

Agenda Item No.:	2
Work Plan:	State Forests Work Plan
Topic:	Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust
Presentation Title:	Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust Mission and Programs
Date of Presentation:	July 24, 2018
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SUMMARY

- Presentation and discussion on the history, mission and key programs of the Department’s supporting non-profit, the Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust, with a focus on the current status of the Salmonberry Trail project.
- The Board is asked to endorse the Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust’s Strategic Action Plan which describes key program initiatives being pursued in support of agency programs.

CONTEXT

The Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust serves as a non-profit supporting organization to the agency and the State Forests Division. The Division and the Trust are interested in expanding the Trust’s ability to support programs on state forests, and to bring new partners and revenue streams to meet the challenge of providing the many public benefits associated with recreation, education, and interpretation programs on state forests. Such an expanded partnership between the Division and the Trust holds promise for developing a new model for funding management for these public benefits, one that relies on a public-private partnership.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Trust’s mission is “*Inspiring Oregonians to learn about and enjoy the many benefits of their state forests by nurturing partnerships and supporting the Oregon Department of Forestry.*” Formed in 1999, the Trust initially spearheaded a successful fundraising effort to enable a public-private partnership for planning and construction of the Tillamook Forest Center. Since the opening of the Forest Center in 2006, the Trust has remained active through continued fundraising to support specific projects and programs at the Center, including awarding annual grants to local educators through the JE Brown Education Scholarship program. More recently, the Trust has expanded its support to the agency through a successful effort to raise funds for construction of an outdoor education pavilion at the Forest Center, a project celebrated with a grand opening on June 22. The Trust also created the State Forests Recreation Fund to support recreation programs, and joined the Salmonberry Trail Intergovernmental Agency as its non-profit fundraising and development partner. Support for the Forest Center, the broader recreation management program on state forests, and the Salmonberry project all contribute to meeting the Trust’s mission, and continues to expand the list of partner organizations and contributors to the Trust.

The Trust is a 501 (c)(3) organization, whose work on behalf of the agency is directed by a twelve member Board of Trustees (Attachment 1 – TFHT Board of Trustees Roster). *Ex-Officio* Trustees include the State Forester and the Chair of the Board of Forestry. Day-to-day work is overseen by a part-time Executive Director, provided by the agency through a memorandum of agreement between the organizations. A number of part-time contractors provide additional capacity to carry-out fundraising and development, and communications activities.

The Trust carries-out fundraising and program support activities in three primary areas: recreation, education, and interpretation. In doing so, the Trust solicits grants and donations and manages separate funds to support the Tillamook Forest Center and its programs, recreation management programs on state forest lands, and the Salmonberry Trail project.

The Board of Trustees recently completed a strategic planning process in an effort to better articulate priorities and initiatives needed to expand its support for the agency and the Division. (Attachment 2 - Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust Strategic Action Plan 2017-2020). The plan describes the strategic focus areas, goals, objectives, and specific actions that TFHT is pursuing in the near-term to achieve the goal of increased support to the agency and Division.

Key elements of the Strategic Action Plan are activities that support fundraising and development for the Salmonberry Trail project. The Trust has served as the non-profit supporting organization and fiscal agent for the Salmonberry Trail effort since 2013. In that role, the Trust has provided oversight and coordination for a fundraising and outreach effort that has resulted in over \$2 million in grants, donations and in-kind contributions towards the project. These resources have enabled completion of a concept plan for the overall project and specific segment level plans for the coastal and valley segments of the trail, development of a strategic marketing plan, an economic and health benefits study, and creation of an array of marketing and outreach tools. These efforts have helped create a situation today where the first trail segment is under construction in the City of Tillamook this summer, and a major trailhead development project in western Washington County is scheduled to break ground this fall.

Earlier this year the Trust retained its first full-time employee, a Communications and Outreach Director to assist with preparations for an initial capital campaign to fund trail construction in the valley segment of the trail. The Trust is currently pursuing grants to support the addition of a full-time Development Director, and to create a full-time Executive Director position (currently half-time). We anticipate launching our first capital campaign in conjunction with the trailhead project, with a goal of funding a catalyst project to build several miles of trail on the eastern end of the Salmonberry corridor that will link to the existing Banks-Vernonia trail, creating a loop opportunity.

RECOMMENDATION

- Staff recommends that the Board endorse the focus areas, goals, objectives and actions described in the TFHT Strategic Action Plan.

NEXT STEPS

- Staff from the Trust will return in 2019 to provide updates on key initiatives.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust Board of Trustees Roster
- Attachment 2 – Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust Strategic Action Plan 2017-2020