

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 16, 2016

Agenda Item: 7a

Information

Topic: Oregon Beach Bill 50th Anniversary

Presented by: Chris Havel

The 1967 Oregon Beach Bill, a landmark piece of legislation that changed the Oregon's coast, turns 50 years old in 2017. In cooperation with the Oregon Coast Visitors Association and Travel Oregon, local communities and visitors will have a chance to attend events, experience the history, and appreciate the enormous, positive effect this decision had, and continues to have, on people and the resource.

Details of the celebration are still forming, but the department expects new events focused just on the celebration, and traditional events to hop on board and use their gatherings as an opportunity to remind people of the value of a public shore. The anniversary year will be used as an opportunity to energize volunteers, encourage active recreation, and strengthen a sense of individual pride and stewardship necessary to the longevity of this Oregon legacy. High-minded aspirations aside, visitors will also have a chance to eat, drink, buy merchandise, patronize coast businesses, and support local artists whose work embodies the spirit of the shore.

Prior Action: None

Action requested: None

Attachments: Selected pages from "Oregon Beaches: A Birthright Preserved," a booklet produced by Oregon State Parks in 1992. Full version online at <http://bit.ly/birthrightpreserved>.

Prepared by: Chris Havel

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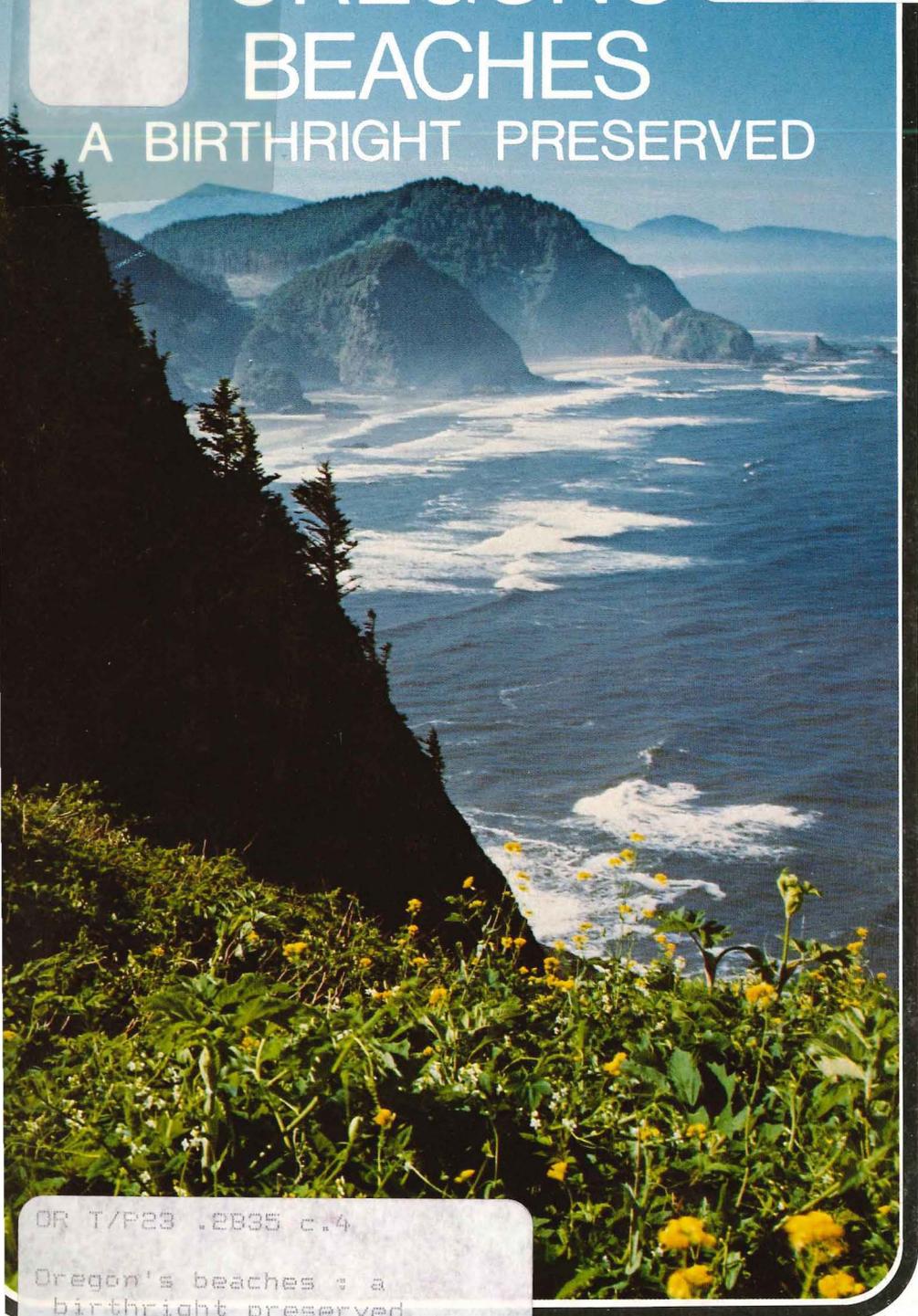
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OREGON'S BEACHES

A BIRTHRIGHT PRESERVED



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Oregon's beaches : a
birthright preserved

OREGON'S BEACHES

A BIRTHRIGHT PRESERVED

*Cover Photo: View South from Cape Mearns
(Oregon Department of Transportation)*

Published by
Oregon State Parks and Recreation Branch
September, 1977

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Oregon's beaches : a
birthright preserved

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oregon's Beaches, A Birthright Preserved, was written by Kathryn A. Straton of the Historic Preservation Section, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Branch. She gratefully acknowledges the cooperation and assistance of those who helped and inspired her during the writing of this history.

Ms. Straton offers her sincere thanks to Frank C. McKinney for guidance and technical advice at each stage of research and writing; Sidney Bazett, Judge Alfred T. Goodwin, Robert W. Gormsen, Justice Edward H. Howell, Janet McLennan, Judge Gus J. Solomon and Judge Robert Y. Thornton for reviewing the manuscript and for their thoughtful comments; Sheila Hammond for her preliminary research; Stephen Dow Beckham for his historical perspectives and to her Parks Branch colleagues for their encouragement and support.

Finally, the author expresses her appreciation to the State Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for their direction and counsel: Loran L. "Stub" Stewart, chairman; A. W. Sweet, vice-chairman; Eric W. Allen, Jr.; Lucille Beck; Bob Frazier; Frank R. Gilchrist; Roger Loennig; Warren A. McMinimee; P. M. Stephenson and honorary member Alfred D. Collier.

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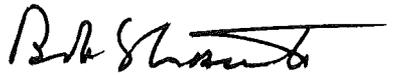
FOREWORD

Oregon's majestic ocean beaches are among the state's most popular scenic and recreational attractions. And, they are now and forever will be preserved for free and uninterrupted public use. **Oregon's Beaches, A Birthright Preserved** is a most appropriate title for a book that reminds Oregonians that the public's long-established right to have access to and enjoy this exceptional resource was in grave doubt just a decade ago.

How that doubt was resolved — in favor of the public interest — is what this book is all about. Here is a vivid account of what *almost happened* to Oregon's beaches . . . and how an extraordinary piece of legislation called "The Beach Bill" eventually established, once and for all time, that the public has acquired recreational rights by custom to the dry sands along Oregon's 362-mile coastline.

My personal involvement in the battle to preserve our beaches, not only for my generation but for generations to come, was an experience I shall never forget. To me, and thousands of other Oregonians, the prospect of "Private Beach - No Trespassing!" signs was not just unacceptable. It was *unthinkable*.

The Beach Bill is more than landmark legislation. It is a tribute to Oregonians' commitment to a vigilant stewardship of a truly wonderous natural environment.



Bob Straub
Governor of Oregon

In the administration of this God-given trust, a broad protective policy should be declared and maintained. No local selfish interest should be permitted, through politics or otherwise, to destroy or even impair this great birthright of our people.

Oswald West, 1949
Former Oregon Governor
1911-1915

THE BIRTHRIGHT

Oregon's Pacific coastline lies like a giant sculpture on the state's western boundary. The coastal headlands, backbone of the shoreline, rise hundreds of feet above the ocean shore. Massive landforms project like fingers into the ocean, and surf lashes continually at their lava-rock base. Yet, it seems they never move, but stand defiant against the sea and sky. Between the headlands the land is low, and soft, with miles of fine, cream-colored beach sand. On a clear and calm day, the ocean's endless rolling against the shore is gentle. On a stormy day, the wind and rain drive against the shoreline in dark and magnificent fury.

Where land meets sea, the sand is wet and dark, and glistens. Sandpipers run quickly and together, darting along the water's edge amid broken shells, seaweed and jellyfish stranded by the retreating tide until the water catches them again and moves them on to some other niche. On these enchanted beaches there is room and time to walk, or run, in freedom like the sandpiper; to think, in solitude; to be close to the earth and in touch with her beauty.

These are the beaches that Oregonians strive to preserve and protect for themselves and future generations. Oregonians are acutely aware of the probable result otherwise. In Maine, approximately 3% of the 4000 miles of coastline are public property. In Massachusetts, only 10 miles of the 1,300 mile coastline are in public ownership. The public frequently pays to go to beaches in New Jersey. Much of Florida's coast has been claimed by hotels and exclusive beach clubs. Along the Gulf Coast, 90% of the beaches are in private ownership.

In California, less than one-fifth of the 1,200 mile coastline is open to the public.

In contrast, along Oregon's 362 miles of shoreline, there are 262 miles of beaches and 64 miles of headlands accessible to the public and set aside for public use. Yet, just ten years ago, there loomed a threat that many of the beaches might be lost for public enjoyment. That might have been the case, had that threat not been averted by the 1967 Oregon Beach Bill which legally established public recreational easements to all the beaches seaward of the vegetation line.

This extraordinary law, however, evolved through time and need and politics. The Beach Bill grew from the public's traditionally free use of the beaches, which, in the collective conscience, should remain free and undisturbed. The law was a response from a gradually developing political conscience which places value on aesthetics as well as economics, preservation as well as progress, conservation as well as development.

The Oregon experience is unique as was the canny foresight of Oswald West. As the "Father of the Oregon Beaches," the former governor gave Oregonians options from which they could make a reasoned choice for the future of their beaches. And, Oregon has chosen.

This history illuminates the events which led to and followed the passage of the Oregon Beach Bill. Those events reflect the independent minds and pioneering spirits which have shaped the conscience of Oregon. They reflect an ecological awareness and an ethical regard for the land. They reflect a sense of historic roots and visions for the future. The preservation of Oregon's beaches is a history of her people.

IN RETROSPECT

Oregon was ready for the Beach Law. And, the process from which the law evolved has been as significant as the Beach Law itself.

The events thrust a relatively young and environmentally vulnerable state through an emotionally and politically wrenching experience. Yet, Oregonians emerged more mature and more confident of the worth of democratic processes. The Beach Law reinforced faith in the means by which people may be heard and by which laws may be created, contested or changed.

The state emerged from the experience with its first, truly significant landmark environmental legislation. The process untangled confusions, challenged and for the first time clarified private and public expectations and rights, and established new directions for Oregon's future. The stage was set for other extraordinary environmental legislation, and today Oregon has an elaborate and expansive body of environmental law acknowledged as among the most progressive in the nation.

The Beach Law focused public attention on the vincibility not only of Oregon's beaches, but of her other resources—historic, agricultural, forests, rivers and air. And, it broadened areas of concern. Oregonians have aggressively addressed other elements of livability—housing, transportation, employment, public facilities and services, urban growth, energy needs, sound economic expansion, recreation and open space.

The experience intensified the need for compatible balances between conservation and development, for

long range resource planning and for citizen involvement in all planning and decision-making processes.

Oregonians have vigorously, forthrightly and uniquely met their challenges. Oregon's pioneering spirit continues to prevail.



(Oregon Department of Transportation)



**Oregon State Parks
and Recreation Branch**

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 16, 2016

Agenda Item: 7b

Information

Topic: Solar Eclipse

Presented by: MG Devereux, Deputy Director

Background

On August 21, 2017 Oregon will experience the first total Solar Eclipse since 1979. This generational event will be most visible for several minutes in the mid-morning, primarily in a band that cuts across the northern end of the state. The unique nature of the event, coupled with the proximity to many major state parks will create some interesting challenges and opportunities for the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD).

Preparation

A special project team has been formed to address the OPRD response to the eclipse in order to prepare for the increase in use on recreation platforms in and around the zone where the eclipse will be most visible. This team will address a wide range of issues that include:

- Increased demands for camping and day use
- Staff and visitor safety in areas where temporary camping may be considered
- Opportunities for expanded visitor education and interpretive partnerships
- Temporary rules, policies, or procedures needed to address a change in business
- Unique reservation procedures to handle potential conflict at first-come first-serve sites
- Additional temporary staffing to manage high impact sites
- Evaluation of cultural and/or natural resource impacts to the system

The demand for open access to view the eclipse is tremendous. Currently most, if not all, hotels within the prime viewing areas are booked, at rates far exceeding the normal price.

Coordination emergency management officials have already identified a significant potential for traffic related incidents along Hwy 97 and 101, as well as a reduced level of response based on the anticipated size of the crowds.

The goal of the OPRD team will be to develop flexible processes that will allow staff to balance the visitor needs for the days surrounding the event and the operational limitations of the system.

Prior Action by Commission: None

Action Requested: None

Attachments: Eclipse Map

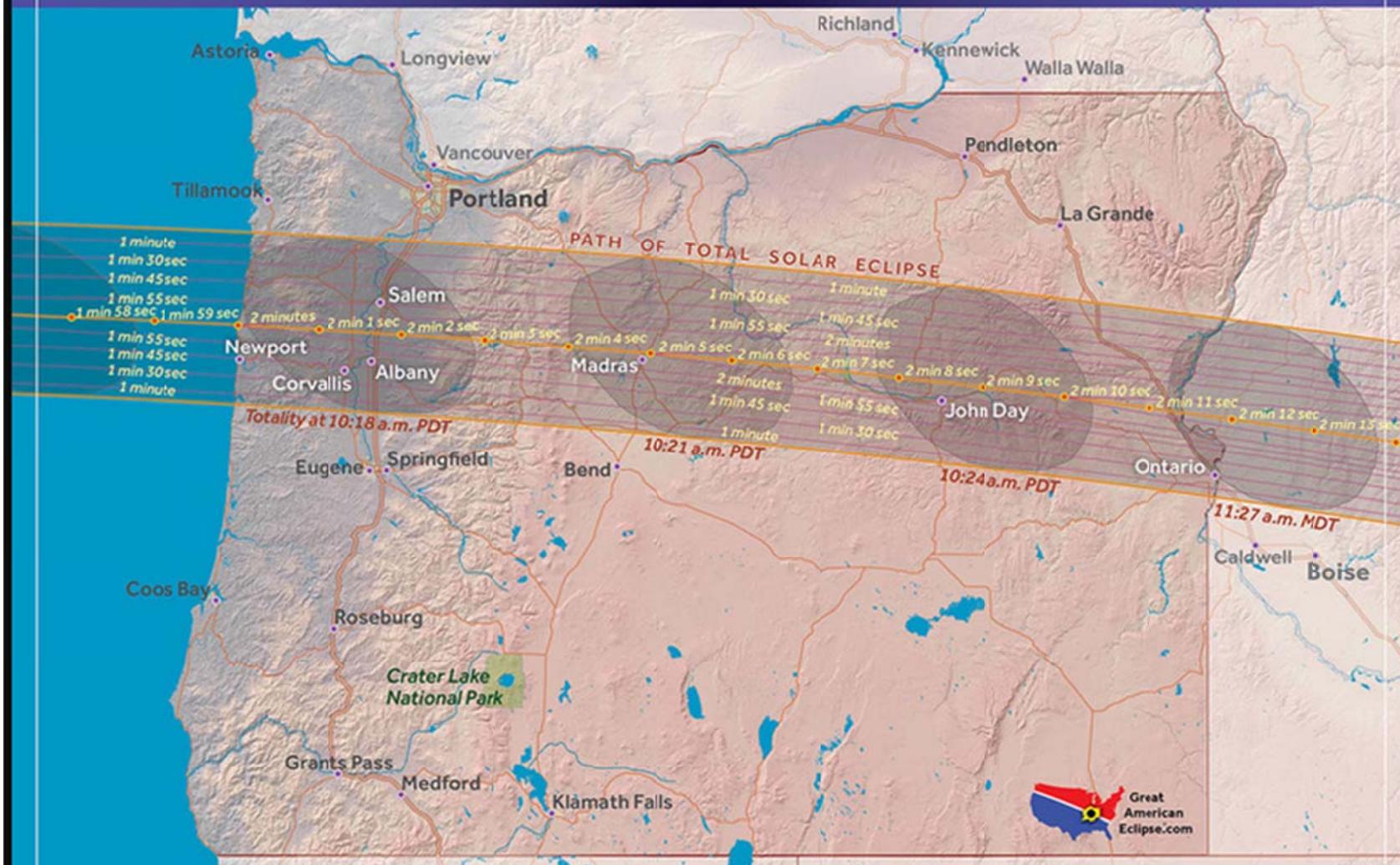
Prepared by: MG Devereux

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE OVER OREGON ON AUGUST 21, 2017

The sight of a lifetime



Don't miss it!



Map credit greatamericaneclipse.com

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 16, 2016

Agenda Item: 7c

Information

Topic: Oregon State Parks Foundation update

Presented by: Chris Havel and Seth Miller, Oregon State Parks Foundation executive director

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has a formal agreement for fundraising and other forms of support with the Oregon State Parks Foundation. Staff and the Foundation executive director will discuss ongoing and planned projects:

- Cottonwood Canyon Experience Center
- State park bicycle pods
- Elementary student field trip transportation
- Membership development
- Corporate relationship building
- Upcoming and other projects

Prior Action: None

Action requested: None

Attachments: None

Prepared by: Chris Havel