PLANNING DATA
YOAKAM POINT STATE PARK
ZONING

YOAKAM POINT

Coos County

REC - Recreation
    - Park use permitted outright

For mapped information, see Cape Arago Zoning map.
Location: 10 miles southwest of Coos Bay on the Cape Arago Highway at the ocean shore. The park is south of the Cape Arago lighthouse at Gregory Point.

Size: 395.49 Acres

Existing Facilities: Picnic facilities (147 units), picnic shelter; campground with 29 trailer and 108 tent sites, showers; park visitor center and headquarters; full maintenance yard, garage and work shop.

Average Annual Day-Use Attendance (1979-1984): 928,000

Average Annual Camper Nights (1979-1984): 45,400

Natural Features: Unique wind-protected bay fronting Pacific Ocean, magnificent views of rocky coast, beach.

Recreation Activities: Picnicking, camping, swimming, nature study, hiking.
LAND USE PLAN
SUNSET BAY STATE PARK
Primary Protection Areas-PPA-10.5 Acres

The PPA's at Sunset Bay include the steep cliffs at the ocean's edge, the marshy area where the endangered giant bog lily is found, and the Darlingtonia bog.

Secondary Protection Areas-SPA-252.0 Acres

Secondary Protection Areas include a buffer zone around the bog lily habitat and the Darlingtonia bog, part of the area around Big Creek and the upper forested lands within the park.

Limited Development Areas-LDA-65.5 Acres

This small area is south of Sunset Bay.

Major Development Areas-MDA-67.5 Acres

Major Development Areas include the already developed portions of the park and the upper marine terrace lands which are suitable for development.

For mapped information, see Cape Arago Land Use Plan map.
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
REHABILITATION PROJECTS
PROJECT COSTS AND PHASING

DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SUNSET BAY STATE PARK
Objective: Relocate Hiker/Biker Campground

The Hiker/Biker campground now at Cape Arago will be moved to Sunset Bay. Users will not have to travel as far to this camp, and daily management will be made much easier.

Objective: Provide Group Use Camping Area

There is a demand for group use at Cape Arago parks which is currently unmet. A group use area with a camping area, a toilet building and a weatherproof shelter will be provided on the marine terrace north of the park road at Norton Gulch. This is an ideal spot for group use because it is somewhat isolated from other park activities and has a large open space for playfields and group functions.

Objective: Rehabilitate and Redesign Campground Facilities

Camping at Sunset Bay State Park needs to be upgraded. The existing campground needs rehabilitation and redesign to conform to current standards for camping. Old restroom buildings should be replaced or rehabilitated on an as-needed basis. In order to maintain the high quality at Sunset Bay State Park and prevent deterioration from overuse, there will be no further expansion of the campground.
Project: Biker/Hiker Campground

Proposal: Relocate primitive campground for bicyclists and hikers from Cape Arago to Sunset Bay. Provide water source, fire ring, picnic tables and locate near restroom facilities.

Cost: $10,000

Maintenance Cost: $1,000

Discussion: The existing primitive camp for hikers and bicyclists is located in a remote area of Cape Arago. Maintenance costs are excessive because of its remote location.

This project will move this camping activity to the Sunset Bay campground area. Maintenance and fee collection costs will be lowered considerably.
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

SUNSET BAY

Project: Group Use Area

Proposal: Build a new group use area with a combination shelter/toilet building, camping area and large open space picnic area.

Cost: $100,000

Maintenance Cost: $4,600/year

Discussion: The park manager and region office have received increasing numbers of requests for a group use area at the Sunset Bay complex of parks. Usually, a park with the numbers of visitors experienced here has a group area which may be reserved in advance. This park has none, although the proposed site has been used as a group area on an unofficial basis.

Access is good off the Cape Arago Highway, and utilities are nearby. The site is open, flat and poses no development restrictions.

Developed facilities will be the minimum necessary to serve group use. A camp area, rather than a paved and developed campground, will be developed. It is anticipated that this area could be used for either day-use or overnight group functions.
REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Project: Campground Rehabilitation

Proposal: Redesign and improve existing campground to better serve existing and projected camp use. Provide improved roadway circulation and better RV access to campsites. Rehabilitate sanitary facilities and other amenities as necessary.

Cost: $80,000 minimum; dependent on final cost estimates based on total extent of work.

Maintenance Cost: Unknown

Discussion: The existing campground was designed using old standards, and is now antiquated. Modern RV drivers find pulling in and out of sites very cumbersome, and the number of sites available is limited. A redesigned campground would serve users better and lower maintenance costs. The cost estimate is based on anticipated minimum improvements. It may be higher due to site limitations and considerations which are impossible to determine without an extensive site survey.

Realignment and redesign will not increase the capacity of the campground since the natural resources of the park would suffer from increased use.
### PROJECT COSTS AND PHASING

**SUNSET BAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Capital Improvement Projects</th>
<th>Rehabilitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A        | Bike Camp  
Water, Toilet  
$10,000  |                   |
| B        | Group Use Area  
Meeting hall/toilet  
Camp area  
$100,000  |                   |
| C        |                   | Rehab. Existing  
Campground  
$80,000  |
PARK MANAGEMENT
SUNSET BAY STATE PARK
Objective: Improve Visual Aspects of Park Entrance

Design a park entry sign in cooperation with Design Unit/Salem Office.

Objective: Design a Comprehensive Sign Program for All Sunset Bay Parks

Coordinate the work with the Design Unit/Salem Office, Standardize sign sizes and heights. Use standard cream on brown colors.

Objective: Protect Plant Sites

Monitor Lilium occidentale sites. Relocate Coast Trail in ranch area. Monitor darlingtonia bog at sewer plant irrigation area and lily bog adjacent to TNC property. Instruct park personnel how to recognize bog lily.
GEOLOGIC FEATURES & HAZARDS
SOILS
WATER FEATURES & HAZARDS
VEGETATION
WILDLIFE
SCENIC QUALITIES
HISTORIC & ARCHEOLOGIC FEATURES

For mapped information, see Cape Arago Site Inventory maps.

SITE INVENTORY
SUNSET BAY STATE PARK
Geologic features include:

Fluvial Terrace deposits in the Big Creek drainage including the campground and day-use areas of Sunset Bay. These areas are flat-lying and elevated deposits of river alluvium above present levels of flooding. This deposit is likely of estuarine origin.

Marine Terrace lands which are flat, elevated marine deposits of sand, silt, clay. These areas were once undersea but have been elevated to their present locations. They are subject to poor drainage locally but they are the most stable areas for park development. Most existing facilities are built on marine terraces.

Cooled Formation comprised of sandstone deposits roughly 38,000,000 years old. These areas make up the steeply sloped wooded acreage east of the Cape Arago road. The flatter areas on the highest portions are caps of marine terrace deposits.

The erosion differential of the Cooled sandstones capped by marine terrace deposits has formed the irregular spectacular shoreline of the Cape Arago parks.

Geologic hazards are directly related to degree of slope, and soil and bedrock stability. Locally steep slopes may increase hazard potential in all categories.

See Cape Arago Geologic Hazards map for mapped information.
The day use area at Sunset Bay is located on beach sand while the campground is located on the silt loam of the Big Creek flood plain. Both of these soil groups have severe restrictions for buildings and development. The silt loams are prone to flooding and excessive wetness while the sandy soils are highly erodible.

Other soils in the park are those found on old marine terraces and upland areas. See Shore Acres Soils for information in these soil types.

The Cape Arago Soils map shows areas which have the highest recreational development hazard ratings. Factors which influence ratings are:

- Drainage
- Depth to bedrock
- Hydrologic hazards
- Steep slopes
- Suitability for sanitary facilities
- Shrink/swell potential
- Low bearing strength
WATER FEATURES & HAZARDS

SUNSET BAY

Water Features to be protected include:

Upland watersheds, which need protection and monitoring to insure high surface water quality in the park

The Nature Conservancy has identified two aquatic features at Sunset Bay, one freshwater and one marine.

The freshwater feature is the Darlingtonia Wetland near the sewage treatment plant. Although the site has good quality vegetation it is too small to fill a cell need.

The marine feature is the Unvegetated Sand Beach in the Intertidal Zone. Due to the heavy recreation use at this beach, this feature is only of fair quality and is not adequate to fill a cell need. (See TNC Report in Appendix).

Water Hazards which limit development include:

Winter storms from the south and southwest
Summer storms from the northwest
Storm tides which affect the lower areas of Sunset Bay day-use area
Wet soils in the Big Creek drainage which lead to unstable slopes and drainage problems in Sunset Bay campground
Heavy runoff from upland drainages
Perched water tables and ponding in isolated park areas, on marine terrace lands (see Geologic Features and Hazards).

See Cape Arago Water Hazards map for mapped information.
VEGETATION

OVERVIEW

Most of the vegetation has been altered over the years by residential use, logging, grazing, plowing and road building. Introduced plants such as English ivy, escalonia, Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry are not uncommon.

NATURAL PLANT COMMUNITIES

DARLINGTONIA BOG

Description

The most important terrestrial community found in the parks near Cape Arago is the pitcher-plant bog ecosystem in Sunset Bay and Shore Acres State Parks. Such bogs were once common along the south coast, but many have since been drained. In darlingtonia bogs the shrubs and trees are often sparse and stunted. Bog blueberry (Vaccinium uliginosum), California wax-myrtle, and Labrador-tea (Ledum glandulosum) are often associated with this community. The darlingtonia bog community is considered endangered on a worldwide basis.

Sunset Bay State Park has three known darlingtonia bogs. The largest is in the northeast corner of the park. The Nature Conservancy owns a contiguous portion of this bog on a parcel called the Bastendorff Bog Preserve to the north. Together these two portions of the bog community cover 20 acres. Drainage flows gently to the northwest from Sunset Bay State Park across the TNC land to Yaakam Point State Park on a sandstone hardpan. The hardpan is covered by an organic layer of peat. Wet areas form a mosaic with well-drained microhabitats. The close proximity of bog plants such as the rare pitcher-plant (Darlingtonia californica) to a dry-site plant like bear grass (Xerophyllum tenax) is very striking. Some other showy plants are rhododendron, azalea, sphagnum moss and the globally endangered giant bog lily (Lilium occidentale). This site is very significant ecologically and is in good, natural condition.
A few acres of the bog community occur immediately north of the sewage lagoons in the area irrigated by the park's effluent sprinkler system. The sprinkler system has no adverse impacts. The endangered lily is also found here. The third bog is 400-500 feet down-slope from this bog by the sewage lagoons (north by northwest) next to Cape Arago Highway. The fact that these two areas are off limits to visitors is beneficial to the plant communities.

Threats and Management

Extra management consideration should be given to this sensitive plant community. Any proposed construction or maintenance on things such as pipes, ditches or roads up-slope from the pitcher-plant bog should be discussed with the Park's Natural Resource Planner. The taking of pitcher-plants and giant bog lilies by park visitors is strictly forbidden. These two species are widely sought after by unscrupulous collectors and gardeners.

ALGAE BED ON ROCKY INTERTIDAL AND SUBTIDAL SURFACES

The flora and fauna of this natural ecosystem, which extends from Sunset Bay to Cape Arago, is unsurpassed in Oregon for its quality, species richness and abundance. It occupies about 600 yards of shoreline at the western boundary of the park. See Cape Arago State Park for complete description and management information.

ALTERED VEGETATION COVER TYPES

SPRUCE FOREST

Description

The largest cover type in the park is a mixed second growth Sitka spruce forest. Depending on the area, western hemlock, Port Orford cedars, shore pine, Douglas-fir and red cedar can occur as subdominant species. Some of this type is presently dominated by shrubs, especially salal, or alder. Within the next 100 years spruce will dominate in these areas. Most of the conifers are 30 to 40 years old. On the headland leading to Gregory Point a number of mature second growth conifers can be found. The understory of salal and huckleberry ranges from dense to impenetrable. In some areas, the canopy layer is lacking or very sparse. These areas, especially in Sunset Bay State Park, should be surveyed on the ground for natural features such as darlingtonia bogs.
Management

Except in the event of catastrophes such as fires or blowdowns, little manipulation of this forest type will occur. In such events, salvage logging or firewood cutting may be employed to remove hazards, clean-up areas and prepare for reforestation. However, larger dead and down logs will be left where possible to promote natural forest qualities. Some thinning of very dense young spruce stands may be done to promote individual tree growth and more varied species compositions. In much of this area, conifer trees are just beginning to emerge from the dense shrub and alder stands which have dominated the area for the past three decades.

SHRUB/FORB HEADLAND

Sunset Bay State Park has only three acres of this type on the headland at the western edge of the property. The trail to Cape Arago passes through this community of salal, black crowberry, thrift, black twin-berry and other plants. The community adds variety to the vegetation encountered along the trail.

BEACH GRASS DUNE

One or two acres of stabilized dune can be found in the heavily used zone between the beach at Sunset Bay and the parking lot. Native species should be used if additional plants are necessary here.

SHORE PINE FOREST

Nine acres of this type occurs on the lighthouse headland, known as Gregory Point. This second growth forest has a dense understory. Manipulation of the vegetation should be limited to avoid acceleration of blowdown. This also applies to the spruce forest immediately to the south.

ALDER FOREST

Although red alder is the dominant tree in many areas throughout the four parks on Cape Arago, only those riparian areas which are likely to be covered by alder indefinitely are classed in the alder forest cover type. The other alder dominated areas will probably be overtaken by the conifer understory.
Many of the alders in the park are over 30 years old. This shade intolerant species is not likely to live more than 100 years. In the riparian areas the old alders will probably be replaced by young alders. Skunk cabbage and salmonberry are associated species.

WILLOW-ALDER/SEDGE TYPE

About two acres of this perennially wet type occur west of the sewage lagoons.

LAWNS AND MAINTAINED VEGETATION

A nine-acre lawn is maintained for occasional group use on the flat-topped bluff southwest of Sunset Bay. The Cape Arago trail passes through the unit near the sea cliffs. Maintenance for group uses should be discontinued between the trail and the cliff, and the vegetation should be allowed to slowly revert to more natural conditions.

In the group picnic area and campground many native trees can be found, such as Sitka spruce, shore pine and wax-myrtle. Red alders are very common. They have grown to a stage where they are over-shading many facilities making them damp and cool and contributing to dry-rot and mildew problems. Heavy leaning branches and tree trunks also may pose safety hazards. Generally, alder trees in these areas, which are older than 25 years, should be removed especially if they have old top breaks or butt scars. Shrubs and low-growing trees should be favored for landscaping.

Because this was historically a residential area, it has many escaped exotic plants growing in it. Among these, Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry, and English ivy are the most visually and ecologically obtrusive. Park managers should gradually eliminate these species and replace them with native species. In some areas such as planted screens between camping spaces, benign exotics such as escallonia, or cultivars of native species may be acceptable.
RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

WESTERN GIANT BOG LILY

Description

The bog lily (Lilium occidentale) bears bright red, two-inch-long flowers from mid-June to early August. The two-foot-tall, elegant plants usually grow in noticeably wet habitats. Its range is southward from Coos Bay into northern California along the immediate coast.

Lilium occidentale is among the most endangered plants in Oregon. There are probably no more than one thousand plants in the world.

Local Occurrence

The rare lily has been found in two localities in the park. Both are located on very gentle, northwest-facing slopes with a sandstone hardpan and a thin organic layer of peat. The largest and most significant is in a 20-acre darlingtonia bog which is isolated and pristine enough to warrant high-priority protection. It lies in the northeast corner of the park.

A smaller group of bog lilies occurs north of the sewage lagoons with darlingtonia. The effluent from the parks sprinkler system causes no apparent harm to the plants.

Associated species are listed in the Darlingtonia Bog section.

Threats and Management

The major threats to the bog lily are collection for their horticultural value and disruption of their water supply. All park personnel should become familiar with the lily's appearance and locations in order to avoid accidental destruction of the plants or their habitat. A botanist should make additional field surveys for rare bog species, particularly on the landward side of Cape Arago Road.

In the long-term, natural succession will lead to an increase in salal, shore pine, wax-myrtle and spruce, and may threaten the lilies by shading them out and drying out the soil. Carefully planned removal of woody plants might be carried out for protective management.
DARLINGTONIA (PITCHER-PLANT)

Description

Darlingtonia is a bog plant whose 10 to 20 inch high, reddish leaves are modified into tubular insect traps. Its spring flowers grow on tall stems and they are quite peculiar upon close inspection. They grow in wet meadows or seeps. The species is a federal candidate for threatened status.

Local Occurrence

Darlingtonia is known to occur sparsely in three localities in the park. They are described in the Natural Plant Community section.

Management

See the Natural Plant Community section.
HABITATS

ROCKY INTERTIDAL AND SUBTIDAL

This small bay is protected by a narrow mouth, and it is diluted by fresh water from Big Creek which has a 6 square mile watershed. For these two reasons the intertidal and subtidal ecosystems are different from others in this group of parks. Some of the animals found here are crabs, marine worms, California mussel, rock scallop, red abalone (rarely), sea urchins, ling cod and harbor seals. School groups sometimes use the tidepools as a classroom. The tidepool area is smaller than those accessible from Cape Arago.

ROCK ISLAND

Location

Two islands lie to the south of the entrance to Sunset Bay and one, known as Squaw Island, lies to the north. (They are all part of the mainland at minus tides.) These are the most visible examples of this habitat from the park. Further to the north are Gregory Point which is an island, and four unnamed islands between Squaw Island and Gregory Point.

Harbor Seals

Approximately 40 harbor seals use the northeast side of Squaw Island as a year-round haul-out site.

Seabird Colonies

The offshore rocks and mainland bluff in on near Sunset Bay State Park offer nesting habitats to a significantly large number and variety of seabirds. The following bird counts were taken from a Catalog of Oregon Seabird Colonies (USFWS, 1979).
Nesting Bird Colonies in the Vicinity of Sunset Bay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Bird Species</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bluffs and rocks, SW</td>
<td>Pelagic Cormorant</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edge of Sunset Bay</td>
<td>Black Oystercatcher</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(O.I.M.B. Colony)</td>
<td>Pigeon Guillemot</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squaw Island</td>
<td>Black Oystercatcher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pigeon Guillemot</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed rocks (between Squaw Island and Gregory Point)</td>
<td>Pelagic Cormorant</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pigeon Guillemot</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tufted Puffin</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PELAGIC HABITAT

Gray Whales can sometimes be seen in the open sea from vantage points within the Sunset Bay Park boundaries.

UPLAND AND RIPARIAN HABITATS

A resident population of deer frequents the uplands where cover is good. Raccoons are sometimes seen along the road at night. The Pacific tree frog and a number of species of mice and voles are found in these habitats.

RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

No rare or endangered species are known in this park.
SCENIC QUALITIES

SUNSET BAY

Sunset Bay is one of Oregon's most sheltered natural bays. Views from the sandy beach take in the spectacular rugged cliffs and offshore islands. The rocky shelter of the outer bay dissipates wave energy and allows the inner bay to be calm except during storms.

The tree-topped Squaw Island can be seen from within this tiny, unusually symmetrical harbor.

See Cape Arago Scenic Qualities map for mapped information.
Historic Features

This area has been used as a recreation site from the time of the early settlers up to the present. Trappers and traders camped in the area and pioneers used it for a summer camp.

During the times of early settlement, the bay was used as a harbor for shallow draft boats and fishing boats. Local people used the bay and beach for picnics and recreation. The bay was named by Thomas Hirst, an early settler of Coos Bay.

In the 1920's and 1930's, the land at Sunset Bay was owned by Louis Simpson of Shore Acres. He had built a lodge and cabins here which were run by a concessionaire. The lodge was in the Colonial Revival Style, the same as the head gardeners house at Shore Acres.

Archeologic Features

It is reported that there was an early Indian village in this area, but there isn't any further information on the location or extent of the settlement. Any traces were probably removed during construction of the road and parking lot. There is no data about any specific sites to be protected.

Park Background

Coos County provided the first tract of land for this park in 1948.

See Cape Arago Historic & Archeologic Features map for mapped information.
Coos County

REC - Recreation
   - Park use permitted outright

RR2 - Rural Residential
   - Park use permitted conditionally.

For mapped information, see Cape Arago Zoning map.
GENERAL INFORMATION

SHORE ACRES STATE PARK

Location: 13 miles southwest of Coos Bay on the Cape Arago Highway at the ocean shore. The park is south of the Cape Arago lighthouse at Gregory Point.

Size: 745.07 Acres

Existing Facilities: Picnic facilities (4 units), restored gardens, observation shelter at cliff's edge, restrooms, greenhouse nursery, park manager's residence.

Average Annual Day-Use Attendance (1979-1984): 292,000

Natural Features: Two miles of rugged coastline with spectacular sandstone ocean bluffs, many small bays and inlets and magnificent views of rocky coast.

Recreation Activities: Storm watching, nature study, beach combing, visiting restored gardens, walking.
LAND USE PLAN
SHORE ACRES STATE PARK
Primary Protection Areas-PPA-89.5 Acres

Primary Protection Areas include all the coves, rocky cliffs and outcroppings found along the edge of the ocean as well as special plant communities.

Secondary Protection Areas-SPA-536.5 Acres

The majority of the land at Shore Acres is in Secondary Protection. It includes all the land east of the highway and a small native headland meadow to the west.

Limited Development Areas-LDA-52 Acres

A small portion of the land around the developed portion of the park is in Limited Development.

Major Development Areas-MDA-67 Acres

The developed part of the park is designated as a Major Development Area.

For mapped information, see Cape Arago Land Use Plan map.
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SHORE ACRES STATE PARK
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Objective: Improve Park Entrance

Provide a park entrance more in keeping with the former Simpson estate and the remaining formal gardens. If, at some future time, entrance fees are collected on a regular basis, a permanent fee collection booth and turnaround may be constructed. The booth design should be compatible with the garden house and other estate facilities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project:</th>
<th>Park Entrance Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal:</td>
<td>Improve visual appearance of park entrance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost:</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Cost:</td>
<td>$1,000/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion:</td>
<td>The existing entrance to the park is very mundane and low key; with no association with the estate which was once there. The entrance should reflect the fact that this is a former estate and be more in keeping with the formal gardens which still remain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>Capital Improvement Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Park Entrance Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARK MANAGEMENT
SHORE ACRES STATE PARK
Objective: Improve Public Awareness of the Gardens

Continue the high-quality garden maintenance. Continue public education efforts about the gardens.
GEOLOGIC FEATURES & HAZARDS
SOILS
WATER FEATURES & HAZARDS
VEGETATION
WILDLIFE
SCENIC QUALITIES
HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGIC FEATURES

SITE INVENTORY
SHORE ACRES STATE PARK
Geologic features include:

Marine Terrace lands which are flat, elevated marine deposits of sand, silt, clay. These areas were once undersea but have been elevated to their present locations. They are subject to poor drainage locally but they are the most stable areas for park development. Most existing facilities are built on marine terraces.

Caledo Formation comprised of sandstone deposits roughly 38,000,000 years old. These areas make up the steeply sloped wooded acreage east of the Cape Arago road. The flatter areas on the highest portions are caps of marine terrace deposits.

The erosion differential of the Caledo sandstones capped by marine terrace deposits has formed the irregular spectacular shoreline of the Cape Arago parks.

Geologic hazards are directly related to degree of slope, and soil and bedrock stability. Locally steep slopes may increase hazard potential in all categories.

See Cape Arago Geologic Hazards map for mapped information.
Most of the soils at Shore Acres are on old marine terraces or uplands. These soils vary greatly in their characteristics.

The flatter areas where development has occurred are on old marine terraces which consist of poorly drained silt loams. These areas have severe restrictions for buildings and development due to wetness and a shallow cemented pan. These areas are good for wetland vegetation and wildlife but poor for other uses.

The soils on the upland areas of the park are well-drained silt loams which are good for coniferous vegetation and woodland wildlife. These areas are suitable for buildings and development if the slopes are not too steep.

The Cape Arago Soils map shows areas which have the highest recreational development hazard ratings. Factors which influence ratings are:

- Drainage
- Depth to bedrock
- Hydrologic hazards
- Steep slopes
- Suitability for sanitary facilities
- Shrink/swell potential
- Low bearing strength
Water Features to be protected include:

- Upland watersheds, which need protection and monitoring to insure high surface water quality in the park
- Two old dams which provide water for irrigation uses

Water Hazards which limit development include:

- Winter storms from the south and southwest
- Summer storms from the northwest
- Heavy runoff from upland drainages
- Perched water tables and ponding in isolated park areas, on marine terrace lands (see Geologic Features and Hazards).

See Cape Arago Water Hazards map for mapped information.
OVERVIEW

Dating from 1906, this park was the grand estate of timber baron, Louis Simpson. The land and vegetation still tell the story of logging, mining, grazing, plowing and planting of exotic tree species. The park is known regionally for the formal botanic gardens near the seashore.

NATURAL PLANT COMMUNITIES

REEDGRASS-WILDRYE HEADLAND GRASSLAND AND CROWBERRY-SALAL HEADLAND AND SHRUBLAND

Description

A high quality 10-acre shrubland community can be found along the headland in the south part of Shore Acres Park. The native vegetation is dominated by black crowberry (Empetrum nigrum) and salal (Gaultheria shallon). Interspersed with the shrubland community is a grassland community of high quality and importance. Pacific reedgrass (Calamagrostis nutkaensis) and blue wildrye (Elymus glaucus) dominate. Evidently the Simpson Ranch did not run cattle or sheep in this 10-acre area. A few young Sitka spruce and shore pine are invading. Although too small for Natural Heritage research cells, these superb natural communities are highly significant.

Management

The light hiking use that occurs through this area is compatible with protection of the headland communities. The prior planting of spruce and non-native pine in the vicinity was detrimental to the habitat and should not be repeated.
ALGAE BED ON ROCKY INTERTIDAL AND SUBTIDAL SURFACES

The marine intertidal and subtidal regions of Shore Acres and Cape Arago are the most diverse of any in the state. They are outstanding from both geological and biological perspectives.

The common plants in this zone are green sea lettuce, ribbon kelp, sea tangle, laver and many other species of green and red alga.

ALTERED VEGETATION COVER TYPES

SPRUCE FOREST

Description

Except for the older spruce stands on the seaward side of the Cape Arago Highway the forest types in this park have developed since the time the park was acquired in the 1940s. Depending on the area, western hemlock, cedars, shore pine, Douglas-fir and red alder can occur as subdominant canopy species while sword fern, salal and huckleberry are common in the understory.

Much of the area was partial-cut logged, then burned in a major fire, re-logged, grazed, and then planted with a variety of coniferous species by early park crews. Advanced shrub growth overtopped most of the planted trees shortly after planting. However, there are some patches of conifer timber, and conifers are beginning to emerge and succeed shrub growth in the dense brush fields. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, most areas which are now in impenetrable brush and small trees should become closed canopy forests with ferns and scattered shrubs. Some shrub fields will persist, particularly in the poorly drained sites with a shallow hardpan.
Management

No significant vegetation management projects are contemplated for this park for the term of this plan except to maintain existing roads and facilities. However, should a major catastrophe occur, some activity may be necessary to ensure rapid regeneration of forest cover. The park manager should be alert for the occurrence of gorse and take swift action to eradicate it.

Fire Access: Improved fire fighting access to the eastern reaches of the park is needed. Cooperation with adjacent landowners is advised to minimize duplication of road and trail development.

SHRUB/FORB HEADLAND

This cover type is seen occasionally along the sea bluffs. The Cape Arago Trail passes through sixteen acres of shrub forb headland southwest of the botanic garden. Grasses, thrift, salal, black crowberry, black twin-berry and other native species grow here. Drainage pipes and rudimentary ditches indicate that some decades ago the area was probably wetter. Although these areas aren't designed for Primary Protection, they should be managed as protectively as is feasible.

ALDER FOREST

Only those alder dominated areas in riparian areas are classed as alder forests because in those areas succession is not likely to lead to conifer forests. Skunk cabbage and salmonberry are associated species. This cover type is found in four small drainages in the park.

ABANDONED TREE PLANTATION

This 21-acre experimental plantation has some survivors including both natives (shore pine) and exotics (Monterey cypress and various pines). The high winds, salt spray and hardpan soils are somewhat severe conditions for tree growing. No additional exotic species will be planted here.
LAWNS AND MAINTAINED VEGETATION

The Formal Garden

The historic gardens of the Shore Acres Estate have been restored and developed into a regional attraction. (See historic and archeologic section.) The garden, with its 100-foot Japanese lily pond, is a visual delight, featuring many unusual exotics. The botanical garden is maintained using standard horticultural practices and an added measure of personal care. The management of the gardens at Shore Acres should continue in the superb manner practiced in 1986.

Lawns and District Manager's Residence

This portion of the cover type encompasses about 10 acres. The largest lawns are between Cape Arago Highway and the big parking loop; within the parking loop; and between the loop and the ocean bluff. Many introduced trees and shrubs are found here.

RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Description

The western giant bog lily (Lilium occidentale) occurs in a small population near the ocean bluffs on the headland in Shore Acres State Park southwest of the botanical gardens. Some of the more moisture dependent species were probably present. Old drainage pipes can be seen in this hardpan bog. Before the area was drained, more moisture dependent species were probably present. Large areas of the peat layer nearby were removed, probably during the early development of the Shore Acre Gardens. Darlingtonia plants were probably removed from this area. Lilium occidentale is a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The total number of plants worldwide is probably less than 1,000.
Threats and Management

The major threats to the lilies are collection for their horticultural value and disruption of their water supply. Because *Lilium occidentale* is among the most endangered plants in Oregon its locations will not be revealed to the general public. Old ditches and pipes which drain the lily habitat on the headland should not be maintained. It would be desirable if they were to be filled in the future so that wetter conditions would prevail.

All park personnel should become familiar with the lily's appearance and locations in order to avoid accidental destruction of the plants or their habitat. Their large, red flowers can be seen from mid-June to early August.

(See the Sunset Bay Vegetation section for an illustration and additional information.)
FISH & WILDLIFE

HABITATS

ROCKY INTRERTIDAL AND SUBTIDAL

While a two-mile stretch of this habitat borders the shore of this park, only small parts are accessible by foot at Simpson Beach and at North Cove (via Cape Arago State Park). Some animals found there are crabs, marine worms, sea stars, California mussels, rock scallops, red abalone (rarely), sea urchins and ling cod.

ROCK ISLANDS

Shell Island with its associated harbor seals, elephant seals, Stellars sea lions and California sea lions can be easily viewed through binoculars from the Cape Arago Trail as it passes through Shore Acres State Park. Some birds may be visible also, for example, the western gull, peregrine falcon, black oystercatcher and pelagic cormorant.

PELAGIC

Whale watching is good from a number of localities including the observatory at the botanic gardens parking lot.

RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The peregrine falcon and elephant seal are the only rare species in or near the park.
The scenic qualities at Shore Acres vary from the geologic formations at the ocean's edge to the restored gardens in the interior of the park. The cliffs and rocky shoreline at Shore Acres are of interest at all times, but coastal storms provide a dramatic spectacle when waves crash against the cliffs. A protected observatory provides views of these storms with some degree of comfort.

Simpson Cove is a secluded sand beach surrounded by steep high cliffs. During severe storms these cliffs are buffeted by winds and waves, providing a dramatic spectacle.

The upland watershed is a good example of the scenic beauty that most visitors do not encounter because of the rugged topography and lack of upland trails in the Cape Arago parks. Its rugged topography hides an interesting mixture of evergreens, hardwoods, lush ferns and understory plants.

The Shore Acres Floral Gardens were originally built by Louis Simpson. Recently restored by the Parks Division, the gardens are a prime example of the numbers and types of plants that can be grown in this area. This garden is one of the most scenic of its type in the northwest.

The attractive design uses plants, walkways, structures, outdoor furniture and exotic plants from around the world. There is a formal garden and an informal "Japanese" garden with pool. Some original plantings have survived to provide a mature backdrop for the restored gardens. There is an excellent selection of roses, both tree roses and bushes.

The gardens are one of the reasons the Sunset Bay Parks are a popular spot for visitors. Even with a day-use fee, the gardens draw nearly 250,000 visitors per year. The park maintenance staff responsible for the garden is due a lot of credit for maintaining grounds to such a high standard in spite of salt fogs, rainy weather and high visitor use.

See Cape Arago Scenic Qualities map for mapped information.
Historic Features

This spectacular park was once the estate of Louis Simpson, a famed timber baron. At one time a large and impressive mansion, dating from 1906, was on the estate but it burned in 1921; a second mansion was built to replace it in 1928. A reversal in Simpson's fortune caused him to leave his estate at the outbreak of WWII. The state acquired the park in 1942 and leased the site to the U.S. Army. In 1948 the second mansion was razed and the site was developed for park use.

Over the years, the famous gardens developed by Louis Simpson fell into disrepair. Through his shipping ventures, Simpson has been able to introduce many exotic species of plants to the Pacific Northwest years before they were commonly available. In the early 1970's, a state park landscape architect began the restoration of the gardens to their present condition.

When the Coos Bay jetties were being reconstructed, the rock to rebuild them came from Shore Acres. The quarries were located in a hill near the beach cove. At one time, they were visible from the road near the viewpoint of the island.

In 1980, the Oregon Geographic Names Board named a small sheltered beach area within the park boundaries "Simpson Beach" for the former owner of this parcel of land.

Archeologic Features

Two sites are located in Shore Acres on a bluff overlooking a small cove north of the parking lot. Both sites consist of shell middens and fire cracked rock. No cultural materials were found at the time of investigation.

The investigator recommended that these sites be tested to determine the extent of their significance.
Park Background

The majority of this park was acquired by purchase from Louis J. and Lela G. Simpson in 1942, with additional acreage being bought in 1954 from the U.S. Department of Indian Affairs and in 1972 from the Georgia-Pacific Corporation.

See Cape Arago Historic & Archeologic Features map for mapped information.
PLANNING DATA

SHORE ACRES STATE PARK
ZONING

Coos County

REC - Recreation
   - Park use permitted outright

For mapped information, see Cape Arago Zoning map.
Location: 14 miles southwest of Coos Bay on the Cape Arago Highway at the ocean shore. The park is south of the Cape Arago lighthouse at Gregory Point.

Sizes: 134.0 Acres

Existing Facilities: Picnic facilities (43 units), picnic shelter, hiker/biker camp, restrooms.

Average Annual Day-Use Attendance (1979-1984): 286,000

Natural Features: Rugged coastline with spectacular sandstone ocean bluffs, many small bays and inlets, excellent views of rocky coast and inlets, superb intertidal and subtidal ecosystems.

Recreation Activities: Picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, photography, surf fishing, primitive camping, hiking, beach activities.

Science classes from the Pacific Northwest visit this area to study the tidepool ecology and marine life here.
LAND USE PLAN
CAPE ARAGO STATE PARK
Primary Protection Areas-PPA-24 Acres

All of the land areas around North and South Coves are in Primary Protection.

Secondary Protection Areas-SPA-80.5 Acres

The forested upland areas are all in Secondary Protection.

Limited Development Areas-LDA-17.5 Acres

This small area provides a buffer between the developed areas in the park and the PPA's and SPA's.

Major Development Areas-MDA-12 Acres

This designation includes the developed portions of the park.
SUNSET BAY STATE PARKS
CAPE ARAGO STATE PARK
SHORE ACRES STATE PARK

Coos County, Oregon
SUNSET BAY STATE PARK
YOAKAM POINT STATE PARK

Contour Interval ~ 40 Ft.
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
REHABILITATION PROJECTS
PROJECT COSTS AND PHASING

DEVELOPMENT PLAN
CAPE ARAGO STATE PARK
Objective: Improve South Cove Beach Access

One way to relieve some of the pressure and overuse on the North Cove is to improve the pedestrian access to the South Cove and encourage visitors to use that area. The bottom portion of the path is in poor condition and needs to be redesigned and rebuilt.
REHABILITATION PROJECTS — CAPE ARAGO STATE PARK

Project: Improved Pedestrian Beach Access to South Cove

Proposal: Construct beach access less susceptible to ocean erosion, capable of year-round use with changing beach sand levels.

Cost: $5,000.

Maintenance Cost: $500/yr.

Discussion: Foot access to the beach is difficult and sometimes dangerous when beach sand levels drop below existing access improvements. Ocean erosion has also deteriorated existing access improvements. A redesigned pedestrian beach access will be more convenient and safer.

Improving access to this area will alleviate some of the overuse at North Cove and help protect the natural resources found there.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Capital Improvement Projects</th>
<th>Rehabilitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beach Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improved foot access to South Cove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective: Protect Natural Features

Monitor, manage and protect natural features at North Cove in cooperation with other natural resource agencies. See Cape Arago Wildlife for more detailed information.

In the past, proposals have been made to extend the Cape Arago Highway through Cape Arago State Park to Seven Devils. State Parks has not supported that proposal in the past and continues to oppose it.
GEOLOGIC FEATURES & HAZARDS

Geologic features include:

Marine Terrace lands which are flat, elevated marine deposits of sand, silt, clay. These areas were once undersea but have been elevated to their present locations. They are subject to poor drainage locally but they are the most stable areas for park development. Most existing facilities are built on marine terraces.

Coledo Formation comprised of sandstone deposits roughly 38,000,000 years old. These areas make up the steep wooded acreage east of the Cape Arago road. The flatter areas on the highest portions are caps of marine terrace deposits.

The erosion differential of the Coledo sandstones capped by marine terrace deposits has formed the irregular spectacular shoreline of the Cape Arago parks.

Geologic hazards are directly related to degree of slope, and soil and bedrock stability. Locally steep slopes may increase hazard potential in all categories.
GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

0 - 5% slopes
HYDROLOGIC HAZARDS, EROSION, COMPRESSIBLE SOILS, LAND USE POTENTIAL EXCELLENT TO GOOD IN AREAS OF MINIMAL HAZARDS.

5 - 15% slopes
MODERATE EROSION, DEPOSITION; EXCELLENT TO GOOD LAND USE POTENTIAL IN AREAS OF MINIMAL OR CONTROLLED HAZARDS.

15 - 30% slopes
MODERATE TO RAPID EROSION & EARTHFLOW, LAND USE VARIABLE, SUITED TO CONTROLLED LOW INTENSITY DEVELOPMENT.

30 - 50% slopes
EROSION, EARTHFLOW, DEBRIS SLIDES; LAND USE SUITABLE TO SPARSE DEVELOPMENT, FORESTRY.

50% slopes
EXTREME EROSION, RAPID EARTHFLOW, DEBRIS FLOW, ROCKSLIDE AND ROCKFALL; LAND USE SUITABILITY RESTRICTED TO OPEN SPACE & WELL-MANAGED LOGGING.
In addition to the sandy beaches, there are two other kinds of soils at Cape Arago.

The old marine terraces consist of very fine sandy loams. These soils are poorly drained with a cemented pan and have several restrictions for buildings and recreation development. These soils are found in and around the loop road at the Cape.

Other soils on the uplands and marine terraces are well-drained silt loams. These soils are good for coniferous vegetation and for woodland wildlife. They are suitable for development if they are not too steep.

The soils map on the next page shows areas which have the highest recreational development hazard ratings. Factors which influence ratings are:

- Drainage
- Depth to bedrock
- Hydrologic hazards
- Steep slopes
- Suitability for sanitary facilities
- Shrink/swell potential
- Low bearing strength
WATER FEATURES & HAZARDS

Water Features to be protected include:

Upland watersheds which need protection and monitoring to ensure high surface water quality in the park.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has identified a number of noteworthy water features capable of filling Natural Heritage cell needs. All of these are marine aquatic features.

The first is an Unvegetated Coarse Unconsolidated Substrate in the Intertidal Zone. This feature, known as Shell Island, consists of a very active unconsolidated island made up primarily of shell fragments. This type of feature is endangered both in Oregon and globally. This example is unique and is the best of its type in Oregon. It could fill a cell need.

Another marine feature is the Unvegetated Sand Beach in the Intertidal Zone. This is a common feature, apparently secure globally and in Oregon. This area receives a lot of recreation use and has been reduced in quality. It is not adequate to fill a cell need.

Two other marine aquatic features are Vegetated Rocky Surfaces. One is in the Subtidal Zone and the other is in the Intertidal Zone. Both have outstanding diversity and quality both in vegetation and animal use. Both of these cells are rare or threatened in Oregon and the Vegetated Rocky Surface in the Intertidal Zone is also threatened throughout its range. Human use is a serious problem since the area is accessible during low tides.

Both of these features are adequate to fill cell needs.

The remaining aquatic feature is Simpson Reef, an Intertidal Offshore Reef. This impressive reef is one of the best in the state, exhibiting a wide variety of marine fauna. Since it cannot be reached by land even at low tide, it is fairly well protected. (See TNC Report in Appendix).
Water Hazards which limit development include:

Winter storms from the south and southwest
Summer storms from the northwest
Heavy runoff from upland drainages
Perched water tables and ponding in isolated park areas on marine terrace lands (see Geologic Features and Hazards).
VEGETATION

CAPE ARAGO

NATURAL PLANT COMMUNITIES

ALGAE BED ON ROCKY INTERTIDAL AND SUBTIDAL SURFACES

The marine intertidal and subtidal regions of Shore Acres and Cape Arago are the most diverse of any in the state. They are outstanding from both geological and biological perspectives. The common plants in this zone are green sea lettuce, ribbon kelp, sea tangle, kelp and many other species of green and red alga. Of the 313 species of algae reported along the Oregon coast, 256 are found at Cape Arago.

These two ecosystems are very extensive in the areas adjacent to Cape Arago State Park. They are largely accessible to visitors at minus tides. These delicate ecosystems are heavily used by school groups and other visitors. Protective management is described in the Cape Arago Wildlife section.

ALTERED VEGETATION COVER TYPES

SPRUCE FOREST

Description

Except for patches of 30 to 50 year-old spruce and hemlock growing near the ocean bluffs and on the east end of the park, most of this forest has developed since the park was acquired in the 1940s. Depending on the area, western hemlock, cedars, shore pine, Douglas-fir and red alder can occur as subdominant canopy species while sword fern, salal and huckleberry are common in the understory. Much of the area was partial-cut logged, then burned in a major fire, re-logged, grazed, and then planted with a variety of coniferous species by early park crews. Advanced shrub growth overtopped most of the planted trees shortly after planting. However, there are some patches of conifer
timber, and conifers are beginning to emerge and succeed shrub growth in the dense brush fields. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, most areas which are now in impenetrable brush and small trees should become closed canopy forests with ferns and scattered shrubs. Some shrub fields will persist, particularly in the poorly drained sites with a shallow hardpan.

Management

No significant vegetation management projects are contemplated for this park for the term of this plan except to maintain existing roads and facilities. However, should a major catastrophe occur, some activity may be necessary to ensure rapid regeneration of forest cover. The park manager should be alert for the occurrence of gorse and take swift action to eradicate it.

The hiking trail should continue to be maintained as possible fire access for small pumper trucks and bulldozers from the main road to the point where it begins its descent into the major creek at the east end of the park.

Some trimming of trail-side trees and shrub growth should be done to enhance and maintain views of the coastline.

LAWNS AND MAINTAINED VEGETATION

A day-use and picnic area comprise this 20-acre type. Introduced trees such as Monterey cypress grow here. A few mature Sitka spruce grow in the developed area. Lawns allow for views of the ocean. Occasional thinning will be necessary to maintain these vantage points. The possibility of making the forest vulnerable to windthrow should be considered whenever shrubs are trimmed or trees are thinned.
TNC ECOSYSTEMS SURVEY

KEY

1A Unvegetated sand beach in the intertidal zone
1B Vegetated rocky surfaces in the subtidal & intertidal zones (2 types)
1C Unvegetated rocky surfaces including rock walls & surge channels
1D Unvegetated coral reef
1E Intertidal offshore reef
1F Unvegetated rocky surfaces including rock walls & surge channels
2A Unvegetated sand beach in the intertidal zone
3A Areas altered from natural condition
3B Littorina californica (giant keyhole limpet)
3C Haliotis tuberculata (Black abalone)
3D Pismo vitulina (Horned abalone)
3E Zostera californica (California seagrass)

TNC BOG

GREGORY POINT

SOUTH BAY

\* DAVE ARASO LIGHTHOUSE
\* U.S. COAST GUARD STATION

ROAKAM POINT

PETERSON BEACH

PETERSON BEACH COUNTY PARK

SOUTH BAY WEDO
OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION AND IMPORTANCE

The tidepools, subtidal areas and rock islands at Cape Arago are an important natural resource to protect. They are the largest, most diverse, and least altered marine ecosystems of their type on the Oregon coast. Including North, South and Middle Coves, 40-80 acres of this extensive ecosystem of tidepools and channels is accessible from shore during the lowest tides.

Science classes from as far away as Canada and Idaho visit Cape Arago and environs regularly. The University of Oregon's Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (OIMB) uses this park as an outdoor classroom and research site.

North Cove, along with the associated Shell Island Complex, is ecologically the most important area in the park and the most threatened by human disturbances.

OWNERSHIP

These tidepools and rock islands are not owned by the State Parks Division, but the trail to the beach in Cape Arago State Park is the only land access to the Cove. Intertidal areas and organisms are managed by ODFW, and offshore rocks and islands above high tide are protected and managed for wilderness values by USFWS.

THREATS

Marine ecologists have expressed concern about the health and safety of these marine ecosystems, their plants and animals, and especially the marine mammals which are dependent on the area.
Seal Pup Harassment

The most important natural features are concentrated in North Cove. During the spring of 1984 an average of 40 people visited North Cove during the low tides occurring in daylight hours. This high use in the spring coincides with harbor seal pupping season. Human harassment, intentional or otherwise, poses a serious threat to the relationship between harbor seal mothers and their young. When school groups and others walk out to Shell Island and beyond, they must walk among the mothers and pups. The mothers always leave the pups when humans approach. The pups sometimes leave Shell Island also. It is unknown whether this is a large factor in the high pup mortality rate. Sometimes school groups handle newborn pups. This type of disturbance constitutes harassment as defined by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and is illegal.

Illegal Collecting

A tremendous number of marine organisms such as sea stars, chitons, and sea palms are illegally collected in the intertidal zone. Since a major use of this area is for serious scientific research, uncontrolled collecting constitutes a major disruption to on-going research and to the health of the ecosystems themselves. North Cove is one of a handful of sites where collecting is allowed by ODFW permit only.

Other Threats

Many park visitors neglect to replace boulders that they turn over as they search for marine organisms. Often the animals die from this destruction of their microhabitats. A large number of animals are killed outright by heavy foot traffic.
National Marine Sanctuary Program

It is possible that North Cove, the Shell Island Complex and Simpson Reef could be designated for protection under the federal National Marine Sanctuary program. If the North Cove is included in this program, funds would be available to manage and interpret this area. Parks will actively pursue placing this area in that program.

Interagency Management Plan

Until it is determined whether North Cove will be accepted into the National Marine Sanctuary program, Parks will work with all affected and interested natural resource and educational agencies to protect and manage this resource. These agencies include:

ODFW - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
USFWS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
DSL - Oregon Division of State Lands
OSU - Oregon State University
OIMB - Oregon Institute of Marine Biology
TNC - The Nature Conservancy

Other groups may be asked to participate.

The advisability of closure or restriction of access during seal pupping (early April to the end of May) will be discussed. Other avenues for protection will be explored, such as signs, an interpretive station, brochures, and volunteers to patrol North Cove and provide interpretation during minus tides.

Park's Management Program

One way to relieve some of the pressure and overuse on the North Cove is to improve the pedestrian access to the South Cove and encourage visitors to use that area. The bottom portion of the path is in poor condition and needs to be redesigned and rebuilt. A large sign indicating the trailhead to the South Cove tidepools should be erected.
The park Natural Resource Planner will ask the Oregon Department of Education and OSU Extension/Sea Grant program to contact teachers who are likely to use Cape Arago to request that they use South Cove or schedule their trips to avoid pupping season. They will be told of the damages caused by displacing boulders, informed of the consequences of collecting without a permit from ODFW and asked to observe baby seals with binoculars instead of first-hand.

Signs will be posted and maintained at trailheads giving information about seal pupping (dates and the threat of human presence), collecting and other concerns.

During low tides that allow access to Shell Island between early April to the end of May, a park employee or volunteer should be present at North Cove during daylight hours to keep the public away from the pups and their mothers.

Interpretation and education are important tools in protecting the resources at North Cove. Good books to use for tidepool interpretation are entered in the bibliography under the names of these authors:

Chris Maser: Natural History of Oregon Coast Mammals.


Tom Carefoot: Pacific Seashores.

Oregon State University Extension Service and Agricultural Experiment Station: Field Guide to Common Marine and Bay Fishes of Oregon.

Don Giles: Flotsam, Jetsam and Wrack.

Angelo Beccasio: Pacific Coast Ecological Inventory Maps: Coos Bay, Oregon.
HABITATS

ROCK ISLAND

Marine Geology

Shell Island consists of a several rocks up to 50 feet in height and a large and very active mound of shell fragments. The island is virtually without vegetation. It is accessible via North Cove at minus tides. The Nature Conservancy reports that Shell Island is a superb example of a type of marine aquatic cell which is globally endangered.

Harbor Seals: Adults and Pups

The best breeding site in Oregon for harbor seals is at Simpson Reef and Shell Island off Cape Arago State Park. A thousand animals use the area. This is one-third of the Oregon population. Pupping occurs in April and May. See the Cape Arago Overview for a discussion of threats and management.

Northern Elephant Seals

Since 1968 North Cove has been the only site in Oregon where northern elephant seals could be seen regularly in the winter, but never have more than four animals been seen at once. Until 1978, only males were seen. Since then a few juveniles and females have also been observed. In March, 1985, the Oregon Natural Heritage Data Base listed the northern elephant seal as "limited in abundance in Oregon or throughout range." The elephant seal is recovering since the late 19th century when it was on the verge of extinction.

There is some possibility, as northern elephant seals recover from a brush with extinction, that a breeding colony may be established on the Shell Island/Simpson Reef Complex in the future. Presently Oregon has no breeding colonies. During the breeding season adult males will charge humans. The animals should not be disturbed during the pupping and breeding season.
Birds

The islands, cliffs and rocks of the parks at Cape Arago are heavily used for nesting and feeding areas by numerous seabirds and migratory shorebirds such as turnstones, surfbirds and wandering tattlers. One federally listed endangered bird species, the peregrine falcon, has been seen at North Cove and on Shell Island. A single male has been regularly seen here during winter months.

Brown pelicans are occasionally seen during late summer and early fall.

Two black oystercatchers and a number of western gulls nest on the Shell Island Complex.

ROCKY INTER/SUBTIDAL HABITATS

Overview

The flora and the fauna of these natural ecosystems, which extend from Sunset Bay to Cape Arago, are unsurpassed in Oregon for its quality, species richness and abundance. The rocky intertidal and subtidal ecosystems at Boiler Bay have equivalent value, but only half the size.

Rocky intertidal/subtidal habitats occur at South Cove; Middle Cove; below the sea cliff; and in a system of tidepools, channels and boulders extending from North Cove, past Shell Island and on to Simpson Reef. The rocky reef acts as a natural breakwater protecting the North Cove ecosystems from wave action. The reef itself is dominated by algae, such as the sea palm, mussels, goose-neck barnacles and large populations of marine mammals. Common invertebrate animals found throughout these habitats include the anemone, sea urchin, marine worm, rock scallop, California mussel and various species of crabs, barnacles, limpets and chitons. Young sport and commercial fish such as cabezon, rockfish and greenling develop in the abundant algal communities off Cape Arago.
Harbor Seal

Harbor Seals use Simpson Reef and the area around Shell Island for haul-out, breeding, and feeding areas. The habitat is excellent.

Northern Elephant Seal

The rare Northern elephant seal hauls out at Simpson Reef and at Shell Island.

Stellar Sea Lion

In spring and fall about 150 Stellar sea lions use Simpson Reef and Shell Island for hauling out. This species, which has declined in number throughout its range, was a former breeder at this site.

California Sea Lions

About 500 California sea lions joust, feed and rest at Simpson Reef and North Cove. In the spring before pupping begins, the males leave the breeding grounds for Cape Arago; they return in the fall. This is one of the best sites in Oregon for the sea lion or circus seal, as the California sea lion is also known. Sea lions are found in seven other sites in the state.

PELAGIC/ROCKY SUBTIDAL

Northern Sea Otter

The Northern sea otter was reintroduced on the south coast in about 1970. Individuals were last seen at Cape Arago in 1981, and probably no longer occur in the area. These animals used Shell Island and Simpson Reef in Cape Arago's North Cove as haul-outs and the area in between for feeding. The sea otter is listed as "threatened in Oregon but more common or stable elsewhere" (Oregon Natural Heritage Data Base, 1985).
PELAGIC HABITAT

Numerous fishes abide in this open-sea habitat. Killer whales have been observed feeding on seals and sea lions at Cape Arago. Gray whales and Minke whales frequent South and North Coves during their migratory journeys. The gray whale is the only whale that park visitors are likely to see.

UPLAND AND RIPARIAN HABITATS

Although these are not an outstanding habitats, they do support a resident deer population which uses the forests, riparian zones and edges for browse and shelter.

RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The following species occur in or near the park. None breeds here. Information on these species is found in Nature Notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species/Status</th>
<th>Localities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California brown pelican</td>
<td>Shell Island Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peregrine falcon</td>
<td>Shell Island Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endangered worldwide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern elephant seal</td>
<td>Shell Island Complex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern sea otter*</td>
<td>Between the Shell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Threatened in Oregon</td>
<td>Island Complex and Simpson Reef</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Probably no longer at Cape Arago.

See Nature Notes at the end of the Wildlife section for descriptions and illustrations of interesting plants and animals.
WILDLIFE HABITATS

Rock island
Pelagic common
Black oyster catcher

Harbor seal
Black oyster catcher
Pigeon guillemot

Pelagic
Gray whale
Killer whale

Rock island
Pigeon guillemot
Tufted puffin
Black oyster catcher

Gregory Point

Rocky intertidal/subtidal
Smelt

Yoakam Point

The following non-nesting birds have been observed from this point:
- Peregrine falcon
- Bald eagle
- Brown pelican
Scenic qualities at Cape Arago include high sandstone cliffs, ocean vistas, long views to the south from Cape Arago, views of Simpson Reef, Shell Island and sea lions from Sea Lion Viewpoint. There are also spectacular views of cliffs from hiking trails throughout the area.

North and South Coves at Cape Arago have other scenic qualities with tidal changes, exposed rocks, tidepools, unusual geologic features and small beaches.

The upland watershed provides another example of the scenic beauty that most visitors do not encounter because of the rugged topography and lack of upland trails in this area. The rugged topography hides an interesting mixture of evergreens, hardwoods, lush ferns and understory plants.
SCENIC QUALITIES
Important Features
Historic Features

Named for Dominique Francois Jean Arago, a French physicist and geographer, this cape was originally known as Cape Gregory. Its original name came from Captain James Cook who sighted the cape on March 12, 1778 and named it for the saint of that day.

Most of the activity of a historic nature at Cape Arago State Park took place offshore from the park. Explorers of many different nations passed by in their search for new routes to the interior of the continent and also on their trading voyages.

It is speculated that Chinese voyagers may have sailed along the coast of western America as early as 458 AD and it is known that many Spanish and later the English explorers sailed off the coast of Oregon from the early 1500’s until the late 1700’s.

Of particular interest to the history of Cape Arago State Park is the possibility that Sir Francis Drake may have anchored at South Cove for five days from June 5 to June 10, 1579. This area is believed by some scholars to be the northernmost point reached by Drake in his historic circumnavigation of the globe.

Archeologic Features

There are two archeologic sites at Cape Arago. One is a double midden on a bluff overlooking the ocean. This site is a shell midden which has been disturbed by park development. A black-top road and trails have been constructed over the midden.

A second site is located in the South Cove area of the park. It is reported that this area was one that was used by the Coos Indians during their spirit quests. This area is undeveloped and the condition of the site is unknown at this time.
Park Background

All of the acreage of the park, 134 acres, was a gift from the Simpson family in 1932. The CCC was very active in the early development of this park, though little of their work remains. At one time there was a log octagonal observatory on the point. Only the foundation remains.

At one time the land at Cape Arago was the homestead of the Colver family. An old tombstone and grave remain on the property near the hiker/biker camp on the east side of the park.

The lighthouse at Gregory Point is visible from the park. The present lighthouse, still in service, was constructed in 1934. Two other lighthouses were built on this point earlier. The first was erected in 1866. It was an iron tower built at the western tip of an island jutting into the ocean. At low tide one can still spot one iron rod from this lighthouse which was part of the central spiral staircase.
Coos County

REC - Recreation
- Park use permitted outright
The following parks and waysides were also studied as part of this master plan.

Barview State Wayside
Bolon Island Tideways State Wayside
Conde B. McCullough Bridgehead & Wayside
Umpqua State Wayside

Due to their small size, remote locations, low intensity development and use by mostly local populations, these parks are being recommended for transfer to other managing agencies.

The existing conditions and proposed disposal of each of these parks is described on the following pages. There are no known rare threatened or endangered species on these lands and no features that require protection by State Parks.
BARVIEW WAYSIDE
TOWNSHIP 26 S, RANGE 14 W, SECTION 1
NORTH
COOS COUNTY
OREGON STATE PARKS 4/86
LOCATION: On Cape Arago Highway, south of Coos Bay, on opposite bank of Slough from City of Charleston in Coos County.

Size: 5.34 Acres - Deeded land. Accretion has increased the size of the property to 15+ acres.

Existing Facilities: None


Natural Features: Tideflats and eel grass beds. Fossil Point a geologic landmark of local interest, a small creek bisects the property; undistinguished riparian vegetation in the wetland area; song birds and coastal birds are found in area.

Recreation Activities: Clamming, bayside activities, potential area for nature study.

Proposed Disposal: Sell to Port of Coos Bay. They have expressed an interest in purchasing the property in order to develop a boat launch site.

Discussion: Not suitable for development as a state park. Very poor access to highway. Suitable for local needs for boat launch and for local county needs.
Location: On U.S. 101, 1/4 mile from Reedsport at north end of the Umpqua River Bridge in Douglas County.

Size: 11.41 Acres

Existing Facilities: Restricted parking, poor highway access; foot trail to river; viewpoint at top of hill; memorial to donor's children.


Natural Features: The park consists of about half of a large island between the Umpqua River Bridges. Park is located adjacent to large lumber mill. Park is mostly steep timberland.

Recreation Activities: Fishing access, viewing Umpqua River estuary from hilltop vantage point.

Proposed Disposal: Transfer to County Parks Department, or State Highway Division or sell.

Discussion: Property does not have state park significance. Poor site conditions hinder further development.
Location: On westerly side of old Coast Highway 101 at north end of the Coos Bay Bridge in Coos County; just north of town of North Bend.

Size: 22.91 Acres

Existing Facilities: Boat ramp and parking area.


Natural Features: Narrow scenic buffer along Coos Bay - Haynes Inlet arm with undistinguished mixed fir and hardwood vegetation.

Recreation Activities: Boating

Proposed Disposal: Transfer to State Highway Division.

Discussion: Area acquired to preserve scenic qualities of bridge approach and as memorial to Conde B. McCullough, designer of the Coos Bay bridge and other scenic bridges. Area not suitable for state park purposes, but strongly related to highway purposes.
Location: On State Route 38, 7 miles east of Reedsport in Douglas County.

Size: 110.87 Acres, (5 separate parcels)

Existing Facilities: Picnic facilities (4 units), pit toilets, no drinking water; boat ramp to Umpqua River; historical sign of local significance for "Brandy Bar."

Average Annual Day-Use Attendance (1979-1984): 50,183

Natural Features: Property is located along Umpqua River; area experiences storm flooding, wooded with myrtle trees and deciduous trees, steep topography.

Recreation Activities: Picnicking, fishing.

Proposed Disposal: Transfer parcels adjacent to the highway to State Highway Division and/or Douglas County. Transfer larger parcels adjacent to Elliott State Forest to Oregon State Forestry Department (see map).

Discussion: The size and disjointed nature of the park properties, plus poor access, and steep topography severely limit further development of this wayside. Costs for maintenance are high.