



Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

3. Statewide Issues Category Summary

"OTHER FUNDING ISSUE" CATEGORIES

Issue Category	Comments Collected
A. Need For Basic Recreational Services/Facilities	41
B. Need For Camping Facilities	18
C. Need For Additional OHV Facilities *	17
D. Need For Water-Based Recreational Facilities	17
E. Need For Winter Recreation Facilities	13
F. Emerging Recreational Resources/Facilities	11
G. Need For Swimming Pool Facilities	8
H. Need For Shooting Facilities	5
I. Need For ADA Accessibility of Resources/Facilities	4
J. Need For Day-Use Facilities	4
K. Need For Primitive-Setting Resources/Facilities	2

* OHV trail & facility projects are not eligible for LWCF funding.

"GENERAL ISSUE" CATEGORIES

Issue Category	Comments Collected
L. Recreational Planning/Technical Assistance	41
M. Tourism/Economic Development	30
N. LWCF Grant Process	24
O. Recreation Funding/User Fees	22
P. Resource Protection/Environmental Education	21
Q. Law Enforcement/Safety	20
R. Facility Maintenance	14
S. Interagency Coordination/Cooperation	10
T. Loss of Access to Recreation Lands	8
U. Land Use Regulations	6
V. Recreational Programming	2
W. Historic Preservation	1

Other Funding Issue Categories

A. Need for Basic Recreational Services/Facilities (41 Comments)

There is a strong need for additional team sports facilities such as soccer, baseball and softball fields, basketball and volleyball courts and support facilities such as restrooms, shelters, lights, parking and spectator seating. Recreation providers and the general public report that existing team sport facilities are in short supply and high demand. Existing facilities are being overused, especially in areas lacking regional facilities typically provided by Special Recreation Districts. Whenever possible, these facilities should be designed to accommodate all-weather use (of particular importance in high-rain areas of the state).

Additional team sport facilities would help satisfy the need for:

- a growing Hispanic youth population (of particular importance in non-metropolitan area of the state),
- at-risk-youth in dire need of rewarding recreational experiences, and
- affordable, close-to-home recreational opportunities for low-income youth.

In addition, there is a shortage of playground areas designed to satisfy the needs of pre-school age children. Currently, schools are providing facilities for school-age children, but not for these younger age children.

Finally, recreation providers report a shortage of recreational facilities satisfying the needs of a growing elderly population.

B. Need for Camping Facilities (18 Comments)

According to workshop participants, there is a shortage of a wide range of camping facilities/opportunities throughout the state.

Specific shortages include:

- RV and tent campsites in established campgrounds,
- high amenity facilities such as cabins and yurts (and support facilities such as restrooms, water and electricity) to better serve the elderly and disabled populations,
- combined camping and day-use areas to serve family reunions and a growing Hispanic population,
- group camping areas,
- semi-primitive motorized (car & tent) camping opportunities,
- semi-primitive campgrounds for hikers, bikers and river users (canoeists and kayakers) and other alternative camping facilities, and
- overflow camping areas for use during the peak-visitation season.

In addition, there is a shortage of RV dump stations throughout the state. Wherever possible, campgrounds and roadside rest areas should include an RV dump station.

C. Need for Additional OHV Facilities (17 Comments)

Although OHV riding continues to grow in Oregon, riding areas on Federal lands continue to be closed as a result of resource concerns. Recreation providers report that cross-country OHV travel is damaging the state's natural resource base. As existing Federal lands are closed, similar problems will increase on adjacent private lands. The state needs to take a proactive approach by creating more designated OHV riding areas in the state.

Needed OHV facilities and services include:

- OHV trail riding areas (ATV, motorcycle and 4X4) including trails, parking areas, restrooms, tow vehicles, camping facilities, communication links to emergency services and law enforcement,
- OHV parks in reasonably close proximity to metropolitan areas, and
- designated motocross and challenge courses for motorcycles, ATV's, 4-wheel drive vehicles, mud bogging and truck pulling.

There is a concern that such riding areas be thoroughly separated from hikers, kayakers, campers, cyclists and other human-powered users of public lands and that environmental impacts be closely monitored.

Finally, existing trails need to be brought up to a level of standard that minimizes user damage and provides year-round riding opportunities, especially in high-rain areas along the coast.

D. Need for Water-Based Recreation Resources and Facilities (17 Comments)

There is a need for increased access for motorized and non-motorized water-based recreational activities in both urban and remote settings. Acquisition must occur to counter property owners excluding public access to their shores. This is especially important in rapidly growing areas of the state.

Additional resources/facilities include:

- boating and angling opportunities near residential areas,
- motorized boat ramps and camping facilities (RV and tent sites),
- non-motorized boating facilities for canoes, kayaks and drift boats.

E. Need for Winter Recreation Facilities (13 Comments)

There is a need for increased access to winter recreation areas to take advantage of the great natural resource base that exists in the mountain regions of the state.

Additional resources/facilities include:

- access roads,
- snowparks,
- a commitment to plowing of access roads and snowparks,
- snowmobile trails,
- cross-country ski trails,
- trail support facilities such as trailheads, parking, restrooms, and
- trailside warming huts to create a hut-to-hut trail system.

A need was expressed to provide separate facilities for cross-country skiing and motorized trail users due to user conflict and safety concerns.

F. Emerging Recreational Resources/Facilities (11 Comments)

Recreation providers, user groups and the general public identified a number of new emerging sports activities in the state requiring additional resources and facilities.

Needed resources/facilities include:

- climbing walls,
- acquisition and protection of potential rock climbing areas,
- large areas of undeveloped hikeable/runnable forest and fields for orienteering. The more advanced courses (e.g., cross-country map and compass racing) require cross-country navigation (no trails are necessary and in fact make navigation too easy),
- identify and acquire potential kite boarding areas along the Columbia River (kite boarders require separate sites from wind surfers due to safety concerns),
- new non-traditional extreme sports parks,
- skate parks and BMX areas, and
- disc golf courses.

In addition, there is a reported need for additional dog parks (off-leash dog areas) in urban areas, state parks and dispersed recreational areas in the state. Dog parks would help alleviate problems such as dog fights, dog refuse, negative encounters with people and impacts on wildlife– all associated with an increasing dog population in the state.

G. Need for Swimming Pool Facilities (8 Comments)

Recreation providers report a need for additional indoor swimming pools in the western portion of the state. Indoor pools provide recreation and education opportunities for people in all age groups and help to satisfy fitness and health needs (e.g., childhood obesity). Although swimming pools are very costly, they are often the center of community recreation facilities with links to other dry land facilities. Whenever possible, swimming pools should be part of a full service Community Center.

In Eastern Oregon, there are a number of aging outdoor swimming facilities in need of major rehabilitation or timely removal and replacement. A plan is needed for demolition and building of new facilities. The plan should minimize the service gap occurring between pool removal and construction.

H. Need for Shooting Facilities (5 Comments)

There is a need for land acquisition and development of target shooting areas in close proximity to metropolitan areas and smaller communities throughout the state. Specific facilities include rifle/pistol, shotgun and archery ranges, and paintball areas.

I. Need for ADA Accessibility of Resources/Facilities (4 Comments)

There is a need to retrofit existing facilities for ADA accessibility. We should consider developing a comprehensive approach to establish accessibility consistency across the state. In addition, there is a need to consider/adopt consistent signing to provide information about trail accessibility.

J. Need for Day-Use Facilities (4 Comments)

There is a need for large group picnic shelters, picnic tables and day-use restroom facilities.

K. Need for Primitive-Setting Resources/Facilities (2 Comments)

There is a need for increased access to remote recreation areas (natural/primitive) within mountainous regions of the state. Specific types of development include high mountain primitive camping sites (Adirondack, etc.), day-use access and trails/trailheads, interpretive/educational facilities, natural areas (including areas supporting biodiversity) and access roads.

In addition, there is a need for more "primitive setting" recreation areas in close proximity to population centers. Appropriate facility development would include interpretive and loop trails.

General Issue Categories

L. Need For Recreational Planning and Technical Assistance (41 Comments)

There is a strong need for funding comprehensive recreational planning at the local, regional and state levels. Grant dollars should be made available for site-specific master planning and systems master planning for parks and open space.

There is also a need for more:

- integration of SCORP findings into local planning efforts,
- focused recreational planning to address the needs of specific issues and the special needs of recreational user groups, and
- development of management plans for recreation facilities.

Across the state, recreation providers report a need for funding coordinated regional outdoor recreation planning. Such planning would assist in the development of a seamless system of recreation service which promotes interagency and public-sector cooperation and coordination. Currently, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and METRO conduct some interagency planning, but much more is needed.

Benefits associated with regional planning include:

- greater opportunity for partnerships between recreation providers,
- increased communication between area recreation providers involving acquisition and development of parks and open spaces,
- sharing of valuable planning and design expertise, and
- an opportunity for use of progressive engineering and design practices (e.g., quality design practices and use of water conservation techniques, etc.).

Existing recreation facilities in high-growth areas of the state (e.g., Bend) are reaching carrying capacity limits. There is a need to redistribute demand through additional facilities or a unified regional reservation/information use system. This system should be a one-stop location, with multi-agency capacity.

Finally, recreation planners need to find ways to better manage for an increasingly diverse set of user groups. This includes a growing Hispanic population, those participating in new recreational activities and those using a number of new recreational products. Planners need to better address conflicts between hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers on multi-use trail systems. The challenge is to minimize user conflict, while satisfying the needs of the recreating public.

M. Tourism/Economic Development (30 Comments)

Several regions have reported a strong desire to develop recreation-based tourism as a regional economic development strategy. A key component of this effort is to better market existing recreational resources and facilities to the recreating public. One possibility is to develop a one-stop statewide internet website containing information about available recreational areas and opportunities (including descriptions and downloadable maps). Standardized reporting forms could be used to collect consistent information from recreation providers across the state. The site could be arranged by SCORP planning region, allowing the visitor to click down to specific geographic areas and sites within the region.

A second component of the statewide effort would involve improvements to the state's highway system to provide the necessary infrastructure for tourism development. Suggested improvements include:

- additional day use/public restrooms along highway corridors (e.g., along the Hwy 140 corridor),
- facilities for travelers to feed and water their horses along Interstate 5,
- roads designed for Recreation Vehicles and safe bicycle use,
- increased funds for improvement of regional Scenic Byways, and
- better directional signing on highways providing access to recreational opportunities (signing will promote the use of existing recreational facilities).

A third component is a need for an interagency effort to provide additional interpretive facilities (signage and kiosks). The interpretive effort should be related to historical and environmental themes and provide directional information.

Finally, there is a need to promote regional group events such as bike tours (e.g., Cycle Oregon), snowmobile festivals and interpretive events. Regional events should provide recreational opportunities for people of all ages and skill levels. Such events can help to encourage the use of existing recreational resources and facilities.

N. LWCF Grant Process (24 Comments)

There is a need to provide better guidance for recreation providers in the LWCF application process and to streamline the application process. An effort is needed to simplify the OPRD grant application forms because small communities lack the expertise and staff to effectively complete and compete in the grant application process.

OPRD should consider developing a short pre-application for screening projects. This pre-qualification process could be used to make sure that applicants are meeting the basic requirements of the grant proposal process. In addition, final presentations should be made by a short list of superior grant applicants. This will reduce the amount of work that applicants put into the application process, especially if their proposal has little or no chance of being funded. The state should store basic application information to allow for ease of reapplication in upcoming funding cycles. The state should also carry unfunded projects to the next year's application process as done in the Marine Board Grant Program.

Funding priority should be given to joint projects involving the participation of multiple organizations/agencies. We want to encourage more partnerships (public/private and public/public) in recreational service provision. Such partnerships result in greater funding, maintenance and operation efficiency.

Additional comments include:

- the rule allowing only one application per city during a LWCF funding cycle negatively affects the distribution of grant dollars by population density,
- there is a bias towards communities who are committed to funding recreational facilities. We need to invest in those areas deficient in or lacking recreational opportunities,
- the 50% match required for LWCF grants should be reduced to allow rural areas to better access funding,
- the stateside portion of the LWCF allocation should be increased over the federal portion to be in proportion to facilities/services provided, and
- a percentage of LWCF funds should be earmarked for acquiring high-value properties with high natural resource value such as wilderness areas and wild and scenic river segments.

O. RECREATIONAL FUNDING/USER FEES (22 Comments)

Municipal recreation providers continue to face a shortage of operation funding for outdoor recreation facilities within the state. There is a need for additional funding for park development and general maintenance of recreational resources and facilities within the state. Most municipalities do not dedicate specific dollars for park operation. Park and Recreation Departments have a difficult time completing with law enforcement, fire protection, libraries, education and a myriad of other demands for local general fund revenue. Such problems are exacerbated in communities suffering from difficult economic conditions.

Municipal providers are also responsible for providing additional "social services" which dilute recreation funding. As a result, we need to be able to reinforce the complementary nature of park and recreation and school partnerships. Park and recreation departments are picking up after-school athletics and arts programs—often using school facilities. We need to strengthen the position of both players.

Finally, there is a need for better information/direction regarding the use of recreational use fees within the state. Better coordination is needed for the collection of day-use fees between recreation providers across the state (e.g., OPRD, USFS, BLM and Counties). A plan should be developed to identify where fees are appropriate, the influence of fees on visitor behavior and the best methods of implementing a fee program. Considerable care must be used in implementing user fees. We need to insure that low-income residents are not priced out of local recreational opportunities.

P. RESOURCE PROTECTION/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (21 Comments)

A greater emphasis should be made, especially in metropolitan areas, to strike a balance between protecting natural resources and providing outdoor recreational opportunities. There is an inherent conflict between providing adequate natural resource buffer areas and providing public access to these resource areas. Statewide or regional task forces should be established for information sharing to identify what works and doesn't work regarding resource protection and environmental education techniques. A good example is METRO's effort towards developing a guide for trail planners, constructors, and maintainers.

In addition, there is a need to develop educational programming to encourage responsible recreation behavior, especially in sensitive ecosystem types such as forested recreational areas and tidal pools. Additional visitor centers, kiosks, sign structures and waysides are needed to get information out to the recreating public.

Finally, an increased effort is needed to stop the spread of noxious weeds by recreational vehicles. There is a need to enforce regulations designed to keep recreational vehicles on established roads and in campground areas. The public is prone to injury from weeds such as puncture vine, goats head, knapweed and star thistle. In addition, cattle and deer will not walk through areas overgrown with such weeds.

Q. LAW ENFORCEMENT/SAFETY (20 Comments)

There is a need to address growing public safety concerns in recreational areas throughout the state. A large portion of the recreating public has become fearful, as a result of an increase in dangerous confrontations on recreation lands. Recreational providers report an increase in illegal activities such as vandalism, illegal dumping, drug production and use, larceny, assault and gang activities on recreation lands.

There is a strong need to develop statewide and regional strategies for addressing such safety concerns. A key strategy would involve the creation of a designated fund for Federal, State and local agencies dedicated to law enforcement on recreation land. The fund could be used to acquire dedicated personnel

or enforcement time from Sheriff's Departments. We need to emphasize that law enforcement personnel require specialized training for handling the range of violations occurring on recreational land. In addition, more aerial patrols should be used to allow coverage of larger areas of land and direct land personnel to where problems exist.

Special enforcement problems are occurring in urban interface areas in metropolitan areas across the state. There is a growing problem with recreationists trespassing on private property within the urban interface areas due to the highly fragmented nature of public lands. Potential solutions include establishing designated road routes, defined pathways/trails, improved road and trail signage, fencing, and the creation and distribution of recreational maps. In addition, there are safety and noise concerns associated with shooting of firearms, vandalism, bonfires and partying.

Finally, there is a need for safe, long-distance roadside bicycling opportunities throughout the state. Existing highway shoulders are too narrow for safe riding. Large groups of cyclists often block traffic and create conflicts with motorists and truckers. For safety purposes, it would be preferable to separate the trail from the roadway. At a minimum, all roads shown on the Oregon Bicycling Guide (published by ODOT, 8/99) should have an adequate paved shoulder (2 to 3 feet) for bicycles. For riding safety, the shoulder should be asphalt rather than chip seal.

R. FACILITY MAINTENANCE (14 Comments)

There is an urgent need for increased general maintenance funding as a result of a lack of available labor and deteriorating maintenance equipment across the state. Maintenance staff are severely overworked. Volunteer groups are being used as much as possible. This situation is compounded by budget cuts and ever-increasing visitor use. Providers stress that it is more cost effective to invest in regular preventative maintenance than to wait until these facilities require major rehabilitation. Deferring maintenance is a very expensive management strategy.

Besides the need for additional funding, recreation providers must take a more regional approach to park maintenance and operation. There is a need for sharing of operation and maintenance personnel and equipment through a unified regional management system. Such an effort would require a separate management structure to succeed. But, caution is advised since each agency is mandated to serve a specific portion of the population for a specific purpose. If people can see an agency is able to better leverage service to their customers for less cost and in a manner consistent to the mission of the organization, then great. But often agency missions are not the same or on parallel tracks.

S. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION/COOPERATION (10 Comments)

Recreation providers report a need for more interagency coordination and cooperation in the following areas:

- training, maintenance, and recreational planning,
- information regarding available outdoor recreation opportunities (e.g., multi-provider brochures, maps, etc.),
- planning for recreational development projects,
- maintenance planning,
- environmental education and service projects, and
- basic communication and information sharing between recreation providers.

T. LOSS OF ACCESS TO RECREATION LANDS (8 Comments)

There is a growing trend towards the loss of access to public and private recreation lands in the state due to private property conflicts/disputes. Access roads and trails through private property are being gated and closed to public access. An effort is needed to identify critical access problems and acquire necessary properties, recreational easements, and partnerships with private landholders. In addition, more law enforcement partnerships are needed to reduce levels of drug use, vandalism and illegal dumping (cars, appliances, garbage, etc.) in recreation areas—especially in urban interface areas.

In eastern Oregon, ranches are being bought up and closed to public access, effectively denying access to recreation lands surrounded by private landholdings. A suggestion was made to use Federal Revised Statue 2477 (Historic Transportation Routes) to keep historic roads and trails in public road status. It was reported that some counties were avoiding their responsibility of maintaining public access to public lands.

U. LAND USE REGULATIONS (6 Comments)

Recreation providers often encounter difficulties in finding adequate supplies of available, affordable and developable land for recreational use. In part, this problem exists as a result of state land use laws. In particular, the availability of land for urban recreation facilities is affected by statewide land use goals that effectively prohibit the development of such facilities outside of urban growth boundaries (UGB). There is a need for local zoning codes to acknowledge the presence and compatibility of parkland on agricultural and forest lands outside the UGB.

In addition, an effort should be made to make the land use application process for zoning and complying with requirements of the Division of State Lands and the Land Conservation and Development Commission easier and faster.

V. RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING (2 Comments)

There is a need for affordable after school/summer programs for low-wage earners and their families.

W. HISTORIC PRESERVATION (1 Comment)

There is a need for additional investment in historic preservation. This effort should include property identification, acquisition and preservation of historic resources.

For additional information about the SCORP planning process, please visit our website at <http://www.prd.state.or.us/scorp.php> or contact Terry Bergerson at OPRD, 1115 Commercial Street, Salem, Oregon 97301-1002, (P) 503-378-4168 X 305, (F) 503-378-6447 or (E) at terry.bergerson@state.or.us