

**Oregon Department of Forestry
Staff Analysis of
Tillamook County – Board of Forestry Land Exchange**

BACKGROUND

In 2014, Tillamook County (County) and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) began discussions concerning a possible land exchange. In May 2016 ODF and the County entered into an Agreement of Intent to Explore Land Exchange.

The exchange proposes to transfer a parcel of State Board of Forestry land (Trask Park – 87 acres) to Tillamook County. In return, the County will transfer ownership of a parcel of County land (Sprague Memorial Wayside – 154.4 acres) to the Board of Forestry (BOF).

The Tillamook District does not have an approved Acquisition/Exchange Plan. However, this land exchange has been approved by the State Forester in accordance with OAR 629-033-0015(2).

Trask Park:

In 1991, ODF and Tillamook County entered into a Forest Land Management Agreement, which allowed the County to manage Trask Park for recreational purposes including the installation, operation and maintenance of recreation facilities. Any harvest of timber was done by and through ODF at the site. This agreement remained in place for 20 years.

In 2011, an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) was entered into between ODF and the County which replaced the 1991 agreement. The IGA extended the time period for the management of Trask Park by the County by fifty years and includes the following provision:

Land Exchange: “ODF and COUNTY agree that it is their intent to work together to complete an exchange of land, acceptable to both parties and in accordance with ODF’s administrative rules governing state forest land acquisitions and exchanges (OAR 629-033), whereby ownership of the State Forest Land, upon which Trask River Campground/Park is located, will be transferred to the COUNTY.”

Trask Park currently has camping sites for recreational vehicles and tents, water pumps, vault toilets, and a host site with electric and water hook up. Trask Park also provides access to the North Fork Trask River and main stem Trask River. Access to Trask Park is via Trask River County Road, approximately eleven miles east of Tillamook.

Sprague Memorial Wayside:

In 1997 a Lease of Real Property was entered into between ODF and the County for the Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel owned by Tillamook County. The initial term of the lease was 20 years but was later amended to a 40 year term.

Sprague Memorial Wayside is operated and maintained by ODF and is utilized as a day-use site by travelers. The site has a parking area, vault toilets, picnic tables, interpretive kiosk and ½ mile loop trail. The Sprague Memorial Wayside is maintained along with the other ODF trailheads and campgrounds along the Highway 6 corridor, approximately twelve miles east of Tillamook.

BENEFITS AND VALUES ACHIEVED

The County would like to invest in upgrades to the infrastructure at Trask Park by obtaining grant dollars. An obstacle for the County to compete for grants, or to prioritize investments, is not having ownership of the land. Likewise, an obstacle to ODF for future investment at Sprague Memorial Wayside for upgrades or expansion is lack of ownership of the land. An exchange between the two parties resulting in ownership of lands where infrastructure has been created is mutually beneficial and provides for more efficient management of the properties.

This land exchange furthers the objectives of ORS 530.010, OAR 629-035-0020, and OAR 629-033-0010 by providing recreational opportunities and social benefits to the public, streamlining management of the parcels, which will provide economic and environmental benefits, and results in the consolidation of state forest lands making management more economically feasible.

ASSESSMENT OF VALUES

Economic Values:

➤ **Acres and Appraised Values**

The third-party appraisal report information assigns the following total acres and values for each landowner.

- County acres: 154.4 County Wholesale Value: \$589,000
- BOF acres: 80.0 BOF Wholesale Value: \$541,000

➤ **Balance of Values**

- ODF will exchange 7 additional BOF acres on the Trask Park parcel to the County to balance the \$48,000 difference between values. In an effort to avoid incurring additional appraisal costs, and in consideration of the fact that the values are already relatively close, the value of the additional 7 acres was calculated as follows:

- A per-acre value of the Trask Park parcel was determined by dividing the appraised value (\$541,000) by the number of acres (80) to get a value of (\$6,762.50) per acre. Next, the difference in the current parcel values (\$48,000) was divided by the per-acre value (6,762.50) to determine the number of additional acres needed and arrived at (7.09) acres.

➤ **Mineral Rights**

- A mineral rights assessment will not be conducted for this exchange as mineral rights will not be exchanged with surface rights.

Environmental Values

A third-party biological assessment was completed by Turnstone Environmental Consultants Inc. and concluded the following:

➤ **ODF (BOF) Parcel**

- The Trask Park parcel provides many wildlife habitat types including mixed deciduous/coniferous forest, mature coniferous forest, deciduous forest, riparian communities, and a large river system.
- Marginal northern spotted owl habitat occurs within the parcel and may be used by foraging and dispersing owls; however, it is unlikely that northern spotted owls use the parcel for nesting.
- Potential marbled murrelet nesting habitat exists within the 10.22 acres of mature coniferous forest within the Trask Park parcel, which is located less than 50 miles from the Pacific Ocean.
- There is no documented use of the Trask Park parcel by marbled murrelets; however, they may use the suitable habitat within the parcel. The Trask Park parcel does not overlap any designated critical habitat for marbled murrelet.
- The Upper Trask and the North Fork Trask rivers have deep-water, high-gradient habitat and continuously contain high-flowing water providing permanently flooded, upper perennial, riverine systems with unconsolidated bottoms.
- The North Fork of the Trask, South Fork of the Trask, and Upper Trask rivers that border the Trask Park parcel all have rearing and migration habitat for Coho salmon. Low velocity flow areas with potential rearing habitat were also present.
- The Upper Trask, North Fork Trask, and South Fork Trask rivers are large rivers with low-gradient spawning and rearing habitat for Pacific lamprey, winter and summer steelhead, and native fall and spring Chinook salmon; additionally, these large river systems are rearing and migration habitat for native Coho salmon.
- The state of Oregon lists five plant species as threatened or endangered in Tillamook County, none of which are likely to be present within the Trask Park parcel.

➤ County Parcel

- The Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel mostly contains young forest with a mixture of red alder and Douglas-fir overstory trees and an understory with sword fern and shrub species, such as salmonberry and red elderberry. There is also a smaller component of mature mixed coniferous/deciduous forest.
- Marginal northern spotted owl habitat occurs within the Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel and may be used by foraging and dispersing owls; however, it is unlikely that northern spotted owls use the parcel for nesting.
- Potential marbled murrelet nesting habitat also exists within the Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel, in the 33.8 acres of mature mixed coniferous/deciduous forest, which is also located less than 50 miles from the Pacific Ocean.
- There is no documented use of the parcel by marbled murrelets; however, they may use the suitable habitat within the parcel. The Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel does not overlap any designated critical habitat for marbled murrelet.
- The Lower Wilson River has deep-water habitat, continuously contains flowing water throughout the year, and provides a non-tidal, lower perennial riverine system with an unconsolidated bottom immediately adjacent to the property.
- The Lower Wilson River segment that borders the Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel contains rearing and migration habitat for Coho salmon.
- The large river system provides low-gradient spawning and rearing habitat for native fall and spring Chinook, native winter steelhead, and hatchery summer steelhead; additionally, the Lower Wilson River is rearing and migration habitat for native Coho salmon.
- The state of Oregon lists five plant species as threatened or endangered in Tillamook County, none of which are likely to be present within the Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel.

Social Values

A Recreation Value Assessment was completed for all parcels by the ODF District Recreation Unit Forester that concluded the following:

- The Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel owned by Tillamook County that would be transferred to ODF possesses moderately valuable recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities. These lands provide opportunities for dispersed recreation activities that currently occur across the forest. These activities include angling, swimming, wildlife viewing, hunting, and white water river access.

- The Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel and the associated riparian areas offer small areas of forest habitat that are lush in ground vegetation with scattered older Douglas-fir and red alder tree species that are attractive to outdoor recreationists.
- The Demolay Park portion of the Sprague Memorial Wayside parcel would likely remain as the use is today – walk-in day-use opportunity.
- Trask Park has great potential for further development as a recreation destination and provides excellent opportunities for camping, angling, swimming, hiking, OHV staging, and a scenic park setting. There is also potential for historic interpretation and education at the site.
- This exchange does not impact the ability for ODF to provide and manage recreational opportunities on the Tillamook State Forest. The exchange also does not impact any objectives outlined in the Tillamook State Forest Action Plan Update (2000).
- Other recreational opportunities exist on other ODF ownership on the Tillamook State Forest that would mitigate any opportunities transferred to Tillamook County with this land exchange.

Cultural Resources Evaluation

A review by ODOT for cultural resources determined that there are no known archeological or cultural sites present on either of these two parcels. Notification of the proposed exchange was provided to the State Historic Preservation Office, the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde, and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on January 30, 2018 at the Tillamook County Courthouse. No members of the public attended the hearing.

The public comment period began on December 20, 2017 and ended on February 28, 2018. No public comments were received.