

# SITKA SEDGE STATE NATURAL AREA

## 2016 DRAFT Master Plan



*Nature*  
**HISTORY**  
*Discovery*

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

The mission of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is to provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.

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# 1

# Introduction & Planning Approach

## A Vision for the Park

In June 2014, the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission voted to purchase the Beltz property in Tillamook County from the nonprofit that owns it.

Located on the north coast between Cape Lookout State Park and Pacific City, Sand Lake is one of Oregon's least developed estuaries, including approximately 1,250 acres of open water, tidal flat, emergent marsh, and forested wetlands. A dominant feature within the estuary is Whalen Island, primarily owned and managed by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department as the Clay Myers State Natural Area alongside the Tillamook County Campground on the south edge of the island. At the north end of the estuary is the Sand Lake Nature Preserve, property being acquired by North Coast Land Conservancy in partnership with the OPRD. At the southern end of the estuary is a 357 acre piece of land known as the Beltz property.

Beltz contains ocean beaches, wetlands, and forests. The property was acquired from a private owner by the nonprofit Ecotrust for \$1.8 million in May 2014, and the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission has authorized the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to purchase it from Ecotrust for up to \$1.8 million using Oregon Lottery funds dedicated to state park acquisitions by the Oregon Legislative Assembly and with assistance from a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant. The purchase of the property became final in September 2014.

Because of its beauty, natural features, and location, the property has been of interest to the state park system for decades. The property will be kept in a natural state, focusing on trail recreation, enhancing facilities for wildlife viewing, and natural resource improvement projects. This master plan represents the long term vision for this incredible and unique coastal property, as it enters its next phase of life as Sitka Sedge State Natural Area (SNA).

# The Role of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

The mission of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is:

*To provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.*

This mission gives the agency a dual mandate; serve people by operating the state park system and protect park resources so future generations may also understand and enjoy them.

Each park is a unique place where people play, picnic, camp, rest, hike, renew and everything in between. The park system is an everyday reminder of the things that make Oregon great and its existence is a testament to what Oregonians collectively value.

Oregon's outdoor recreation and cultural heritage values are explained in state law;

*Oregon Revised Statute Chapter 390 states that the well-being of Oregonians is in large part dependent upon access to the state's outdoor recreation resources for their physical, spiritual, cultural and scientific benefits.*

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is empowered by state law to provide outdoor recreation and heritage programs and plans.

The Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission (the department's citizen oversight body), positions the agency to function at a high level by aligning programs to the powers and

duties granted by state law, and by observing and planning for emerging trends. Those laws direct the department to focus on four areas:

1. State Park System—Create and run a state system of parks that protects and manages resources in order to provide recreation opportunities.
2. Natural Resources—Exercise forward-thinking, sustainable land stewardship in state parks and along ocean shores and state scenic waterways. Protect state park soils, waters, plants and animals.
3. Statewide Recreation Advocate—The agency is Oregon's lead advocate for outdoor recreation. Through research, financial and technical assistance, OPRD provides an Oregon context for federal, state and local governments to collectively fulfill their outdoor recreation-oriented missions.
4. Heritage Programs—Work to preserve and protect Oregon's heritage and historic resources.

## The State Park System

State parks are categorized based on three criteria: natural setting, facilities, and primary purpose. These criteria help OPRD plan the management and visitor experiences at each park, and combine to create nine types of state park system properties: parks, recreation areas/sites, scenic corridors/viewpoints, greenways, heritage areas/sites, natural areas, trails, and waysides. State scenic waterways are a special category; the state does not own scenic waterways, but works cooperatively with property owners to preserve each waterway's scenic and recreational qualities.

The Oregon state park system contains more than 100,000 acres, nearly all of it natural resource-based. There are more than 300 properties in the system, including 174 developed for day use, 50 campgrounds, and 110 undeveloped parcels along the Willamette River Greenway.

## Agency's Resource Management Role

The natural resources staff of OPRD is responsible for land stewardship, marine conservation and the rocky intertidal shores, several permit programs, department-wide resource policies, and park plants and animals. OPRD strives to provide a safe environment while maintaining the natural beauty and historic importance of our parks.

OPRD is committed to managing the natural, scenic and cultural resources within the Oregon state park system. The agency writes plans and conducts management to balance resource protection with recreation use; resources are the essential foundation for nearly all forms of recreation.

The following categories best summarize the OPRD approach to resource stewardship:

- Forest Health
- Fish and Wildlife
- Ecosystems
- Invasive Species
- Protected Species
- Natural Heritage Sites
- National Register of Historic Places, Sites and Districts
- Historic Buildings
- Cultural Landscapes
- Iconic Oregon Views and Scenic Corridors.

## Agency's Role as Recreation Advocate

OPRD connects people to meaningful outdoor experiences by protecting Oregon's special natural and historic places. This inherent tension between recreation and preservation, and between the needs of today and tomorrow, has always defined the mission of Oregon State

Parks. ORS 390.010 describes the state's broad policy toward outdoor recreation. In summary:

1. Present and future generations shall be assured adequate outdoor recreation resources coordinated across all levels of government and private interests.
2. The economy and well-being of the people are dependent on outdoor recreation.
3. Outdoor recreation opportunities should be increased commensurate with growth in need in the following:
  - Oregon's scenic landscape
  - Outdoor recreation
  - Oregon history, archaeology and natural science
  - Scenic roads to enhance recreational travel and sightseeing
  - Outdoor festivals, fairs, sporting events and outdoor art events
  - Camping, picnicking and lodging
  - Tourist hospitality centers near major highway entrances to Oregon
  - Trails for hiking, horseback riding, bicycling and motorized recreation
  - Waterways and facilities for boating, fishing and hunting
  - Developing recreation in major river basins
  - Access to public lands and waters having recreation value
  - Development of winter sports facilities
  - Recreational enjoyment of mineral resources.

## The Centennial Horizon Plan

The Centennial Horizon Plan—a vision document that looks ahead to 2022, the 100th anniversary of the state park system—is a series of principles developed to guide the work and priorities of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in fulfillment of its mission. Eight principles compose the Centennial Horizon plan:

- Principle One – Save Oregon’s special places
- Principle Two – Connect people to meaningful outdoor experiences
- Principle Three – Take the long view
- Principle Four – Engage people through education and outreach
- Principle Five – Build the state park system with purpose and vision
- Principle Six – Attract and inspire partners
- Principle Seven – Prioritize based on the vision
- Principle Eight – Oregon’s parks will be tended by people who love their work.

The first three principles play a substantial role in park acquisition, planning and development. The remaining five principles support the first three by offering more specific direction for park operations and programs. Each principle is more fully defined by a series of strategies and actions that change over time as opportunities arise. The full document is available at the department website: <http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/>.

## Need for a Plan

OPRD master plans help to accomplish the OPRD mission by establishing the goals, development concepts and resource management guidelines that strike a balance between recreational use, and development and resource protection.

A park master plan is needed to fully address future recreational use and resource management as this property becomes a state park. The need for planning is driven by both the natural resource and visitor experience aspects of the park, which need to be considered together if an appropriate balance is to be achieved. Finding the right balance is critical to success in achieving the department’s mission. In order to both “provide” and “protect,” the department must manage in a way that promotes recovery and healthy succession of

ecological resources while providing for visitor experiences at levels consistent with resource capacities. The planning process provides the information, analysis and public process needed to determine that balance, and to formulate the goals and management strategies necessary to achieve the mission.

## Purpose of the Plan

The master plan for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area accomplishes four tasks:

1. Establishes the vision, goals, concepts and actions to guide park development, management and operation.
2. Meets OPRD’s legal obligation to adopt a plan for the park through the state administrative rulemaking process.
3. Meets OPRD’s legal obligation to present a plan for the park to Tillamook County as a basis for assuring that planned park uses are compatible with the County comprehensive plan, and as a basis for requesting land use permits for planned park projects.
4. Establishes a library of park resource assessments to help park managers succeed with their stewardship mission.

The plan works for a variety of audiences: the visiting public, park managers, county land use planners and decision makers, surrounding local communities, and partner agencies and interest groups. It represents the vision for the park’s future supported by the public. The park manager will use this plan as the overarching guiding document in managing the park. The County will review this plan for compatibility with the County comprehensive plan and assure that requests for development permits are consistent with project descriptions in the plan for the park. Partner agencies and interest groups will work with OPRD to ensure the plan is implemented. Local communities can use it in partnership with OPRD to enhance the park as a thriving, ecological system with appropriate facilities that support recreational uses.

# Planning Framework

In a critical first step for a park-specific plan, OPRD staff compiles data from department and other statewide or regional plans. This background information is used as a lens through which the park master plan is first shaped. This data is used to inform and develop a framework for the park plan, and is then taken to the public for comment and discussion. Public advice and goals for the statewide system are then synthesized to produce the values, goals, strategies, and management actions to become the comprehensive, long-term plan for a park like Sitka Sedge State Natural Area.

A park-specific plan therefore includes information on:

- Mission and mandates that define the role of OPRD (Oregon Constitution, Oregon Revised Statutes, and Oregon Administrative Rules).
- OPRD goals and objectives (Centennial Horizon, Commission Investment Strategy,
- Legislative Performance Measures, and Oregon Benchmarks).
- Existing OPRD organizational structure and roles of visitors, volunteers, staff, external parkland managers, and other partners.
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, State Trails Plans, Regional Interpretive Frameworks.

This background information defines the context for a state park master plan.

## OPRD Master Planning Process

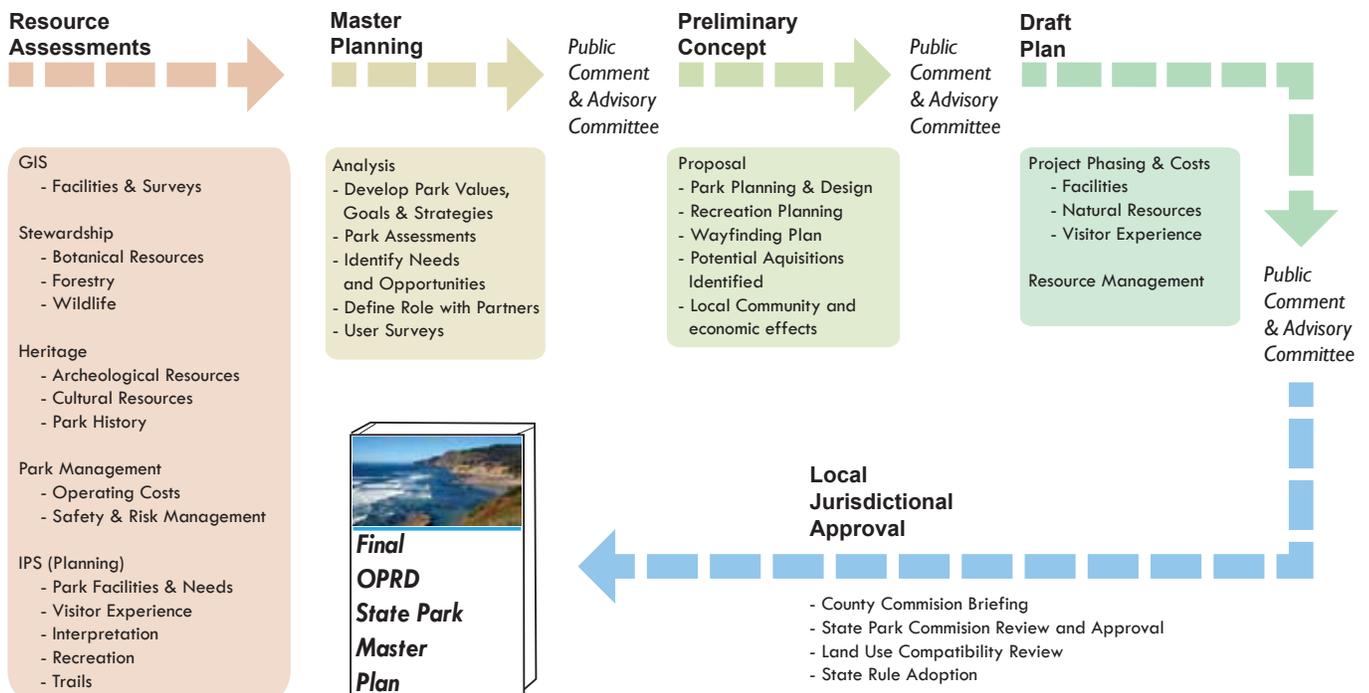


Figure 1.1 OPRD Master Plan Process Diagram

# Planning Process

The planning process involves numerous steps in determining what is most appropriate for the park's future, and formulating and adopting a plan that describes the management direction. The following summarizes the steps leading to adoption of the plan.

Resource Assessments: In the first steps of the process, information is gathered on the park's natural and cultural resources, existing park uses and facilities, recreation trends and opportunities, as well as information about the local community. The information about the park is condensed in a way that geographically represents the opportunities and constraints related to recreational development and preservation and management of important natural, cultural and scenic resources.

Vision for the Park: With the information gathered in the resource assessment process, the department formulates a vision for the park's future that will be tested as the process unfolds. A core team made up of key OPRD staff is convened. The vision is formulated with input from the team.

Public Input: The information gathered in the resource assessment process and the vision for the park are shared in meetings with the core team, a stakeholder committee, park neighbors and the general public. The department asks participants to express their thoughts and ideas about the park's future, including issues that need consideration in formulating a plan. The stakeholder committee membership includes representatives of affected government agencies, and interest groups. A written comment period follows the meetings.

Preliminary Concept Formulation: Based on identified issues and ideas for the park's future, a preliminary concept is prepared that geographically represents proposed types, locations and sizes of recreation support

facilities in the context of park areas where natural resource protection and enhancement will be emphasized.

Public Input: The preliminary concept is shared in a second round of meetings with the core team, stakeholder committee, park neighbors and the general public. Participants are asked to share their thoughts about the concept and any recommended changes or additions. A written comment period follows the meetings.

Draft Plan Formulation: The department produces the first draft of the plan based on the resource assessments and information gathered from meetings with the core team, stakeholder committee, neighbors and general public. The draft plan includes the park vision, resource assessment summary, issues summary, values and goals, resource management strategies, and design concepts as they pertain to future development and management of the park. Key members of the core team contribute their expertise to the production of the document. The draft material is shared with the entire core team and executive team for their input.

Public Input: The draft plan is distributed for public review using OPRD's planning website and available hard copies, and another set of meetings is held with the stakeholder committee, park neighbors and the general public for discussion of the draft. Participants share their comments on the draft plan content. A written comment period follows the meetings.

County Commission Briefing: Department staff meets with the County Commissioners to brief them on the draft plan and comments received in public and committee meetings, and ask for their input.

State Parks Commission Review and Approval: Any revisions recommended in the public process are reviewed by the Director, and needed changes are incorporated into the draft plan. The plan is then presented to the State

Parks Commission for their deliberation and approval. The Commission recommends any needed changes and directs the department to proceed with the adoption process.

**Land Use Compatibility Review:** The master plan for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area serves as the “master plan” for the park as defined under OAR 660 Division 34 and OAR 736 Division 18. Prior to adoption, the draft plan is checked for compatibility with the County comprehensive plan in consultation with County planning officials. If the draft plan is determined to be compatible, it can then be presented for adoption as a state rule. If the draft plan is not compatible, OPRD takes steps necessary to achieve compatibility, either by making appropriate changes in the draft plan for the park or by requesting pertinent changes in the County’s plan through the appropriate land use application process. The plan for the park cannot be adopted as a state rule until it is compatible with the County plan.

**State Rule Adoption:** A formal rulemaking hearing is held which allows additional comments from the public. A written comment period follows the hearing before the hearing record is closed. Final edits may be made to the draft plan based on public comments prior to filing the rule for final adoption.

## Values Based Approach

A critical component of the state park comprehensive planning process is the involvement of the public, stakeholders, and partners that have interest in the property. As a state agency accountable to the public, OPRD seeks to engage the community in a discussion to develop a sense of public interest, concern, and desired experience. The agency looks to the community to help identify potential opportunities, conflicts, and desired outcomes for the property. Feedback from the public process helps relate a sense of place to potential outcomes for management actions. These

values help to develop an analysis framework to view the resource inventories and recreation assessments so that a better sense of future condition or experience can be defined.

The values created for this plan have close ties to the elements of the OPRD mission that relate to natural, cultural, scenic and recreational resources. These values, expressed in detail in Chapter 6, provide another layer of analysis to interpret the existing conditions and future potential of the property.

## How to Use This Plan

Master plans can be confusing documents. In an effort to make navigation easier, this section outlines key components of the planning process as well as the contents of this plan.

### Section One: Existing Conditions

Read this section to understand the status Sitka Sedge State Natural Area at the time this plan was written. This section explores the existing uses, natural and cultural resources, history, and geographical context of the park property.

Section One includes chapters:

1. Introduction & Planning Approach
2. Regional Context
3. Resource Assessments
4. Visitor Experience

### Section Two: Analysis

Read this section to understand the discussion and collective thought behind the proposals shown later in this plan. This section describes the public process for gathering input about the plan, the opportunities and constraints that were identified, and an analysis of the major themes that arose during the existing conditions studies.

Section Two includes chapters:

5. Public Involvement
6. Needs, Constraints & Opportunities
7. Values, Goals & Strategies

## Section Three: Park Proposals

Read this section to understand the long-term vision for how OPRD will serve visitors to its parks in the Gorge and the management strategies that will maintain these parks going forward.

Section Three includes chapters:

8. Park Plans & Management Recommendations

## Section Four: Plan Implementation

Read this section to learn about the steps for implementing the proposals in this plan, including the priorities and phasing identified for improvements to parks, the costs, and the permitting processes required to make this plan happen over the next 20 years, and find out what you can do to help.

Section Four includes chapters:

9. Cost Estimates & Project Phasing
10. Land Use Reviews and Approvals
11. Stewarding the Plan

Finally, an appendix (Chapter 12) includes relevant documents summarized or referenced in the comprehensive plan: reports, plans, vision statements, public comments, historic documents, and others. This appendix is delivered to park staff at the end of the planning process to guide management.

## 12. Appendix

This final document includes:

- A summary of the existing conditions of OPRD parks, programs, recreation activities, and natural resources (Chapters 2-4);
- Description of the public involvement process and the identification of guiding values and benefits (Chapter 5);
- Discussion of larger regional themes and concepts heard during the planning process as a reference for future Gorge-wide planning efforts (Chapter 5);
- Analysis of the opportunities, needs, and constraints for OPRD parks, programs and recreation activities and natural resources (Chapter 6);
- Values, Goals, and Strategies that drive planning recommendations developed during the public planning process (Chapter 7);
- Planning recommendations including strategies for park management and park specific enhancements (Chapter 8); and
- Budget and phasing for identified enhancements and maintenance (Chapter 9).

# 2

## Regional Context

### Regional Context of Sand Lake Estuary

Sitka Sedge State Natural Area (SNA), traditionally known locally as Beltz Farm, is located on the northern Oregon coast between Cape Lookout State Park and Cape Kiwanda State Natural Area (Pacific City), along the south edge of the Sand Lake estuary. This estuary, one of Oregon's least developed estuaries, includes approximately 1,250 acres of open water, tidal flat, emergent marsh, and forested wetlands. A dominant feature within the estuary is Whalen Island, primarily owned and managed by OPRD as the Clay Meyers State Natural Area. At the north end of Sand Lake is Sand Lake Nature Preserve, owned by North Coast Land Conservancy in partnership with OPRD. The submersible land within the estuary is owned by Department of State Lands.

Sitka Sedge SNA includes approximately 357 acres. Approximately 244 acres are west of Sand Lake Road, fronting the ocean and the Sand Lake estuary. This portion of the property consists of approximately 87 acres of marine and freshwater marsh and 157 acres of dunes

and uplands. An unmaintained, half mile long, artificial dike that separates the freshwater marshland from the marine estuary runs east/west through the northern third of the property. The remaining 113 acres of the property east of Sand Lake Road is predominately pasture and forest land. Three creeks, Reneke, Beltz, and an unnamed stream, flow into the southern portion of the property. This area is part of the Sand Lake watershed.

The subject area for this master plan encompasses roughly 357 acres, and includes the southern portion of the estuary, as well as the pasture and forest land east of Sand Lake Road.

The 1967 'Oregon Beach Bill' recognizes all state beaches up to the vegetation line as public land. OPRD manages these lands separately from State Parks through the Ocean Shores Program, even when adjacent, as is the case at Sitka Sedge State Natural Area. This plan will only reference the beaches adjacent to the natural area, with regard to trails and other management needs as they overlap with the ocean shores adjacent to the property.

## Regional Economic Trends

Historically, Tillamook County relied heavily on timber products, dairy industries and commercial fishing to sustain its economy.

The coast has seen a rise in tourism in the past decade, especially in the vicinity of Tillamook to the north and Pacific City to the south of Sand Lake Estuary. This is also evident in the way the nearby coastal parks are filled to capacity every summer weekend.

## Oregon State Park Designations

- State Parks (SP) provide a variety of general outdoor recreational uses within an extensive scenic setting, under OPRD ownership.
- State Natural Areas (SNA) protect outstanding, or important portions of Oregon's ecosystems for continued public education, and/or for contributing to larger ecosystem health.
- State Recreation Sites (SRS) provide access to resource dependent, recreational activities, without OPRD ownership of extensive scenic setting.
- State Scenic Corridors (SSC) and State Scenic Vistas (SSV) protect corridors and viewpoints along state highways which are in jeopardy. For those single viewpoints which cannot be easily included in a grouping along a highway, the subclass State Scenic Viewpoint can be used.
- State Trails (ST) and State Trailheads (STH) provide recreation trail opportunities for hikers, equestrians, cyclists, and, where appropriate, motorized recreation vehicles such as snowmobiles, off-highway vehicles, motorcycles, and jeeps.

Definitions are referenced from the 1995 OPRD System Plan.

## Oregon State Parks on the Coast

Historically, transportation difficulties were a major barrier to development along the rugged coastline. The beach was often the easiest way to move people and goods over land between communities. The precedent of using beaches as roads along the coast contributed to the designation, in 1913, of all Oregon beaches below the high tide line as public highways, which effectively made all of Oregon's beaches public land.

The Good Roads movement prompted interest in road construction throughout the state in the early 1900s, and there were many advocates for a coastal highway in Oregon. The Roosevelt Military Coast Highway was built in 1932. The Oregon Coast Highway, as it is now known, is a National Scenic Byway and an All American Road, placing it among a handful of the most scenic roads in the country. With the construction of the Coast Highway and the growing popularity of automobile-based recreation, the interest in public parks and campgrounds along the coast increased.

During Sam Boardman's tenure as the first superintendent of State Parks from 1929-1950, OPRD had begun a period of land acquisition across the state, including along the Oregon Coast. The Civilian Conservation Corps made improvements to some of the early parks and waysides during the 1930s. Camping in Oregon state parks was first introduced in the 1950's by superintendant Chester Armstrong. The public continues to reap the benefits of protecting these special places along the coast and the opportunities they provide for outdoor recreation. OPRD continues to manage these facilities and properties like Sitka Sedge State Natural Area add to this incredible system of parks, providing new and unique opportunities for public recreation along the Oregon coast.

More information on regional recreation can be found in Chapter 4.



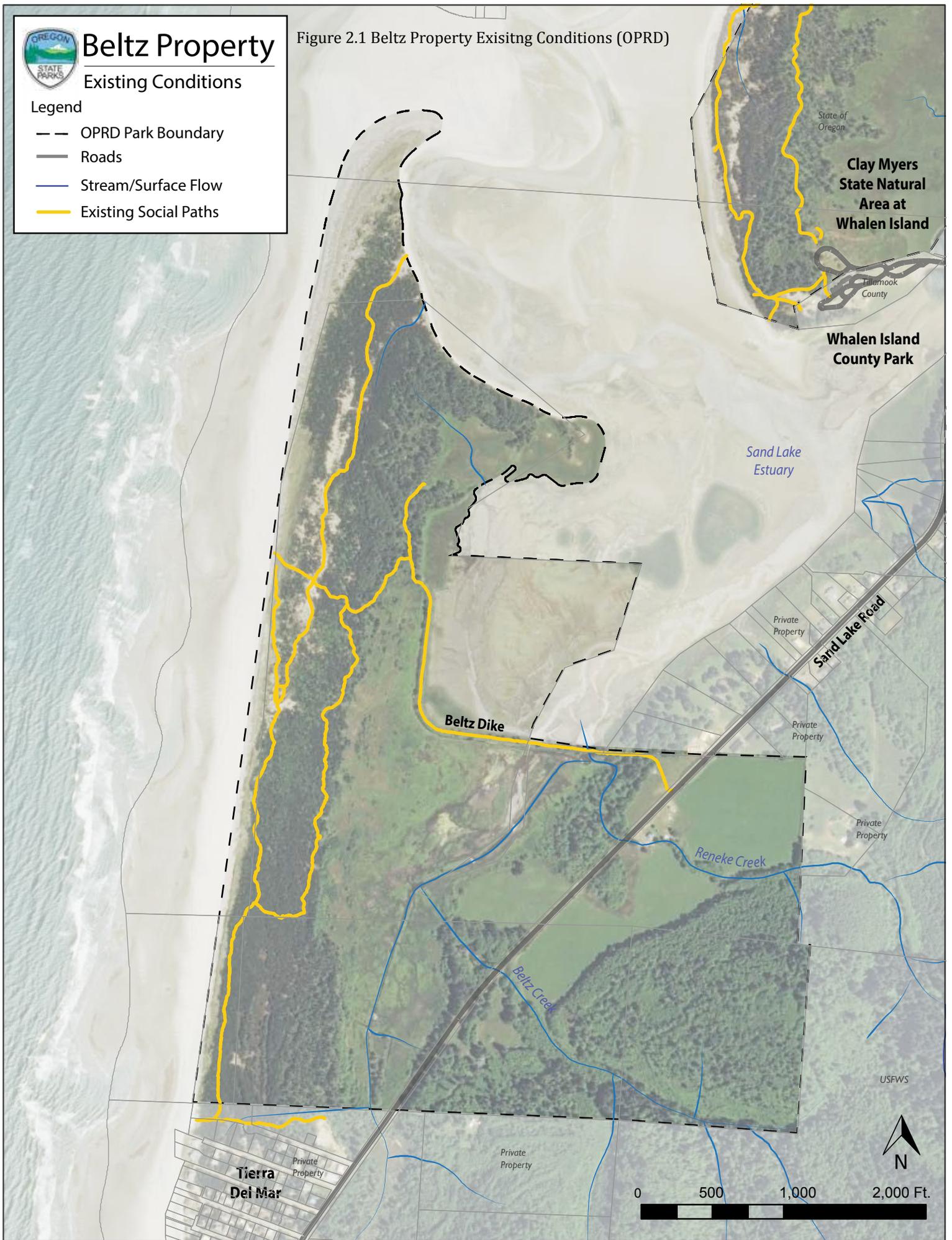
# Beltz Property

## Existing Conditions

### Legend

-  OPRD Park Boundary
-  Roads
-  Stream/Surface Flow
-  Existing Social Paths

Figure 2.1 Beltz Property Existing Conditions (OPRD)



State of Oregon  
**Clay Myers State Natural Area at Whalen Island**  
 Tillamook County

**Whalen Island County Park**

Sand Lake Estuary

Sand Lake Road

Beltz Dike

Reneke Creek

Beltz Creek

Tierra Dei Mar

USFWS



0 500 1,000 2,000 Ft.

## OPRD Acquisition of Beltz Property

OPRD is interested in adding important and rare natural lands like the Beltz property to the ocean shore system to build on its current success with Whalen Island, and to provide Oregonians with parks that encourage outdoor recreation in quality settings. The department's involvement around Sand Lake stretches back decades:

1960s-70s: Beltz property noted as high-value natural resource property that would make desirable addition to the state park system.

2000: OPRD Acquired large portion of Whalen Island and developed low-impact recreation (trails and beach access).

2004: Beltz appraised by OPRD, but attempt to purchase is unsuccessful.

2006: Beltz ranks high on the general state park acquisition priority list and named as a goal for 2007-2013.

2012: Property identified as a potential acquisition, but no opportunity presents itself.

2014:

- a. April: Added again to OPRD priority list.
- b. May: The private nonprofit Ecotrust buys the property. OPRD director Lisa Sumption signs an option with Ecotrust allowing the department to purchase the property by August.
- c. June: Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission unanimously authorizes the acquisition on June 25 at their regularly scheduled meeting in Klamath Falls.
- d. August: With authorization from the state commission, OPRD purchased property from the nonprofit with assistance from a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant.

## Partners & Land Managers in the Sand Lake Estuary

Although OPRD is the managing agency for the park and the ocean shore, other government agencies have jurisdiction over certain resources and activities that occur in the park:

- Oregon Department State Lands – jurisdiction of submerged and submersible land, wetland fill or removal
- Army Corps of Engineers – wetland fill or removal
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality – activities involving pollutant discharges
- Oregon Water Resource Department – water rights and permitting, water diversions
- Tillamook County – county roads, land use and development
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife – fishing regulation, riparian area development, activities affecting state ESA listed species
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – activities affecting federal ESA listed species. Management of neighboring lands to the north of the estuary and directly adjacent to the southeast portion of the park property.
- National Marine Fisheries Service - activities affecting federal ESA listed aquatic species.

The North Coast Land Conservancy owns and manages 214 acres in the northern Sand Lake Estuary, including Bradley Bog. There is no public access to this area which is composed of forested dunes dominated by Sitka spruce, freshwater wetlands, and tidal marsh at Sand Lake. Bradley Bog is a sphagnum-dominated bog with western red cedar and shore pine forest. This property was acquired in 2014 in partnership with the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, and in-kind support from OPRD.



Coordination between the other conservation partners in the region and local estuary will be an important piece of the management planning and subsequent stewardship of the property. Partners in conservation for the estuary include the U.S. Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, the North Coast Land Conservancy, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Nestucca-Neskowin Watersheds Council.





# 3

## Resource Assessments

OPRD prepares park resource inventories and assessments as a basis for decisions on resource management and visitor uses. This chapter summarizes key resource inventories and assessments completed for this Plan. These assessments are not intended to serve as the final documentation guiding future decisions on resource management in the park. Refinements to information gathered so far will be made through ongoing studies of resource conditions and management needs for particular areas on a case-by-case basis. Background reports resulting from key inventories and assessments are referenced in various places in this Plan and are available for review.

# Natural Resources

## Climate

The Oregon coast climate is moderate, with winter weather patterns influenced by counterclockwise rotating low pressure centers that pass over the North Pacific bringing frontal cyclonic storms with heavy rains and strong south to southwesterly winds. In summer, the pattern is dominated by fair weather and mild north-northwesterly winds with strong afternoon breezes and coastal fog. Mean annual temperatures are generally in the low 50's (F) with mean summer temperatures in the low 60's and mean winter temperatures in the low 40's. Most of the precipitation falls in the winter in the form of rain. Average annual precipitation is 75 to 90 inches.

Insert natural features information from pending NR report, on additional natural feature descriptions, soils, historic vegetaion, natural hazards, hydrology etc.

Insert info from Waterways report, summarizing capacity and preliminary groundwater findings with reference to complete study to be finalized, Spring 2017.

# Natural Resource Inventory

Three separate assessment reports were prepared by OPRD staff to provide guidance to the planning process and inform broad management strategies to park staff:

1. Vegetation Inventory, Botanical Resource Assessment, and Natural Landscape Characterization
2. Forest Management Technical Report
3. Wildlife Assessment

The findings from these reports have been summarized in this section and referenced throughout the plan. Full reports can be requested for review.

## Botanical Resource Summary

### Botanical Resource Value Ratings

*Botanical resource value* is the term used to represent the relative ecological importance, from a plant community perspective, of discreet plant community polygons. The assigned value captures information about the plant community, its ecological condition and relative value for preservation, determined by combining six environmental characteristics of each polygon: conservation ranking, condition, restoration priority, restoration feasibility, wetland status of the community, and age class (for forested communities). Interaction of these parameters in assignment of a botanical resource value rating is described in detail in the "Methods" section of the background vegetation assessment report cited above. Plant communities having the most restrictive botanical ratings are wetland communities and late-seral forest in good condition. This is

Figure 3.1 Botanical Resource Value Map (OPRD)



# Sitka Sedge

State Natural Area

## Botanical Resource Values

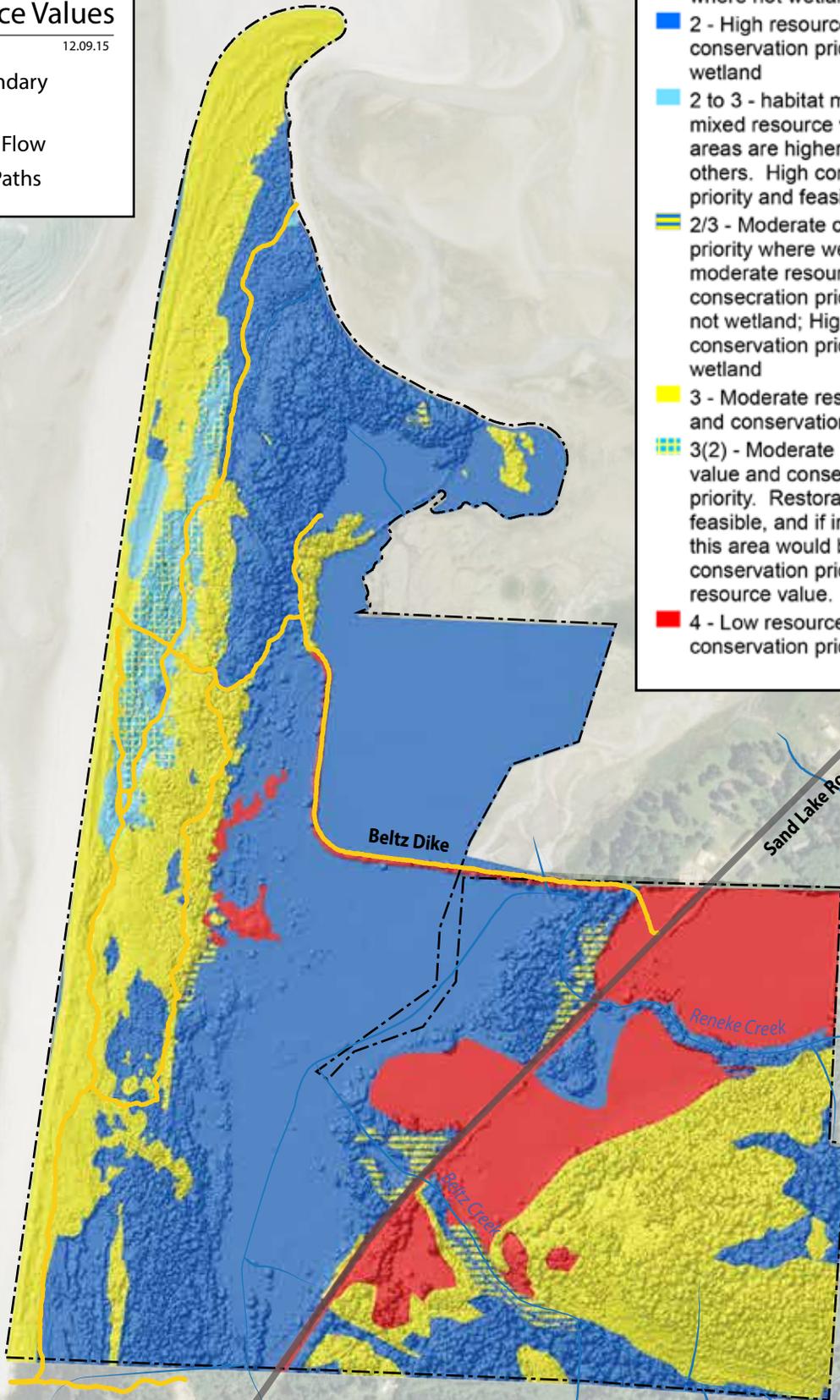
### Legend

12.09.15

- OPRD Park Boundary
- Roads
- Stream/Surface Flow
- Existing Social Paths

## Botanical Resource Values

-  2/4 - Preservation where wetland. Low resource value where not wetland
-  2 - High resource value and conservation priority and/or wetland
-  2 to 3 - habitat mosaic of mixed resource value. Some areas are higher quality than others. High conservation priority and feasibility.
-  2/3 - Moderate conservation priority where wetland, moderate resource value and conservation priority where not wetland; High conservation priority where wetland
-  3 - Moderate resource value and conservation priority
-  3(2) - Moderate resource value and conservation priority. Restoration is feasible, and if implemented this area would be high of conservation priority and resource value.
-  4 - Low resource value and conservation priority.



Tierra Del Mar



primarily due to the relatively high conservation rankings and decent ecological condition of these communities, but in some cases their restrictive ratings are entirely due to wetland status.

Botanical resource value ratings for the park can be found in the full Botanic Resource Report. Botanical resource value is a key factor used in determining “composite natural resource value” of various areas of the park. Composite natural resource value combines the botanical value with habitat resource values discussed later in the chapter. The Composite Natural Resource Values for the park are depicted in [Figure 3.3](#) in this chapter.

## Botanical Resource Management Recommendations

The background vegetation assessment report cited above includes detailed recommendations for management and restoration of various botanical resource communities in the park.

[Figure 8.X in Chapter 8, “Natural Resource Management Strategies,”](#) illustrates priority projects for the management and restoration of botanical communities for their combined botanical and habitat values. These include projects to remove or control invasive species, promote health, succession and diversity of early seral and young plantation forests, and restore wetland communities, as well as other projects that will improve the ecological conditions of the park over time.

## Forestry Summary

The *Forest Technical Report* is designed to accompany and provide guidance to the Integrated Park Services division in creating a Master Plan for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area. The report seeks to provide a summary of current conditions or condition classification, provide criteria for establishing a natural

resources value, and to provide broad management recommendations for forested stands within the planning area.

39 individual areas totaling 385.09 acres were identified on digital orthophotography using GIS software. These areas were grouped into four categories;

1. Upland Forest, (176.72 acres) - These are areas that currently contain deciduous and/or coniferous forests as the dominant vegetation type and are above the riparian zone.
2. Riparian Forest, (13.44 acres) - These are areas that currently contain deciduous and/or coniferous forests as the dominant vegetation type and are within the influence of the riparian zone.
3. Forested Wetland, (12.67 acres) - These are areas that currently contain deciduous and/or coniferous forests as the dominant vegetation type and exhibit criteria required to be considered a wetland, including; a dominant hydric soil type, ground saturated by surface water for a significant portion of any given year, and the existence of understory vegetation typically adapted to saturated soil conditions.
4. Non Forested Areas, (182.26 acres) – Any area that is not currently dominated by deciduous and/or coniferous forests. These areas may have some deciduous and coniferous trees with the area but generally represent less than 10% of the dominant vegetation type.

## Stand Assessment

Approximately 95 percent of the stands received a site visit to evaluate the accuracy of the GIS compilation. The stands were assessed by a combination of onsite ocular estimations and inventory plots. A variety of forest inventory measurements were taken at one to two locations per stand. This survey

INSERT Figure 3.2 Wildlife Habitat Value Map

was not statistically robust, but OPRD forestry staff used professional judgment to collect data that represented conditions typical of each stand. Stand data collected at plots or by aerial photo interpretation included tree species, dominant species age, trees per acre, and average diameter. A basic road inventory was also documented to assess the access needs for potential forest management activities. Furthermore, an analysis of the soil matrix was conducted through the USDA Web Soil Survey to evaluate site productivity and operational feasibility.

The data for the stand assessments was collected by OPRD forestry staff, management recommendations were made based on the guidelines in the OPRD Forest Management Policy. This policy was created in 2004 and guides forest management decisions on OPRD property statewide.

## Wildlife Summary

Insert Wildlife Report Summary once finalized.

## Wildlife Habitat Value Ratings

Wildlife Habitat Value ratings were developed for use in producing the Composite Natural Resource Values for the park illustrated in [Figure 3.3](#) in this chapter. Habitat Value ratings were merged with the Botanical Value ratings discussed above in producing the Composite Natural Resource Value map. Wildlife Habitat Values are illustrated in the full Wildlife Report produced for this Plan. The assigned Habitat Values capture information about the quality of the habitat based on botanical conditions, the desired future conditions, and anticipated disturbance based on proposed park development and related human activity and land uses adjacent to the park. Interaction of these parameters in assignment of Habitat Value ratings is described in greater detail in the background Wildlife Assessment report cited above and in the appendix.

## Wildlife Management Recommendations

The background wildlife assessment report cited above includes detailed recommendations for management and restoration of wildlife resources in the park. These recommendations provide a basis natural resource management plans, supplemented by further assessments where needed, that implement the more generalized strategies addressed in this Plan document. Key management strategies are summarized in this Plan, [which are represented in the management actions detailed in Chapter 8](#). It illustrates priority projects for the management and restoration of botanical communities for habitat values.

- Add additional information about plover here.
- Incorporate fish passage current conditions

INSERT Figure 3.3 Composite Natural Resource Value Map

# Composite Natural Resource Suitability Analysis

Insert composite NR suitability summary once finalized

## Scenic Views and Settings

Assessment of the park's scenic resources included consideration of existing prominent scenic corridors, known locations that offer broad views overlooking the park landscape, opportunities for estuary and ocean views, potential for creating narrow or screened views through forest vegetation, and the qualities of various scenic settings.

There are two prominent scenic corridors that attract the attention of park visitors. Views of the relatively undeveloped Sand Lake Estuary, including views across the estuary to Whalen Island are omnipresent in the park. The Pacific Ocean beach with its sweeping views of the coastline and open ocean is generally regarded as a secondary, yet outstanding, scenic attraction with views of Haystack Rock to the south and Cape Lookout to the north.

A number of accessible or potentially accessible developed viewpoints offer broad views overlooking the landscape from existing or potential upland trails. Two of these areas are located on the Beltz Dike. While most spots on the dike allow unmitigated views to the estuary, these two locations have been chosen to highlight wildlife, while providing ample rest spots for hikers. Additionally, an area of high ground inside the dike has been identified for its unparalleled panoramic view of the Sand Lake estuary.

Narrow or screened views of the estuary are possible with strategic management of the forest and shrub vegetation along existing or potential upland trails, and corridors where these opportunities appear promising have been identified. Areas along the existing and planned trails have been identified for continued management to provide long term scenic views. It should be noted that the forested section of property east of Sand Lake Road contributes to the scenic quality of the park and should be managed as natural forest to increase the scenic value over time.

Figure 8.1 'Proposed Site Plan' in Chapter 8 illustrates the various potential scenic corridors and viewpoints identified in this assessment. More information about planned development to increase access to these areas can be found later in the Plan in Chapter 8.

## Cultural Resources

A background assessment report on the park's cultural resources, titled "Historic Resource Report of the Beltz Property" was prepared for this Plan by the OPRD Historian. Below is a condensed but comprehensive version of the report.

### Historic Summary

The park property is located within the traditional territory of the Tillamook, who at the time of European contact, occupied the Pacific coast from approximately Tillamook Head in Clatsop County, south to the Siletz River in Lincoln County. The Tillamook were incorporated into the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians as a tribe along with many other tribal groups and individuals from the region. The property is also an important place to other tribes, such as The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, who have close ties to the area. The property was likely used for a variety of traditional native land uses, foraging, fishing and temporary habitation.

Post-settlement, the historic use of the property was dairy farming, which began with the Roenicke family in the early 20th century. Anna Elise Timm Roenicke, having lived in Portland with her husband, Otto, and two children, William and Annie, was a widow by 1899. She moved to this property with her children and began dairy farming. In 1920, she and her son, William, and her two granddaughters, Hazel and Gertrude, lived on the farm. In 1930, they moved to Salem after selling the farm. (The Roenicke house, barn, and farm outbuildings no longer exist.)

Dairy farming continued when Frederick “F.A.” and Naomi Beltz purchased the property. They lived in the city of Tillamook with their four daughters, Mary Margaret, Marilyn, Nancy and Fritzi. F.A. worked in the lumber industry and was a Tillamook County judge during 1926-1932. He was a strong advocate for building the Coast Highway (Roosevelt Military Highway), and worked diligently to promote better roads for the Oregon coast. After the Beltz’ purchased the subject property, F.A. was actively involved in the operation of the dairy farm, with the help of a full time caretaker, Chris Bourne.



Sand Dunes Looking North in 1973 (OPRD Archives)

## Property Timeline

- Pre-Settlement: Traditional
- Tillamook Territory
- 1900-1920’s: Roenicke Family Farm
- 1920-1930’s: Beltz Family Farm
- 1930’s: Sand Lake Road & Dike Developed
- 1940’s-1950’s: Fry Family (farming)
- 1940’s: Coast Guard Monitoring Station
- 1958-1975: Beachy Family (farming)
- 1960’s -1970’s: OPRD explores state park opp.
- 1975-1987: Farrell Family (farming)
- 1980’s: Bastache purchases property
- 2014: OPRD Acquisition from Ecotrust LLC

The Amos Fry family came to live on the Beltz farm after World War II, when Chris Bourne moved to Sandlake. The old caretaker’s house (presumably the Roenicke’s house) and barn were demolished, and a new house and barn were built across the road from the dike. Lewis Beachy and his family occupied the property during 1958 through 1975. After that, the Farrell family lived on the farm until 1987 and raised beef stock in the upland pastures. Frank Bastache bought the property and hired Peggy and Bill Howard (Fritzi’s daughter and son-in-law) to live on the property as caretakers, which they did until about 2004. During this time there was an intense community effort to prevent development of the property as a golf resort. Following several failed attempts at resort development, OPRD purchased the property in September 2014.



Beltz Dike in 2015

## Historic Features

Based on the information available to date, the Beltz family is credited with building the two historic structures that remain on the property--the “cabin” (c.1933) and the dike (c.1935). These structures provide evidence of the historic uses and were evaluated for historic register status but determined not to meet National Register criteria. The criteria for listing are age (50+years), integrity (retains historic appearance), and significance (events, people, architecture (engineering), and/or archaeology).

### *Beltz Dike*

The dike was important to the dairy operation. It was used to provide pasture land for the cattle, and served as a road for wagons and tractors. Oral accounts indicate that the Judge quarried stones out of the bank on the west side of the road to build the dike. Beltz and Schaleck Creeks ran into the field behind the dike and drained through the gates at low tide. At high tide, the water pooled behind the dike to provide fresh water for the stock that grazed between the sand dunes and the dike. The dike also served as a roadway for the cattle, wagons, tractors, and trucks. Chris Bourne, the Krakes,

and the Schalecks from the farms to the north, and the Sears on the south, joined in harvesting grass at each farm.

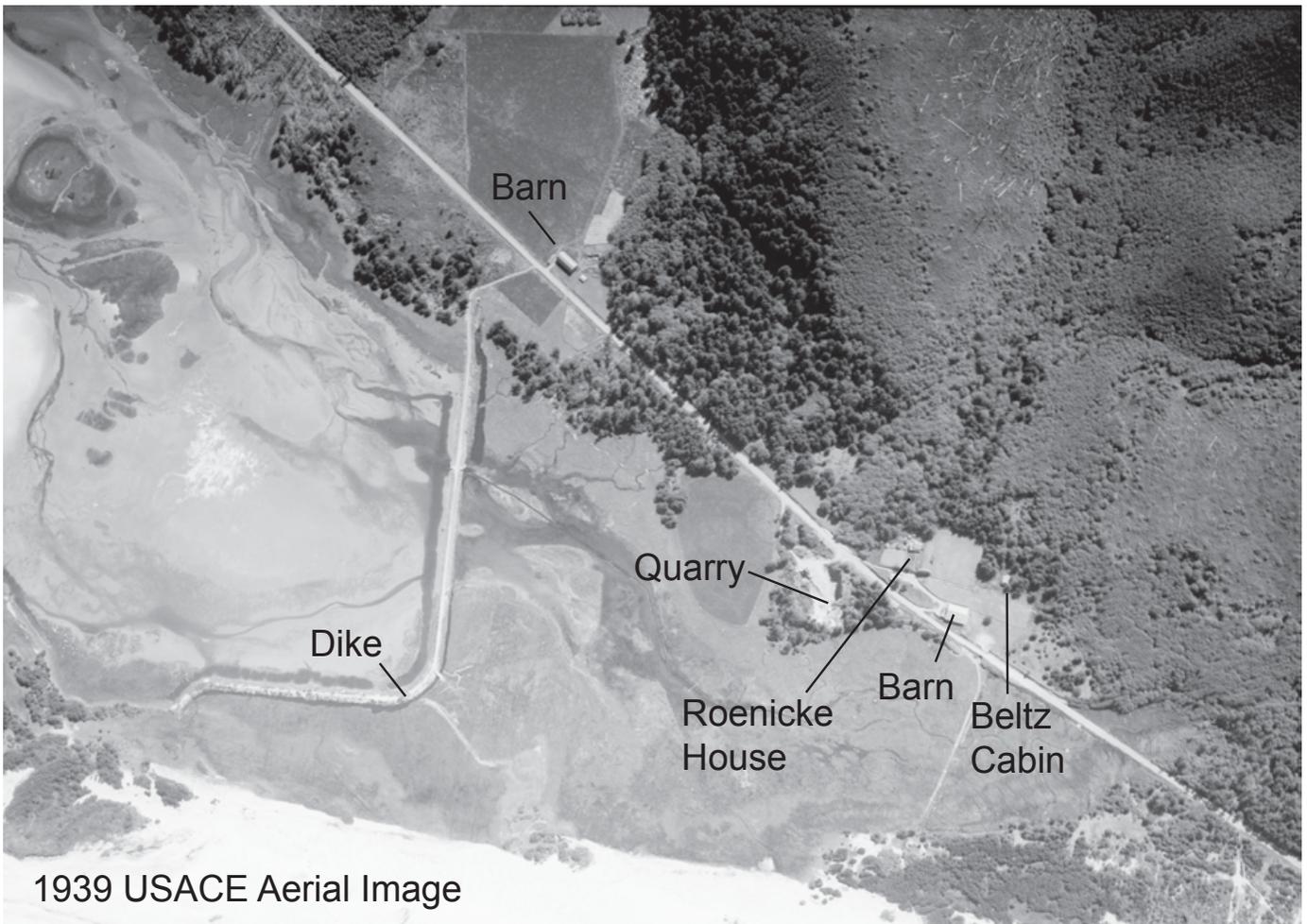
### *Beltz Cabin*

The cabin retains a high degree of historic integrity both on the interior and the exterior. The cabin is a Craftsman Bungalow style residence. The style was more typically built during the 1910s and 1920s in Oregon. However, this type of house was utilized through the 1930s. The Sears Homes Catalogs show the continuation of this style in their kit homes up until 1940. Additionally, the book, *American Vernacular Interior Architecture, 1870-1940*, illustrates that the various components within the “cabin” could have been anytime between 1915 and 1940. These features include doors with five panels, Prairie style window sash, simple trim with square edge casings, panel and batten walls, and the use of natural materials, particularly wood. The hardware also appeared in trade literature from 1900-1935, and was commonly used in bungalows.

The exterior of the building incorporates the traditional features of a bungalow, including front facing gabled roof, shed roof dormer, bracketed eaves, full length front porch accessed by centrally-located stairs, and shingle and horizontal board siding. Features that are not typical for this building style are the round, nautical-shaped windows in the gable ends,



Beltz Cabin in 2015



1939 USACE Aerial Image

1939 Aerial with Annotations Describing Historic Structures

and the extension of the upper floor beyond the roof plane of the first floor, with curved, dentil-like brackets. One-and-one-half stories in height, the building is rectangular in shape, approximately 25 feet wide by 30 feet long, and is supported by a post and beam foundation.

## Archaeological Features

A cultural resource inventory of the park and a review of report findings were conducted in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to inform potential impacts during development. A 49 acre survey of park property was conducted in late 2015. Given the history of use by Native American tribes, there is an overall high likelihood of archaeological resources present in the park.

## Summary

Collectively, these existing condition assessments provide guidance to the planning process in regards to informing development proposals, project prioritization, interpretive opportunities, and natural and cultural resource protection. These assessments also assist park staff as they manage the parks for historical, scenic, and natural resource quality over the coming years.



# 4

## Visitor Experience

Park visitors may come to Sitka Sedge State Natural Area for a specific purpose like wildlife viewing or hiking the trails, yet their experience at a park is influenced by many other factors: finding the park easily because of clear road signage, delighting at the sound of the birds in the trees, or learning something about the history of the site during their visit.

If OPRD is to plan state parks for high quality visitor experiences it must consider the cumulative effects of the many experiences a visitor has when spending a day in the park. One way we can do this is by considering the relationship between the activities that visitors participate in, the facilities that support those activities and the natural setting in which those activities occur.

The diagram on this page represents the activities that have historically taken place at Sitka Sedge State Natural Area as it has been utilized for recreation for decades, despite being in private ownership. The property provides a wealth and variety of activities for all types of visitors. This plan aims to enhance the

recreation facilities at this property to facilitate quality recreation experience for the long term, while managing recreation to protect natural resources.

### Historic Recreation Activities

-  Walking, Hiking, Trail running
-  Plant and wildlife viewing
-  Photography
-  Beach Walking, Combing, Sitting
- Watching Sunsets
-  Fishing/Clamming
-  Kayaking/Paddleboarding
-  Horse riding
-  Swimming
-  Dog walking
- Foraging: Berries/Mushrooms
- Meditation
- Listening



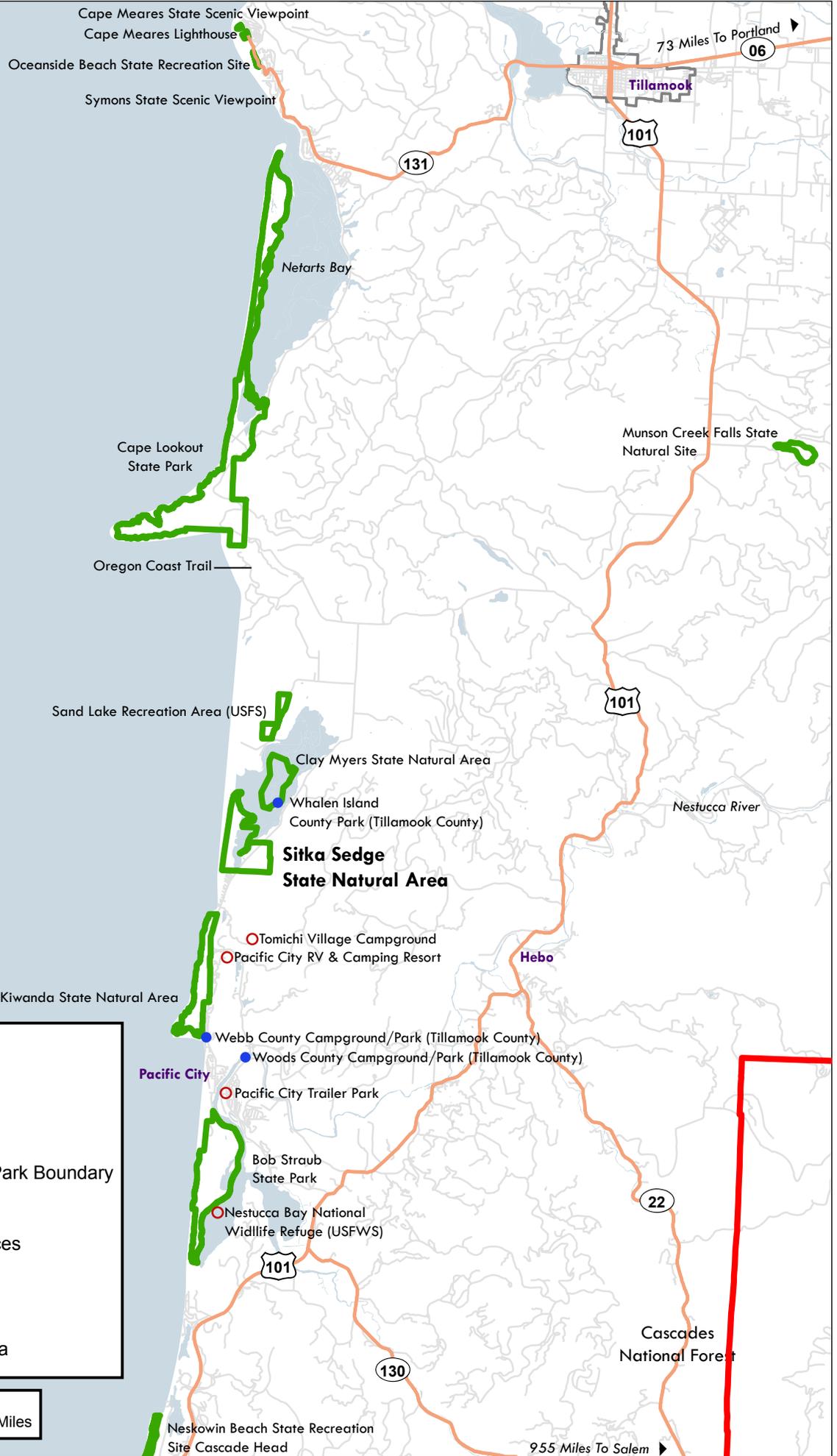
## Existing Recreation

Sitka Sedge SNA is part of an outstanding network of State, County and Federal recreation facilities between Tillamook and Pacific City that provide excellent opportunities for hiking, horse riding, camping, fishing, kayaking, ATV use, wildlife viewing all in a few mile stretch of coastline. In addition to all these activities, Sitka Sedge still fills a void in providing public access to the Sand Lake estuary, a unique opportunity to enjoy wildlife and scenery unlike any other section of the coast. See the context map in this chapter for locations of additional parks in south Tillamook County.

## Nearby Oregon State Parks

**Cape Lookout State Park:** One of the crown jewels of the Oregon State Park system, Cape Lookout is located on a sand spit between Netarts Bay and the ocean, giving you a terrific view of the ocean with easy access to the beach. More than eight miles of hiking and walking trails wind through a lush old-growth forest and the Cape Lookout trail follows the headland for more than two miles, providing a perfect perch above the Pacific Ocean to see migrating whales. Cape Lookout has 170 tent campsites, 35 full hookup sites, 13 yurts, 6 deluxe cabins, two group camps, a hiker biker camp, meeting hall and day use parking areas. This is the only state park nearby that provides overnight use.

Figure 4.1 Site Context Map



### Site Context

#### Legend

- County Boundary
- Approximate OPRD Park Boundary
- City Limits
- Parks and Greenspaces
- Highways
- County Parks
- Other Recreation Area



### **Clay Meyers State Natural Area at Whalen**

**Island:** Just across the Sand Lake Estuary to the north of Sitka Sedge SNA, Whalen Island provides two miles of trail access to mixed woodlands, grasslands, fresh and saltwater wetlands (the Lillian Parker Craft Wetland) and a rare native dune sedgeland. This park contains 15 parking spaces, a restroom, picnic areas, and is directly adjacent to a Tillamook County Campground, which provides boat and fishing access to the estuary.

**Tierra Del Mar Beach Access:** OPRD manages all Oregon Ocean Shores as a recreation area under the 1967 Beach Bill and the beaches at Sitka Sedge SNA will be managed separately according to provisions of these administrative rules. The Tierra Del Mar Beach Access located on Sand Lake Road south of the Tierra Del Mar neighborhood provides beach access. For some of the year vehicular access is allowed from this location north to the beach adjacent to Sitka Sedge SNA.

**Cape Kiwanda State Natural Area:** This park, directly north of Pacific City, provides access to popular beaches, hang gliding, picnic areas, and the cape.

**Bob Straub State Park:** This is a popular park located south of Pacific City that provides several miles of beach access, fishing, and horse trails.

For comparison, daily average attendance by year (based on car counter data collected by OPRD) for two nearby similar state parks are provided. These numbers assist in determining appropriate parking lot capacity for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area.

### DAILY ATTENDANCE AVERAGE

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bob Straub	90	79	78	83	75
Clay Meyers	40	42	39	41	38

Based on monthly car counts averaged across the calendar year.

### Tillamook County Parks

Tillamook County operates several dozen day use, overnight parks, beach access points, and boat launches across the county. County parks in the nearby vicinity to Sitka Sedge SNA provide mostly overnight camping, and boat access. This includes the Whalen Island County Campground and boat launch just north of Sitka Sedge SNA which has 28 tent sites.

### U.S. Forest Service Parks

The U.S. Forest Service manages Sand Lake Recreation area, and the Siuslaw National Forest adjacent to Sitka Sedge SNA. Sand lake Recreation Area is a popular destination for off-highway vehicle (OHV) riders with access to dunes and overnight facilities.

### Private Recreation Providers

Of the private coastal campgrounds, A Thousand Trails is the largest and nearest to Sitka Sedge SNA. There are also various smaller private campgrounds along the Highway 101 corridor.

# State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and Oregon Trail Plan

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is OPRD's statewide five year plan for outdoor recreation. At the time of planning for Sitka Sedge SNA, 2013-2017 is the current SCORP plan. It guides the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funds that come into the state, and other OPRD administered grant programs, and provides recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector in making recreation policy and planning decisions. A primary intent of the SCORP plan is to provide up-to-date, high quality information to assist recreation providers with park system planning in Oregon. A total of 8,860 randomly selected Oregonians completed a mail/internet survey questionnaire. The current SCORP plan was the first in the U.S. to provide statistically reliable survey results at the county level. The Recreation Assessment of Sitka Sedge State Natural Area included review of SCORP. Additional details about methods can be found in the complete SCORP plan found at [www.oregon.gov](http://www.oregon.gov).

There are 11 SCORP planning regions across the state. Sitka Sedge State Recreation Area is found in SCORP Region 1. Data for this region is reflected in tables on the next few pages. OPRD has included a selection of findings that helps characterize existing recreation patterns in the vicinity of the park, as well as needs based on this statewide survey. The survey asked residents to indicate which of these recreational activities they had engaged in during 2011. Overall, 92% of Oregonians participated in at least one outdoor recreation activity in Oregon during the past year. Top statewide outdoor recreation activities are presented by proportion of the population that participated in the activity. Definitions of activities can be found in the 2013 -2017 SCORP document.

## Top 10 Activities per SCORP Region

### Region 1

- Walking on local streets
- Walking on local trails
- Sightseeing
- Beach – Ocean
- Visiting historic sights
- Relaxing
- Picnicking
- Outdoor Concerts/Fairs
- Day Hiking on non-local trails
- Exploring tidepools

Oregonians were asked their opinions about priorities for the future. Respondents were asked to rate several items for investment by park and forest agencies using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Lowest priority need to 5 = Highest priority need). The following priority lists are based on number of individuals served, not on the frequency of their participation in each activity.

The top priority needs for Oregonians are:

- Soft surface walking trails
- Access to waterways
- Nature and wildlife viewing areas
- Playgrounds with natural materials (Natural Play Areas)
- Picnic areas for small groups
- Off-street bicycle trails.

Low priority needs for Oregonians are:

- Tennis courts
- Basketball courts
- Baseball / softball fields.

## SCORP Tillamook County Need

### Public Recreation Provider Survey

Close-to-Home Priorities	Score	Dispersed-Area Priorities
Public restrooms	4.3	Acquisition of parklands
Urban bike routes	4.0	Dispersed tent campsites (walk in)
Community trail systems	3.7	Public restrooms

### Oregon Resident Survey

Score	Score
5.0	Dirt / other soft surface walking trails and path
5.0	Nature and other wildlife viewing areas
4.5	Public access sites to waterways
	Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups
	Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (Natural Play Areas)
	Off-street bicycle trails and pathways
	Paved / hard surface walking trails and paths
	Community gardens
	Off-leash dog areas

## Recreation Activities

The SCORP plan also identified needs for each county in Oregon by surveying recreation providers and citizens. The results of this survey for Tillamook County are shown above.

## Oregon Trails Plan

OPRD recently completed an updated statewide trails plan, *Oregon Trails 2016: A Vision for the Future* which guides the agency's 10-year vision for funding trail projects.

Identified needs for non-motorized trail funding priorities in Tillamook County (Region 1) were as follows (pg 158):

1. Connecting trails into larger trail systems
2. Protection of natural features, including wildlife habitat
3. Repair major trail damage.

Additional information can be found in this plan at [www.oregon.gov](http://www.oregon.gov).

## Existing Facilities Assessment

As part of the planning process, OPRD staff assessed existing facilities on the property, mostly trails. Despite being in private ownership prior to public acquisition, this property has been utilized for recreational use for decades. This was seen as an advantage for development upon acquisition of this property. The following list summarizes staff findings. For more specific trail construction and maintenance recommendations please see *Chapter 8: Park Plans and Recommendations*.

- Most trails are in good shape
- Need to identify single North/South dune trail to sign and manage
- Some areas will need rerouting or turn-piking to avoid rainy season ponding, especially in dunes
- Sand surface trails in north will likely stabilize like trails in south area over time
- Some trails need resurfacing
- Best management will be to determine loop options and destinations from proposed parking area to reduce foot traffic on Sand Lake Road or into adjacent neighborhoods

- Develop a trail maintenance plan similar to Whalen Island
  - Yearly trimming for clearance standards (6' wide/8' tall)
  - Monitor for erosion
- Five to six trail locations need slight rerouting to reduce existing erosion and severe grade
- There is potential to work with park caretaker/local volunteers on trail maintenance.

In addition to trails, the property, largely undisturbed by human activity includes a dike, constructed in the 1930's to support pasturing and two residences. See the Existing Conditions map in Chapter 2 for more information on the location of these facilities.







# 5

## Public Involvement

This chapter describes the process for engaging the public in the master planning process for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area and the results of community discussions around a number of issues that arose during the park planning process. More information on how this engagement informs the overall state park master planning process can be found in Chapter 1: Introduction and Planning Approach.

## Outreach & Engagement

The initial step of engaging the public and creating awareness of the planning process was through developing the website at: [www.beltzplan.com](http://www.beltzplan.com). The website was a centralized database for schedule updates, proposals, and meeting materials, allowing people the opportunity to directly comment in a public forum. Announcing meetings through the website was also helpful as it allowed partners to link to the site for updates or meeting times.

In addition to the website, public outreach was conducted via press releases, a mailing list of property owners within 1/4 mile of the park and other interested parties, newspaper notifications, and television and radio interviews.

Tools for communication and outreach:

1. Values based approach
2. Plan website
3. Web mapping survey for geographic based comments
4. Public surveys, recreation and interpretive
5. Public meeting check-ins

6. Advisory committee
7. Local media interviews and communication
8. Stakeholder meetings on selected issues

## Values Based Approach

During the planning process, the community was asked to form a series of plan values to help guide and define proposed management actions. OPRD looks to the community to help identify potential opportunities, conflicts, and desired outcomes for the property. The values developed in the public process describe the sense of place desired in potential outcomes for management actions. These values help to develop an analytical framework to view the resource inventories and recreation assessments, so that a better sense of future condition or experience can be defined that is relevant to the park property's unique landscape.

At the first public meeting and through an online survey the public was asked the following questions:

1. What do you think of when someone mentions the Beltz property?



2. What benefits does the Beltz property provide?
3. What would you like to stay the same about the Beltz property?
4. What would you like to change about the Beltz property?
5. What would you like to add to the Beltz property?
6. What types of recreation activities do you do at Beltz?
7. What types of recreation activities do you would you like to see?
10. What do you value about the Beltz property?

Approximately 75 people responded to the online and paper surveys provided at public meetings. The answers to these questions helped in formulating the following value statements:

**Value 1: Natural Resources**

We value the ecological benefits of this unique and diverse estuarine habitat.

**Value 2: History**

We value the cultural history, stories and site features that remind us of how the landscape has been shaped by its inhabitants.

**Value 3: Community**

We value the opportunities for public access and education that this special place provides within the context of the Sand Lake Estuary.

**Value 4: Recreation**

We value the opportunity for all to discover, explore, and enjoy the peaceful beauty of this natural area.

## Public Meetings

Public meetings were hosted three times throughout the planning process, with each round including a local meeting, metro-region meeting, neighborhood meetings in Tierra Del Mar and advisory committee meeting. Full summaries of these public meetings are available in the appendix. An additional meeting was held in 2014 prior to acquisition of the property by OPRD to gauge public opinion of transferring the property to public ownership. Comments from these meetings were reviewed to inform this master plan.

### Meeting – OPRD Acquisition June 2014

At this initial meeting OPRD presented interest to the local community in acquiring the property as a state park. The agency expressed an intention for low impact, passive recreation and natural resource restoration. Public comment was taken in regards to potential acquisition. As a result of this meeting, the OPRD Commission recommended purchase of the property later that year, which occurred in August 2014.

### Meeting I. Public Comment & Values August 2015

At the first round of public meetings OPRD staff explained how the planning process guides the vision and management of this state park. More importantly, staff listened to local residents and stakeholders to find out what they value about this incredible place.

### Meeting II. Assessments & Concept Alternatives January 2016

At the second set of public meetings OPRD staff presented the results of resource assessments to the public. Community members and park staff worked together to begin to identify key

goals and strategies to maintain the natural character of the state park. Staff also presented preliminary planning concepts with alternatives for development of the park and listened to public comment.

### **Meeting III. Draft Park Master Plan**

#### **May 2016**

At our third set of public meetings OPRD staff presented the draft master plan for public review prior to approval of the draft plan by the OPRD Commission.

### **Advisory Committee**

The advisory committee is made up of partner agencies, neighboring land management agencies, stakeholders, recreation and natural resource interest groups, and local municipalities. Representatives from these groups participate on the committee to advise the planning process, as well as take information on the planning process back to their agencies. This group is especially important to the planning process, helping to identify and analyze issues and opportunities that are multifaceted and require partnership solutions. A full list of advisory committee members can be found at the beginning of the plan.

### **Summary of Public Comment**

The comments in this chapter were compiled with input from an advisory committee, OPRD staff and consultants, local officials, affected agencies and interest groups, tribal representatives and members of the public. Understanding the community needs and public expectations of a state park is an essential element of creating a comprehensive plan. During the process for the Sitka Sedge State Natural Area plan, OPRD has implemented approaches to maximize the opportunity for comment and issue identification. The

opportunities to comment and efforts to raise awareness have included:

- Four sets of public meetings scheduled to increase awareness and gather comments.
- Creation of a mailing list, including one quarter mile radius of park neighbors.
- Press releases.
- Written comment periods.
- A website with interactive comment capability, and comments on a park map.
- Individual meetings with relevant stakeholders.
- Engagement with neighbors groups to comment on park proposals.
- Issues raised and captured in the resource assessment process.
- Advisory committee made up of locals, agency partners, resource professionals, and community leaders to provide guidance and comment.
- OPRD Commission input.
- Meetings with OPRD staff for guidance and comment.
- Media releases to increase awareness of the planning process.
- Newsletters to mailing list.

Many of these opportunities yielded excellent feedback and comments that are reflected in the overall planning document. This section addresses the issues that were identified during the outreach process and summarizes responses to these issues. During the planning process, OPRD reviewed hundreds of public comments that came from public meetings, advisory committee, planning website, correspondence, phone calls, partner agencies, OPRD staff, and informal external sources (such as online responses to news stories). The public discussion is summarized below and informs the values, goals and management strategies contained in the following chapters of the plan. Some comments have been paraphrased from public meeting comments.



## Park Needs

- Better access to dike.
- Clarify trails routes and add wayfinding.
- Provide education (but don't use signs—they pollute).
- Provide enforcement for illegal camping and nuisance uses of site.
- Re-use of former Beltz cabin as host/ employee site, education center, or local museum.
- Restore streams for fish passage, possibly widening access through dike, improve vegetation along creek.
- Limit development of infrastructure and fragmentation of site.
- Better access to beach.

## Recreation

- Potential for light footprint approach to recreation activities supporting: hiking/ walking, trail running, foraging for food, wildlife and bird viewing, paddling, kayak, picnic, day use, restroom.
- Many comments for education efforts to explain birds, wildlife, restoration of streams and fresh/salt water bodies. (Education plan, apps, bird and wildlife watching

opportunities, volunteer walks, etc.).

Requests to not have panels, reduce them as much as possible, or limit them to one area. Viewing areas, benches, blinds would be good.

- A handful of people supported historic equestrian use, however others at the meeting commented that this use harmed the trails and should be limited to the beach.
- Trails on east side are an opportunity for larger regional connections, possibly biking and equestrian --could be tied to Oregon Coast Trail planning.
- Consider native people and provide education about their presence.
- "We would like to continue to use horses on the trails at Beltz Farm. It is a historic use that should be grandfathered in."

## Facilities

- Need to clarify and upgrade existing trail system as well as provide wayfinding (reduced trails and wayfinding), especially regarding beach access (fragile dunes).
- Provide enough parking opportunities to alleviate impact of people parking in town.
- Provide picnicking opportunities (consider shelter).
- Provide facilities that will assist and enhance education programs.

- Need for park host to manage illegal camping.
- Surrounding areas are full. The long-term plan needs to consider use today and in the future.
- There will be a change to the hydrology of the estuary based on widening of the bridge spans from 26' to 70'.
- Beltz home has historic value – possibly use as an education center, ranger information center, classroom for kids.
- “I feel the roof structure is a little much for being in the natural areas (in reference to wildlife viewing area precedents).”
- I do not think you need a blind to hide behind.
- The tide is always making things shift but it would be nice to sit and watch everything change around you.
- “Keeping them looking natural is very important.”
- “Adding to the trails system was not included in any of the meetings that I attended.”
- “No motors and no boats.”
- “There is a very strong community request for a flushing toilet instead of a vault toilet.”
- “I read in the PC Sun that the plan is to put gravel on the dike trail. I’m wondering if it would be possible to use a material that’s quieter underfoot. Because it is so noisy to walk on, gravel is terrible for birdwatching! How about woodchips or bark, instead?”

## Management

- Do not name this park for a politician.
- Some questions/concerns for long-term stability of park.
- While plan cannot change rule, residents support for restrictions on driving north of Tierra Del Mar (TDM).
- Cell Tower, some support for a cell tower, as issue is TDM doesn’t designate a large

enough population to warrant a tower, however some residents commented that cell service is available if people want it.

- Some comments requesting additional info about volunteer opportunities: assessments, volunteer rangers, adopt a park, co-op, etc.
- Restrict dogs, on leash or other.
- Manage invasive species.
- Leave the east side natural.
- “Take into consideration how to contain vandalism.”
- “There could be a sign board at the parking to let people know they need to clean up after themselves.”
- “If there is a bench without a garbage can on that trail we will see trash on that trail.”
- “At Roma and Pollock we see people parking in that area and find human waste.”
- “I am concerned that folks would bring their ATV or motorcycle and cut across the dike to the beach.”
- “Would like to see some opportunity for clothing optional recreation on part of the property.”
- “Access locations should be marked similar to the current beach access numbering signs. This will give any park goers or responders a start point. Also location markers within the system to help identify a close location to where help is needed.”
- “Well developed maps for responders that show the trail system, access points and key points that can be used in a search of the area. Also noting hazards or dangerous areas within the area; the outfalls for the dike system and gate/control points. Fenced locations where falls by hikers in to dike could occur.”
- “Cell phone coverage in that area is poor at best. A call box or some kind of emergency notification system will need to be established. If a “cell phone area” is located where cell coverage is found, it’s located in the system should be marked on maps

and signage posted in that area including directions from anywhere in the trail system to that location.”

## **Park Access**

- Direct access to the dike was highly supported, at Site A (adjacent) or B (southern meadow).
- Site B was preferred but people generally understood limitations at site B as cost prohibitive (wetland crossing).
- Tierra Del Mar Neighborhood sees some parking on Roma Road and other neighborhood streets for beach access, (generally a few, but up to nine vehicles). While parking in this area was generally supported for future needs, it is not a high priority currently and would not provide access to the main draw of the park, the dike.
- There is a potential that a lot of side parking In TDM is for rental housing overflow, not beach access.
- Some local residents see potential management issues with the property being left vacant.
- Some issues currently on Roma Road with RV turnarounds and zero county maintenance of roads, however signing can be issued by the county to solve this issue.
- Need for a wider bike lane so people could walk along the road safely.
- “How did you determine the number of parking spaces?”
- OPRD: Comparable visitor counts at other parks in the area and trail miles. At Whalen Island, there are 2.5 trail miles. Here we know this will be an important resource for education. RVs and school buses can have full turnaround.
- “Keep the area natural and concentrating the picnic area closer to the parking rather than farther out in the natural area.”
- “I would be more concerned about building too large then too many people will show

up.”

- “I am hoping beach access is being discouraged.”
- “I like the basic design, but do think there should be some additional parking. Tillamook really is the natural choice when it comes to beach and outdoor recreation but there also needs to be a local economic consideration at our park locations. Each one needs to contribute to the economic vitality of the community. Not having enough parking is a turn off and people will go somewhere else.”
- “If conditions permit, it would be nice to have a bench near a beach access point. This would let kids or dogs play while guardians rest on the hike. Even just a bench-like piece of driftwood would be lovely.”

## **Natural Resources & Restoration**

- “Coastal meadows are more endangered than huckleberries. I think it would be worthwhile to restore this area as a native meadow instead of a forest.”
- “You should put emphasis on groups like pollinators and try to incorporate them into these development areas, or the meadows. There could potentially be funding for that.”
- “On the upland forest on the east side of Sandlake Road: practice restoration forestry and return area to what it might have looked like pre European settlement. I’m not sure what that would look like, maybe a big meadow with a few scattered big trees or a something that would be good marbled murrelet habitat. The big meadow with a trail would provide pretty outstanding views of the valley.”

## **Fish Passage and Hydrology**

- Question: “The community is concerned about the fish passage but we are worried about being flooded. We have flooding

already, how is that influx of water going to influence Tierra Del Mar?”

- OPRD: It should not have any impact. The hydrology study has shown that the dike is not protecting Tierra Del Mar from flooding, as Tierra Del Mar is higher than the elevation of the dike. It sits at about 15', whereas the dike is at 12'. Water would need to exceed the dike by 3' to reach Tierra Del Mar.
- “It would be helpful for you to present the full range of data. 70% of the tidal range is in that 7' and in those scenarios, the opening actually makes the site dryer. So water filters in but then has to leave through that little small box. This might be a good visual for people to see as they take in all this data.”
- “Some of the work that's been done in the Salmon River estuary has shown counter-intuitive reactions because of the restoration. It may seem illogical that restored salt water marsh has more capacity it tends to they see in many ways that things change slower now because of this giant sponge. I wanted to make the point because I work for the Forest Service and manage the Reneke Natural Area that's just above and adjacent to this and to us restoring fish passage to there is of utmost importance.”
- “Do you have geotechnical information about what is the levee built on? If you open up an 18' hole and you get 4' per second velocities and you scour the sand, in two years you could have a 20' hole and in 10 years you could have a 30' hole. You really need to know what the soils are that the levee is sitting on and get the geo-tech data. Just to give you comparison, Tillamook County is designing the replacement bridge at Whalen Island. The replacement bridge will not only be 78' through, but both sides of the existing levee are going to be sheet piled to protect the 78' opening for scouring. I'd be very concerned about the velocities at 80% that meet fish passage and that's great but that 20% is going to be rough. It's probably sitting on a mix of rock and mud. That's going to transport like crazy at 4'

per second velocities and if you still have hydrology work you can do you need to get the information about what the dike is sitting on.”

- “The other part of that question you're asking, OPRD can plan for it now or react to it later. At some point that is going to fail and you are going to have to meet those standards, after everything else has been developed and things are in place. Now is the time to consider it as part of this big landscape change of what's going to happen. It's now this great natural area and these are the improvements that need to be made in order to enhance it at the level it needs to be.”
- “A critical part of the discussion is the natural process that will occur, and someone said the site is changing, climate is changing. What we have in here is almost like a museum piece, we've cut off that natural process. We need to work with those processes, and include some of the natural drivers, so there will be some dramatic changes, but it won't stop there. Most of the sites we've seen on the coast, once the dramatic change has occurred you get something that was meant to be there and much more self-sustaining than what was there before. The encouraging thing I see in the model is that everything is still there, is just moving. The model tells you one thing, but it's based on what we have today. There's no way the model can account for what will change in terms of depth of duration. A lot of these things will happen anyway. This is a chance to do it more carefully.”
- “What is the viability of Reneke and Beltz Creek in terms of climate change? There's times we can't turn our showers on in the summer because there's no water flow. Why make all that effort to restore it if we can't be certain there will continue to be flow?”
- “I remember when Katie Duzik (Former OPRD Coast Natural Resource Specialist), first presented about this property and the

importance of having the freshwater area next to the saltwater area. Having a side-by-side fresh water marsh and salt water marsh is the only example in the state. To me this is one of the values we would give up. There are numerous values to this, not just in terms of flora and fauna but the history of man's impact on natural lands. Because when the dike went in you have those two examples side-by-side and there's something to be said about human impact by looking at those two things next to each other. I'm not a biologist or an engineer but I am a citizen and I do pay taxes. I see some of the unbelievable costs of these projects that go on. I'm all for fish, and passage and I fish but I think that realistically, when you are a public agency utilizing public dollars I like the concept of a measured approach. It would be a shame to use taxpayer's money to spend millions of dollars on a tiny property. As a public agency there will be a lot more credibility with taking a measured approach is a better way to do this. The other thing I didn't hear a lot about the impact on fixing the culverts appropriate so that fish can pass through. I didn't hear a lot about the impacts of fixing the culverts but not the tidegate."

- "I like your long-term vision, and maybe this should be reflected in your values more. It was 100 years ago that this area was first farmed and the habitat has been created and if you're thinking 100 years in the future there a lot of natural processes that will transform this site and keeping that in mind and planning for that, that dike might not last 100 more year, and that's OK, then other things will change."
- "There are risks of unintended consequences when you start messing with this. We have a beautiful estuary I would hate to see it go away."
- "Coast communities rely on healthy salmon runs. Please remove large section of dike to maximize tidal wetland and salmon-bearing stream restoration. If public access needs to be maintained, build bridges. Tidegate

removal or modification is not enough!"

- "Change as little as possible to reduce the risk of flooding Tierra Del Mar".
- "We could not use one of our cabins (in Tierra Del Mar) because it was flooded and we do not want that again."
- "You need to study the groundwater to understand how the dike impacts Tierra Del Mar in the rainy season."
- "We need to know--where would the fish go, and would it have any effect on our water system. And we should think about that."
- "I wanted to thank you and your team for an excellent presentation and discussion at last night's public meeting in Pacific City. After some thinking about the proposed changes, I like the parking lot, trail plans, dike road graveling, view sites, (plus restricting equestrian and bicycling use). The one area that concerns me is the modification plans for the tidal water flow. By everyone's admission, we have a rare, unique and "nearly" pristine estuary, where protection and conservation is top priority, along with recreation and education. The existing tidal flow, while not original, has been in a relatively steady state condition for many decades, and the unique flora (including the Sitka Sedge) and fauna are a result of these conditions. To experiment with the introduction of major changes to the hydrology of the estuary based on some global ideals of "restoration" and improving local ocean fisheries is a risk I'd rather not take. History is full of examples of good intentions leading to unintended consequences. I'd hate to end up with a mosquito laden mud-pit because we wanted to "improve" our estuary. Please keep in mind what your primary objectives are, and avoid trying to "solve world hunger" because you have the opportunity. Do that on someone else's estuary."
- "My request is to consider is to restore the function of the tide gate. A properly operating tide gate will lower the water levels behind the dike and will provide more

dry area for bird nesting. You may have noticed the fence posts out in the water. They were the pasture fences that held the grazing cows. The land was dry enough for that purpose when the tide gate was working and think that there would be more game animals and other wild life there if it were dryer.”

## Park Name

- “I strongly support the recommendation to name our newest state natural area the Sitka Sedge State Natural Area. It honors one of the unique features of this property and will help to educate visitors for years to come.”
- “I think the new name of the park could reflect more of the history of the area– more consideration given so that the name invokes an actual “Sense of Place”. Sitka Sedge is only one of many native plants that can be found there. No matter what you call it, I believe everyone will still refer to it as “Beltz Farm”, and a great opportunity was missed when the local community was not invited into the naming process sooner seeing how they helped create what the area/trails are today.”
- “I like the name “Sitka Sedge” for the natural area. There is already a park named for a Governor south, historical owner adjacent and a geographic feature north. Sitka Sedge kind of rounds the naming of parks out, and leaves its location a bit obscure, or as OPRD puts it intimate.”
- “While present, Sitka Sedge is not unique to the area, as shown by example pictures from Mt. Adams. And what if changes to the hydrology alter the presence of Sitka Sedge? It would be best to tie it to some local geographic feature (sand lake, estuary) or historic connection.”
- “We believe that the name planned is an “insider” only name and probably causes joy only among botanists. It does not reflect the area where the park is situated and the grass is found elsewhere. Beltz farm is attached to

the era by history. Sand Lake is also a major feature. Maybe Beltz Park at Sandlake.”

- “I was thinking it would be neat if you can plant, or transplant, some Sitka Sedge, and plant it in appropriate spots around the parking lot, or near the picnic tables near the parking lot. Someplace where you could place a small ID sign showing what it was and easily accessible. Since this sedge is apparently only growing in a couple of isolated spots in the park right now (if I read the map right), it may keep people from trying to tramp down areas to try and find some on their own. I have transplanted Slough Sedge into my back yard in Salem and it is really hardy, especially if planted in a predominantly shady area.”

## Waterfowl Hunting

- ODFW believes there is a great public opportunity for waterfowl hunting in this area while still maintaining public safety. ODFW has the flexibility to be adaptable with hunting regulations to ensure success in these types of situations.”

# 6

## Needs, Constraints & Opportunities

Needs, constraints, and opportunities for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area were identified from a range of inputs including existing conditions assessments, public comments, public surveys, OPRD staff reports, and site visits. This chapter provides a generalized discussion of challenges and opportunities for recreation and resource protection, as well as a list of park specific needs. Strategies to address these needs are identified in Chapter 7: Values, Goals, and Strategies, and implementation of these strategies is outlined in Chapter 8: Park Plans and Management Recommendations.

Some of the needs, constraints, and opportunities that can be addressed through a master planning process are reflected in the master plan goals and/or development concepts. Other issues that cannot reasonably be addressed in the master planning process are noted and passed on for consideration in other appropriate OPRD programs.

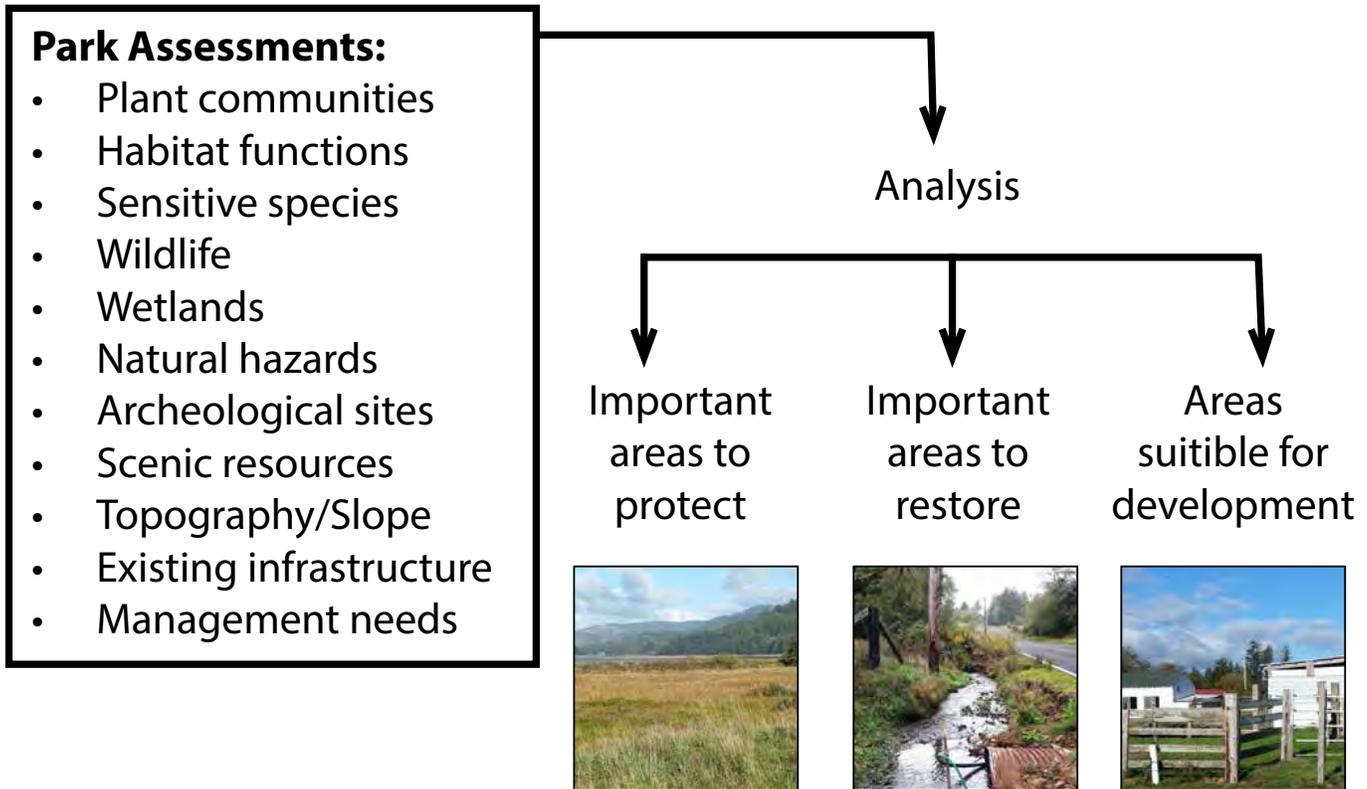
### Typical Needs, Constraints & Opportunities Relevant to OPRD Master Plans

- Natural, cultural and scenic resource management
- Recreational uses and facilities
- Major partnership opportunities
- Property ownership recommendations
- Project costs and funding

### Needs, Constraints, and Opportunities Generally Not Addressed in OPRD Master Plans

- Routine facility maintenance and rehabilitation
- Park fees and budgets
- Staff management
- General park administration
- Lands outside of the area considered for inclusion in park management
- Park naming, feature names

## How do we identify suitable development areas?



## Access and Development Opportunity Areas

**Need:** There currently is no formalized or developed vehicular access to the park property west of Sand Lake Road. A parking area with access to Sand Lake Road is needed to serve visitor uses of the park

**Challenges:** OPRD contracted with traffic engineering consultants to identify feasible locations for developing a visitor parking area with road access from Sand Lake Road. Based on this study, three potential locations for parking were identified, including one neighboring private property: (1) the pasture near the dike, (2) large pasture south of Reneke Creek and (3) neighboring parcel off Roma Avenue. Sites 2 & 3 presented the largest challenges for development and management. Site 2 would require extensive development to provide access across Beltz or Reneke Creeks. Site 3, if acquired, could potentially create management

issues, with users choosing to walk down Sand Lake road to access the dike, instead of heading north along the dune to access the west side of the dike. Parking capacity should meet goals of low impact recreation while planning adequate capacity to discourage parking along the county road.

OPRD considers several factors when determining developable areas in parks. Among these are plant communities, habitat function, sensitive species, wildlife, wetlands, natural hazards, archeological sites, scenic resources, slope, topography, existing infrastructure, and management needs. (See natural resource value maps in Chapter 3 that reflect these studies). Given high natural resource values across the park, there are limited opportunities for parking area development. It was determined that compacting development into one centralized area would be the best decision for natural resource preservation and long term site stewardship.



# Sitka Sedge

State Natural Area

## Land Cover Types

12.09.15

### Legend

- OPRD Park Boundary
- Roads
- Stream/Surface Flow
- Existing Social Paths
- Development Opportunity Areas

Figure 6.2 Sitka Sedge SNA Land Cover Types and Opportunity Area Map(OPRD)

### Forest & Woodland

- Broadleaf Forest
- Conifer/Kinnikinnik Woodland
- Coniferous Forest & Woodland
- Forested Wetland
- Mixed Broadleaf/Conifer Forest
- Mature to Late Seral Forest

### Herbaceous

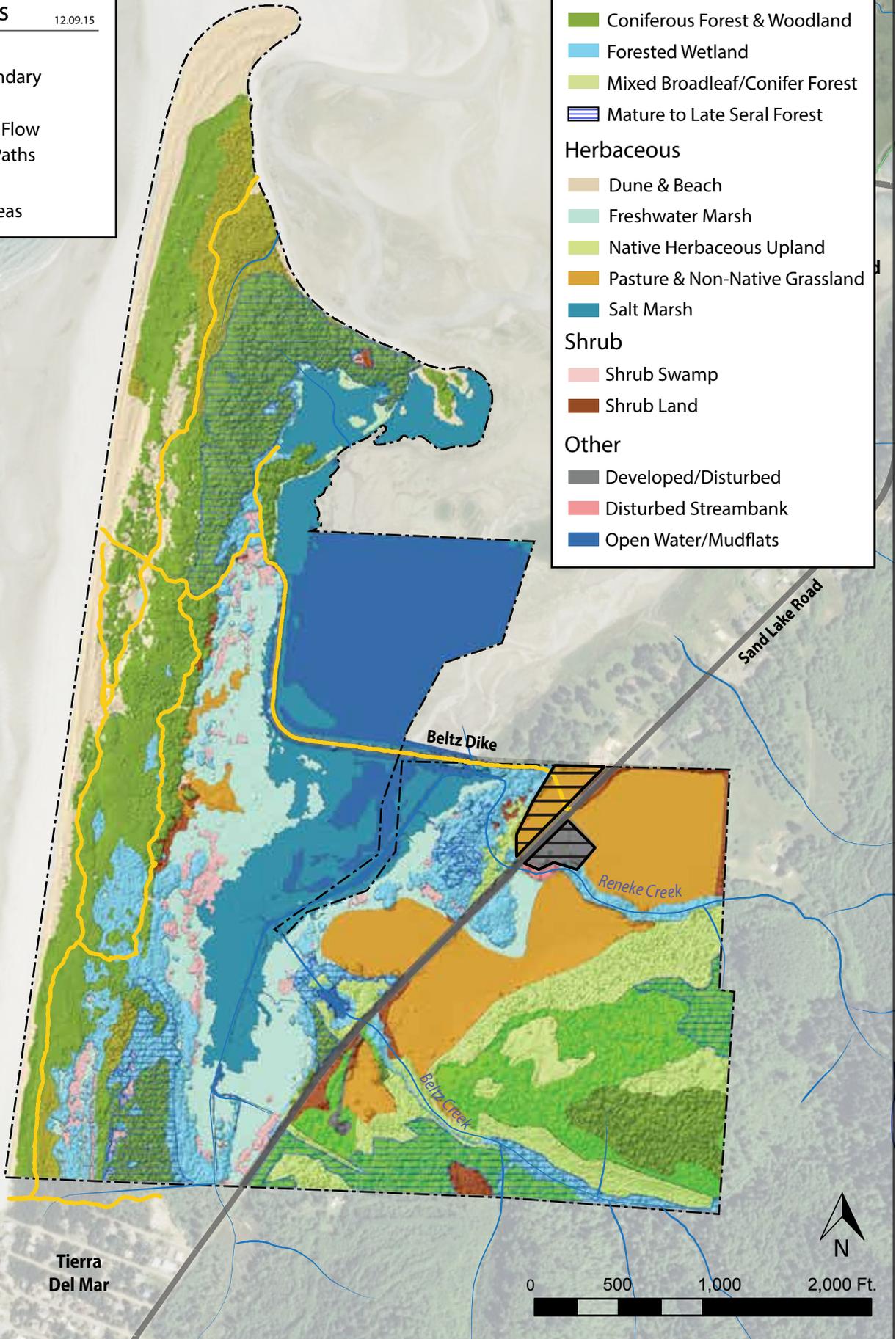
- Dune & Beach
- Freshwater Marsh
- Native Herbaceous Upland
- Pasture & Non-Native Grassland
- Salt Marsh

### Shrub

- Shrub Swamp
- Shrub Land

### Other

- Developed/Disturbed
- Disturbed Streambank
- Open Water/Mudflats



**Opportunities:** In public meetings, OPRD heard repeatedly that the northern pasture provides direct access to the dike and is therefore the preferred location for parking. This location also offers the best sight distance for traffic safety, and can be developed without the need for a left turn lane. It may be advantageous to explore future opportunities to acquire property at the south property boundary to facilitate closer access to the beach and an alternate trail connection to the park trail system. If needed in the future, overflow parking could potentially be provided at the previously level

## Natural Resources and Restoration

**Some of this may overlap with info in Ch 3 or natural resource management recommendations, review when those pieces completed.**

**Need:** Retain and protect high quality native habitats and botanical resources on this property, and implement management actions as needed for preservation of these communities.

**Challenges:** Although the park's natural resources are in exceptional condition overall, this landscape has been altered by past human use including construction of a dike that separates two estuarine communities, one open salt water, the other a combination of saltwater and salt marsh, and freshwater marsh (see Figure 6.2). Since the 1980's when the tidegate was last repaired, salt water intrusion into the freshwater side of the dike has been increasing due to tidegate malfunction, which has resulted in gradual reversion to higher salinity and corresponding changes in botanical communities. While having different habitat types side by side presents opportunities for interpretation about the site history, preservation, human impacts, and natural areas there is value for federally listed fish species to return the estuary to its pre-contact state,

by opening a section of the dike to optimize native fish passage to Beltz and Reneke Creeks. There would also need to be improvements to culverts where the creeks cross Sand Lake road at these creeks to optimize passage to upstream spawning and rearing habitat.

In discussions with a fish passage working group made up of several interested agencies and conservation partners, it was determined that simply removing the tidegate flap and opening up a 4 foot gap in the dike would not meet State fish passage standards. Fish passage would be improved in this scenario (velocity standard met 47%-64% of the time) however velocity requirements under Federal and State standards would not be met. The State standard is fish being able to pass 90% of the time or using an alternative calculation based on active channel width of target streams. As the 90% criteria is not met, the active channel width calculation is a minimum of 18 feet, based on combined channel width at Beltz and Reneke Creeks. It should be noted that OPRD may be required to meet these criteria for fish passage in the future if the tidegate (which is in poor condition) fails.

Hydrologic velocity impacts from opening a gap in the dike could potentially threaten the rest of the dike structure unless significant armoring is added, because the dike is likely sitting on a sand bed. More geotechnical studies need to be performed to understand these potential impacts.

OPRD vegetation models show that opening the dike to fully meet fish passage standards would cause major changes in the existing habitat and vegetation inside the diked portion of the estuary, which is in good condition in its current state. **The potential impacts of this are modeled in Chapter 8.** With fish and shorebird habitat potentially increasing under this scenario, there would also be a potential decrease in migratory song bird and amphibian habitat, among other changes.

As can be seen from the models, OPRD is seeing evidence of salt water intrusion into estuary south of Beltz Dike through salinity testing that was performed in 2015, throughout the property. This is likely due to the fact that the dike has not been repaired in a number of years, possibly since the mid-eighties when farming practices were last seen on the property. This has resulted in gaps at the bottom of the tidegate from missing board(s). Visually, it appears that currently some of the willows on the fringes of the estuary are suffering from saltwater damage. It is therefore plausible that if the dike were to remain in its current condition (ignoring increased degradation, which is highly likely) the habitat quality inside the dike would change, due to sea level rise and the mix of salt and fresh water from outside the dike, as well as the freshwater creeks that empty into the estuary inside the dike.

While water capacity analysis shows little flood impacts to the neighboring communities unless water was overtopping the dike by approximately 3 feet (see Figure 6.3, groundwater testing is currently (at time of plan writing, Spring 2016) being initiated to understand how these impacts are effected by groundwater at different times of year. While it is logical to assume the dike is holding back water that could potentially contribute to existing flooding in Tierra Del Mar, similar projects on the Oregon coast have shown that dike structures retain water to the extent of impeding natural drainage. Restoring natural hydrology could improve drainage in Tierra Del Mar.

Recent OSU surveys (ODFW unpublished Data 2003, ODFW unpublished Data 2014) show that Beltz and Reneke Creeks have low habitat value. These upstream reaches have relatively low habitat quality for Coho and Chinook and low to moderate quality for Steelhead and Cutthroat. This could be attributed to immutable factors such as small stream size (active channel width) or higher than desirable gradients, but they are

also severely lacking in pools and large wood (number of pieces, key pieces, and volume). ODFW's 1988 study has similar findings that the upstream channels of Beltz and Reneke Creeks are not as highly rated as other habitat for salmon species (Sand Lake Watershed Analysis. Prepared for Hebo Ranger District, Siuslaw National Forest, 1988). These findings need to be verified prior to committing to projects to increase fish passage to the creeks.

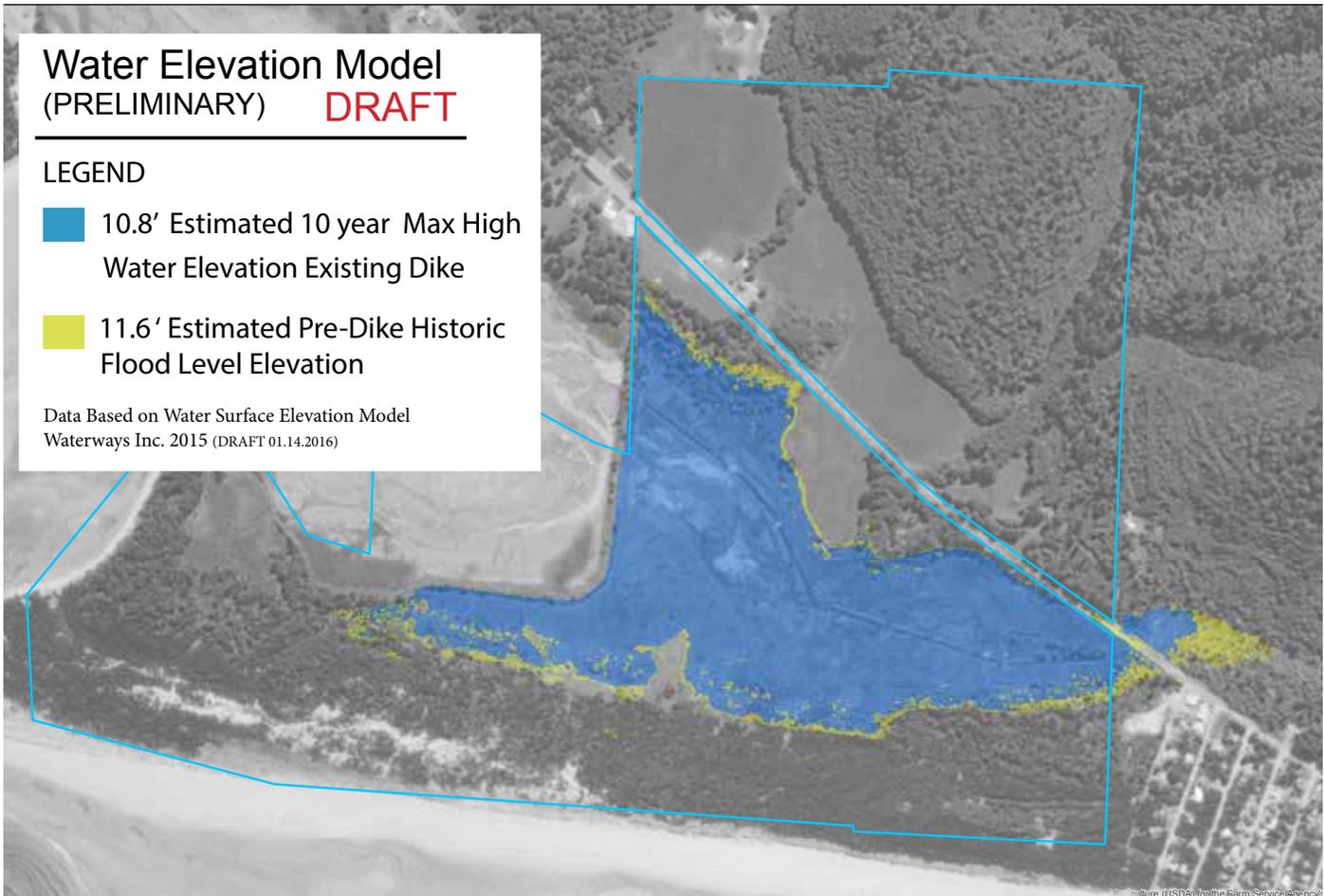
**Opportunities:** OPRD will continue to work with the local community and conservation partners on an adaptive natural resource management strategy with a long term goal of restoring natural hydrology to the estuary, and Beltz and Reneke Creeks through deliberate actions based on a combination of modeling and scientific data and monitoring without exacerbating flood potential in neighboring residential areas. The merits of such projects need to be explored in cooperation with interested conservation groups, agencies and the local neighborhood. Public education about the benefits and impacts associated with restoration actions should be a primary focus of public outreach associated with restoration efforts.

Natural resource management strategies are described in Chapter 8.

## Western Snowy Plover Habitat Conservation

**Need:** Sitka Sedge State Natural Area is listed as a Recreation Management Area (RMA) in the *Habitat Conservation Plan for the Western Snowy Plover* (2010, USFWS) (HCP). This site was included in the plan because the habitat is presumed to be attractive to plovers. As of Spring 2016, nesting plovers have been surveyed in the mouth of Sand Lake Estuary. A site management plan to protect these rare birds has been established.

Figure 6.3 Water Elevation Model (Waterways Inc.)



**Challenges:** Managing Sand Lake as an RMA presents some challenges to recreation and trail planning at this State Natural Area, although the area near the mouth of the estuary is less traveled by people than other sites on the coast. Trails can be designed and managed in such a way to discourage additional foot traffic near potential plover nesting sites. There may be a need to restrict recreation in this area for a longer period of time (including limiting beach driving, dog walking, kites, and bicycles.). Management of this area is difficult due to limited staffing at this park.

**Opportunities:** Lessons from the temporary site management plan enacted in Spring 2016, will guide future management of this RMA. OPRD will continue to work with federal and state partners on a site management plan for this site that meets resource protection goals, while weighing recreation needs at the State Natural Area.

## Trails

**Need:** The existing trail system at the park was developed informally over decades of farming, military, and recreation use. While some trails are in great shape, an OPRD trail assessment was undertaken to inform the planning process and produce a trail plan intended to deliver enjoyable recreation experiences while providing sustainable trail infrastructure and protecting park resources.

**Challenges:** There are significant natural and cultural resources present in the park that need to be protected from recreational use. The trail assessment identified opportunities for a refined trail system and included recommendations for new trails that guide users away from sensitive resources. Dunes and park topography present some challenges to providing trail access with quality surfaces for pedestrian use.

OPRD is always interested in providing more opportunities for equestrian and off-road bicycle use in suitable areas. While several factors affected the decision not to allow these uses, the primary reasons center around potential conflicts between these uses and the park's primary purpose for natural resource management under a State Natural Area designation. Substantial investments supported by multiple partners will likely be made at Sitka Sedge SNA toward re-establishing native plant communities and enhancing habitat conditions for important wildlife. Problems of weed introduction are commonly exacerbated by horse droppings, which counteract efforts to control the spread of weeds and re-establish native species. More direct impacts on important resources can occur when horses are allowed to stray from designated trails into wetland and riparian areas and sites used by ground-nesting species. Frequent flooding and ground saturation occur over much of the park during the rainy months, and these conditions, together with the heavier impacts on trails that would result from allowing equestrian and biking activity, would necessitate more maintenance as well as trail closures for longer time periods. Additionally the trail mileage (4-5 miles) offered at Sitka Sedge does not make it as suitable as other destinations for equestrian or bike use. Expanding trail widths to facilitate multiple uses would be a significant cost. Staff considered proximity of the park to parks that do provide for equestrian use which include Bob Straub a few miles away and Nehalem Bay to the north of Tillamook.

All things considered, the potential consequences of opening Sitka Sedge to equestrian use were believed to outweigh the recreational benefits offered by the relatively small trail system. It is recommended that equestrian, and bike use be restricted for several reasons. The impacts of these trail uses are not compatible with the park's status as a state natural area. These uses are allowed on the beach adjacent to the park.

**Opportunities:** In public meetings, OPRD presented a trail plan for the park that was met with favorable comments. This plan utilizes mostly existing trails and establishes new trails for the purposes of enhancing recreation experience, while managing resource protection. Clearly signing these trails with clear wayfinding and utilizing methods for closing unwanted trails with natural materials can be successful in defining a clear park trail system.

## Safety

**Need:** Provide for the safety of park visitors and provide access for rescue crews to reach injured park visitors quickly.

**Challenge:** The dike provides ample width for a single lane of vehicular access, however there is no space for vehicle turnaround. Future plans for fish passage improvements potentially hinder vehicle access to the dike further.

**Opportunities:** OPRD Park staff will maintain an Emergency Procedures Manual, which covers park-specific procedures for everything from fire and medical emergencies, to water and sewer failure, flooding, hazardous materials spills and more. Evacuations are covered in detail. These procedures will be reviewed annually. Park staff will work with local fire and rescue officials to strategize on emergency management and preparedness.

Emergency routes that provide access to refuge areas will be identified.

## Universal Access

**Need:** Provide universal access to state park properties and recreation facilities.

**Challenge:** Providing universal access is not feasible in all areas in the park due to steep topography and shifting dunal geology.



**Opportunities:** This park does have a potential to provide universal access to one of the park's most interesting features, the sand lake estuary. Park development can prioritize developing trails, where feasible to US Access Board/ADA recreation standards.



# 7

## Values, Goals & Strategies

The values, goals and strategies outlined in this chapter are a bridge between ideas generated during the public involvement process and future implementation of park management actions, park development, and resource management. They reflect the values-based planning approach described in Chapter 5: Public Involvement, and respond directly to the needs, opportunities, and constraints identified in Chapter 6: Needs, Constraints, and Opportunities. Subsequent chapters will provide a detailed approach to implementing these values, goals, and strategies in order to realize the community's vision.



## Value 1: Natural Resources

### We value the ecological benefits of this unique and diverse estuarine habitat.

A top priority for park planning and management is to understand, respect and preserve the integrity of important natural resources, and to improve natural resource functions and values where appropriate.

### **Goal 1: Preserve and improve natural resource conditions in the park to benefit ecological health, recreation settings and visitor experience.**

#### Strategies

**1.1 Assessments:** Use professional assessments of natural resources, supplemented by citizen science assessments, as a basis for decisions on resource management.

- Use natural resource assessments completed for this plan as a basis for locating and designing park uses and managing natural resources. Key guiding documents include the “Vegetation Inventory and Botanical Resource Assessment”, the “Wildlife Assessment”, and “Forest Technical Report” drafted for the park planning process.
- Use the resource assessments and expertise of other natural resource agencies and interest groups to supplement OPRD’s assessments in developing more detailed management plans and prescriptions consistent with OPRD’s objectives for the park. Partner agencies and groups will include Tillamook County, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, Oregon Department of State Lands, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, The Nestucca, Neskowin & Sand Lake Watersheds Council, and potentially others.

- OPRD and OPRD Stewardship staff will work with other conservation partners in the estuary including the North Coast Land Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, and the U.S. Forest Service to develop a management strategy for the network of protected lands in the Sand Lake Estuary.
- Conduct more detailed follow-up assessments where needed to refine development and management plans for particular sites.
- Continue to monitor and study the park's natural resources over time to increase understanding of resource conditions and management needs with support from expert agencies and volunteer citizen science groups.
- Study potential negative or unintended consequences of restoration based on all available information. Consult with local community prior to making irreversible restoration actions.
- Utilize adaptive management strategies to lessen negative or unintended impacts of restoration over time, taking measured steps to achieve desired future conditions.
- Retain and enhance natural resource focused partnerships with stakeholders and organizations to increase the potential for successful restoration and preservation projects across land ownership boundaries in the Sand Lake Estuary.
- Share natural resource data collected during planning process with stakeholders and organizations.

**1.2 Management Emphasis:** Apply natural resource management practices that support the desired conditions and intended use and management emphasis of each area or site.

- Where the emphasis of management is on ecological conditions, management practices will focus on measures needed to preserve or improve ecological health.

- Where the emphasis of management is on recreational development or a balance of natural resource conditions and recreation, management practices to support ecological health will be balanced with objectives for creating desirable recreation settings and managing hazards.

**1.3 Priority Habitat Preservation:** Preserve the highest quality and most important ecological resource areas in the park through special designation.

- Special protection will be applied to areas and sites with high quality and rare native botanical communities and habitats of particular importance to the life cycles of at-risk species and focal species.

**1.4 Habitat Connectivity:** Designate corridors where suitable contiguous habitat conditions facilitate terrestrial and aquatic wildlife movement through the park.

- Identified wildlife movement corridors will connect areas identified as the highest priority habitat preservation areas, especially across Sandlake Road.

**1.5 Habitat Management Projects:** Implement viable projects for restoring important natural resource areas and sites to optimal conditions.

- Habitat management will be guided by desired future ecological conditions and the habitat needs of identified focal species.
- Habitat enhancement will prioritize projects that support recovery of at-risk species, help prevent degradation of high quality or rare habitats, improve important wildlife movement corridors, or that are otherwise important to overall ecological health.
- Work with partners to engage in habitat restoration efforts that seek to restore large acreages of native plant communities, or that will reduce habitat fragmentation.

- Protect known rare, threatened or endangered plant populations where they are being threatened by human activities.
- Feasible projects determined to have significant benefits to stream, estuary and freshwater wetland habitats will be implemented. Controlling invasive weeds in these areas will be a top priority. Projects to reverse former actions that altered stream and marsh hydrology will be evaluated for potential benefits and implemented accordingly.
- Forested areas will be managed to promote healthy succession by prescribed thinning, removal of diseased trees and under planting of native species as needed.
- Pastures with no viable farming capacity will be restored to healthy native forests over time by planting native trees and shrubs and controlling invasive weeds. Areas of pasture will be retained as open meadows for their contributions to habitat diversity and scenic values.

- Dunal habitat management will focus on protection and restoration of identified at-risk plant species and control of invasive non-native species.
- Implement strategies recommended in ODFW's Oregon Conservation Strategy.
- Partner with organizations on natural resource enhancement and restoration efforts to leverage funding and improve outcomes.
- Use native, drought tolerant, non-invasive species in developed area plantings.
- Manage and treat or infiltrate stormwater runoff from paved surfaces and parking lots.
- Manage pets in ecologically sensitive areas and on beaches.

**1.6 Forest Management:** Review forest management plan to improve forest health including forest thinning projects.

- Refer to OPRD Forest Management Policy to reduce the risk of catastrophic loss of forest resources from insects, disease, and fire, maintain or enhance the diversity, productivity, and integrity of native forest systems, and reduce risk of injury to park visitors.
- Limit tree removals, while managing hazard trees according to OPRD policy and natural resource assessments.
- Limit removal of native trees, wildlife snags, and other high value or rare trees where possible.
- Reduce wildfire intensities by assessing fuel reduction needs.
- Manage forests to reduce pest outbreaks.
- Add defensible space around structures to protect them from risk of fire damage.



**1.7 At-Risk Species:** Support the recovery of identified at-risk species through management actions that protect habitats critical to their survival and improve habitat conditions where needed.

- Conduct site assessments for project areas to identify possible presence of at-risk species.
- Follow applicable guidelines set out by responsible agencies to prevent impacts on at-risk species and their habitats.
- Identify wildlife reserves within park properties where no development, or only passive, low impact development, will take place.
- Develop recreation in consideration of potential impacts on fragile habitats.
- Create or retain snags and downed wood within forested areas to increase habitat.
- Respond to new threats posed by invasive animals in a timely manner, working with ODFW and other partner agencies.
- Focus development in areas currently developed or disturbed.
- Protect sensitive natural resources, especially waterways, wetlands, waterfalls, cliff faces, talus slopes and mature upland and riparian forests.
- Avoid development in wetlands and near streams, where possible.
- Limit tree removal and avoid removal of trees and woody vegetation during March 1 – August 31.
- Add small-scale wildlife features, such as loafing logs, bat boxes, and wood duck boxes.

**1.8 Invasive Species:** Eradicate or control the spread of invasive species to the extent feasible using best management practices.

- Weed control measures will focus first on managing the spread of weeds along avenues of dispersal and at the perimeters of infested areas.

- Major weed eradication projects will prioritize areas of best ecological condition with highest conservation value.
- Establish priorities for treating invasive weeds in coordination with partners. This will include prioritizing areas to maintain prior eradication efforts and to strategically limit the spread of invasive weeds into new areas.
- Explore implementation of an early detection, rapid response plan for new, high-risk invasive weeds and educate OPRD staff about the plan.

**1.9 Scenic Resources:** Preserve and enhance the park's natural scenic character through appropriate management of natural resource settings and scenic views and careful placement and design of park development.

- Create and enhance aesthetically pleasing recreation settings through appropriate management of the natural resources for ecological health.
- Create and manage scenic views at key locations through strategic management of vegetation.
- Locate and design park development to avoid unwanted visual impacts on scenic views and settings.

**1.10 Adaptive Management:** Manage natural resources in an adaptive manner, adjusting management strategies to take advantage of professional research, expertise, innovations and practical experience to achieve desired outcomes.



## Value 2: History

We value the cultural history, stories and site features that remind us of how the landscape has been shaped by its inhabitants.

In order to assist visitors in discovering the valuable resources at the parks, we must understand and respect the history of the place and its people. Understanding the relationships between the natural resources and cultural history is an essential part of instilling visitor understanding and appreciation of the park setting.

## Goal 2: Honor the cultural history and traditions of the park setting.

### Strategies:

**2.1 Archeological Sites:** Preserve the integrity of any identified archeological sites, especially those that are significant in representing the cultural history of the park setting.

- Follow protocols for investigating potential archeological sites and preserving the integrity of any identified sites prior to and during ground disturbing activities within the framework of OPRD's Cultural Resources Policy.

**2.2 Cultural Landscape:** Continue working with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde and interested historians to identify sites and settings that are important in promoting understanding and appreciation of the area's cultural history.

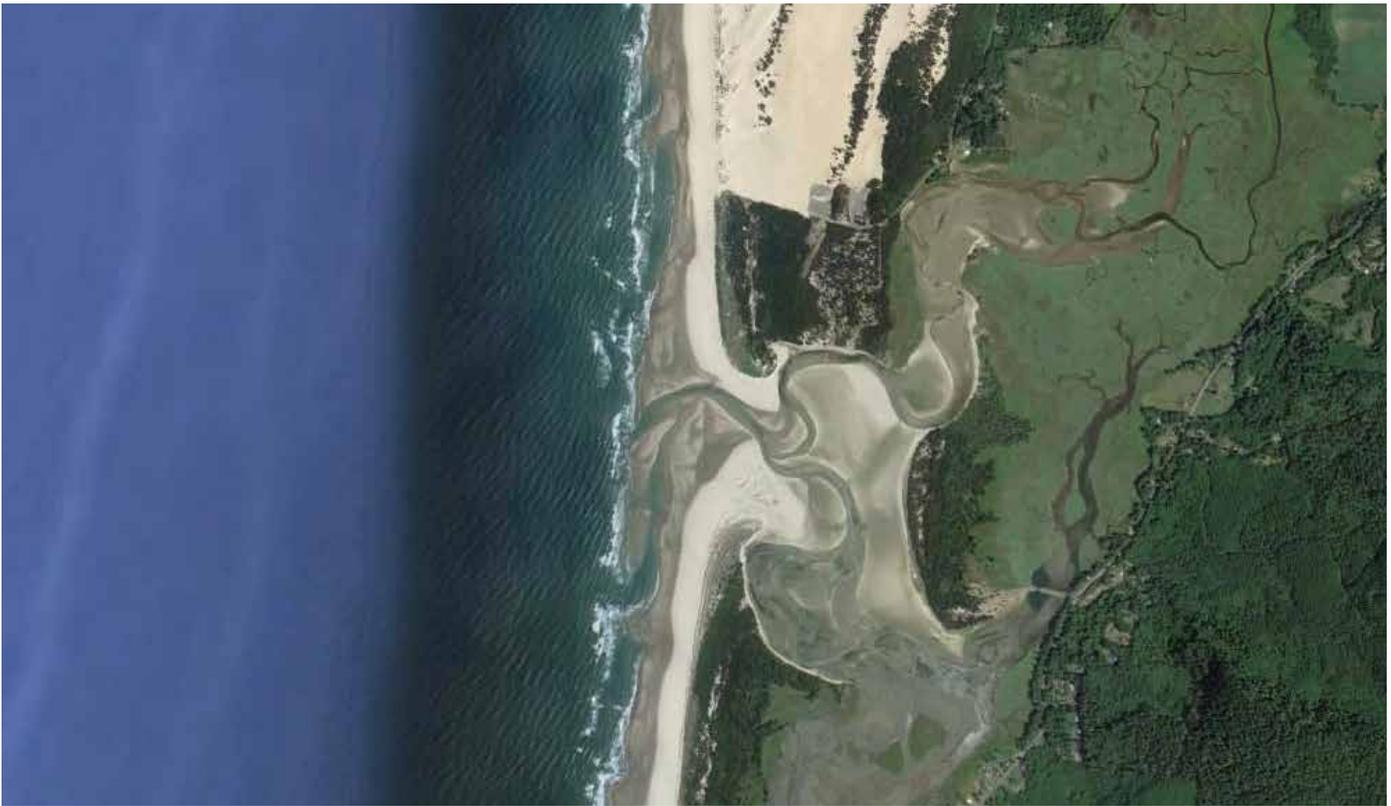
### **2.3: Interpretation and Park History:**

Implement measures for interpreting historic and culturally significant features within state parks while taking appropriate steps to preserve their historic integrity.

- Relate historical stories in varied ways that capture diverse audiences (i.e. through programs, self-guided, music, poetry, interactive activities, scientific exploration, school groups, modern technology, volunteer programs, signage, etc.).
- Partner on interpretive programming, outdoor skills, and volunteer opportunities.
- Empower state park staff (as well as volunteers, friends groups and other partners) to create compelling educational programs.
- Provide access to relevant resources.
- Promote partnerships with valued stakeholders.

### **2.4 Land Stewardship Interpretation**

- Increase awareness and understanding of the preservation effort behind protection of the estuary.
- Increase awareness of management enhancement programs and stimulate participation in protection and restoration efforts.
- Enhance understanding of resource stewardship concepts, and explain how and why these concepts are being carried out in the estuary.
- Increase knowledge and awareness of the vegetation diversity of the estuary and its relationship with climate and geology.
- Increase awareness of the management programs to protect and restore native plant communities.
- Increase knowledge and awareness of park wildlife, habitats, and their relationships.



## **Value 3: Community** **We value the opportunities for public access and education that this special place provides within the context of the Sand Lake Estuary**

Relations with the community are mutually beneficial. The park is a valuable resource to the community, providing benefits to happy and healthy lifestyles, the local economy and community identity. The park and its visitors benefit from local services and various visitor programs provided or supported by partner organizations and the local business community.

## **Goal 3: Enhance opportunities for community involvement with park programs.**

### Strategies:

#### **3.1 Community Involvement:**

- Build on existing partnerships and establish new partnerships for providing natural and cultural resource interpretive, educational and outdoor learning programs at the park.
- Expand mutually beneficial programs that involve volunteer citizen science groups in studies of the park's natural resources and related community outreach.
- Continue and enhance community outreach efforts to encourage volunteer assistance in park stewardship projects and events.
- Support programs that use the park as an environmental learning laboratory for schools.
- Promote 'Leave No Trace' principles in interpretive features.

- Enhance school and youth group field trips.
- Retain and enhance ‘Adopt-a-park’ or ‘Adopt-a-plot’ programs for individual or group stewardship opportunities at selected areas in the park where needed.
- Enhance these programs long-term through partnerships to generate the external support necessary to perform needed maintenance, while also monitoring changes over time and managing data.
- Develop communication and recreation elements that tell the story of natural resource preservation on the property.
- Develop self-guided experiences.
- Design wildlife viewing areas highlighting fish, bird and other species native to the estuary and Oregon Coast to provide access to these species without harming them.
- Develop signage or other less resource intensive communication tools for tourists about local resource protection.
- Increase public education on park property preservation and maintenance requirements.
- Enhance volunteer planting and invasive removal programs.

### **3.2 Be a Good Neighbor:**

- Locate, design and manage park uses and facilities to be aware of potential affects from the park on neighboring land uses.
- Seek ways to prevent significant impacts on these properties, and also to prevent impacts from the neighboring uses on the park.
- Enhance or create naturally vegetated or topographic buffers along the park boundaries.
- Where potential problems exist, OPRD makes every effort to work with the neighbors to identify and implement workable solutions. Potential problems are also addressed in the way the park uses are managed, which includes visitor management under defined park rules.

**3.3 Universal Access:** Develop strategies for increasing universal access in state parks.

- Provide access to primary recreation activities in the park when feasible.
- Provide universal access circulation in day use areas to basic facilities like bathrooms and information stations.
- Prioritize facility development and major maintenance for projects that improve or increase universal access.

**3.4 Outreach:** Develop strategies for engaging emerging and underserved demographics in state parks.

#### Outreach Strategies

- Increase survey, website, and outreach materials to capture non-English speaking populations, elderly and younger park visitors.
- Investigate methods of outreach to establish relationships with underserved and underrepresented community groups so OPRD can better engage in future developments.
- Partner with organizations to increase park experiences for underserved communities.
- Develop programs to provide outreach to underserved communities in our parks, such as urban classroom visits, field trips, and service learning opportunities.
- Expand and increase low cost, introductory recreation opportunities like the Let’s Go program to include birding, wildlife viewing, and other recreation activities that highlight the Sand Lake Estuary.

**3.5 Safety and Park Administration** Reduce visitor safety incidences at this state park. Support safe and enjoyable visitor experiences and efficient park management through well-designed and appropriately located park facilities, well-managed administrative programs, sufficient levels of staffing and volunteers and cooperation with the area’s providers of necessary support services.

- Assess communication strategies to provide visitors with the information to make safe recreation decisions; including trail signage (content), interpretive programs, printed materials, and web content.
- Prioritize budget and personnel to maintain existing facilities, alleviating safety hazards.
- Repair trails and walkways damaged by hazardous roots and wildlife.
- Use signage when necessary to warn visitors of potential hazards.
- Review management practices at parks suffering from overcrowding.
- Clarify land ownership to increase responsibility for potential hazards.
- Year-round and seasonal staffing levels for the park will be established consistent with the needs of the park in its phased development of facilities and programs and visitation levels.
- Park administration will be assisted by volunteer hosts living on site in sufficient numbers and optimally located to provide the level of assistance needed for the park visitors and facilities.
- Establish and maintain preparedness for emergencies. In cooperation with the area's emergency response planners and service providers, develop and regularly update an emergency management plan, staff and volunteer training, related facilities and equipment, and media for conveying safety messages to park visitors.
- Designate a refuge area for emergencies requiring evacuation from vulnerable areas.
- Maintain close coordination with state and local law enforcement agencies.

## Value 4: Recreation

We value the opportunity for all to discover, explore, and enjoy the peaceful beauty of this natural area.

### Goal 4 Provide low-impact recreation in accordance with the park's designation as a state natural area; to protect important ecosystem components and provide public interpretation and education.

#### Strategies

**4.1 State Recreation Area:** Enhance existing trails and develop recreation facilities to support hiking, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and interpretation.

- Park development should consider natural surroundings and blend in.
- When siting recreation facilities, consider impacts to the ecological function of the landscape setting. Design facilities to minimize impacts on natural resources and prescribe strategies for maintaining natural resources, given the increased impacts from the recreational use.
- Identify recreation opportunities in low value natural resource areas.
- Reserve high value natural resource areas for minimal or no recreational access.
- Educate users about environmentally responsible recreation practices.
- Communicate with natural and cultural resource specialists when designing recreation facilities.
- Utilize the reuse of existing roadways and infrastructure for recreation facilities.



- Reduce the amount of pavement and minimize the addition of new impervious surface.
- Manage landscaped areas around recreation facilities with ecologically responsible practices.
- Retain and enhance opportunities for picnicking, wildlife viewing and other low-impact recreation activities that complement state natural area designation.
- Retain and enhance park facilities, circulation, operations and maintenance to support the state parks mission and facilitate efficient and effective management.

**4.2 Trail Opportunities:** Retain, develop, and enhance short trip and smaller loop trails for walk-in visitors, families and universal access.

- Identify single North/South dune trail to sign.
- Resurface trails where wet and or suffering from erosion.
- Determine loop options and clear destinations from proposed parking area.

- Develop trail maintenance plan similar to Whalen Island with yearly trimming for clearance standards (6' wide/8' tall), monitoring for erosion.
- Re-route existing trails to reduce erosion and severe grade changes.
- Work with park caretaker and local volunteers on trail maintenance plan.
- Route trails to protect cultural and natural resources.

**4.3 Trailhead Parking Areas:** Develop trailhead parking at locations that best serve hiking and low impact trail uses.

- Develop parking lot design that provides capacity that compliments the state natural area, while reasonably accommodating local use patterns.
- Develop facilities to promote site stewardship, safety and maintenance: i.e. picnic tables, restrooms, waste receptacles, wayfinding, park rules, etc.

- **Wayfinding and Signage:** Provide maps and information at the trailhead and on the website designed to let visitors efficiently find their way in advance, or when arriving with no prior knowledge of the park.
- Provide signage only when necessary. Try alternative management options prior to placing signage in the park.
- Interpretive and wayfinding signage should be limited and contribute to the natural setting of the park.

**4.5 Trail Connectivity:** Continue exploring alternatives for establishing an inland trail connection between Pacific City and the Sand Lake Estuary. Work with outside interests in establishing trail connections to community and regional trail systems.

- Work with groups interested in trail connections from the park to community and regional trails.
- Consider that connecting the park trails on the west of Sand Lake Road will likely be cost-prohibitive when proposing connections to the area on an inland route from Pacific City.



# 8

## Park Plans & Management Recommendations

The following plan proposals aim to support the recreational needs and values of the people who will visit this park, now and for decades to come. These proposals strive to find a balance between recreation access, natural resource health, scenic resource management, and fiscal responsibility. Management recommendations for the park including natural resource strategies are found in this chapter.



Rendering of Proposed Viewing Area on Dike

## Park Identity

In November 2015, the OPRD Commission unanimously approved the park name Sitka Sedge State Natural Area. OPRD considered several options to name the park, weighing names that reflect past owners, politicians, and landscape features. After thinking about what the agency intends the park will become – a beautiful, natural place that offers a low-key, intimate connection to south Tillamook County – it was decided to go with a name that will introduce people to a relatively unknown native plant; Sitka Sedge State Natural Area. Sitka



Sitka Sedge (*Carex aquatilis v. dives*)

Sedge (*Carex aquatilis v. dives*) is a beautiful native grass-like plant found in pockets throughout the property, and OPRD thinks it is a perfect fit for this new park; graceful, ecologically important, and native.

## A Vision For the Park

### Wildlife Viewing Areas

Four locations for wildlife viewing have been identified for development with varying scales (see locations on Figure 8.1). These locations were based on providing dedicated and varied opportunities for visitors to enjoy the wildlife and natural features the property has to offer. Ranging from simple benches, to viewing platforms, these viewing areas seek to allow visitors to engage with the natural qualities of the park at different interest levels. Park features will be designed to contribute to the scenic quality of the natural area and where possible, constructed from sustainably developed materials, including potentially recycled materials from coastal state parks.

Figure 8.1 Proposed Park Site Plan (OPRD)



# Sitka Sedge State Natural Area

Proposed Site Plan **DRAFT**

## Legend

- OPRD Park Boundary
- Existing Social Paths
- Proposed Trails
- Proposed Viewing Area
- ☀ Scenic Viewpoint
- Roads
- Stream/Surface Flow

## Proposed Site Program

### Recreation Activities & Facilities

- Day Use
- Walking & Hiking Trails
- Nature/Wildlife Viewing
- Conservation Education

### Restoration Area Focus

- Invasive Removal
- Fish Passage
- Native Habitat

### Trail Mileages

(From Parking Access)

4.5 Miles of Total Proposed Trails

- To A 0.5 mi (out & back)
- To B 1.0 mi (out & back)
- To C 1.75 mi (out & back)
- Short B Loop 1.5 mi (loop & back)
- North Loop 2.25 mi (loop & back)
- South Loop 2.25 mi (loop & back)
- Full Loop 3 mi (loop and back)
- Spine Trail 2.5 mi (out & back from TDM Access)

**Proposed Parking Access**

- 20-25 Car Spaces / 2 Bus/RV
- Trailhead
- Restroom
- Meadow Restoration
- Host Site (Across Road)

Clay Myers State Natural Area at Whalen Island



Whalen Island County Park



Sand Lake Estuary

Sand Lake Road

Reneke Creek

Beltz Creek

Dune Trail

Dike Trail

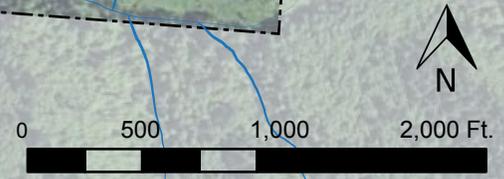
Beltz Dike

North Trail Loop

South Trail Loop

Tierra Del Mar

To Tierra Del Mar Public Beach Access





Aerial image showing location (above) and view from proposed viewing area 'B' (below)

### Site C: Knoll

A small platform structure and benches will be located on the topographical rise in the center of the inland estuary to provide access to panoramic views of the entire estuary, highlighting the variety of bird and wildlife species that occupy the south part of the estuary. This location makes an excellent destination for pausing to watch wildlife and the clouds moving across the park.

### Site D: Pond

A small interpretive feature, highlighting the seasonal pond in this section will be installed and a small section of split rail (or similar) fence will be situated to reduce impacts on this sensitive area.

### Trails

The general plan for the park, Figure 8.1, illustrates the planned trail system. All trails are designed for pedestrians only. There are approximately 4.5 miles of trail proposed in the park, including upgrading existing trails and new trails. Approximate trail mileages, including suggested loop options, are included in figure 8.1. Trails have been designed to provide logical and varied routes all initiating from the parking area for hikers of all-abilities.

### Dike Trail

This trail has been designed to highlight the view of the estuary from the dike. It allows people to walk through the center of the estuary, providing views to the north and south. This trail will be surfaced with a 60"-wide compacted gravel to maintain ADA recreation standards for universal access. The gravel trail will reduce required mowing on the dike while providing a reliable surface year round. Vegetation on the banks of the dike should be trimmed to maintain clearance standards (6' wide/8' high). Considerations to aesthetic and wildlife habitat values should be made prior to clearing vegetation.

### Site A: Dike

A small bench will be provided along the dike trail approximately a quarter mile in from the parking lot so visitors can rest in the shade and look out to the north and south of the dike into the estuary. Some improvements may need to be made to the dike to facilitate a passing area. Minimal limbing and vegetation removal will be necessary.

### Site B Terminus of Dike

An accessible viewing platform at the terminus of the dike is proposed in this plan, providing views to the north of the estuary where the largest number of seabirds roost and feed on site. This structure will be situated to remain outside the estuary zone.



Rendering of Proposed Dike Trail

Additional improvements to the dike will include fencing portions of the property boundary to reduce trespassing and improvements to clearly define this trail route along the dike, possibly by planting short stretches or fencing alongside the dike banks. Erosion control should be considered near the tide gate pending recommendations for fish passage, and potentially in other areas of the dike over time as needed. Refer to state and ODFW requirements for tide gate work.

### North Trail Loop

A new trail will connect the northern dike terminus with existing trails in a manner that will effectively facilitate management of trail use through high value resource value areas while restoring a forested portion of the dike, and allowing exciting and significant views of the estuary and wildlife. This loop will highlight views of the northern estuary and the sea birds that roost in this section of the park and typically feed at low tides. A new route is planned through mid-seral forest, that will open up views across the estuary to Whalen Island and Cape Lookout, before passing through the

edge of native kinnikinnick shrubland. This trail is designed to be linked to the south loop trail to provide a longer three mile hiking experience that showcases all the unique habitats of the park.

### South Trail Loop

This loop highlights forested sections of the park, mostly shore pine, and makes for a nice wooded hike on a rainy or sunny afternoon. The trails weave through woods in a storybook way, while opening up on some breathtaking views of the estuary to the east. A section of this trail near the dike will need improvements to reduce flooding in the rainy season.

### Dune Trail

This spine trail currently provides access to the park property and is utilized by visitors in the neighborhood of Tierra Del Mar. This trail will be maintained as a link to the north and south loops and for neighbors to walk to the north beach. Some sections will need slight rerouting to adjust the trail to high ground to avoid areas of seasonal flooding. Parallel sections of this trail will be closed using natural materials and vegetative restoration. A new route over the dune will be cleared to provide access to the beach near Tierra Del Mar so residents can continue accessing the park from the south. Currently the trail that connects to the property crosses private land, and unless an easement can be maintained, an additional access will need to be created onto the ocean shores.

### Existing Trail Maintenance

Selected areas of existing trail are in need of brush removal to trail clearance standards (8' tall/4-6' wide), especially along the wooded inner dune trail. Some areas are in need of rerouting and enhancement for sustained protection against erosion, extreme grade, or flooding. Selected locations will require removal of a few trees for view shed enhancements. Wayfinding signage will be installed at trail

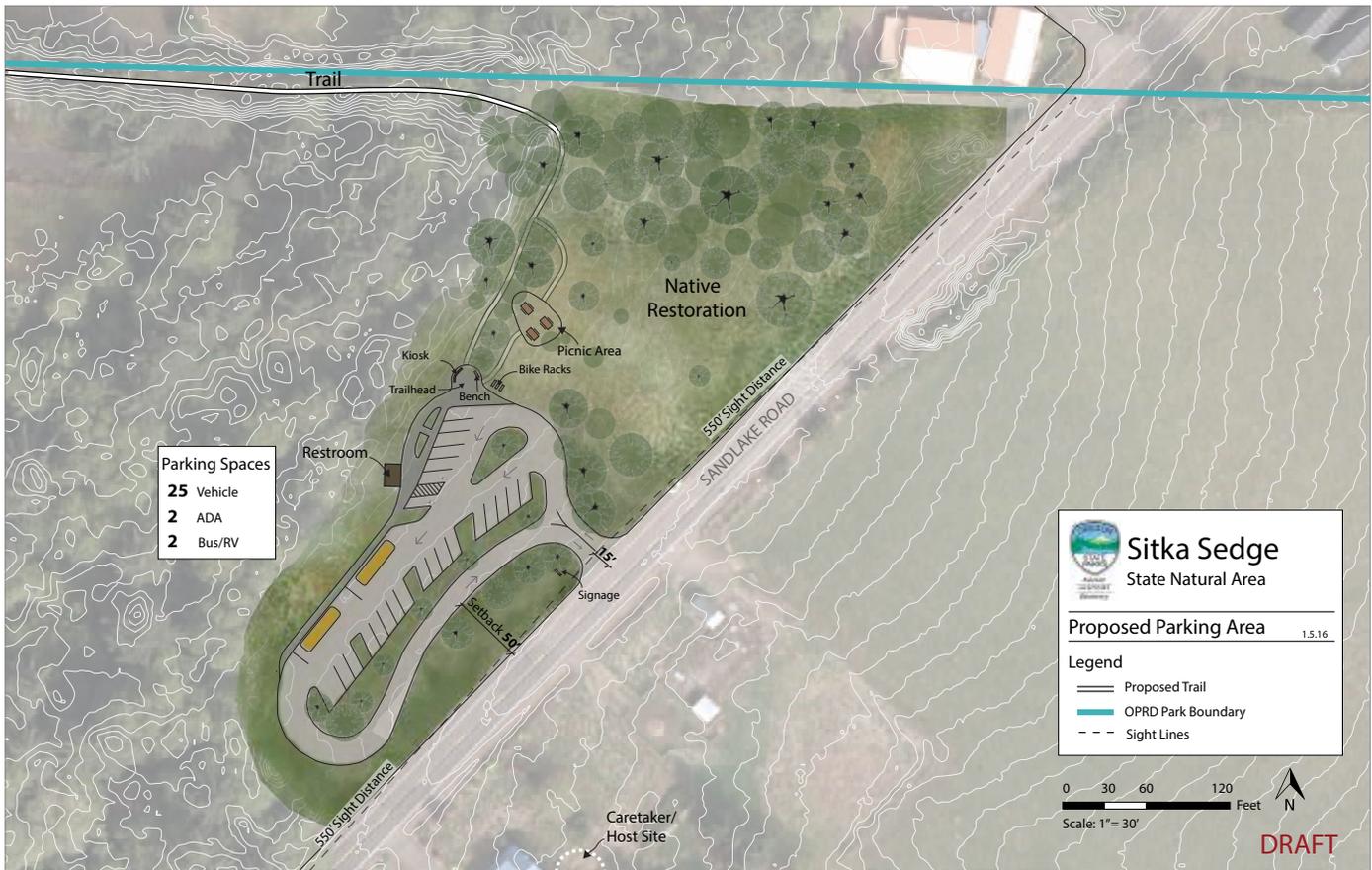


Figure 8.2 Proposed Parking Area Schematic Design

crossings to enhance visitor safety. Signs indicating numbered coastal emergency identification locations will be installed near the dune to enhance rescue operations on the ocean shore.

Two or three beach access trails will be maintained over the dune to provide access to the beach. These locations will be signed from each side of the dune to mark access points back into the park from the ocean shore.

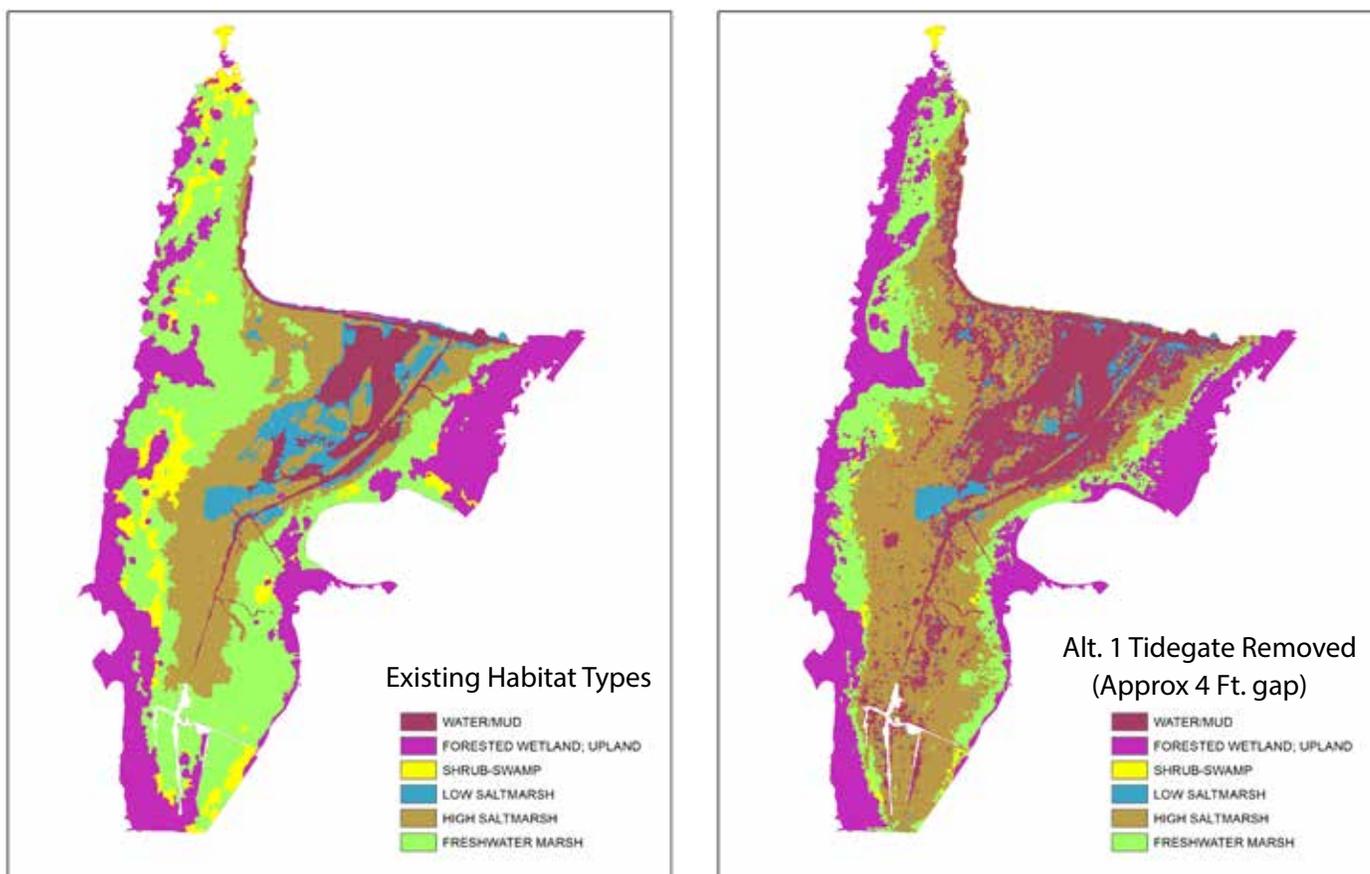
### Off-Site Trail Connections

OPRD welcomes opportunities to work with interested groups and landowners to connect park trails to existing and planned regional and local community trails. Possible opportunities for offsite trail connections could emerge in the future, and need not be identified in this plan to be implemented.

### Parking Area

Access to the park has been provided in a location proximate to the dike trail and Sand Lake Estuary providing direct access for visitors to quickly stop on a coast tour, eat some lunch at one of the provided picnic tables, choose to take in a glimpse of the estuary and shore birds, or embark on a slightly longer day hike. The parking area has been designed to minimize the development area and provide easy access to trails whether the visitor arrives by vehicle, school bus, RV, or bicycle. Proposed capacity is based on comparable attendance data at nearby parks and trail miles. A trailhead, restroom, small picnic area, bike parking, and benches will be provided. Additionally park information, including interpretation, maps, and safety information should be concentrated at this location reducing the need to place additional signs throughout the park.

INSERT Figure 8.3 Composite  
Natural Resource Management  
Recommendations (OPRD)



HABITAT	ACREAGE				
	Existing	Alt1	Alt 1 %change	Alt2	Alt 2 %change
FORESTED WETLAND or UPLAND	20.5	16.8	-18%	13.7	-33.3%
FRESHWATER MARSH	29.9	13.9	-54%	11.1	-62.9%
HIGH SALTMARSH	17.5	30.6	+75%	12.7	-27.7%
LOW SALTMARSH	4.6	1.6	-64%	0.9	-80.0%
SHRUB-SWAMP	5.2	0.8	-85%	1.1	-79.4%
WATER/MUD	6.4	20.5	+220%	44.8	+599%

Figure 8.4a Digital model data (OPRD)

The access area will be vegetated with native species, highlighting the natural area. Storm water retention areas may include plant species found on site, including the park’s namesake sitka sedge.

Successional restoration of the north meadow will serve three purposes: (1) establish a vegetative buffer between the park and neighboring residential property; (2) increase the visitor experience, creating a more naturalized park-like entrance; and (3) establish defined area for potential management of storm water from the proposed parking area.

### Caretaker/Park Host Site

This project includes demolition of the residence near the proposed entrance and clearing to prepare the site for a caretaker/ park host. Utility work will need to be done to abandon and/or extend existing electric and water on site. The park host site will consist of a concrete pad and vegetation improvements to the area.

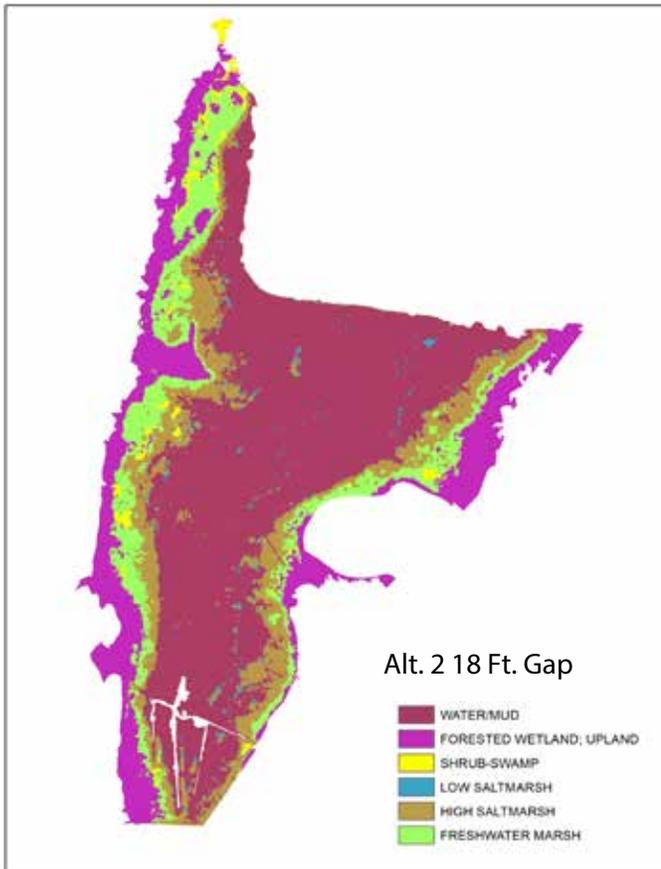


Figure 8.4 b Digital models demonstrating possible scenarios for vegetative changes to the estuary inside Beltz Dike with two fish passage alternatives (OPRD)

## Natural Resource Management Strategies

This plan describes natural resource management mostly in general terms and categories for purposes of describing intent and providing guidance at a general planning level. Designing management actions at a project level, such as detailing project prescriptions, is not a purpose of this plan. However, management actions will be consistent with the management intentions and general project descriptions expressed in this plan, which are based on recommendations made in the botanical and wildlife resource assessments prepared for the plan.

Management actions include actions to preserve natural resources and to enhance them through intervention. Aside from light development for

access described in this chapter, this site will be managed with a natural resource emphasis, compatible with its designation as a State Natural Area.

Insert text summarizing natural resource management strategies and maps with headings based on different land cover types and general management recommendations for habitat.

Address management recommendations for fish passage (draft below), adaptive management, reserves, plover, etc as needed.

## Fish Passage and Stream Restoration

OPRD recognizes the importance of restoring fish passage between south Sand Lake estuary and upstream spawning and rearing habitat. As Sand Lake estuary is one of the least developed estuaries on the west coast, much of it now surrounded by publicly owned land, there is a great opportunity to restore native spawning habitat for several sensitive species including Coho, Chum, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

We can achieve this goal over time by allowing more natural salt water flows past the dike. This helps meet the agency's mission to "provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations".

As a land manager, the agency needs to balance several needs. It is clear after working with partners on evaluating the merits of restoring hydrologic conditions to the estuary, that meeting the goal of fish passage is a complex process that will need to consider several factors including hydrology, historic land use, impacts to neighbors, engineering, botanical diversity, and habitat values. Following through on the agency's pledge to "take the long view", OPRD will take a measured pace in moving towards restoring native hydrology to Sitka Sedge State Natural Area. As it approaches

100 years of Oregon State Parks, OPRD feels that taking a flexible, measured approach to restoring fish passage based on incremental and informed steps is key to achieving the goal of restoring native hydrology for the next 100 years.

Next steps to meeting this goal:

- Understand consequences of removing tidegate using knowledge gained through hydrologic study to be completed in spring 2017. Develop a plan with partners and the community to remove or permanently raise the tide gate, allowing approximately 4 feet of passage width to fish.
- Continue to work with neighboring land managers to understand OPRD's responsibility to the entire estuary.
- Continue to study upstream habitat values along Beltz, Reneke and other creeks that feed the estuary.
- Work with partners on options for fish passage that optimize benefits to fish, in relation to other habitat values while retaining botanical diversity.
- Agency representatives and stakeholders will consider the Salmon River project as a precedent project to understand potential benefits of restoration at Sand Lake.
- Sketch out the expected lifecycle of the dike. The next time it needs major repairs, it will have to be brought into compliance with current fish passage laws. At or before that time, a larger opening needs to allow natural salt water flows through, and the park plan should anticipate this by wisely designing recreation services in the park.
- Continue to communicate with park neighbors to facilitate understanding of proposed impacts to local communities of alternatives for providing fish passage.

## Cultural Resource Management

A cultural resource inventory of the park and a review of report findings were conducted in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to inform potential impacts during development. A 41 acre survey of park property was conducted in late 2015. As described in Chapter 3, Beltz Cabin is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Given the history of use by Native American tribes, there is an overall high likelihood of archaeological resources present in the park. Under OPRD's Cultural Resources Policy, archeology staff will be consulted prior to any ground disturbance in all areas of the park where projects are planned. For each project, archeology staff recommends protocols based on likelihood of encountering significant artifacts at the site. The protocol may involve a surface survey prior to groundbreaking followed by monitoring during construction, or in certain cases, subsurface testing prior to ground breaking followed by monitoring during construction.

## Interpretive Themes and Message Framework

OPRD supports high quality interpretation and environmental education programs that enhance visitor experiences through trained staff, volunteers, and cooperating organizations. These programs also help OPRD achieve its mission of preserving and protecting natural and cultural resources by raising visitor understanding and awareness and promoting stewardship. A number of these programs help strengthen relationships between the park and the local community through the direct involvement of community organizations and volunteers.

It was recognized through the planning process that this park will be an extremely important resource to the local community in providing educational experiences, and facilitating stewardship for natural resources among the younger generations. While there are potential opportunities to utilize park facilities to enable these programs (Beltz Cabin, trails, etc.) that have yet to be fully realized, OPRD recognizes the local community will play a large part in achieving visions for park programs and interpretive efforts. Some of the ideas generated through the public process have been included in Chapter 5 and 7 of this Plan. While it is not the role of the Plan to detail park programs and interpretive features, the following educational and interpretive themes have been developed utilizing surveys with OPRD staff, citizens, and historical information:

### Primary Interpretive Theme

*Sitka Sedge State Natural Area provides a rare and valuable view into one of the last functioning estuaries of the Oregon Coast, offering perspective on how both natural and cultural elements have – and continue to – shape our ecosystem.*

### Supporting Messages and Related Content

1. As a relatively unspoiled and undeveloped estuary on the Oregon Coast, Sitka Sedge SNA provides a unique and ever-evolving habitat for a diverse population of native plants and wildlife.
  - One of the last undeveloped/intact sections of Oregon coast
  - What is an estuary and what is its value/role to the area? (e.g. absorb flooding, support fish cycles, location of large woody debris)
  - Importance of fresh/salt water estuary for wildlife
  - Important natural resource of high conservation value
  - Constant shifts/changes due to human and natural effects

2. Sitka Sedge SNA has a rich cultural history that has played an active role in shaping the estuary and surrounding area, from Native American use and early dairy farming to Coast Guard Beach Patrol and current day efforts by public/private groups to support conservation of the estuary.
  - How people have interacted with the landscape over time
  - How farming and dike played a role in shaping the landscape and community (including why the dike was built)
  - How partnerships with local residents, stakeholders, agencies, etc. helped bring SSSNA into public ownership (vs development)
  - Ongoing shifts/changes due to human and natural effects
  - Correct misperception that “natural” means it hasn’t been altered by man-made influences
3. Sitka Sedge SNA offers a rare and multi-faceted opportunity for visitors of all ages and abilities to experience a rare ecosystem of the Oregon Coast and what it looked/felt like before modern development.
  - Sitka Sedge SNA provides a rare opportunity to observe salt and fresh water estuaries side-by-side, also changing habitat
  - Sitka Sedge SNA provides unique access points to explore the estuary via trails, viewpoints, the dike, and remote beach access.
  - One of the last remaining undeveloped/intact section of OR coast
  - How the dike shaped the natural space and climate
  - Many OPRD recreation sites on the coast are restricted to the shoreline. This area is unique as it extends inland covering the coastline, dunes, estuary, and upland areas in a very short distance.

These themes provide a basis for establishing interpretive features throughout the park.

# Sitka Sedge State Natural Area Visitor Experience

The table below summarizes planned and existing visitor experiences at Sitka Sedge SNA supported by park resources and facilities, park rangers, volunteers and community partners.

Visitor Experiences Planned or Existing	Status	Visitor Support Facilities Planned or Existing
<b>Day Use Recreation</b>		
Trail hiking, walking	New	Hiking trails
Beach activities	New	Beach Access Trails
Equine trail riding	Existing	On beach only
Bicycling	Existing	On beach only
Picnicking	New	Picnic area and facilities
Wildlife Viewing	New	Trail system and viewing platforms or blinds
<b>Park Resource Interpretation</b>		
Self-guided natural & cultural interp. sites	New	Interpretive features, trailhead, trail system, viewing areas
Self-guided nature trails	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Ranger or volunteer-guided interp. hikes	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Natural /cultural interp. programs	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Roving interpretation by park rangers/volunteers	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
<b>Environmental Learning Programs</b>		
Natural and Cultural History programs	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Botanical and wildlife learning programs	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Stewardship learning programs	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Wildlife/Botanical surveys	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas
Multi-day classes taught by rangers/community partners	New	Trail System, trailhead, viewing areas

Figure 8.5 Proposed Visitor Experience Activities Table for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area

# Visitor Capacities

The tables below quantify maximum peak day occupancy by day use and overnight visitors assuming all visitor facilities are filled. For day use visitors, the numbers are based on maximum buildout of day use parking and assumed average numbers of visitors per vehicle. Facilities available only for pre-arranged group use or special use permit are not included in the estimates.

Estimated Average Peak Day Use Traffic					
Facilities	Description	Max. # Units	Max. # Vehicles/ Day	Avg. Stay	Ave. Peak Day Vehicle Trips
<b>Visitor Day Use</b>					
Main Trailhead	Designed for standard size vehicles. Vehicle trips per space include arrival & departure of 2 vehicles per space per day.	25 standard vehicle spaces	2 per space	half day (3-4 hours)	4 per space per day
					100 total
Main Trailhead	Designed for larger vehicles. Vehicle trips per space include arrival & departure of 2 vehicles per space per day.	2 Bus/RV	2 per space	half day (3-4 hours)	2 per space per day
					4 total
<b>Administrative</b>					
Staff	Staff private vehicle parking at park office does not include parking for park vehicles, which are used for work trips in addition to daily arrival & departure. Vehicle trips per staff include arrival & departure plus 1 additional work trip to & from per staff per day.	1 staff parking spaces	2 per space	half day	4 per space per day
			2 total		4 total (includes work trips in park vehicles)
<b>Total Peak Day Trips Per Day</b>					<b>108 total</b>

Figure 8.6 Estimated Day Use Capacities for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area

# Administrative Program Priorities

## Emergency Response

Emergency preparedness is a top priority among park operations. OPRD will prepare and regularly update a plan for emergency management in cooperation with area emergency response planners and providers. The plan will address staff and volunteer training, provision and maintenance of related facilities and equipment, response protocols and coordination with affected emergency response agencies, and media for conveying safety messages to park visitors.

Because of the park's proximity to coastal communities and the higher elevations of the park east of Sand Lake Road, this part of park may serve as a refuge in a tsunami or major storm event requiring evacuation from surrounding areas.

## Weed Control

Despite a majority of native plants present in the park, invasive weeds are a problem in various areas of the park, and of particular concern in and around the estuary and areas where at-risk native plant species may be threatened. Measures to control invasive weeds will be implemented to the extent feasible using best management practices. Efforts to control weed infestations of concern will focus first on controlling the spread at the perimeters, prioritizing areas in the best ecological condition with the highest conservation rankings to prevent further deterioration. On-going maintenance will involve monitoring, removing and controlling the spread of weeds along avenues of dispersal - streams, ditches, trails, roads, and parking areas – and at the perimeters of significant infestations.

## Trail Maintenance

While trail maintenance is important to the experience of trail users, at some locations

the erosion that accompanies deteriorating trail conditions can affect water quality in nearby streams and wet areas. Monitoring and maintenance of trail conditions will focus on known and potential problem areas with particular attention to sites where stream sedimentation caused by erosion may occur, and on sites most vulnerable to creation of social trails. Seasonal trail closures will be implemented where needed to prevent problems not otherwise manageable through periodic trail maintenance. Trails will be designed and constructed using best management practices.

Trail maintenance will include trimming vegetation to clearance standards once a year, possibly more on dike, depending on growth. Every 3-5 years trails should be checked for erosion. Grading, drainage measures and other maintenance improvements should follow OPRD Trail Management guidelines.

## Refuse Management

For aesthetic reasons, management of human refuse is important to the experience of park visitors. Refuse management is a key concern as it relates to declining populations of wildlife species that may be present in the park. Refuse management is therefore important wherever humans are present. OPRD will carefully manage refuse through placement and regular maintenance of receptacles and prompt clean up as needed. Information on the importance of management and stewardship responsibilities will be provided at key locations.

## Ocean Shores

Under the Beach Bill enacted in 1967, the public has free and uninterrupted use of the beaches along Oregon's 362 mile-long coastline. The Beach Bill also directed that the ocean shore be administered as a state recreation area. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is charged with the protection and preservation of the recreation, scenic, and natural resource values found on Oregon's ocean shore. Through ocean shore Administrative Rules (Division 20-30; 80), OPRD regulates vehicle use, camping, and other recreational activities on the ocean shore. In addition to administering a permit program for ocean shore alterations, OPRD reviews application permits for special events, commercial filming, and beach salvage activities. This part of the park will be managed under these rules, and ocean shore rules will likely apply to proposed improvements where trails in the State Natural Area cross over the vegetation line. Please refer to: <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/RULES/pages/oceanshores.aspx> for additional information.





# 9

## Cost Estimates & Phasing

This section provides a complete project list for implementing the planning proposals described in Chapter 8: Park Plans and Management Recommendations. Projects are listed by phase of construction, Development projects benefit from multidisciplinary input and consideration of the project effects the several layers of infrastructure, natural resources, and visitor experiences present in a park. Project details, summarized conceptual cost estimates, potential permitting requirements, funding sources, and operations and maintenance strategies are described for each project. These projects are prioritized by project phasing.

Note: Construction costs are conceptual and totals do not fully reflect natural resource project costs.

**Sitka Sedge State Natural Area**

**CONCEPTUAL COST ESTIMATE**

PHASE I - Project A1) Existing Trail Clearing & Maintenance	Status	OPRD / Contractor	Conceptual Cost	Parameters & Permitting	Operations & Maintenance
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**Circulation: Trails**

**New \$4,500**

.10 mile new trails, connection over dune off beach to Tierra Del Mar - Core Paths - 6' wide: natural surface	New	OPRD		Graded, compacted soil	
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**Rehabilitation \$16,500**

Repair existing 1-1.5 miles of trail - Core Paths - 6' wide: dirt	Maintenance	OPRD		Graded, compacted soil, run machine to 4-6 foot width, 3-4 reroutes, some surfacing, pending GIS assessment or project leader walkthrough	
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**Sitework \$1,320**

Wayfinding signage (Casonite Posts)	New	OPRD		Information signage on wood post	
Wayfinding signage (Casonite Posts)	New	OPRD		Information signage on wood post	
Wayfinding signage (Casonite Posts)	New	OPRD		Information signage on wood post	

**PROJECT TOTAL \$21,000 Tillamook County**

**PHASE I - Project A2) General Park Improvements & Maintenance**

**Rehabilitation \$1,500**

Possible equipment rental for debris removal, cable, etc.	New	OPRD		OPRD staff projects to remove debris on site in several areas, dune	
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**Buildings, Structures and Major Features \$10,000**

Wood Fencing	New	OPRD		Wood fencing	
Gates	New	OPRD		Free standing wood structures, signage nic	

**PROJECT TOTAL \$11,500 Tillamook County**

**PHASE I - Project B1) Restoration of Meadow near Proposed Parking Area**

**Planted Buffer/Landscaping \$17,000**

Day use area trees	New	OPRD			
Landscaping - Screening	New	OPRD			

**PROJECT TOTAL \$17,000 Tillamook County**

PHASE I - Project B2) Host Site Improvements					
<b>Demo</b>			\$18,600		
Asbestos and Abatement	New	Contractor			
Existing House	New	Contractor		Likely Fire Dept. training project, costs for disposal fees	
<b>Buildings, Structures and Major Features</b>			\$10,000		
Site Prep for Host Site	New	Contractor		Incl. disposal fees	
<b>Utilities</b>			\$10,000		
Electrical service	New	Contractor		To host site	
Water service	New	Contractor		To host site	
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>\$38,600</b> Tillamook County		
<b>Total</b>			\$38,600		
15% Permitting			\$5,790		
30% Contingency			\$11,580		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$55,970</b>		
PHASE I - Project B3) Dike Improvements, Gravel Trail					
<b>ABA Improvements to Dike</b>			\$25,000		
Core Paths - 5' wide (ADA-accessible) (Parking Lot to Middle of Dike)	New	OPRD		Graded, 4-6" aggre. base, resin rein. soil surface Cost to included gravel 60" wide, compactor rental	
<b>Day Use Viewing Area</b>			\$2,000		
Benches	New	OPRD		6' wood benches, no back set in ground	
Tree Limbing	New	OPRD			
<b>Planted Buffer Along Dike and Property Boundary</b>			\$2,160		
Landscaping	New	OPRD		Shrub beds and understory trees, hooker willow, natives, alder	
<b>Fencing on Boundary</b>			\$2,000		
Wood Fencing	New	OPRD		Wood fencing	
<b>Erosion Control</b>			\$780		
Rip Rap Around Tidegate	New	Contractor		Potential	
<b>Demo</b>			\$500		
Culvert at farm road	New	Contractor			
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>\$32,440</b> Tillamook County		
<b>Total</b>			\$32,440		
15% Permitting			\$4,866		
30% Contingency			\$9,732		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$47,038</b>		

PHASE II - Project 1) Parking Lot/Park Access	Status	OPRD / Contractor	Conceptual Cost	Parameters & Permitting	Operations & Maintenance
<b>Asphalt Parking Area</b>			\$18,000		
Main Parking lot (incl walks, stalls, road)- Asphalt	New	Contractor		Ac paving 3" Depth 10,000 sf	
<b>Gravel Base (For Gravel Lot Cost, subtract \$18,000 from total above)</b>			<b>\$21,250</b>		
Main Parking lot (incl walks, stalls, road) - Gravel	New	Contractor		370 cy gravel at 12" depth, 10,000 SF	
Geotech fabric for gravel lot	New	Contractor			
<b>Circulation: Roads and Parking</b>			\$71,760		
Intersection	New	Contractor		KPFF Estimate 6/30, Includes roadway from entrance to parking	
Asphalt road and base from entry to day use area - 20 ' wide	New	Contractor			
Parking lot landscaping/ Stormwater	New	Contractor			
<b>Entrance Day Use</b>			\$29,850		
Benches	New	OPRD		6' wood benches w/back	
Picnic tables	New	OPRD		Wood picnic tables w/attached benches	
Bike Parking	New	OPRD			
Boulders/Curb stops	New	OPRD			
Wood Fencing	New	OPRD		Wood fencing	
Education/Visitor Experience	New	OPRD			
<b>Trails</b>			\$11,520		
Trail from parking to dike - 5' wide (ADA-accessible)	New	OPRD		Graded, 4-6" aggre. base, resin rein. soil surface	
<b>Day Use Landscaping</b>			\$17,000		
Day use area trees	New	OPRD		2" caliper	
Landscaping in day use area	New	OPRD		Shrub beds and understory trees	
<b>Signage</b>			\$22,000		
Directional Signage	New	Contractor			
Advanced Signage	New	Contractor			
Custom Entrance Sign	New	OPRD			
Wayfinding signage	New	OPRD			
Permanant Parkwide Wayfinding signage	New	OPRD		3 foot post, park map	
<b>Buildings, Structures and Major Features</b>			\$55,000		
Restroom (Double Vault)	New	Contractor			
Information kiosks	New	OPRD		Free standing wood structures, signage nic	

<b>Sitework</b>			<b>\$6,800</b>		
Parking (site prep)	New	Contractor			
Trailhead (site prep)	New	Contractor			
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>\$253,180</b>		<b>Tillamook County</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$253,180</b>		
15% Permitting			\$37,977		
30% Contingency			\$75,954		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$367,111</b>		
<b>PHASE II - Project 2 &amp; 3 New North Tail Loop Development &amp; Dike Viewing Platform</b>					
<b>Sitework</b>			<b>\$102,600</b>		
Viewing Deck	New	OPRD		Approx 20x20'	
Education/Visitor Experience	New	OPRD			
Trailhead	New	OPRD			
New trails, connection to main trail - Core Paths - 3' wide: dirt	New	OPRD		Graded, compacted soil	
Wayfinding signage	New	OPRD		Information signage on wood post	
Wood Fencing	New	OPRD		Wood fencing	
Benches	New	OPRD		6' wood benches w/ back	
Planted Buffer	New	OPRD			
Pedestrian Bridge	New	OPRD		10' ft long '8' wide 160 sf; option to pull trail away from Neighbor Property	
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>\$102,600</b>		<b>Tillamook County</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$102,600</b>		
15% Permitting			\$15,390		
30% Contingency			\$30,780		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$148,770</b>		

<b>PHASE III - Project 1 Knoll/'Freshwater' Viewing Area &amp; Trail</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>OPRD/ Contractor</b>	<b>Conceptual Cost</b>	<b>Parameters &amp; Permitting</b>	<b>Operations &amp; Maintenance</b>
<b>Sitework</b>			<b>\$39,490</b>		
Viewing Deck	New	OPRD			
New trails, Loop connection to ridge trail - Core Paths - 3' wide: dirt	New	OPRD		Graded, compacted soil	
Trailhead	New	OPRD			
Wayfinding signage	New	OPRD		Information signage on wood post	
Wood Fencing	New	OPRD		Wood fencing	
Benches	New	OPRD		6' wood benches w/back	
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>\$39,490</b>	Tillamook County	
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$39,490</b>		
15% Permitting			\$5,924		
30% Contingency			\$11,847		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$57,261</b>		
<b>PHASE III - Project 2 Dunal-Pond Viewing Area</b>					
<b>Sitework</b>			<b>\$9,290</b>		
New trails, Loop connection to ridge trail - Core Paths - 3' wide: dirt	New	OPRD		Graded, compacted soil	
Wayfinding signage	New	OPRD		Information signage on Wood post	
Wood Fencing	New	OPRD		Wood fencing	
Benches	New	OPRD		6' wood benches w/back	
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>\$9,290</b>	Tillamook County	
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$9,290</b>		
15% Permitting			\$1,394		
30% Contingency			\$2,787		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$13,471</b>		
<b>TOTAL ALL PROJECTS</b>				<b>\$525,100</b>	
<b>Total All Projects (Includes 15% Permitting and 30% Contingency)</b>				<b>\$725,650</b>	



# 10

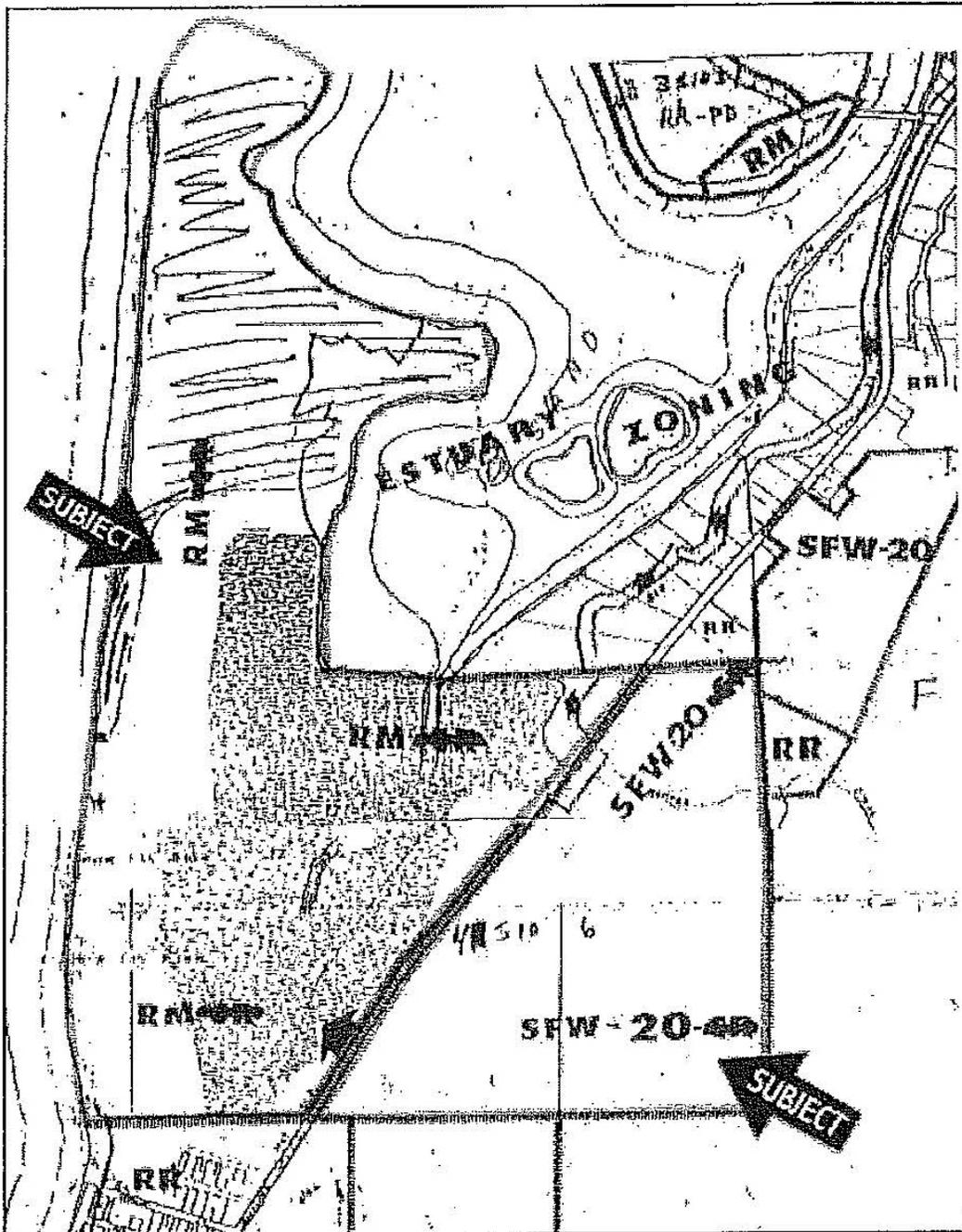
## Land Use Reviews and Approvals

Land use regulations are the legal and practical means by which Oregon's natural heritage is preserved for public enjoyment. Almost every significant alteration to the physical landscape within parks requires approval from a local government in the form of a land use permit, whether it is construction of a new interpretive center or a trail realignment alongside a creek. State rules require master plans for OPRD parks to be compatible with local government plans and zoning codes, however, projects must still be approved on a case-by-case basis before they can be implemented. This chapter summarizes the regulatory structure of Oregon State Law and how it pertains to the park plan, also outlining key aspects of the Tillamook County development code as it relates Sitka Sedge State Natural Area.

## Land-Use Authority

Development of the park uses and facilities described in this plan for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area is regulated by Tillamook County under the provisions of the Tillamook County Comprehensive Plan. The County's plan is acknowledged by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) pursuant to the Statewide Land Use Goals and related

statutes and administrative rules. This plan for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area has been formulated through the planning process described under OAR 736 Division 18 and OAR 660 Division 34. The planning process includes procedures for coordinating with affected local governments to assure that planned park uses and facilities are compatible with local government comprehensive plans.



10.1 Zoning Map (Tillamook County)

## Land-Use Compatibility Review

Review of a park plan for compatibility with affected local government comprehensive plans is required prior to OPRD's adoption of the plan for the park. When a draft park plan is ready for OPRD's adoption, OPRD requests that the local planning official provide written confirmation that the draft park plan is compatible with the local comprehensive plan. "Compatible" means that development permits may be approved for all of the planned park projects without first amending the local government's comprehensive plan, or that the plan for the park specifically states that a local plan amendment will be needed prior to construction of any project that is not compatible. If the draft park plan is determined to be incompatible, it may need to be changed to achieve compatibility before it is adopted by OPRD. The plan for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area will be reviewed for local land use compatibility by Tillamook County planning officials.

## Tillamook County Zoning

Under Tillamook County's Comprehensive plan, three primary zones apply to different areas of the park: Recreation Management (RM), Estuary Natural Zone, Management Unit 2 (2EN), and Small Farm & Woodlot (SFW-20). There are also two overlay zones that apply to certain resource areas: the Coastal Shorelands (CS), and Flood Hazard Overlays. The overlay zone requirements apply in addition to requirements of the underlying primary zones.

**RM Zone:** This zone covers most of the property west of Sandlake Road, south and west of the Beltz Dike.

**2EN Zone:** This zone applies to estuary north of the dike. In a conversation with Tillamook County planning, language defines the boundary of this zone, not the line indicated on

the map: 'mean high water line or line of non-aquatic vegetation, whichever is most landward'.

**SFW-20 Zone:** This zone applies to all of the park property east of Sandlake Road.

**CS Overlay Zone:** The Coastal Shoreland Overlay covers area of the property west of Sandlake Road.

Excerpt from Tillamook County Goal 17 Coastal Shoreline Element, page 35:

Site Sandlake Park Sandspit  
Location T 3S, R 10W, S 30  
Classification Exceptional aesthetic resource (Map 3, Site 15)  
Significant wildlife habitat (Map 8, Site 3)  
Discussion: This area was identified as an area with potential for Exceptional Coastal Experience in the Visual Resource Analysis of the Oregon Coastal Zone, and has been identified by the ODFW as a significant habitat for the Snowy Plover.

**Flood Hazard Overlay Zone:** This overlay covers all of the area mapped as 100-year floodplain by FEMA, as represented by the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for this area. FEMA flood map 4101960305A shows that A0 Zone or A3 applies to most of site west of Sandlake Road. Proposed parking improvements appear to be outside of this area.

## Development Permits for State Park Projects

Development permits will be required for most of the development projects described in the plan for the park. Prior to beginning construction of any project, the project manager is responsible for consulting with the affected local government planning department and obtaining the necessary development permits. The specific requirements for obtaining development permits for a project, and the kind of local permitting process required may vary from one project to another.

The time required for completing the development permitting process may also vary, so the project manager will consult with the local government planning department to assure the permitting process is completed prior to the target date for beginning construction. Prior to issuance of development permits the local government will review the project plans and specifications to assure the project proposed for construction is consistent with the description of the project in the park plan and with any applicable development standards in the local government's development code.

## Variations from the Park Plan

Under the provisions of OAR 736-018-0040, OPRD may pursue development permits for a state park project that varies from a state park plan without first amending the park plan provided that the variation is minor, unless the park plan language specifically precludes such variation. Any specific elements of planned projects that cannot be changed by applying the "Minor Variation" rule are indicated in the plan.

The OPRD Director must determine that a proposed variation from the park plan is "minor" using the criteria in OAR 736-018-0040. A minor variation from the plan, which is approved by the Director, is considered to be consistent with the plan contingent upon the concurrence of the affected local government.

## Rehabilitation of Existing State Park Uses

State laws allow OPRD to continue any state park use or facility that existed on July 25, 1997. (See ORS 195.125 and OAR 660-034-0030(8).) The laws allow the repair and renovation of facilities, the replacement of facilities including minor location changes, and the minor

expansion of uses and facilities. Rehabilitation projects are allowed whether or not they are described in a state park plan. These projects are subject to any clear and objective siting standards required by the affected local government, provided that such standards do not preclude the projects.

Prior to applying for development permits for a project involving a minor location change of an existing facility or minor expansion of an existing use or facility, the OPRD Director must determine that the location change or expansion is "minor" using the criteria in OAR 736-018-0043. A determination by the Director that a proposed location change or expansion is minor is contingent upon the concurrence of the affected local government.

## Natural Resource Review and Approvals

In consultation and coordination with local, state, and federal agencies and partners, OPRD has determined the need for natural resource stabilization and restoration in the park. Under the authority of OPRD Commission Policy 20-0 Natural Resource, and OP 50-09 Invasive Species Management, natural resource projects will be undertaken to manage and restore the landscape to benefit the natural resources. OPRD staff work with conservation agencies and interest groups and surrounding land owners to implement specific resource projects. Projects are developed and implemented under OPRD management as budget and staff allow. Implementation of natural resource projects are subject to applicable permitting requirements of local, state, and federal authorities.

## Cultural Resource Review and Approvals

OPRD recognizes that preservation and protection of cultural resources is an important aspect of land management. Management of historic and archeological resources is in accordance with OPRD Commission Policy 20-02. OPRD has worked with tribal interests and local heritage organizations to identify how proposed park development could potentially affect cultural resources. OPRD works with the State Historic Preservation Office in determining measures needed to protect any important cultural resources. OPRD will continue to work with tribal and local interests to ensure the cultural resources of Sitka Sedge State Natural Area are preserved and protected.

## Emergency Management

OPRD strives to provide a recreation experience that is safe for staff, visitors, and the surrounding community. The life-safety aspects of facility and infrastructure development are reviewed during the local government land use permitting process. OPRD has additional responsibility beyond the local planning jurisdictions. Park management is responsible for the development of an emergency management plan under OPRD policy 70-04. The development of this emergency management plan will occur after land use review of the park plan has been completed. Development of the emergency management plan is done through consultation and coordination with affected emergency service providers.





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## Stewarding the Plan

- Now that you've had a chance to review the plan, is there an idea that you are particularly compelled by that you just can't wait to see put into action? This plan is full of great ideas and visions for Sitka Sedge State Natural Area, some of which were directly created by citizens during the public process, and all of which were shaped by people's comments at the meetings. This chapter aims to provide resources for you to become involved in implementing the concepts presented in this plan. These projects don't just build themselves! In an era of decreased funding for new park projects, contributions of time and money have been extremely successful in supporting exciting new parks and repairs at Crown Point, Kam Wah Chung and Fort Yamhill, to name a few. If you're interested in getting involved as a volunteer, financial benefactor, or recreation advocate the following pages provides some starting points to help you make a connection at any level you choose.

# Volunteering at Oregon State Parks

## Why Volunteer?

Volunteers are motivated by many things, but ultimately, most volunteers want to be part of something they value. Here are some other reasons we often hear: Repay or “give back” to a park system you’ve enjoyed and benefitted from over the years. Stay in a park and experience a behind-the-scenes look at what we do and work alongside park rangers to welcome visitors and make a difference. Play and have fun in a new area, and stay active in Oregon’s beautiful parks all around the state. Pay it forward and become part of the stories and traditions. Through your service, you are able to make a personal mark on the landscape and preserve parks for future generations.

## Benefits of Volunteering

Along with the praise and thanks from staff and visitors, here are some of the benefits you can enjoy at many of the parks:

- Develop new skills
- Specialized training
- Leave a legacy
- A unique experience to broaden your enjoyment of state parks

## Ways to Volunteer

- We have tons of possibilities! You can volunteer as an individual, part of a group, with your family—whatever works best for you. And you can spend as much or as little time as you want. We will try to match you to the location and opportunity of your choice.
- Become a volunteer Park Host and help keep parks clean and in good condition. In return for your generous efforts, you’ll receive a

free campsite.

- Join our network of volunteer partners. Public/private partnerships help us work efficiently, and collaborate with people in the community. Volunteers support our partners and our partners support Oregon State Parks. You can become an Adopt A Park Partner and assist us with operations and maintenance at a specific park location or join one of our 16 Cooperative Associations, whose efforts raise awareness, consciousness and appreciation for the protection, preservation and improvement.

## How to Apply

Complete a Volunteer Application, available at: [www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org).

- When you apply, describe your experience, education, talents, skills and interests. Each park has unique needs and looks for volunteers with particular skills. The more thoroughly you describe your knowledge, skills and abilities, the better a match we can make.
- Regardless of your experience and skills, park staff can nearly always find a job that suits you. Many of the jobs, naturally, are outdoors and mean “getting your hands dirty,” but there is indoor business as well, such as various administrative and guest relations work.

## What’s available?

You can search for volunteer opportunities at:

Website - [www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org)

Email - [vol.info@oregon.gov](mailto:vol.info@oregon.gov)

Phone - toll free 1-877-225-9803



## Park Hosts

Our park hosts are literally some of the most visible faces of our agency, helping visitors feel welcome, answering their questions and orienting them to the park and area. Common duties include selling ice and firewood, cleaning yurts or cabins, conducting tours, educating young campers through our Junior Ranger program, mowing lawns, repairing equipment and more. In return, parks provide hosts with a free campsite, usually with full hookup, for those who host for a minimum of one month.

### The Hosting Lifestyle

Many of our park hosts volunteer at their favorite parks over the summer, then go home. But for many, full-time hosting has become a lifestyle. Full-time RV-ers arrive at one park, then travel around Oregon, volunteering at other parks over a longer period. Whether this is for you or not, we value whatever commitment you can make.

## Friends Groups

Cooperating Associations, also known as “Friends Groups” are private 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations formed by citizens to provide and support the educational and interpretive services of the park.

These organizations rely heavily on volunteer support in all areas of operation. Friends support state parks by operating museums and interpretive stores and providing additional educational programs at the park. Friends help support these projects by raising funds for park projects and historical renovations and building new park facilities. The groups’ nonprofit status allow them to sell memberships, write grants, receive qualified donations and receive donated materials.

There are 16 state park Cooperating Associations (friends groups) associated with 18 park locations. For more information on the group’s volunteer opportunities and current projects, you may visit the state parks website [www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org).



OREGON STATE PARKS  
FOUNDATION

## The Oregon State Parks Foundation

The Oregon State Parks Foundation is proud to be the statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Oregon's state parks. The foundation works to enrich the state park experience for generations to come.

Since 1995, the Foundation has provided more than \$8.5 million to preserve and enhance Oregon State Parks. The Foundation is the only 501-(c)-3 nonprofit in Oregon dedicated to improving and protecting your state park system, and they are a crucial way to channel your financial support. These funds have supported many vital projects such as restoring Vista House at Crown Point, helping to maintain Oregon's Lighthouses, and purchasing important property at Iwetemlaykin State Heritage Site near Wallowa Lake.

The Oregon State Parks Foundation strives to connect all Oregonians with their state parks, to enrich the visitor experience through interpretation and education, and to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

Oregonians treasure their state parks. We need your support to ensure that these natural and historic wonders remain strong — today and well into the future.

More information is available at: [www.oregonstateparksfoundation.org](http://www.oregonstateparksfoundation.org).



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Supporting Documents and Reports

This is an index of all documents that are referenced, or were created in preparation for this plan. These documents are available for viewing at:

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
North Mall Office Building  
725 Summer Street NE, Suite C  
Salem, OR 97301

#### OPRD Background Documents and Reports

- Beltz Farm Acquisition Project Sand Lake Estuary; A Proposal to the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, OPRD June 2014
- Beltz Property Access Study, Prepared by KPFF and Kittelson and Associates, June 2015
- Beltz Property Existing Trail Survey, OPRD 2015

- Centennial Horizon Vision, OPRD, 2009
- Clay Myers State Natural Area At Whalen Island Master Plan, OPRD 2003
- Forest Management Technical Report: Beltz Property, OPRD, 2015
- GIS Database, OPRD, 2016
- Historic Resource Report, Beltz Property, OPRD, 2015
- OPRIS Database, OPRD, 2016
- Oregon's Highway Park System 1921-1989 An Administrative History, 1992
- Oregon Natural Areas Plan, OPRD, Salem, 2010
- 2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), OPRD, 2013
- Park Attendance Data, OPRD 2015
- Park Survey Data, OPRD (collected in-person and online), 2015-16
- Public Meeting Summaries, OPRD 2014-16
- State Park System Plan, OPRD, December 2012
- State Park Systems Plan, OPRD, 1995
- Statewide Trails Plan, OPRD 2016
- Summary of Current Coastal Interpretive Programs, OPRD, 2015
- Summary of Current Cape Lookout Management Unit Operating Costs, OPRD, 2015
- Wildlife Assessment for Beltz Property, OPRD 2016
- Vegetation Inventory, Botanical Resource Assessment, and Natural Landscape Characterization for the Beltz Property, OPRD, 2016
- Visitor Experience Assessments, Prepared by Dialogue Consulting, 2016

## Additional Documents and Reports

This is an index of documents that are referenced in or informed this plan.

- Beltz Farm Property Proposed Project (Pacific Gales), Applications for Conditional Use, August 2003, (Several Authors)
- Beltz Creek aquatic habitat assessment. Unpublished data. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2003.
- Reneke Creek aquatic habitat assessment. Unpublished data. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2014.
- Fish Passage Restoration Project, Conceptual Alternatives and Hydrology Data Reference, Waterways Consulting, Inc., 2016 (In process at time of plan writing)
- Natural Resources of Sand Lake Estuary. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife for Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission, Salem, Oregon. 1979.
- Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan for the State of Oregon. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Salem, Oregon. 2007.
- Sand Lake Watershed Analysis. Prepared for Hebo Ranger District, Siuslaw National Forest, 1988, Prepared by SRI/Shapiro/AGCO, Inc.
- Testimony For Preservation of the Beltz Farm, Date Unknown, Lynda Steiner
- Tierra Del Mar Tales, Diana Sears, 2005

## Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Once the park comprehensive plan is adopted as a state rule, any development in the park must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Minor variations from the adopted master plan may be allowed if such variations are determined by the OPRD Director and the affected local government to be consistent with the master plan in accordance with OAR 736-018-0040. Any use that is not consistent with the comprehensive plan requires a master plan amendment. Comprehensive plan amendments must follow the same process used to adopt the comprehensive plan, which includes re-adoption as a state rule and a determination of compatibility with local government comprehensive plans.

Park comprehensive plans are amended when changes in circumstances are significant enough to warrant plan changes. The OPRD Director considers the recommendations of OPRD staff and outside interests in prioritizing the park comprehensive plans to be adopted or amended each biennium. The director's decisions are based on considerations of various factors, such as:

- Recreation demands that affect the park, and opportunities in the park to help meet the demands;
- The need for significant changes in park uses or facilities to improve park functions;
- Significant changes in the conditions of, or threats to, natural, cultural or scenic resources within or surrounding that park where a comprehensive plan amendment is needed to address the changed conditions or threats;
- Conflicts or potential conflicts between park uses and neighboring land uses where a comprehensive plan amendment is needed to address the conflicts;
- Opportunities to establish partnerships to implement previously unplanned projects that fit the park setting; or
- Alternatives to amending the master plan that would adequately address needed changes, such as interagency management agreements, partnerships, and so forth.

