

Agenda Item No.:	C
Work Plan:	State Forests Work Plan
Topic:	Proposed State Forest administrative rule revision addressing Senate Bill 116
Presentation Title:	Forest Recreation Rules Revision
Date of Presentation:	January 3, 2018
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CONTEXT

Senate Bill 116 (2017) calls for the Department of Forestry (Department) to honor the pass issued by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) to permit the free recreational use of state forest lands by disabled veterans, as well as, active duty military personnel on leave on Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veteran’s Day. The Bill became law January 1, 2018.

Under current Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR), all users of state forests campgrounds are required to pay a camping fee or could be fined. Revision of the Division 25 rules will help to ensure implementation of the statute in a manner that ensures a favorable experience for visitors and meets the needs of the State Forests Division.

BACKGROUND

OPRD administers a Special Access Pass program for U.S. veterans with any level of service-connected disability. This pass allows pass holders to park for free at the 26 state parks that charge a day-use parking fee. It also covers camping costs in RV sites, tent campsites and standard horse camp sites. This benefit does not cover yurts, cabins or other special park facilities, nor does it cover the \$8 fee to make reservations or the \$7 per night charge for a second vehicle. Pass holders may camp for free up to 10 days per month.

Active duty U.S. military on official leave are also provided a benefit under this program. These service members may request a refund of fees paid after their visit by submitting documentation of their visit and leave status.

Division staff have drafted proposed rule language to address administration of the Veteran's Special Access Pass program on State Forest lands, as well as, some additional proposed changes to address other minor issues or challenges.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Board of Forestry (Board) direction to begin rule-making, next steps are:

- The Department will return to the Board in April 2018, after the public rulemaking process has concluded, to present a summary of public hearings, proposed changes based on the feedback, and to obtain approval of the final rules by the Board.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the Department to begin the formal rulemaking process according to the Oregon Administrative Procedures Act and return in April with a summary of public comment and proposed final rule language for Board adoption.

ATTACHMENT

- (1) Draft proposal of Division 25 rule revisions.
- (2) Summary of proposed rule changes