

MINUTES
Historic Columbia River Highway
Advisory Committee
September 12, 1997
Best Western
Cascade Locks, Oregon

Members Present: John Lundell, Jack Wiles, Julie Curtis, Bill Pattison, Jeff Plummer, Charlie Sciscione, Richard Blaine, James Hamrick and Carolyn Wood.

Staff Present: Jeanette Kloos, Sam Wilkins, and Gail Smith.

Public Present: Tom Turck, and Chuck Frayer, USDA Forest Service; Mike Bridges, City of Cascade Locks; Jerry Igo, and Russ Jolley, Native Plants Society of Oregon; Bus Gibson, Mazamas; and Mike Stovall.

Bill Pattison, chair, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the previous meeting and of the field trip were approved as distributed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Russ Jolley, Vice Chairman of Native Plants Society of Oregon, commented that he had sent a letter a year ago discussing the use of herbicides between the gates of the Hood River to Mosier project. Herbicides killed plants that are on the watch list. Russ sent a letter to Charlie Sciscione, District 2C Manager. Then he met with ODOT staff who perform spraying in this area to help them identify these plants. Russ suggested that vegetation management in this area and other areas of the HCRH should be done manually rather than mechanically. The work needs to target specific plants and avoid sensitive plants. Jerry Igo suggested a comprehensive vegetation management plan should be developed. Charlie said that District 2C is developing an Integrated Pest Management Plan this year, as required. Rick Blaine noted that spraying needs to be done with caution, because you may kill plants, but other weeds, that are more difficult to kill, may take their place.

Jack Wiles said that OPRD is also required to complete Integrated Pest Management Plans. He would like trail segments to be "adopted"; hand weeding may be one task to be performed under such a program. Convict crews are now charging \$200.00 a day, making the "adopt-a-trail" program more important.

Russ would like to be sure that someone follows through with the commitments made in the plans. Bus Gibson would also like to see more effective measures be taken to control poison oak and English ivy. Russ stated that Horsetail Falls has grapevine, another problem plant, that grows right out to the fog line annually.

Last spring Jeanette attended a SOLV volunteer training. She is planning an event for Moffett Creek to Tanner Creek to clean pavement and remove ivy in the area. A \$250.00 grant is available.

Jeanette asked for volunteers (see enclosed flyers). Bus Gibson and Jeffrey Plummer volunteered.

NEW MEMBER OF HCRH AC

Bill Pattison introduced Jeffrey Plummer as a new member of the Advisory Committee . Jeffrey is replacing Sharon Timko as the Multnomah County representative. Jeffrey was born and raised in Troutdale and has enjoyed the HCRH for many years. Jeffrey stated that he was very pleased to become a member.

ACCESS POLICY

Jack Wiles presented the second draft of the Access Policy for the HCRH State Trail (attached). It incorporates comments from the Advisory Committee and additional information gained through discussions with disability advocates.

Jack introduced Chuck Frayer, USFS Disabilities Specialist.

The Forest Service was mandated to provide accessibility in 1973, but few changes occurred until 1990, when the Americans With Disabilities Act was passed. There have been many discussions since then on how the act applies to recreational facilities, particularly to designated Federal Wilderness Areas. Part of the Wilderness Act is a requirement that no motorized devices are allowed within Wilderness Areas. The HCRH State Trail is neither an urban environment nor a designated Wilderness, but we can learn from the previous discussions.

The Access Policy proposes to use a definition of “wheelchair” that has been court tested. Found on page 4 it includes “mobility impaired person” and “indoor pedestrian environment”. It is clear that an able-bodied person on a motorcycle is not included within this definition. Chuck discussed why we can not establish a rule that says, “the trail is open only to your physical capabilities”, ie hand-powered wheelchairs only. A person relying on a powered wheelchair must be given access to the trail. The powered wheelchair is their legs.

Chuck Frayer emphasized that outdoor recreation is different from accessibility within a city. The recreational experience of the area is important. It is not reasonable to change the recreational experience or the nature of the environment to provide access. There are no legal guidelines for accessibility to outdoor recreation for people with disabilities. A draft guidance document was printed in 1994. Chuck was one of the authors of the Forest Service Design Guide, which has been adopted by the State Trails Committee. This document includes proposals for designing and signing of facilities.

Everyone, including people with disabilities, gains when additional information is provided. The Design Guide recommends that information be provided on the length of the trail, elevation gain or loss, the time to travel the trail and the design standards used (grade, width, cross-slope and surface). In addition, a rating system, similar to that used in ski areas, is proposed. A trail might be easy (green circle) for bicyclists, moderate (blue square) for hikers, difficult (black diamond) for wheelchairs, and prohibited (red circle with slash) for horses. Chuck noted that there is a national debate about the use of the wheelchair symbol to stand for all mobility issues, but that the wheelchair symbol is the only internationally recognized symbol. Chuck recommends that all of this information be provided on one sign at the beginning of the facility. The Tanner Creek to Eagle

Creek project and plans for the Hood River to Mosier project include the first information but not the rating system. A decision needs to be made on changing these signs.

A second issue is people who lack stamina, who do not meet the definition of mobility impaired. Jack Wiles noted that people who arrive with a wheelchair will not be asked if they technically qualify; they will be allowed to access the trail with the wheelchair. There are individuals who may not be able to walk a mile or more who would also not want to be in a wheelchair. What options are available for them?

Chuck Frayer discussed the trail to the Benson Footbridge at Multnomah Falls. It is a very difficult trail for someone in a wheelchair. However, changing the trail would destroy the experience. He noted that many apparently healthy adults begin climbing the trail and return quickly, noting that they could not make it up the steep trail. An option is to provide another way to experience the site, such as a video. Another option is to have assistance provided on 48-hour notice (this might be applicable for a presentation, where a signer might be provided for someone who is hearing impaired).

It was suggested that a device (ex., motorized cart) that meets the definition of wheelchair might be provided for special events or with adequate notice. Chuck said that companies might donate use of such advice; he had this experience when he wanted to test some devices on several facilities. In the future, when the building is constructed at the West Trailhead, it might be possible to purchase and store a device. Jerry Igo suggested that a pedal powered rickshaw might also fit the policy and be helpful to elderly or others lacking stamina.

Julie was concerned because this was once a highway with no restrictions and now it is a trail with restrictions. There needs to be better communication of this change.

Bill asked about electric golf carts as a means of reaching these areas. Horses were also mentioned as another option. Jack reminded the AC that the agreement with the donor included restrictions to motorized vehicles. The CRGNSA Management Plan states that there will be no horse use on the HCRH. The Management Plan would need to be amended before horses or horse-drawn vehicles could access this section. For horses, the AC will not propose any action to entertain an application for a commercial use permit for horse-drawn wagons or carriages until such time as the Scenic Area Management Plan is amended. The issue of horse use could be considered by the Gorge Commission during the Scenic Area Management Plan update. Carolyn stated the highway was not built for use by horses, but 1920-era cars.

Chuck asked "What is the frequency of the problem?". How often do these unusual situations occur? The draft policy is a good start.

James Hamrick asked about closure of the area; has the Advisory Committee agreed to winter closures during potential rockfall hazard times? Since there will be a full time ranger-caretaker at the center year round, the area would be open. Weather closures will be determined based on site conditions, as determined by OPRD staff. Carolyn Wood thought that the Committee discussed winter closures as likely, but that no definite decision to close had been made.

Julie Curtis asked if commercial users need permits. Jack stated there would be either a one or two year permit available for non-exclusive uses. Exclusive use permits require a public review process. There will also be a day use fee. Sam Wilkins asked about commercial film companies using vehicles on the site. This will not be allowed, but film companies could use the area without vehicles.

Jack would like the AC to take their draft copies, make any changes and send comments back to him as soon as possible. Jack will plan a special workshop meeting, with public testimony, before completing the final policy. Chuck suggested that we consider what would happen if taken to court? Are you meeting the intent of the law? How are you informing the public? The decision process needs to be well documented to withstand potential legal challenges. The public input process will include public meetings, probably in both Hood River and Portland, probably in the evening. Jack Wiles will send the draft document to interested parties and invite them to the public meetings. The draft will then be revised and brought back to the next Advisory Committee meeting for potential adoption.

RESIGNATION OF AC MEMBER

A resignation letter dated August 7th was sent by Lewis McArthur, to Governor Kitzhaber and read to the AC by Bill Pattison (attached). Julie Curtis suggested a dinner to honor Lewis for his many years on the committee. Carolyn Wood suggested inviting past Advisory Committee members and presenting him with the typical framed resolution and HCRH photo. Rick and Bill will extend the invitation to Lewis. James also volunteered to help.

Jeanette will prepare a certificate and order an appropriate photo. Jeanette stated that the Governor's office is accepting applications until September 20 to fill the position. Applicants must live in Multnomah County.

PROJECT UPDATES

HOOD RIVER TO MOSIER UPDATE

PHASE 1

Phase 1 of this project is almost done. The crosswalk is finished and the telephone is in. The water source for the project is still being developed. The State Park engineer working on the project has left OPRD, so a consultant will finish the design work. City water is still the preferred source.

PHASE 2 & 3

The deadline for Phase 2 and 3 Plans, Specifications and Estimates is Friday, September 12 for September obligation of funds. Bid opening is scheduled for October 23rd.

Since the last June meeting, the consultant designing the rockfall catchment has changed. The plans developed by the previous consultant were reviewed by a representative of Associated Contractors; he concluded that they were not constructable. That led to the decision to use another consultant to complete the work. The design parameters agreed to by the Advisory Committee were given to the new contractor as requirements.

Jeanette distributed a priority listing for funding. There is enough funding at this time to construct the rockfall catchment and associated fencing and gates, construct and pave the parking lot at the West Trailhead and to fence the overlook. If bid prices permit or additional funding becomes available, additional pieces of Phase 3 will be completed.

A dark gray coloring agent will be included in the concrete of the 700' catchment so the color will remain consistent.

Bill asked about the progress with Hood River County and the shooting range. Charlie has been working with Jim Lyons, Hood River County Road Master. The material source agreement states that rock will be provided within five miles of the East Pit, but Hood River County does not need rock that far north. Charlie has worked with County staff and believes there is agreement on this year's required 20,000 cubic yards of pit run rock material at site near Dee. Charlie is working with the Forest Service on four or five potential sites up Pine Martin Road.

Kim Titus, District Ranger is helping with another agreement for a pit on Forest Road 17. There is 40,000 cubic yards of rock involved that could be jointly used between ODOT and Hood River County. Negotiations look promising.

Nothing is happening at this time with the shooting range. The quarry at MP 12.9 on Highway 35 is in joint ownership. ODOT has not received a response from Sheriff Wampler. A Memorandum of Agreement would need to be written to allow the shooting range at this site. Bill Pattison will arrange a meeting with Charlie Sciscione, Jim Azumano and Sheriff Wampler. Sam Wilkins noted that Wasco County has an indoor shooting range in The Dalles.

MULTNOMAH CREEK AND WALL

Department of Fish & Wildlife issued a permit for ODOT to dredge Multnomah Creek from Benson Lake to lower Plunge Pool. This project was done with a fish enhancement permit. Gravel accumulation in the creekbed will be monitored. The permit allows future cleaning when needed. This multi-year permit is a long-term solution to this problem.

CONCRETE GUTTERS

Cascade Locks Maintenance crews have not had the time to work on the gutters due to a heavy workload on I-84. They will do a small scale clean out of the gutters to see if that may help solve the problem. Raising the gutters to the current pavement level has been proposed for Forest Highway funding. This is the second priority proposal. The first priority is construction of the HCRH Enhancements (Angel's Rest Trailhead, Angel's Rest Overflow, West Oneonta and Elowah Falls Trailhead). The third priority for Forest Highway funds is paving the gravel access from I-84 exit 40 to the Toothrock Trailhead.

MOFFETT CREEK TO TANNER CREEK

The bridge crew is working on stripping the rails for the Tanner Creek restoration project. The job is 3/4 complete.

Richard Fix is working on the forms for the replacement spindles for Moffett Creek Bridge railing. Three hundred spindles are needed for the project. This will probably not be completed this year, but they should be ready to begin installation next Spring.

The plans for the switchback are completed and ready. Lack of a federal Transportation Appropriation for next Federal Fiscal year is making future actions uncertain. (Update: this project is scheduled to go to bid on October 23, 1997.)

EAGLE CREEK TO CASCADE LOCKS

Bid opening for this project is today, September 9. No lighting in the I-84 undercrossing tunnel is planned at this time but conduits will be put in place for future use. (Update: Bids were considerably over the engineers estimate and all bids were rejected. Agencies will need to meet to decide if costs can be reduced or additional funds can be found.)

ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

Funds previously available for the Enhancement project has been transferred to the Eagle Creek to Cascade Locks project. Therefore, the Enhancements have been submitted as the first priority for the CRGNSA for future funding.

INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

The pre-construction date for the Interpretive signs will be in the near future. There are 27 signs to be installed and work should be completed by next Spring by Coral Construction.

SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR

The Scenic Byway Corridor pamphlets have been distributed through out Oregon.

National Scenic Byway nominations are due by December 15. A draft nomination for the HCRH will be distributed and discussed at the next meeting.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Bob Hadlow is working on a National Historic Landmark designation. He hopes to have the document drafted and ready for review and discussion by November. If you have suggestions for the proposed outline (attached), please contact him.

ACTIVITY STATUS REPORTS:

ODOT

Charlie Sciscione, District 2C reported a culvert failure at MP 3 near the Stark Street Bridge that caused a bump on the HCRH. Steel plates have been placed until the culvert can be cleaned.

I-84 at MP 31.9 east of Multnomah Falls had a slope failure. The clean up work was estimated at \$700,000. The work was done for \$380,000.

Perham Creek west of Hood River (I-84 MP 57.5) had a culvert failure which caused a sinkhole on the freeway. The culvert has been underwater most of the year. A cofferdam has been installed at the outfall to allow access to clean the culvert.

Dry Creek, on the east side of Cascade Locks, has a culvert failure. A permit will be needed to dredge the area to clear the culvert and prevent flooding of homes nearby.

Richard Fix, District 2C Master Mason, will be working at Latourell Falls and Vista House during the next two months.

Sam Wilkins, District 9, reported that crews are rebuilding the shoulder from Mosier to Rowena. The mediation sessions regarding the Mosier Pit resulted in a proposed agreement. However, the Mosier City Council has rejected the proposal.

The connection of the HCRH and I-84 at the Chenoweth Interchange should be completed by next month.

Funding for the guardrail is needed in order to close the old pit used as a shooting range near the Chenoweth Interchange. Once the guardrail is installed a berm will be built and planted. Carolyn Wood asked if a “no shooting” sign could be posted right away but Sam reported this could not be done without a physical barrier first.

John Lundell asked about the Chenoweth Bridge railing work. Sam reported work would be started after the Discovery Center at The Dalles closed for the winter, however, the Center will only be closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years according to Carolyn Wood.

Shogren-Rowena, Phase 1 (I-84) is under construction and Shogren-Rowena, Phase 2 is beginning design.

GORGE COMMISSION

Due to funding, Brian Litt, representative of the Gorge Commission, will no longer be attending HCRH AC meetings. He will keep in touch through the HCRH minutes and contact Jeanette with information and questions.

FOREST SERVICE

Tom Turck reported that East Pit restoration will begin with some plantings in November. Mr. Bryant has signed an option regarding the Bryant Assemblage but this is not necessarily the completion of this deal. Charlie Sciscione stated relocation of the rock from the quarry is being worked on by Rick Reeves, Region 1 Right of Way. (Update: The acquisition has been completed.)

The Urban Area boundaries are being reviewed at this time within the Scenic Area.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS:

A development review for a change of use to a Bed & Breakfast has been received. Viewpoint Inn, at the junction of Larch Mountain Road, has been purchased and will be re-opened again as a restaurant and overnight facility. The facility will be used as an education facility for people with developmental disabilities.

James Hamrick stated that the Inn was listed in the National Register and he will comment separately on the review.

MEMBERS ISSUES:

Mike Bridges, City Manager of Cascade Locks, was introduced to the AC. Mike is very interested in the work of the AC and hopes to attend meetings regularly.

John Lundell mentioned that he noticed that some guardrail and cyclone fencing was falling down at the east end of Mitchell Point at the HCRH level. Charlie said he would have someone check the area.

Carolyn Wood asked about the closure of Starvation Creek and Kolberg Rest Areas. Jack said they are closed due to a problem with the drain field and it will be a while before they are re-opened.

Carolyn asked about MP 4.1 Dabney rockfall mitigation work. Charlie reported that the area will be covered with a screen to protect the highway from rockfall but the work can not resume until the tourist season is past and the Osprey have finished nesting. The work should start soon and could be finished this winter or it may take another year.

HAER drawings are on display at the Maryhill Museum from September to November of 1997. If anyone has any other ideas on where this display might be used, call Bob Hadlow, 503-731-8239.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION:

The next meeting will be Thursday, November 13, at Wood Village City Hall. **This meeting is expected to start at 1:00 PM rather than the usual 10:00 AM.**

Attachments:

- Draft Access Policy
- Lewis L. McArthur Resignation Letter
- HCRH National Historic Landmark Outline

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