

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee

November 10, 1999

**Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital
Hood River, Oregon**

Members Present: Bill Pattison, John Lundell, Janice Newton, Jeffery Plummer, Charlie Sciscione, Carolyn Wood, and Jack Wiles.

Staff Present: Jeanette Kloos, Robert Hadlow, Charlie Sciscione, Gail Smith, Kevin Bracy, Ryan Murray, Frank Nelson and Scott Liesinger.

Public Present: Jerry Igo and Michael Igo, Native Plant Society; Dave Tilton, USFS; Diane McClay, OPRD; Marie Miller, Columbia River Gorge Visitors Association and Friends of Vista House; Linda Maddux and Mike Stovall.

Bill Pattison called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Linda Maddux, a frequent user of the west end of the Hood River to Mosier section of the HCRH State Trail had several concerns to present to the HCRH AC.

Linda has noticed while hiking from Hood River east that Hood River Sand and Gravel has done some extraction that has come close to the guardrail. This appears to have caused undermining to the highway and the vegetation has all disappeared in this area. Linda felt this was a safety issue. Jeanette Kloos noted that at the last meeting the HCRH AC recommended that the guardrail be connected in this area because the drop off had been observed. ODOT has a 60-foot R/W.

Also a concern was a petroleum odor that Linda noticed when hiking east of the gate over by the Native American property. Linda stated that perhaps the old trucks that have been stored on Jack Bryant's property are leaking and contaminating the soil. Mike Stovall suggested that the aroma could be from the old asphalt plant that used to operate in this area a long time ago.

Linda also told the AC that the contractor, JAL, has been courteous and kept the area clean while they worked on the project. The new contractor has been leaving trash at the site and the trash has been blowing all over

the area. Linda asked if someone could speak to him about this?

Linda suggested the need for a restroom a couple of miles from the West trailhead, particularly for children.

Linda asked about cutting down the width of the asphalt along the trail. Why spend the money to tear up the shoulder and replace with gravel? For the multiple users of (bikers and walkers) the wider trail would be more beneficial. Linda suggested we pave the path and leave the remainder as is.

Marie Miller, Columbia River Gorge Visitor's Association and board member of Friends of Vista House was concerned about the selected date for the grand opening of the Mosier Twin Tunnels. Marie stated that there are many things going on at that time of the year and many of the volunteers that are called upon to help with events will be involved and will not be able to help with the celebration. Marie asked the AC if the date could be changed. The brainstorming session has been held and during that meeting the date proposed was discussed. Metropolitan Group had called various groups and found that most of them were very busy during May, June and the first half of July and that is why the last two weeks in July were chosen. Jeanette stated that information has already been included in a calendar that is being printed and will be distributed in January. Jeanette would need to alert them right away if we change the date. Jack Wiles said that spring is a busy time and the contact station will not be done until mid-May or April. The catchment is to be done in April. There are too many events planned at the beginning of spring. Jack stated that we should go ahead and have grand opening and there will be plenty of time for other events in the fall. It was decided the dates would not be changed.

HCRH Celebration

Julie Curtis has sent out two mailings regarding the celebration. One mailing provided information on the celebration and the other mailing was an outreach for sponsors of the event.

Jeanette asked if the AC would be willing to call people on the mailing list that they knew personally, then Metropolitan will call as a follow up.

Jack Wiles said that the goal of the celebration is to celebrate the re-connection and make the public aware of the valuable resources the HCRH has to offer.

The Public Relation's sub-committee is meeting this afternoon to develop a package for the event for the media. Media outreach will continue for 9

months to 1 year.

Carolyn Wood asked if we should hook in with other events such as the Gorge Games (July) or Cycle Oregon (September) events. (we will contact the sponsors and discuss co-ordination, co-operation, and/or collaboration.)

Janice Newton asked about the manpower to work during the event. Marie stated that the Visitor's Association members in Washington and Oregon want to help, but they do have a full load planned for July. Carolyn stated that the original proposal for the event is the "biggest and best" event; depending on money and participation. If there is enough money, people could be hired like they were for the 75th Anniversary to help with the event. Publicity and media coverage are most important. Some of the ideas in the proposal may not occur if funding is not available.

John Lundell asked if a full week event was too long. John stated that if it were a major anniversary, 100th, etc., a whole week would be understandable, but perhaps for this event it was a little overdone and should be scaled back.

Diane commented that we would have more of an idea on how much money will be available by January. Jeanette said that we can re-prioritize at that time. Bill Pattison said the event will be somewhat self-limiting; those parts of the proposal without interest will be dropped.

June 6 is a firm date for completion of the Mosier Twin Tunnels. After that date the contractor will start paying ODOT for every day they run over. The visitors contact station will be completed in April, the roadway by the end of December and paving will be completed by August. The weather will make the difference in the project completion dates. JAL will work on the fence during bad weather.

Brainstorming \$25,000 National Scenic Byway Funding

FHWA has proposed to distribute a portion of the National Scenic Byway funding to the byways. \$25,000 per year may be available for the next five years for each nationally designated Scenic Byway. The funding must be an 80% FHWA and 20% match.

The AC discussed ways the money could be used. One suggestion is to translate the new brochure into other languages. Jerry Igo reported that at the Tom McCall preserve the registration list shows visitors from at least 15 different countries. Bonneville Dam also has a lot of foreign tourists. The money could also be used to fund traveling to various conferences, updating the HCRH video (showing the new segments and the areas that have been changed). Jeffery Plummer suggested marketing Gorge

destinations and "punch list" items such as "safety eyes" on bridges and gutter and culvert restoration. A multi-media product is another idea. Diane McClay suggested a touchscreen video with printer. Dave Tilton suggested additional scenic enhancement projects, Jerry Igo suggested living history people. Janice Newton suggested that we receive community input at an evening public meeting and then have the HCRH AC prioritize the ideas. Jeanette Kloos agreed to do this. Janice asked if the \$25,000.00 needed to be applied for every year. The answer is yes.

Millennium Legacy Trail Designation

The HCRH was designated as one of 50 Millennium Legacy Trails last month. Also announced was \$520,000.00 from the National Endowment for the Arts to be used for art projects. At this time the plans for using the money are vague. Additional funding could be available. We will need to prepare a grant application.

Bridge Weight Limits

Frank Nelson and Scott Liesinger, ODOT Bridge Engineering Section, are in the process of evaluating all bridges in the State of Oregon for weight capacity. They have completed 45% of their evaluation.

Frank informed the AC that the crossbeams for Shepperd's Dell Bridge are inadequate and need to be re-enforced. Options include a high tech fabric like that used on Horsetail Bridge or re-enforcing cutting into the beams. A weight limitation was posted November 1. Dave Tilton asked how this is going to affect the tour buses. The tour buses can travel east to Vista House turn back to Corbett Hill Road or Jordan Interchange, then travel I-84 east to Bridal Veil and then get back on the HCRH, to Multnomah Falls. However, there are no regularly scheduled tours until spring. Frank asked if the old drawings of the bridge are available. Bob Hadlow commented that the bridge was one of a kind and that drawings are sparse, but he does have some information on this and other bridges and would send Frank and Scott what information he had. Multnomah County built it and is State owned. Jeanette asked that the HCRH AC be kept informed as proposals for strengthening the bridge are developed.

Frank will have more information on the Shepperd's Dell Bridge at the next meeting in January.

Horsetail Falls Bridge has been re-enforced with high-tech fabric. There are still six bridges along the HCRH that have not been evaluated but the evaluations should be completed within the next few months. Those bridges are; Sandy River-Troutdale, Crown Point Viaduct, Wahkeena, Multnomah Creek, East Multnomah Falls Viaduct, and Oneonta Gorge. Moffett Creek, Tanner Creek and Eagle Creek were not on the bridge log list. FHWA uses the Federal inventory to determine which bridges will be evaluated. If the bridge is listed in the bridge inventory it can receive

FHWA funding. If a bridge has been removed from inventory, state funding may be used. Tax money can be used if it relates to the appropriate transportation mode. The State is liable for any situations that happen on the bridges so they are moving quickly to correct all problems.

A long-range plan for restoration and preservation of historic bridges is being planned for the HCRH. Frank stated that the plan will take about two years but he would co-ordinate with the AC on how to proceed.

Distribution of HCRH Interpretive Brochure - Who needs copies?

Jeanette went over the distribution list for the brochures. She asked the AC to let her know if anyone else should receive brochures.

Plaque Policy

Bob Hadlow said that Kathy Schutt indicated there is an OPRD policy relating to plaques. We are seeking a copy of that policy. ODOT will prepare a photo inventory of the existing plaques, including information on current condition.

Casino Update

Jeanette referred to attachments that were included in the background package distributed to the AC (see attachment) regarding the casino. Governor Kitzhaber has rejected the proposal to build a casino in Cascade Locks. There is tribal property east of Hood River along the HCRH, in Madras and on US 26 in Warm Springs that could be used for building a casino. There has been no proposal received by ODOT for any of these locations. Art Carroll, Jurgen Hess, Gorge Commission Interim Director Claire Puchy and Jeanette visited the tribal land east of Hood River. The only access at this time is a small logging road. Survey flags were found along the road.

Kevin Bracy asked if all policies regarding vehicle use on the HCRH State Trail are in place.

Potential issues raised by a possible casino east of Hood River include impact on the HCRH Historic District and on access from I-84 to the site. The Hood River loops can not handle wide loads (motor homes and RV's). The HCRH AC unanimously approved a motion recommending that ODOT prepare a resolution for OTC consideration that would limit use of the HCRH State Trail to those uses included in the adopted HCRH State Trail Access Policy.

Diane McClay commented that if tribal members needed access through the gates that they call Kevin Price or Diane for the keys. Carolyn asked if they have been notified of the gate closure. Diane will take care of contacting them.

National Scenic Byway Conference Proposal

The Oregon Tourism Commission, WSDOT, USFS, ODOT, and US Fish & Wildlife will propose that the 2001 National Scenic Byway Conference be held in the Portland area. The Double Tree at Jantzen Beach has stated they will give government rates for use of their facility in September and have offered the same rates for May or June. Tours of both sides of the gorge and other byways in the area are being proposed before and after the conference. Washington State has three national scenic byways.

The selection of a site for 2001 National Scenic Byway Conference will be made in January. Three hundred people are expected to attend the conference.

PROJECT UPDATES

Hood River - Mosier

PHASE 2

Kevin Bracy, Project Manager, handed out photos showing how the project is proceeding. The contractor will continue to work through the winter months. There are 13 deck sections left to complete and they should be finished by the end of November. Cellular concrete pouring will begin the first week in December. The project could be completed by the end of the "century" weather permitting. The fascia panels go up as each deck is completed.

ROADS

This project is proceeding well. The wood from the Elk Creek Tunnel used for the wood canopy looks beautiful. This was a good resource and re-use of wood.

Alpha Omega is doing the masonry rockwork. They are forming the caps now. They will be sprayed with the permion to match the rest of the project. The color of the permion will be determined by test sections. Discussions are underway on whether the shoulder will be removed this year or just before paving next year.

VISITOR CONTACT STATION

The slab is expected to be poured on November 11. Heat cables will be installed inside the building for warmth.

Hood River-Mosier Parks this project went to bid October 28. J & P contractors bid was substantially lower than what was expected. This means that other parts of the project can be added. Currently the project includes bringing the utilities up from the Koberg property, grading, and restoring native vegetation at the Hanel Quarry and at the area east of the

tunnels.

Michael Igo asked about the seed list. He was concerned about the price of seed and if the seed would be seed that is good for this area. Sometimes seed is used that is not appropriate for the climate. Kevin Bracy will make sure that the contractor adheres to the right specifications for seeds in the contract.

Ryan Murray took a helicopter ride over the area and took pictures. Kevin presented the slides to the AC. They gave an overall view of the projects.

Jack Wiles suggested a time capsule be part of the opening celebration of the Mosier Twin Tunnels. Jack will pursue this idea.

VISITOR CONTACT STATION INTERPRETIVE PLAN

Sea Reach, LTD., has been hired to develop an Interpretive Plan for the Visitor Contact Station. Volunteers will need to have information on the HCRH, the former gravel operations, wildflowers, the tunnels and other topics. A workshop was held two weeks ago and the consensus was that the information contained in the building should relate to the tunnels. The local people will be a large component of the audience. The information at the station should change as the season's change and this way it will not become stale.

Moffit - Tanner Creek, Unit 2

Bid opening for this project will be in December. The low bidder will be announced at the next meeting and construction should begin in the spring. The bid for the project includes work on the trail, additions to the interpretive signs, desert varnish on the stairway, Toothrock Tunnel Bridge, and the caps for the street signs.

The petrified tree will be buried. The cost to change the trail alignment to keep the tree visible, including acquisition of additional land from the UPRR, was too high. Diane McClay asked if any of the petrified rock could be saved. Jeanette stated that it is estimated to cost \$10,000.00 to remove the rock. Carolyn commented that there is a petrified wood organization that may be interested and if any of the rock were removed she would like to have an exhibit the Gorge Discovery center.

Starvation Creek to Viento

There will be a meeting next week and a field review to discuss where this project should end and where the next project might begin at Viento.

HCRH Interpretive Sites and Signs

Sea Reach, Ltd., will be the contractor for this project.

Toothrock Tunnel Lighting

Toothrock Tunnel lighting project is near completion. The new lighting has been installed and the old lights are being removed.

National Historic Landmark Designation

Bob Hadlow is doing the final editing and will have the nomination in the mail by Tuesday.

Warrendale - Moffet Creek

Jeanette Kloos is investigating whether ODOT staff will be available to design this project or whether a consultant will be needed.

ACTIVITY STATUS REPORTS

ODOT

Charlie Sciscione, District 2C Manager, presented slides of the Bridal Veil and Shepperd's Dell area. The grindings from the Bridal Veil Bridge were spread on an area that can be used to turn around when approaching Shepperd's Dell from the east.

Charlie Sciscione shared some slides that had been taken of the shoulder along I-84. The slides show how the channel is changing and causing the shoulder along I-84 to fail. Charlie estimated the cost of repair to be around \$300,000.00.

The district has also been busy removing rock from the highway.

Bob Hadlow reported that the HCRH web site should be ready soon.

OPRD

Jack Wiles reported the OPRD has received the TEA-21 grant money (\$560,000.00) for the Vista House. They will be doing work on the balcony in the spring. The money will be used for the roof, window work, gutters and a new apron around the base of the structure. The cost to replace plastic window covers at Crown Point (due to vandalism) cost \$450.00 to \$500.00 each time.

The tile and copper roof will be taken off and heat coils will be added to help with heating the structure. The apron will be done in sections so that the building will remain open. This is a two-year grant.

Jack stated that funding for the water system might allow Starvation Creek to be open again. It will be used as a trailhead not a rest area. The septic system will not allow the area to be used as a rest area. The rest area signs along the highway will need to be changed to reflect that the next rest area is Memaloose. This should help cut down on over use at Starvation Creek.

The old Columbia River Highway bronze plaque formerly located at Starvation Creek is still missing. Bill suggested that mentioning this to the

media would inform the public and may help get the plaque back.

Dianne is working on some ideas to cut down on the vandalism to the wood panels at the tunnel. The wood in the tunnel has been marked already and she is concerned that more will happen unless something is done to stop vandalism. Kevin Price suggested that education in the schools at Mosier might be a good start.

USDA - Forest Service

Dave Tilton reported that there are no new federal projects on the HCRH. The sewage system at Multnomah Falls has been completed. The vegetation in the area needs to be completed. The AC complimented Dave on how well the design and plantings look.

The AIA plaque proposed to be located at Portland Women's Forum is waiting for approval from the OPRD before it can be placed.

The Forest Service was sent a development review stating that the Viewpoint Inn at Larch Mountain is being closed.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

Jeanette has received a page of development reviews; however, none of the reviews concern the HCRH.

Jeanette did receive a pre-application for a business on Cascade Avenue just west of 13th. OPRD has been given approval for demolition of the structures at Coopey Falls. They will need to be torn down. Burning the structures was not permitted.

MEMBERS ISSUES

Charlie has been told that ODOT owns the HCRH right of way around Ruthon Point. The berm between the two hills will be seeded.

Carolyn reported that a new Director, Michael Parry, has been appointed for the Gorge Discovery Center. Michael, who is from Colorado, has 30 years of experience and will begin his new position the Monday after Thanksgiving.

Jack asked when the building at the old Hood River dump will be removed.

Jeffery asked if there would be any plantings around the catchment. Kevin Bracy stated that there would be no new plantings at the catchment site.

Jeanette reminded everyone to get their sponsor's contact list for the event back to her as soon as possible.

Jerry Igo will be giving a presentation at the Discovery Center, December 1 at 7:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

Monday, January 10, 2000
Wood Village City Hall