

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 18, 2015

Agenda Item: 7a

Information

Topic: 2015-2024 Statewide Trails Plan Update

Presented by: Terry Bergerson and Kreg Lindberg (Oregon State University)

Background: The last Statewide Trails Plan for Oregon was completed by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) in February 2005, and is coming to the end of its ten-year planning horizon. The purpose of the 2015-2024 statewide trails planning effort is to provide guidance for the Recreational Trails Program (Federal funds) and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Grant Program, and information and recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in making recreational trail policy and planning decisions. It also provides guidance for other OPRD-administered grant programs including the Local Government Grant (Lottery), Land and Water Conservation Fund (Federal), and County Opportunity (RV funds) Grant Programs. Besides satisfying grant program requirements, the primary intent of this plan is to provide up-to-date, high-quality information to assist recreation providers with trail system planning in Oregon.

OPRD was given responsibility for recreational trails planning in 1971 under the “State Trails Act” (ORS 390.950 to 390.990). In general, the policy of the statute is as follows: “In order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding resident and tourist population, and in order to promote public access to, travel within and enjoyment and appreciation of, the open-air, outdoor areas of Oregon, trails should be established both near urban areas in the state and within, adjacent to or connecting highly scenic areas more remotely located.”

At a previous commission meeting workshop (September 2013) staff presented information about the overall planning components, process, and timeline. The plan has been titled, *Oregon Trails 2015: A Vision for the Future*. The planning process began in August 2013, taking an innovative approach to statewide trails planning by conducting simultaneous ATV, snowmobile, non-motorized, and water trails planning efforts. The plan also establishes a review process for potential State Scenic Waterway corridor additions.

Information Presented: Public outreach was a key emphasis in the planning effort, which included statistically reliable surveys of trail users and non-motorized boaters, resulting in feedback and opinions from 7,450 randomly selected Oregon residents. OPRD contracted with Oregon State University (OSU) to conduct four separate surveys of state residents regarding their participation in four categories of trail-related recreation: non-motorized trails, non-motorized boating, motorized (ATV/ OHV), and snowmobile recreation. Survey results provide recreation planners across the state with up-to-date information for use in local and regional planning. Dr. Kreg Lindberg will provide a summary of survey methods and results.

Regional trails planning workshops were held in 14 locations across the state, allowing additional public input on trails issues and funding need for each of the four trail category types. In addition, workshop attendees had an opportunity to nominate top water trail and State Scenic Waterway corridor additions.

OPRD also made a strong effort to involve trail providers (local, county, state, federal, non-profit) from across the state in the planning process. Collaborative trail planning efforts included:

- Four separate trails plan advisory committees (ATV, snowmobile, non-motorized, water) to assist with the concurrent planning process.
- A series of online surveys (ATV, snowmobile, non-motorized, water trails) of Oregon's public recreation providers to determine region-level need for trail funding and issues affecting recreational trail provision.
- Two separate advisory committees to assist with using trails planning findings to develop a set of ATV grant program evaluation criteria for evaluating ATV grant proposals and RTP grant program evaluation criteria for evaluating ATV, snowmobile, non-motorized and water trail grant proposals. A substantial number of the total evaluation points available for both sets of criteria are tied directly to findings from the trails planning effort. Grant award recommendations from these advisory committees are presented to the commission for approval.

In addition to funding need, the planning process has identified three top management issues for each trail category type in the state. For ATV and snowmobile trails, closure of trails and unimproved backcountry roads on federal lands came to the forefront as top challenges. For non-motorized trails, more trails connecting towns/ public places and need for improved trail maintenance were identified. For non-motorized boating, increased boater access and lack of funding for non-motorized boating are top challenges. Planning recommendations were developed for addressing these issues in the coming years.

Terry Bergerson will provide a summary of these collaborative planning efforts and how all results were integrated into trails plan findings, recommendations, and grant evaluation criteria.

Next Steps:

- Staff will finalize draft planning document (November 2015)
- Public review of draft plan (December 2015)
- Submit final plan to Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission for adoption (February 2016)

Prior Action by Commission: Participation in trails planning process work session in September 2013.

Action Requested: None

Prepared by: Terry Bergerson

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November 18, 2015

Agenda Item:	7b	Action
Topic:	Naming New Park in Tillamook County	
Presented by:	Chris Havel	

In June 2014, the commission approved purchase of a 357-acre property on the south end of the Sand Lake Estuary. Formal planning for this park is underway, but the department's intention from the beginning has been to focus on the property's strength as a complex of beaches, dunes, estuarine tidal flats, marsh, and forested uplands by keeping development to a minimum. Locally, the property is referred to as the Beltz farm, harkening back to a past owner.

For the next stage of its life, the property deserves a name that illustrates its natural pedigree. After considering options for names that included local geography, historical figures, and natural features, staff propose: **Sitka Sedge State Natural Area**.

Sedges are grasslike plants with triangular stems and small flowers, typically growing in the kind of wet ground common at the park. Sitka sedge in particular is a species found only on the west coast of North America. As a beautiful, graceful, native plant, it appears to be perfect fit to lend its name to this new, low-key park that will provide opportunities for light hiking, wildlife watching, nature study, and beach access.



Action Requested: Approval.

Prior Action by Commission: June 2014, Item 7.a. Sand Lake Initiative - Beltz Farm Acquisition.

Prepared by: Chris Havel