OPRD Sustainability Plan Update 2014 - 2016

Date: May, 2017

Introduction:

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is organized to provide outstanding experiences in Oregon's most beautiful and historic places. At its core the agency provides sustainable recreation experiences to current and future visitors to the park system. This commitment to sustainability has been repeatedly re-affirmed by the Oregon State Park Commission through the Natural Resource and Environmental Management Policy (COM 20-0) and the Centennial Horizons Strategic Vision Plan, which laid out several areas of department focus through the year 2022. This strategic vision sets out key objectives including:

Principle 1 – Saving Oregon's Special Places

Principle 2 – Connecting People to Meaningful Outdoor Experiences

Principle 3 – Taking the Long View

Combined these provide powerful guidance to agency staff and stakeholders. This guidance has helped the agency achieve many of the items in the 2014 sustainability plan, as well as explore new ways to incorporate sustainability into the everyday activities of the agency.

Update (May 2017)

OPRD has put great effort into furthering the agencies sustainability program. Focus has been on areas where we can have the most influence and the biggest impacts. By doing so, OPRD has not only made significant reductions, it has seen large reductions in operations costs. The savings from these measures have been used to further the sustainability program in other areas. Example; Savings from the purchase of garbage compactors was used to install on-demand water heaters in the campgrounds.

Strategy Area: Resource and Material Use

Action	Descriptions	Econ	Environ	Comm	Completed By
Achieve 3% reduction in fleet fuel/mileage	One of the largest cost and environmental impacts of agency operations is the use of fuel and driving miles on fleet vehicles. OPRD has been actively reducing the size, number of vehicles and miles driven since July of 2013. The goal is to achieve a reduction of 3% in fuel usage and miles driven compared to the 11-13 biennium.	X	X		June 2015
Update: OPRD has met this goal by reducing the number, size, and miles driven. 4.3% reduction					Completed
Green Chemistry Implementation	OPRD has for many years been using green chemicals in janitorial operations. The agency will develop the next level of material use and purchasing guidelines to direct agency purchases to meet the directives of the Green Chemistry Executive Order 12-05.	X	X	X	January 2015
Update: OPRD has met this goal by developing internal green standards and robust training to staff.					Completed

Long Term Goals

Create Internal Innovation Fund	A constant barrier to park projects to improve sustainability is a lack of funding or technical expertise. The agency will re-establish the internal innovation fund to help share the costs of efficiency projects.	X	X		July 2017
Update: OPRD reestablished the fund and has administered it through our IMPACT program.					Completed
Mowed Turf Reduction Project	Mowed turf is an expectation of many parks, but requires a significant investment of personnel time, equipment usage, and water usage. This project will develop a statewide strategy to reduce the agencies mowed areas. It will focus on maintaining levels of service without significant impacts to park aesthetics though landscape plans that replace mowed turf with native plants/shrubs or alternative landscaping.		X		Sept 2018
Update: OPRD is combining this effort with the drought water reduction program as they are related					In Progress
Develop model for utility use by site type	OPRD currently provides utilities to visitors based on customer expectation. The agency has only rough calculations on the energy use by site type (RV, Tent, Cabin/Yurt, and support infrastructure). OPRD will develop better metrics to help plan for future energy costs, and make better development decisions to reduce costs.	X	X		July 2020
Develop building and park improvement standards that are more sustainable.	OPRD will develop minimum development standards for the construction and rehabilitation of common style buildings such as restrooms or showers. These standards will target ways to reduce energy consumption and the use of sustainable building materials.	X	X		Dec 2017 (Note: OPRD currently incorporates sustainability)
Reduce deferred maintenance through enhanced preventive maintenance planning	OPRD will develop a long term strategy for incorporating the latest condition assessment data into our computerized maintenance management system as to identify highest return on our investment and further extend the life of assets.	X	X		July 2017
Update: OPRD has incorporated the condition assessments into OPRIS and will be used in 17/19					In Progress

Balancing Agency Needs with the Natural Environment

Action	Descriptions	Econ	Environ	Comm	Completed By
Develop Sustainability Chapter for all new Park Master Plans	As part of the OPRD commitment to incorporating sustainability to park operations, OPRD will develop a sustainability section for each park master plan. This section will outline site specific actions for park operations. These site specific actions can also help connect the general public to OPRD sustainable actions through the planning process.		X	X	Dec 2017

Develop a checklist to guide park staff in measures to reduce their electrical usage.	Electricity use is one of the largest environmental impacts of agency operations. However, most energy usage is from visitors not staff actions. This action will create a minimum standards checklist of efficiencies that parks staff will need to incorporate into their facilities and in turn reduce their overall electrical use.	X	X		July 2017
Update: While standards for shop facilities are in place, they need expanded to other facilities.					In Progress
Develop Sustainability evaluation for building condition inspections	OPRD routinely conducts building condition assessments to evaluate maintenance needs. These assessments will be expanded to identify improvement areas like: weatherization and insulation, lighting efficiencies, and water-saving technologies		X		Dec 2017
Update: Being included in the Critical Systems Inspections (CSI). Program is being expanded.					In Progress

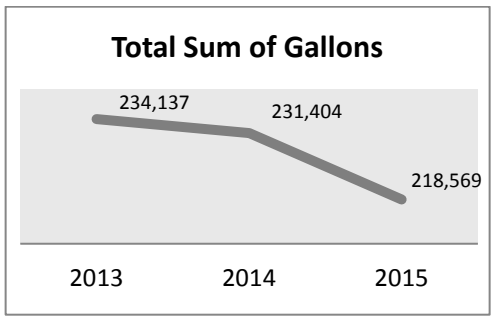
Long Term Goals

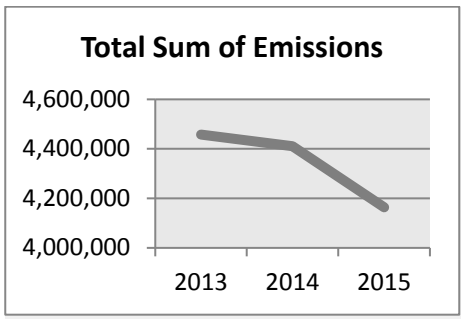
Develop off-the-grid park facilities	OPRD is looking for park facilities that could be developed or retrofitted to meet customer service needs but require no grid energy connection.		X		Dec 2020

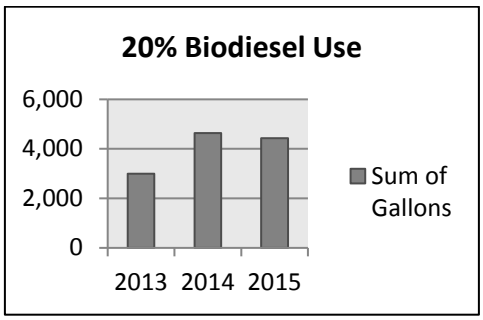
Development of Learning Systems

Action	Descriptions	Econ	Environ	Comm	Completed By
Implement sustainability into Employee Orientation and IMPACT Training	OPRD is currently revising and updating employee orientation training. OPRD's commitment to sustainability can be added to this training.		X	X	Sept 2017
Update: IMPACT Training includes statewide Green Chemical training					
Develop GIS Layer for Pesticide and Herbicide Application	Currently our field applications of Pesticide and Herbicides are tracked on paper. Information is dispersed at a park level. Better decision making and adherence to agency IPM practices can be developed through creating a GIS Layer for applicators.		X	X	Sept 2017
Update: Pilot Project has been started. Statewide application will take place after pilot					
Statewide Let's GO program	OPRD has been looking to connect parks and recreation to historically underserved populations. The Let's GO program is currently a regional pilot program designed to attract new park users to recreational activities and parks.		X		December 2019
Update: OPRD continues to offer "Let's GO" to a wide range of socially diverse groups/individuals					In Progress
Internal and External Sustainability Recognition	OPRD has several programs for recognition of internal efforts. Sustainability can be included as an award or recognition category. Recognition can also be extended to external grant and partnership opportunities.		X	X	June 2017

Fleet Fuel Reductions







Energy Use/Visitor Data

Criterion	*Year*			*Average Use Per Overnight Visitor**		
	2014	*2015*	*2016*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
No. of Overnight Visitors	2,491,805	2,590,942	2,741,578			
No. of Day-Use Visitors	45,510,297	48,741,330	51,716,729			
Electricity - kwh	1,339,779	1,316,251	1,383,810	0.5377	0.5080	0.5047
Natural Gas - Therms	2,251	2,666	2,501	0.0469	0.0531	0.0492
Propane - Gallons	102,937	102,358	96,221	0.0421	0.0403	0.0358
Heating Oil - Gallons	3,451	2,535	3,245			
BTUs	14,000,355	13,867,040	13,535,403	5.62	5.35	4.94
Water (Municipal only) - Gallons	58,046,911	61,442,556	64,099,368			

*** Based on previous data, overnight visitors account for approximately 92% of the total energy use - above data assumes they use 100% of energy.**

Current Efforts

OPRD has been committed to organized sustainability effort for over a decade.

- Only native plants are used for landscaping unless the location already has non-native plants established (e.g., Shore Acres and State Capitol).
- Active Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan for each park management unit, which provides the appropriate measures for controlling pests and invasive plant species (both land and aquatic) Native plants have priority in new landscape projects.
- Computer printer software defaults to 2-sided copying and black/white printing. Printer paper is 30% recycled and FSC certified.
- Mixed paper recycling bins are provided near printers and in individual employee work spaces.
- Specifications also include protection of heritage (cultural, historical and archaeological) sites.
- Online training and meetings are available to minimize travel. Fuel-efficient and hybrid vehicles are used when feasible.
- Best Management Practices (BMPs) are used to protect natural resources.
- Project review/approvals are all online. Project considerations include natural resources (plants, wildlife and forestry), heritage (cultural, historical and archaeological), safety (hazardous materials, OSHA, public safety) and sustainability.
- Environmental requirements are coordinated with the applicable jurisdiction in advance to ensure that the project can meet the requirements.
- Park staff often re-use/re-purpose materials, such as re-using wood from a deck to repair a bridge deck and turning old yurt furniture into cabinets.
- Our larger parks, such as Silver Falls, utilize wood from hazard trees for lumber on various historic restoration projects.

- Some parks have installed garbage compactors and recycling centers in large campgrounds which have cut our disposal costs.
- A list of HQ (OPRD Headquarters) employees, who can speak languages in addition to English, is kept at the Front Desk in case they are needed to translate.
- Green products, when available on State Price Agreements, are purchased via State Price Agreement. When not available on State Price Agreements, parks will seek out alternative green products and purchase if available.
- Projects, which do not require or have ADA guidelines or requirements, are designed to incorporate as many ADA features as feasible. Example: Boot/Bike Rinse Station - there are no ADA guidelines or requirements for these types of facilities, but OPRD incorporated ADA features such as the water hydrant meets the 5lbs pressure to operate, the dimensions allow wheelchair access, and the grating meets the 1/2" ADA grating
- Review projects to determine the level of energy-efficient/sustainable products that are feasible prior to purchasing. It is important to research when high-efficiency products are feasible and when they're not. Vendor data and occasionally products which are considered by ODOE to be efficient do not always perform as claimed. Reviewing the technical data and speaking with people who have actually tried the product is necessary to ensure that the sustainable benefits meet expectations. Several examples point to testing new approaches:
- No smoking policy for park visitors (except in vehicles and campsites).

Current External Practices & Goals

- Grant information, applications and submittals are online. Grant applications are partially judged based on sustainable practices listed by the applicant. Grant applicants are often municipalities, who have sustainability standards already in place and are aware of the importance of implementing those practices within their grant projects. Examples include the use of solar, re-using materials, recycling products, and planning products that ensure the future use of an area with minimal impact to the area's natural systems.
- Project opportunities are posted on the DAS-ORPIN database.
- Agency website includes State Park features, locations updates and nearby towns and attractions (free publicity for local communities)
- Recycling containers out in the parks are placed near the park exit for visitor convenience, which also minimizes fuel consumption for recycling companies (central pick up in one place), and visitor safety (recycling company truck doesn't need to drive in/out of camp loops where kids are often running around).
- Park rangers speak at schools about plants and wildlife, environmental protection, as well as providing field opportunities. Education and/or recreational programs at the parks are provided for children and adults such as the Junior Ranger program, "Leave No Trace", guided walks, kayak tours, star gazing, heritage talks, Civil War re-enactments, etc.
- OPRD routinely partners with other groups such as the SOLV Beach Clean-up, schools, museums, ODFW, and non-profit groups to provide environmental, educational and recreational opportunities
- Park work provides permanent and temporary job opportunities for people with various skills, education levels and ages: Examples: park hosts are retired people, interns are typically students, project development requires input from planners, archaeologists, historians, property managers, park rangers, engineers, accountants, botanists, biologists, etc. A program between OPRD and DOC also provides work to inmates that include making park signs, park products such as bicycle racks, sign boards, and doing maintenance work such as storm damage cleanup, or painting.
- Purchase products available locally to support local businesses and save on greenhouse gas emissions (reduced transportation).
- For every dollar spent on managing State Parks, nearly $17 are spent by park visitors in the local economy with 30 miles on food, fuel, supplies, etc. The vast majority of State Parks are in rural areas, which typically are the hardest hit during economic downturns. In addition, properties adjacent to State Parks have a higher land value, because of the close vicinity to scenic and recreational opportunities.