

Smith Rock State Park
Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday October 3 2018, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bend Parks & Recreation District
799 SW Columbia St Bend

David and Robin provided an introduction and overview of the meeting agenda.

Were the responses you are referring to from the 2016 survey?

Yes.

Do you have the 2013 survey data?

Yes and we can cross reference them if need be.

Is the Warm Springs Tribe involved in this process and do they have property around there?

There is tribal representation on the advisory committee but they are not here. The Burns Paiute Tribe and the Warm Springs Tribe are working with us in most of the design aspects.

When you refer to overcrowding, is it within the bivouac or everywhere?

It is both.

There is a difference between a master plan and development plan. The development plan is a living, breathing document. You can find a summary on line.

The Misery Ridge problems are an issue but the trail is very important and we can make improvements.

The suggestion to have a shuttle is a nice idea but it is not to help increase users but more to manage the safety and the current amount of users.

We talked about the parking not being increased but rather managed better.

How will the intersection at 17th Street change?

It will stay a two-way intersection and the parking will be paved and will be far enough away.

Why are you keeping it so small, people stop here first so it would seem to make sense to make it bigger.

That is part of the ongoing discussion. The challenge is the private property owners property goes right up to the parking.

That does not seem like a good argument.

We also have to consider the natural and cultural resources. This corner of the park has a high level of natural and cultural resources and we want to balance the protection and use of those resources.

You spoke of an overflow lot but that is going to have visual and resource impacts too.

Our goal is to make the parking more functional instead of making it larger.

What would you do with the parking you no longer use?

If the parking spaces are limited you may have a traffic issue. It is a really desirable place for climbers to park and for the guide services. If those spots are limited, you are going to have issues.

We can manage the guide service parking and we are not looking to create a large welcome site there.

Safety will be an issue because of potential traffic in that area.

We could implement limited hour parking to manage it as well.

Do you have the staff capacity to enforce parking?

The county is going to make parking on the road illegal. We are asking for authority from the county to manage the illegal parking. And, we have received a new fulltime ranger so it will be easier to manage.

Can you put an electronic parking sign that says how many spots available?

There are other non-electronic ways to monitor it that are also less intrusive and we can put things out there during high use.

The intersection at 17th & Wilco provides better accessibility and you can keep those impacts minimal.

The 25 parking spaces are not very many and I encourage you to look into expanding it.

We have to be mindful of the neighbors.

Concept Development Plan

Are there any ADA trails or access?

Our intent is to make this trail suitable for limited accessibility.

Neighbors would like to see limits on the concessionaires – they do not want it to turn into a food cart area. It would take away from the rural community.

We make recommendations on capacity and discussion, but sometimes what does it mean to the impact of staff, etc. We cannot always predict the impacts.

You could list private lands for parking in peak times.

Yes we could but we cannot manage private land and any safety and overcrowding concerns. We are not currently working on offsite parking on private property.

Is using parking a way to control the amount of people in the park?

Not entirely. It is convenient but it will not keep people from coming in.

Shuttle Service

You could use King County as a good model. And, Mt. Bachelor, Ride the River, Lava Butte, Bend are several other examples.

Did you see what the park-and-ride site lot look like?

Physical signs helped, however folks using it were typical hotel guests, new to Bend.

This pilot shuttle project is not to get more people to Smith Rock, but to managing traffic and parking issues.

The issue of crossing Highway 97 will be discouraging. It would be nice to have a spot on the East side so you do not have to wait for a half hour to cross 97.

What is the timeline of the pilot?

We are not sure, we have to get a handle on what we need and secure a partner.

Have fees been discussed and how do you limit the capacity?

It will be an ongoing process for us. Because we use federal and state funds, we must have a set schedule and provide it to everyone.

Other states and agencies can provide examples.

What about hi-lining?

It may be part of the climbing management plan.

What about car counters?

There are different zone classifications for the car counters.

I think we need a discussion about the zones. Maybe there should be some changes to the zones.

Are you saying that you would not have a reservation system for the overnight use?

It is one piece of the discussion.

How many are climbers in the bivouac campers?

If the rules change the bivouac area will be predominantly climbers, and I think it will change with the changes you are talking about.

It will still remain pretty primitive and not really desirable for families looking for picnic tables and fire rings.

Are you getting trail maintenance from friends groups?

Yes and they will be whom we look to for partnership on funding, volunteering and improvements.

I would love to get the map – not everyone has access to GIS. I would like to see the many layers of a map.

We do not have the capability to provide that kind of information.

You need to provide more transparency on the topography, resources, etc. Not everyone understands the process.

Callan's Summary

- Concerns of conflicting user groups and overcrowding, the phrase “disperse user groups” was thrown around a lot. Primarily by the climbing folks, and the gentleman who leads group hikes.
- Concern about the size of the 17th trailhead parking lot -- there is ample space, why aren't we utilizing it? It seems like a waste of resources to build a 25 space parking lot that would surely be the first to be filled up (primarily by climbers accessing Monkey Face)
- Natural Resource maps

- Where are the restoration areas? Why aren't we seeing these items on maps/graphics?
 - Can this shapefiles be made accessible to the public so we can perform our own analysis?
- South Point Bridge – why is this drawn where it is? (conceptual...) it would make more sense to site the new ped bridge further up the river, to avoid the need for giant foundation/footing in the floodplain.
 - The reason the bridge is not further up the river is because of the nesting eagles.
- Will there be designated river access points? Not necessarily for swimming but because people are constantly trying to get to the river and trampling over potential habitat/restoration areas.
- Parking Technology?
 - Inform the public when lots are filled up so that they don't drive around aimlessly waiting to snag parking and cause congestion to build up throughout the park.
- Concerns about climbing/equestrian trails not showing up on maps
 - This will be included in the management plan
- Shuttle Pilot
 - Concerns about the success of this
 - How long will service run for?
 - At what interval will the service be at?
 - Where will people park their cars?
 - The school parking lot is sparking a lot of criticism
 - What happens if someone misses the shuttle?
 - What is the shuttle capacity?
 - Who would be the primary user?
- Parking, parking, parking.
 - People were concerned about parking but the parking diagram did a good job of illustrating what changes would be happening and the fact that no parking would be lost, just shifted around to improve the flow of the park.