

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 20, 2013

Agenda Item: 10a

Information

Topic: Wallowa Moraines Partnership

Presented by: Wallowa County Commission, Wallowa Land Trust, Wallowa Resources

Background:

In the Commission's Jan. 26, 2011 meeting, Wallowa County, Wallowa Resources, and Wallowa Land Trust presented an opportunity to form a partnership for protection of the moraines surrounding Wallowa Lake. As owner and/or manager of the adjacent Iwetemlaykin State Heritage Site and Wallowa Lake State Park, the Commission expressed mutual interest and approved entering into a collaborative partnership with the three entities to protect the moraines with an initial focus on the East Moraine. A partnership agreement was signed among the partners outlining roles, responsibilities and a timeline.

OPRD has been meeting quarterly with the partners, working in collaboration to complete a landscape assessment of East Moraine, establishing relationships with landowners, and developing funding strategies. The partners are providing to the Commission an update of accomplishments to date and activities anticipated occurring in the near future.

Prior Action by Commission: Jan. 26, 2011, the Commission approved entering into a collaborative partnership with Wallowa County, Wallowa Resources, Wallowa Land Trust to protect the Wallowa Lake Moraines.

Action Requested: None

Attachments: None

Prepared by: Jim Morgan

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 20, 2013

Agenda Item: 10b

Information

Topic: Willamette River Greenway

Presented by: Dennis Wiley

Background: Initiated by the legislature on behalf of Governor Tom McCall the Willamette River Greenway began in 1967 as a “big idea” of creating a continuous parkway of green space the length of the Willamette River. The 1967 Legislature passed House Bill 1770, the Willamette River Park Systems Act; this state grant program was made available to local governments to acquire lands along the river to be used as natural area and parks. The Willamette River Park System, administered by ODOT through its State Parks Division, lasted six years with very little success. Local governments had a difficult time providing the matching funds needed for a successful grant application. To help augment the apparently ineffective local grant program, ODOT proceeded to buy lands along the river to add to the River Park System. ODOT threatened the use of condemnation and actually condemned at least one parcel of land for the program, raising public concern about the effort.

In 1973, the Willamette River Greenway Act replaced the original legislation and placed restrictions on what lands ODOT could acquire. It also required a Greenway Plan to be developed, which was never completed. In December 1975, the Land Conservation and Development Commission adopted Goal 15 that integrated greenway planning into local comprehensive planning intended to control how development happened along the river. This effectively changed the program from one of acquisition towards local zoning regulation. In the end, State Parks retained broad authority for acquiring lands both in and out of local “greenway” zones.

Today, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department’s (OPRD) Willamette Greenway park lands encompass 90 parcels and 5 state parks totaling nearly 9,000 acres. Parcels range in size from less than an acre to many hundreds. Many of the parcels have no upland access and can be only approached by water. These park lands serve as the backbone of the Willamette Water Trail, recently designated a National Water Trail. In addition, the lands provide low-key dispersed recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. The park lands provide vital habitat for native fish and wildlife.

In 2004, a Willamette River Greenway Parklands Strategy Task Force was assembled to review the status of the Greenway and make recommendations to the Department on how to revitalize the program. Strategies included expanding partnerships to leverage resources for recreation and

natural resource restoration, development of a water trail system and adding key parcels based on OPRD's acquisition priority and evaluation process.

Current Initiatives:

Beginning in 1997, with the ESA listing of Willamette Spring Chinook and Winter Steelhead, Governor Kitzhaber established the Willamette Restoration Initiative, emphasizing the development of a conservation and restoration strategy for the Willamette River. OPRD Willamette Greenway properties provided and continue to offer opportunities to play a major role in this effort.

More recently, a number of programs with funding streams have been developed to carry the Willamette Restoration Initiative forward.

Listed below are current 2013-15 funding sources for acquisition and restoration work targeted for Willamette River properties:

- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Willamette Special Investment Partnership (WSIP) - **\$2,000,000**
- Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT) Willamette River Initiative (WRI) - **\$1,300,000**
- Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Willamette BiOp - **\$1,600,000**
- BPA/ODFW Wildlife Mitigation- **\$1,200,000**

These significant funding opportunities have raised the awareness of our Willamette Greenway properties amongst numerous conservation organizations up and down the river. We are currently in early and frequent discussions on partnership opportunities with nearly a dozen organizations, working with others under the guidance of OPRD's Land Acquisition and Exchange Policy.

Prior Action by Commission: None

Action Requested: None

Prepared by: Dennis Wiley