very clear with how this issues information will be used in the overall planning process. In the end, if you are clear with how you will use the prioritized information, and the attendees understand the role of the Advisory Committee in sorting out final regional and statewide issues, the information gained can be very helpful as you move through the planning process.

- An OPRD staff member asked if the Committee Members could suggest any additional workshop process strategies to draw more information out of attendees.

One suggestion was to use a series of maps, and try to get people to look at the map and be as specific as possible to communicate geographically what their suggestions are. If there are some broad issues that couldn't be captured on the maps, they could be recorded on the margins.

Develop as many techniques as you can to reach differing comfort levels. Include various stations with graphics and maps to encourage people to write directly on the maps or post sticky notes on the maps. Have a staff person at each station ready to write down ideas on a flip chart and attempt to draw as much information from each participant as possible. We've also used a middle of the room questionnaire or a general comment sheet to gather additional information. Encourage attendees to participate in more than one of these input processes.

The workshop format should be structured so that one person cannot tie up the information gathering process with one particular issue or by arguing with the presenter. The opening presentation should be short and to the point to avoid such confrontations from occurring. Also, you might consider having a greeter at the door to describe the meeting process to those arriving after the opening presentation.

Another Committee Member stated that the statewide trails plan, by its very nature, is futuristic and must look ahead to anticipate need and demand. We would also be interested in what people feel about the existing level of services provided. There may be some features that people are very happy with, and we want to ensure such features are protected or can be replicated in other areas.

In summary, OPRD staff will include the following suggestions in the workshop design:

- A set of leading questions to spur the discussion; and
  - A variety of information gathering techniques including flip charts, allowing participants to write issues on paper and allowing people to write comments directly on maps.
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- One Committee Member cautioned that there was already some anxiety in eastern Oregon that OPRD was working on a statewide plan addressing the Water Trails Concept. This concern has come up in association with the Division of State Lands Navigability Work Group. OPRD staff should be ready to describe how the efforts of this navigability process relate to the Statewide Water Trails Planning process.

## **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:

- We are starting with a lot of good survey information related to non-motorized boat use in the state. This information base includes participation information from the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) process and past State Marine Board studies.
- The first problem is to identify the population for the water trails survey. We could examine the population of all boaters in the state or reduce the population to include only non-motorized boaters. Committee Members pointed out that before we answer that question, we must first develop a definition for a water trail. If

motorized boaters are not included in that definition, we need to clearly point out how their needs are currently being addressed through state agency planning (such as through the 6-Year Marine Board Facilities Plan). Motorized boaters may not be looking for a Statewide Water Trails Plan because they already have the Marine Board's Facilities Plan.

The Oregon Marine Board has already engaged the motorized boat owners through various surveys and public meetings. On the other hand, non-motorized boat owners have never really had an opportunity to provide input about their needs outside of the Deschutes River Plan. The process of identifying non-motorized boating needs is essential as participation continues to grow in the state (138% increase in estimated user occasions between 1987 and 2002). To this point, non-motorized boaters have not had a chance to explain their issue and facility needs are. It is also important to point out that these two user groups are not mutually exclusive. Past studies have identified that approximately 25% of registered motor boaters also have unregistered non-motorized boats.

It should also be stated that past boating studies have not examined the need for long-distance motorized boating opportunities statewide (e.g. motorized water trails). But, the Marine Board has done 3 different studies on the Columbia River which examined the need for additional transient stops. The Willamette River Recreation Guide is certainly usable by motorized boaters as a water trail guide. These two rivers may be where the real opportunities are for long-distance motorized trails in the state. The Deschutes River database is also available.

- If you are trying to get a list of non-motorized boaters, the Rogue River Permit System database may be a potential source. This system is already computerized, and could provide a mailing list of past applicants. There are also boat owner lists which private sales organizations such as REI may have, but such information is proprietary and may not available for use.

## **6. Defining a Water Trail in the State of Oregon**

Steve Brutscher led the group in a discussion attempting to answer the question, What is a water trail in the state of Oregon? Steve stated that water trails, as they are conceived back east, are very facility and publicity oriented, and in a sense are a built experience on the natural resource base. Is such a water trails concept applicable in the state of Oregon?

- A Committee Member responded that Oregon has more public land and a broader and longer experience with providing river recreation opportunities. We need 3 things in developing water trails in Oregon; access to water, a flat spot to put a tent, and sanitation facilities. If it's in a populated area, we don't have the luxury of knowing that we would be the only ones on the water—although the user may still want a pristine wilderness experience that is no longer available. In such circumstances, we will need to provide more developed facilities or you will have people camping all the way up and down the river. As such, you will need to centralize some of those facilities.

- Another Committee Member stated that it would not be fair to say the eastern water trail model does not apply for geographic reasons. Water trails are similar to land-based trails in that some people will want to go into the wilderness and others will want to go to more developed areas. You certainly do not want to put those developed facilities everywhere, it may be that we strive for a balance and think about water trails doing different things in different settings. Offer a spectrum of experiences—some may be highly developed and some minimally developed.
- It was suggested that we look at the water trails definition in the Humboldt Bay Study as a potential model definition. The definition reads as follows:
 

"Water Trails are routes that have been mapped out to provide educational and scenic experiences for recreational canoers and kayakers. Some of the trails are simply day paddles, while others stretch for hundreds of miles. Some programs develop small-boat launches, shore access and overnight camping facilities, while others seek solutions for maintaining wilderness character and limited road access."

Another Committee Member stated that in Oregon, we have a wide-range of water travel opportunities from Wilderness areas all the way to more urbanized settings. The Humboldt Bay definition limits use to canoers and kayakers, limiting the scope of what we see a water trail to be. Earlier we talked about a more inclusive list of specific activities that could be associated with water trails in Oregon including canoeing, sea kayaking, white-water kayaking, white-water rafting, and drift boating.

Humboldt is a flat-water program, clearly in Oregon we have the whitewater kinds of experiences that should be included in the definition of a water trail. The coastal water trail ought to be part of our definition as well. We can't define a water trail system for Oregon that doesn't include the coast as a part of the system. This argument is especially relevant with all the state lands on the Oregon coast—a coastal access model for the country. We also have all the hiker/biker camps in place along the coast. A lot of the necessary infrastructure is there, we just have to match it with landing opportunities.

- For our purposes, a water trail system in Oregon should be representative of the geographic diversity of the waterways that we have. The definition should be broad enough to include portages—not just water alone. There was also concern with the cookie-cutter approach that all water trails need to be tied together somehow. It should be a system—but described as discontinuous. The definition has to be as broad and inclusive as possible. From white-water to tidewater and everything in between, and include a broad range of paddling experiences (e.g. from wilderness to urban settings and a variety of challenge levels).

- The prototype definition might be that a potential water trail is managed by a public entity, includes known sites where you can stop, facilities at those sites, and a take out point. People are looking for a safe place to put in, a place to leave their car, a place that they can stop that is on public land, sanitary facilities and a place to take out. We should also point out that the definition includes a variety of low-impact paddling experiences; connecting people—physically, visually and spiritually—to the natural, cultural and historic resources of the state. There should also be day-use and overnight trails in a variety of settings (from wilderness to urban).
- There was general consensus among Committee Members that, although our primary planning objective is to develop non-motorized water trails, water trails be open for all types of uses, both motorized and non-motorized. Some water trails will be, by law, open or closed to motorized boaters. In Oregon, unless the Marine Board (who has the authority to regulate motorized watercraft) were to adopt a rule that prohibited the use of motorized watercraft on a certain stretch of water, there is no way to exclude any watercraft from using a water trail. On the other hand, the primary intent of the Statewide Water Trails Plan should be to provide access to and encourage paddling in Oregon and that most water trails will be used by non-motorized boaters.

The Committee Members felt that if the Marine Board had not built all those boat landings with motorized boat receipts, we wouldn't have the non-motorized access that we have today. There may be a lack of historical context in any argument from paddlers to restrict motorized use of water trails. Regardless, there is going to be joint use of the water trails in flat-water paddling areas. If you don't have a motorized boat ramp, you do in effect control the use of the water. But in other places where motorized boaters have access, as a matter of choice they can go down the trail if they desire and stop at the campsites if there are any. As long as people see the water trail system as an equitable system, one providing facilities for both types of users (motorized and non-motorized boaters), it will be accepted by both user groups.

- It may be that with good planning and design we can have dual uses in some circumstances. (Such as areas that are open to both cross-country skiers and snowshoers, which share certain facilities such as parking lots, sanitary facilities, snow shelters, but have separate designated-use trails.) On the lower Columbia, there are areas where you will not get larger boats in, but are excellent for paddlers. Yet, motorized boaters may use the same access point if they chose to take a motorized watercraft into the area.
- Another topic discussed was whether a state agency would assume any liability by providing information on a website that may put people into a situation that they are not prepared to handle (such as on whitewater paddling stretches). A Committee Member responded that recreation providers across the state are already doing it now. People could have problems on any stretches included on a

number of currently available brochures and maps. Placing water trails information on a website would be no different.

- Several Committee Members argued that there is inherent risk associated with boating on any of the variety of water bodies and conditions in the state of Oregon. Currently, there are many people out on flatwater bodies in open canoes that are just as ill prepared to be there as on whitewater stretches. There should not be any greater risk with boating on whitewater than flat water. In addition, the current recreation use statute in Oregon should cover any potential exposure associated with including whitewater, flat water, or ocean water trail routes on a website.
- Committee Members also recommended that the website not include skill level and difficulty rating information such as found on the North Carolina Water Trails Website. Skill level or difficulty ratings are extremely subjective because of changing water and weather conditions. For example, on the Lower Columbia there are certain places with a lot of wind exposure. On some occasions these stretches may be extremely calm, but minutes later very difficult to paddle due to changing wind conditions. Such an argument can also be made for changing river levels, time of the year, and daily tidal conditions.

On the other hand, you could provide basic recommendations such as:

- Always wear a PFD;
- Carry a whistle;
- Consult guidebooks;
- Seek local knowledge; and
- Have an understanding of the conditions that you will be facing on the trip.

It would also be appropriate to mention special considerations such as major open water crossings and a list of potential hazards included on the water trail.

We must also be aware that people are seeking adventure and risk in their outdoor recreation activities. There is a certain inherent risk in doing outdoor recreation activities and people need to accept those inherent risks and to inform themselves of those risks.

- The website can become a lot more interactive than simply serving to let people know where to paddle. As you build the website from the ground up, considered using it as a tool to connect people with restoration projects, on-river workshops and local events. The Water Trails Toolbox will also be a central component of the website, providing step-by-step instructions on how to develop water trails. This website should go beyond the 2-year planning process. The site should also provide a resource to connect people that want to become involved in water trails projects.

- The OPRD website could serve to show what the statewide water trail system as a whole looks like, including what agencies are currently providing. But, the site should not become the place that includes specific water trail maps and other information for heavily used Wild and Scenic Rivers in the state. For such areas, the OPRD site should simply provide links to other agency websites. But if you go beyond those heavily used areas, the OPRD website could serve as a container for water trail information for those wishing to draw additional use to their particular water trail as a part of a tourism development strategy.

## 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 water trail statewide vision map, including existing and proposed trails that could make up a statewide system.

A proposed definition is:

*"A recreational waterway on a lake, river, or ocean between specific points, containing access points and day use and/or camping for the boating public."*

Non-motorized water trail uses include canoeing, sea kayaking, white-water kayaking, white-water rafting and drift boating.

- We need to further identify the specific types of water bodies that will be included in the inventory. An OPRD staff member stated that he was willing to identify a number of water trails in Oregon before reading about what someone else described as a water trail. Downriver experiences in Oregon are water trails. If you pick up a book like *Soggy Sneakers* or *Oregon River Tours* (and there are plenty others) you can read about many existing river trail segments. In some cases, many of our rivers will be chopped up into multiple segments. Some boaters may run the whole 40 miles of the river, others may run only a 10-mile segment. There could be an argument made that each 10-mile segment offers a different experience or setting and might qualify as a distinct water trail, but the whole 40 miles could be as well.
- A Committee Member stated that we had earlier discussed the need to include all potential water trails, from the coast to the Idaho border and all the water bodies that we have in the state that people currently paddle may qualify. But whether or not we include the Mohawk River on the website—I don't think we have defined

a water trail enough that just because a body of water is currently paddled, that it belongs as part of a water trail system. How do we bring it down to a manageable definition? The Wild and Scenic portion of the Rogue doesn't need any more publicity by any other government entity than already exists. We might find ourselves in direct conflict with what those agencies want to do, which is manage for current use, not create a vehicle that sends a whole bunch more people in that direction.

- Another Committee Member said they understood the idea of not drawing more use to certain rivers. On the other hand, we must keep in mind that our task is to identify what the water trail system looks like. We are talking about inventorying all potential water trails—and not downsize the list due to perceived constraints such as fear of drawing more users to a certain river segment.
- Committee Members felt that it would be a huge public service for OPRD to become a repository for GIS trails-related information, but cautioned that it was a huge undertaking that should be considered very carefully. For water trails, the process is simplified since all waters in the state are already mapped. The challenge will be to identify where those hidden public places are located.

Potential information sources for the current water trails inventory include:

- existing flat-water guides;
- existing white-water guides;
- a Marine Board list of 165 boatable rivers and streams in the state; and
- an OPRD developed list of boatable state waterways.

## **8. A Water Trails Toolbox**

Terry Bergerson led the group in a general discussion of the opportunity to purchase a water trails toolbox as part of the water trails planning effort. The Water Trails Toolbox is a comprehensive "How to Manual" written for water trail development by public agencies, professional planners, grass roots organizations, and joint public-private groups. Key toolbox objectives are to promote community-based volunteer groups and to encourage paddlers to become actively involved as stewards of the resource.

Terry pointed out that North American Water Trails had created a water trails toolbox as a part of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network process. Currently, the only way people can access the information is to have a password associated with entry into the Network. Terry asked Al Staats, with North American Water Trails, if OPRD could purchase this toolbox for use in the state of Oregon. The agreement would also involve some work to make the toolbox directly applicable for use in Oregon. The intent would be for OPRD to have the ownership necessary to include the full set of information on the OPRD trails planning website. Mr. Staats' response was that the toolbox would be available for purchase. An outline of the 12-module workbook, provided by Mr. Staats, was included in the reading materials for review by the Water Trails Steering Committee.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- A Committee Member asked how the material is different from David Getchell's, book entitled "*Modern Water Trails*". Another Committee Member stated that North American Water Trails has been very good at rolling out individual modules, but this is the first time he had seen all this material together in one product.
- There was general consensus that a toolbox containing information described in the toolbox outline would be very useful to the development of water trails in the state of Oregon. You don't want to just give them a plan—you want to empower people to birth and manage these water trails. We currently do not have adequate resources and staffing in the state to provide sufficient guidance for a growing number of water trails projects. Typically, people attempting to develop new water trails come to the process with a lot of energy and focus, but don't have a clue as to how to accomplish the mission. At this time, we do not have a good set of materials to get them going. Such a toolbox will get them started and allow them to better understand the task at hand. It would also help them meet the planning requirements associated with Recreational Trails Program grant evaluation criteria.
- A question was asked if such a toolbox would be useful for Committee Members involved with the Lower Columbia River Water Trail Project. If you would go to the OPRD website and look at these various modules, would it be a tool that you could utilize? The answer was yes.
- The water trails toolbox would also make your website stronger—your message becomes more holistic and proactive.
- If the sale of such a toolbox is a way for North American Water Trails to stay afloat, that's great. Having this outline is great, and having the entire toolbox on the internet is much better than a book (such as Getchell's "*Modern Water Trails*"). A Committee Member cautioned that we don't commit to purchasing the materials before having an opportunity to look at the actual toolbox contents. And finally, be careful that you don't purchase something that is, or will eventually be, available on the internet for free.

## 9. Developing a Statewide Water Trails Vision

Sean Loughran led the group in a general discussion of the water trails planning vision. Sean pointed out that the actual work of developing a statewide vision would be done further down the road—after the completion of the regional issues workshops, statewide trail survey, and needs identification. The Steering Committee will use this information to put together a vision statement.

The following comments were generated during the discussion:

- A Committee Member stated that the Chesapeake Water Trails Vision included in the reading materials contains a set of 4 key steps in developing a water trail. The steps include:
  - Origination;
  - Determination;
  - Creation; and
  - Operation & Evaluation.

In my view, these key steps can be universally applied to all trail types.

In addition, the list of guiding principles of Water Trails in North America included in the Chesapeake Water Trails Vision comes very close to the construct that we want. These principles include:

- Partnerships—cooperating and sharing;
- Stewardship—leaving no trace;
- Volunteerism—experiencing the joy of involvement;
- Education—learning by experience;
- Conservation—protecting our natural heritage;
- Community Vitality—connecting people and places;
- Diversity—providing opportunities for all; and
- Wellness and Well being—caring for self and others.

We will just need to tailor these a bit to fit Oregon.

- Another Committee Member stated that we should substitute the word "Program" in place of "System," and call the state's overall effort the "Statewide Water Trails Program". As such, we could concentrate on helping with the development of water trails in the state.
- The overall planning mission should place OPRD in a position of guiding the development of water trails, but the real mission is about people, their jobs, and their purpose. They don't simply want to know about the system, they also want to know who's working the plan. It will be important for the Steering Committee to understand which of these questions we want to answer ourselves and which questions should be included in the public input process. We will need to strike a balance between what we know we are working on and what the public wants in a plan. If we have an idea of a working vision, we may want to take it out and get public feedback and come up with modifications if necessary.
- The plan should emphasize why we are conducting a water trails planning effort. Go back to SCORP and carefully document such findings. This information will help make the case to the general public as to why we are taking on this planning effort.
- Another Committee Member stated that they didn't feel that we have the necessary filter built—if we pour all the water in Oregon through it, what gets stuck on the screen is a water trail, everything else will pass through. Is this an effort that will need a tool kit for development, or is it simply another body of water in Oregon?
- The public agency folks may be looking for a different animal than the evening folks. We might find a distinction there that helps to guide us to a more reasonable product. Access is difficult, in some places it may be a simple road access allowing access where the river is totally under control by private landowners.
- What elevates a paddling experience to a trail experience? That is the key question that we need to get at. There is somewhere that we need to draw the line in what is defined as a water trail. When you identify that, then this monumental inventory process becomes manageable. Not that the mileage won't be great—but the numbers of bodies of water will start to narrow and focus on those that meet that definition. The criteria are the key to defining a water trail. Start with what is obvious and add more to the list over time.

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

**Next Meeting—September 2003**