



# **OREGON STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN**

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## **STATEWIDE ISSUE A:**

### **NEED FOR MAJOR REHABILITATION OF EXISTING OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

Recreation providers consistently report that the current recreational infrastructure in Oregon (e.g., utilities, roads, trails and buildings) is aging and in need of rehabilitation. They have asked for standards for design life to be able to consistently determine statewide and regional budget needs associated with rehabilitation. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) has been asked to consider reducing the grant applicant match (currently 50%) for rehabilitation projects to provide an incentive for recreation providers to catch up on the current rehabilitation backlog.

#### **Goal:**

Substantially reduce the backlog of outdoor recreation areas and facilities in the state in need of major rehabilitation.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1:**

Provide funding incentives, to the maximum extent possible, for major rehabilitation of existing recreational facilities in the state.

##### **Strategies For Addressing Objective #1**

1. Consider providing additional scoring points for Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant requests for major rehabilitation projects.
2. Consider providing additional scoring points for Local Grant Program grant requests for major rehabilitation projects.
3. OPRD, Oregon Recreation and Parks Association, Special Districts Association of Oregon, and the Oregon Parks Association can use SCORP results to make a case for additional funding for major rehabilitation for provider budgets.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2:**

Focus rehabilitation priorities on recreational areas and facilities that satisfy current recreational need and ensure long-term facility performance.

##### **Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #2**

1. Each public-sector recreation provider in the state should assess the long-term relevance of each recreation area and facility reported as "in need of major rehabilitation" during the SCORP reporting process.
  - If the recreation area/facility is no longer relevant—a change in recreational use should be identified (e.g., removal of obsolete facility and replacement with currently needed facilities).
  - If the recreation area/facility is needed—it should be rehabilitated to ensure long-term compliance with health, safety and building codes.

- Evaluate whether a facility continues to fit within the "niche" of opportunities a specific region or area is providing. Niche definition is formulated through fitting the facilities into places where no important natural or cultural resources would be significantly impacted, ensuring the facilities are consistent with the values the public feels for an area and using a process including public feedback.
2. Once a recreation area/facility has undergone major rehabilitation, the provider should put a priority on maintaining the facility at a level that will ensure that the area/facility does not slip back into needing major rehabilitation.
  3. Public-sector recreation providers in the state should work with local zoning officials to ensure that provisions for major rehabilitation of existing park areas and facilities are in place to expedite the permitting process for such projects (so that such projects are not subjected to the same permitting requirements as new park development).

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Measure the effectiveness of the state's effort to substantially reduce the backlog of outdoor recreation areas and facilities in need of major rehabilitation.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #3**

1. As a part of the 2003-2007 SCORP planning effort, OPRD established a 2002 baseline measurement of how much major rehabilitation of recreation areas and facilities is needed in the state.
2. In future SCORP plans, OPRD will use the major rehabilitation measurement methodology included in the 2003-2007 SCORP to measure the need for major recreation of existing recreation areas and facilities in the state across time. Comparisons will be made to evaluate progress towards achieving the major rehabilitation goal.

**STATEWIDE ISSUE B:**

**NEED FOR RECREATIONAL TRAILS/TRAIL CONNECTIVITY**

Recreation providers expressed a strong desire for the state to update the existing Statewide Trails Plan. They wanted the plan to examine use of all types of trails (motorized and non-motorized) and include the participation of state, federal, county and municipal providers and advocacy groups. They also asked that the plan address the statewide need for walking, hiking, biking and equestrian multiple-use trails. They felt priority should be given to completing necessary planning, design and development of local, regional and federal trail systems.

The concept of trail connectivity was supported throughout the state. Trail connectivity involves:

- linking urban trails to outlying trail systems, including Federal lands,
- linking neighborhood, community and regional trails,
- connecting community parks and other recreational and public facilities, and
- connecting neighboring communities (e.g., Ashland to Medford).

Toward this end, providers felt that priority should be given to projects linking local, regional, and federal trail systems and projects connecting communities (e.g., Ashland to Medford).

They also felt that with increasing connectivity, there is a greater need for directional signage.

Recreation providers felt the trails plan should also address the need to develop canoe and kayak routes (water trails) throughout the state. Existing water resources offer a potential to develop high-quality routes to satisfy a growing demand for paddling sports. Necessary resources/facilities include:

- water access sites,
- overnight camping facilities, and
- directional signage.

Providers added that maps, brochures and other marketing tools will be needed to properly market new water trail opportunities.

**Goal:**

Seek to provide quality trail facilities and opportunities, including inter-connective opportunities where appropriate, to satisfy a growing number of diverse trail users throughout the state.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Provide funding, to the maximum extent possible, for recreational (non-motorized) trail development and projects providing inter-connected trail opportunities.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. Consider providing additional scoring points for LWCF grant requests for recreational trail development projects.
2. Consider providing additional scoring points for Local Grant Program grant requests for recreational trail development projects.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

OPRD will develop a Statewide Trails Plan with input from federal, state, special district, county and municipal providers and advocacy groups.

**Strategic Narrative:**

The SCORP Advisory Committee recommended a statewide trails planning effort to achieve the statewide trails goal that would be distinct from a typical SCORP plan. This decision was not made to avoid the SCORP plan's responsibility to address issues of statewide importance, but rather to allocate the necessary time and resources to properly address such an important and complex goal. The current SCORP IX Planning Agreement (between OPRD and the National Park Service) does not include the necessary time and funding to complete such an extensive planning effort.

The Oregon State Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Study and Oregon Outdoor Recreation Trails Plan have been in place since 1995. Although many of the findings included in these plans are still relevant, considerable change has occurred on Oregon's OHV areas/trails and recreational trails in the last 7 years (including a 9% state population increase between 1995 and 2000 and increases in OHV ownership and recreational trails use). As a general rule, planning documents of this type have a usable shelf life of 5 years. As a result, there is a need to consider updating the trails plans for both OHV and Recreational Trail uses.

## **Support For The Plan**

During the months of October through December of 2001, OPRD staff conducted a series of regional recreation issues workshops across the state as part of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) planning process. Recreation providers from across the state expressed a strong desire for OPRD to update the Oregon State Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Study and Oregon Outdoor Recreation Trails Plan. According to these providers, the plan should examine use of all types of trails (motorized, recreational and water trails) and include the participation of state, federal, county and municipal providers and advocacy groups.

The SCORP planning effort's recreational participation study (Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey) results also emphasizes the importance of recreational trails to the citizens of the state of Oregon. Of the 12 participation categories included in the telephone survey, Community Trail, Sidewalk and Street Activities (e.g., running walking, bicycling and in-line skating) showed the highest level of statewide participation. Fifty-nine percent of the Oregon households surveyed, reported participation in these trail related activities.

Based on information gathered during the SCORP issues workshops and the Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey, the SCORP Advisory Committee identified the development of a concurrent State OHV and Recreational Trails Plan as a key objective in order to provide an adequate supply of quality trail facilities and opportunities to satisfy a growing number of motorized and recreational trail users throughout the state of Oregon.

In addition to OPRD having a current SCORP to receive and obligate Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) under Section 206(d) of the Recreational Trails Program legislation, the state is also required to have a recreational trails plan (motorized and non-motorized) in order to be eligible to receive and obligate Federal Recreation Trails dollars.

Finally, the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Oregon Health Division, and the Oregon Coalition for promoting physical activity are currently promoting physical activity and the health benefits associated with participation in recreational trail activities. According to these organizations, a sedentary lifestyle is a major contributor to an alarming increase in major health problems such as heart disease and diabetes within the American population. The Oregon Health Division is currently developing an Oregon Plan for Physical Activity and has identified the need for more community trails as a top priority. The health division is working with CDC to develop federal funding for trail projects that would enhance other funding programs such as the Recreational Trails Program, TEA-21 grants and the Land & Water Conservation Fund. An updated state trails plan would place Oregon recreation providers in better position to access such funding.

## **Additional Information From Issues Workshops**

Public recreation providers in 8 of the 11 SCORP planning regions voted the "Need For Recreational Trails and Trail Connectivity" as a top LWCF issue. As a result, this need was identified as one of three top statewide LWCF issues for inclusion in the 2003-2007 Oregon SCORP plan.

Recreation providers reported a need for additional recreational trails including walking, hiking, bicycling and equestrian multiple-use trails. In addition, the concept of trail connectivity was supported throughout the state. Trail connectivity involves:

- linking urban trails to outlying Federal trail systems,
- linking neighborhood, community and regional trails,

- connecting community parks and other recreational and public facilities, and
- connecting neighboring communities (e.g., Ashland to Medford).

Recreation providers also felt the trails plan should address a growing interest in canoe, rafting, and kayak routes (water trails) throughout the state. Although the state enjoys a variety of high-quality paddling opportunities, additional recreational infrastructure is needed to satisfy a growing demand for paddling sports. Necessary resources/ facilities/ services needed for water trail development include water access sites and support facilities, overnight camping facilities, directional signage, maps, brochures and other marketing tools to properly market new water trail opportunities and paddling clinics.

Although Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) riding continues to grow in Oregon and nationally, 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. The state needs to take a proactive approach by exercising leadership in shaping a long-term vision for OHV recreation to include:

1. changing riding patterns to avoid impacts,
2. resolving use conflicts and resource degradation, and
3. 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.

Because of the role federal lands play in serving OHV riding –planning clearly requires a state/federal partnership.

### **A Concurrent State OHV, Non-motorized Trail and Water Trails Planning Process**

There are considerable benefits associated with a concurrent State OHV, Non-motorized Trail and Water Trails planning process including:

- providing user groups with comparative information to emphasize areas of common ground and understanding,
- packaging three plans into one volume, providing a one-stop planning document for recreational planners who often work on motorized, non-motorized trails/riding area planning and water trails,
- cost savings from a combined motorized, non-motorized & water trails user survey, and
- administrative and travel cost savings with conducting concurrent but separate regional issues workshops.

The purpose of the planning process will be to provide information and recommendations to guide OPRD and other agencies in Oregon in their management of motorized and non-motorized trail/riding resources. Early in the planning process, OPRD will establish separate motorized, non-motorized and water trails advisory committees to guide the statewide planning effort. Other relevant groups will also be consulted, such as The Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Committee, The Columbia River Gorge Historic Highway Advisory Committee and The National Coast Trails Association. The plans will be written primarily for recreation planners and land managers. In its component parts, it will provide background on trail user and on current trends affecting OHV, and recreational trail and water trail opportunities. The plans will be designed as an information resource as well as a planning tool to guide agencies for the next 5 years.

**Specific planning objectives include:**

1. Assessing the needs and opinions of Oregon's citizens as they relate to trail recreation opportunities and management (motorized, non-motorized and water).
2. Establishing priorities for expenditures from the Oregon ATV Grant Program, Federal Recreational Trails Program and other applicable sources.
3. Developing strategic directions to guide activities for OPRD's ATV Program, statewide recreational trails planning and water access goals.
4. Gathering additional inventory measurement data for motorized and non-motorized trail resources and facilities to add to information gathered for the "2001 Oregon Statewide Outdoor Recreational Resource/Facility Inventory Bulletin."
5. Conducting a systematic inventory of existing and potential water trails and facilities, identifying priority needs and potential funding sources.
6. Recommending actions that enhance motorized, non-motorized and water trail opportunities to all agencies and the private sector who provide trail resources in Oregon.

The Concurrent State OHV, Non-motorized and Water Trails Plans would be completed in 2 years after final approval and necessary funding is available.

**STATEWIDE ISSUE C:**  
**NEED FOR LAND ACQUISITION**

Recreation providers from across the state expressed a need for:

- funding priority for land acquisition to keep pace with population growth and rising land costs,
- acquisition of land or conservation easements for the protection of natural areas, open space and water access in and around urbanized areas and developing areas,
- planning to identify and purchase key parcels (e.g., high value coastal properties) before being acquired by others or land value rises to the point of being unaffordable, and
- development of land acquisition strategies to ensure adequate land and water-based recreation opportunities in the future.

In addition, they recommended that priority be given to land acquisitions that fit into an existing, adopted regional or local open space or park plan and that there be a mechanism in place to steer funds more towards established regional priorities and away from small ad hoc purchases.

Finally, recreation providers felt that land acquisition criteria should consider factors such as scenic, natural, cultural and recreation values, and to place a high priority on the acquisition of buffer lands to protect existing recreation lands and the overall recreation experience.

**Goal:**

Obtain lands and easements to better support the public's long-term access to a broad range of recreational experiences throughout the state.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Increase the number of acres accessible for public recreation purposes through means other than public land acquisition.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. Local recreation providers should pursue leasing recreational lands where appropriate.
2. Local recreation providers should enter into recreational land and conservation easement agreements with private landowners, especially on lands providing access to isolated public landholdings.
3. Local recreation providers should, whenever possible, promote commercial recreation development on private lands.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

Focus recreation land acquisition on those parcels identified in an adopted regional or local open space or park plan that included a public involvement process.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #2**

1. Units of local government (villages, townships, park districts, special districts, etc.) lacking a current park and recreation plan for their jurisdiction should use the materials included in the SCORP chapter "A Guide to Community Park and Recreation Planning for Oregon communities" to assist in the preparation of a park and recreation plan for their jurisdiction.
2. Consider providing additional scoring points for LWCF grant requests for projects that demonstrate a commitment to local planning and public involvement.
3. Consider providing additional scoring points for LWCF grant requests for land acquisition projects identified in a current recreation plan.
4. Consider providing additional scoring points for Local Grant Program grant requests for land acquisition projects identified in a current recreation plan.
5. Prioritize parcels for acquisition that help redistribute recreation use from ecologically sensitive sites.

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Identify and provide funding for time sensitive and opportunistic land acquisition projects which may or may not be identified in current recreation plans (e.g., responding to the threat of development).

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #3**

1. Consider providing additional scoring points for LWCF grant requests for projects demonstrating an extreme urgency with potential to lose a "once-in-a-lifetime" acquisition opportunity.

# **STATEWIDE ISSUES IDENTIFIED AT THE 4/2/02 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

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"Other Funding Issue" Categories		
Issue Category	Number of Comments	Advisory Committee Votes
Need for Basic Team Sports Facilities	41 Comments	9
Need for Camping Facilities	18 Comments	5
Need for Additional OHV Facilities	17 Comments	5
Need for Water-Based Recreational Facilities	17 Comments	12
Need for Winter Recreation Facilities	13 Comments	1
Emerging Recreational Resources/Facilities	11 Comments	0
Need for Swimming Pool Facilities	8 Comments	0
Need for Shooting Facilities	5 Comments	0
Need for ADA Accessibility of Resources/Facilities	4 Comments	1
Need for Day-Use Facilities	4 Comments	1
Need for Primitive-Setting Resources/Facilities	2 Comments	5

Identified by SCORP Advisory Committee as a top Statewide Issue

## **STATEWIDE ISSUE D: NEED FOR BASIC TEAM SPORTS FACILITIES**

Recreation providers and the general public report that existing team sport facilities are in short supply and high demand in the state. They stated 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. According to recreation providers, existing facilities are being overused, especially in areas lacking regional facilities typically provided by Special Recreation Districts. They felt that whenever possible, these facilities should be designed to accommodate all-weather use (of particular importance in high-rain areas of the state).

Recreational providers also reported that 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.

**Goal:**

Provide additional benefits to Oregonians through the construction of additional low-amenity (non-tournament) team sports facilities throughout the state.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Increase the number of soccer, baseball and softball fields, basketball and volleyball courts in specific areas where need is identified.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. Public recreation providers should target areas with growing Hispanic youth population.
2. Public recreation providers should look at the location of team sports facilities to ensure they are in close proximity to low-income youth populations.
3. Public recreation providers should partner with public schools to help increase facilities for team sports participants and school-age and at-risk-youth populations.
4. Public recreation providers should identify needed team sports facilities through local planning which includes a public involvement process, and utilization of good business principles.
5. Consider providing additional scoring points for LWCF grant requests for construction of low-amenity team sports facilities.

**STATEWIDE ISSUE E:**

**NEED FOR WATER-BASED RECREATION RESOURCES AND FACILITIES**

Workshop attendees report that there is a need for increased access for motorized and non-motorized water-based recreational activities in both urban and remote settings. They argued that acquisition is needed before public access is excluded –especially in rapidly growing areas of the state. Recreation providers report that needed resources/facilities include:

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

Public recreation providers and the general public also expressed a need to develop canoe and kayak routes (water trails) throughout the state. They stated that existing water resources provide a great opportunity to develop high-quality routes to satisfy a growing demand for paddling sports. Necessary resources/facilities include water access sites, overnight camping facilities and directional signage.

In addition, maps, brochures and other marketing tools will be needed to properly market new water trail opportunities.

**Goal:**

Provide additional benefits through increased motorized and non-motorized water-based recreation activities in appropriate settings.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Increase the number of recreational facilities and access to water-based settings to support a growing demand for boating, fishing and water-based camping.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. Public recreation providers should identify needed water-based recreation facilities through local planning which includes a public involvement process, and utilization of good business principles.
2. All recreation suppliers should seek to identify public waters under their jurisdiction for which insufficient public access exists and address through acquisition planning.
3. All recreation suppliers should target boating and angling opportunities near residential areas.
4. Consider providing additional scoring points for LWCF grant request for projects involving the construction of appropriate water-based facilities and land acquisition providing water access.
5. OPRD will address the need for water-trails as a part of the statewide trails planning effort.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

Promote the allocation of in-stream water rights to provide adequate stream flow for recreation, fish passage and habitat protection, pollution abatement and meeting public water quality standards.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #2**

1. The Oregon Fish & Wildlife Service, Department of Environmental Quality, OPRD, other state and federal agencies should advocate for and support existing efforts to increase the water flow in high-priority streams through:
  - leasing of water rights,
  - acquisition of properties with water rights,
  - assisting farms to conserve water use through modern conservation practices, and
  - working with local Irrigation Districts to construct water storage reservoirs where appropriate.

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Reduce the number of conflicts between landowners and recreationists on State Scenic Waterways.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #3**

1. OPRD will work with sister state agencies, federal agencies and local government organizations to develop a pilot program to better manage recreational use on State Scenic Waterways. The pilot program could include:
  - acquiring needed water access through recreational easements and lease agreements, land exchanges and acquisition of key properties,
  - increasing law enforcement presence through the development of a river ranger program, and
  - expanding river etiquette and environmental ethics through the development of coordinated educational outreach programs.
2. Test the pilot program on 2 or 3 State Scenic Waterways making adjustments/improvements where necessary.
3. Expand the use of the program for eventual use on all 19 State Scenic Waterways and potentially on "defacto navigable rivers" throughout the state.

# **STATEWIDE ISSUES IDENTIFIED AT THE 4/2/02 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

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<b>"General Issue" Categories</b>		
<b>Issue Category</b>	<b>Number of Comments</b>	<b>Advisory Committee Votes</b>
Recreational Planning/Technical Assistance	41 Comments	10
Tourism/Economic Development	30 Comments	7
LWCF Grant Process	24 Comments	2
Recreation Funding/User Fees	22 Comments	10
Resource Protection/Environmental Education	21 Comments	12
Law Enforcement/Safety	20 Comments	1
Facility Maintenance	14 Comments	5
Interagency Coordination/Cooperation	10 Comments	0
Loss of Access to Recreation Lands	8 Comments	8
Land Use Regulations	6 Comments	0
Recreational Programming	2 Comments	1
Historic Preservation	1 Comment	1

Identified by SCORP Advisory Committee as a top Statewide Issue

## **STATEWIDE ISSUE F:**

### **NEED FOR RECREATIONAL PLANNING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Public recreation providers voiced a strong need for funding comprehensive recreational planning at the local, regional and state levels and that grant dollars should be made available for site-specific master planning and systems master planning for parks and open space.

Recreation providers also reported 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, OPRD, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation and METRO Regional Parks & Greenspaces and others conduct some interagency planning, but much more is needed.

Recreation providers stated that 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.).

Recreation providers stated that existing recreation facilities in high-growth areas of the state (e.g., Bend) are reaching carrying capacity limits. They reported a need to redistribute demand through additional facilities or a unified regional reservation/information use system. They felt the system should be a one-stop location, with multi-agency capacity.

**Goal:**

Provide an opportunity for outdoor recreation providers from all levels (private to federal) to participate in regional recreation planning forums in an effort to increase communication and cooperation between recreation providers within each of the 11 SCORP planning regions.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Develop a "Regional Planning Forum" template for use by SCORP Planning Regions to make more efficient use of existing outdoor recreation resources, funds and programs within the region.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. OPRD will establish a Statewide Advisory Committee (such as the current Oregon Outdoor Recreation Council) to serve in an advisory role during the development of the forum template.
2. OPRD will facilitate completion of template.
3. The template should involve existing regional structures (e.g., Community Solutions Team, Regional Investment Board, Watershed Council, etc.), but maintain a regional recreation focus.
4. The template should address topics such as recreation marketing as part of a business plan, communications and user fee administration.
5. The template should look at tiered planning from federal, state, regional and local levels and address the "niche" of an area and how to best distribute and redistribute facilities to meet demand.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

OPRD will facilitate the establishment of 11 regional planning structures (one for each SCORP Planning Region) to use the forum template.

## **Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #2**

1. Identify and contact key regional personnel to act as regional forum facilitators.
2. Encourage recreation providers to enter into Regional Interagency Agreements to encourage participation in the Regional Planning Forum process.
3. Provide training for use of the template.

## **STATEWIDE ISSUE G:**

### **RECREATIONAL FUNDING/USER FEES**

Workshop attendees tell us that municipal recreation providers continue to face a shortage of operation funding for outdoor recreation facilities within the state. They stated a need for additional funding for park development and general maintenance of recreational resources and facilities. According to workshop participants, most municipalities do not dedicate specific dollars for park operation. They argued that Park and Recreation Departments have a difficult time competing with law enforcement, fire protection, libraries, education and a myriad of other demands for local general fund revenue. Such problems are exacerbated in communities experiencing difficult economic conditions.

Municipal providers reported an added responsibility for providing additional "social services" which dilute recreation funding. As a result, they feel there is a need 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. The position of both players needs to be strengthened.

Recreation providers felt there is a strong 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). They stated that 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 to ensure that low-income residents are not priced out of local recreational opportunities.

Recreational providers stated that recreational fees need to be packaged in a more positive way to obtain public support. There is a need to consolidate fees to avoid "fee overload" on the part of the visitor. It is important for people to see where and how their money is being spent when they pay to enter a park. Customers want to see their fees used in the places they paid to recreate in. They also want the ability and flexibility to choose from a menu of options. They like to decide what programs will be available, when they will be available, how they will be presented, and so forth.

**Goal:**

Secure adequate recreational funding and operate outdoor recreation facilities in the most efficient manner possible.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Make better use of existing public recreation funding.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. The Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD), the Oregon Recreation & Parks Association (ORPA), Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) and Oregon Parks Association (OPA) will provide technical assistance and training for efficient and effective use of public recreation budgets.
2. Recreation providers will pursue appropriate joint public and private ventures to provide financial and other resources necessary for the provision of outdoor recreation areas, facilities and programs.
3. Recreation providers will encourage the application of available funds, to the greatest extent possible, toward meeting priority needs identified through comprehensive recreation planning programs at the state and local levels.
4. Recreation providers will write a business plan for all existing and proposed recreation facilities at the appropriate scale (regional or community).

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

Increase the amount of cooperation between recreation providers for securing recreation funding.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #2**

1. OPRD, ORPA, SDAO and OPA will provide information on how other recreation providers have successfully identified and secured additional recreation funding.
2. OPRD, ORPA, SDAO and OPA will provide grant-writing workshops.
3. OPRD, ORPA, SDAO and OPA will provide recreation providers with documented economic and non-economic outcomes and benefits associated with the outdoor recreation opportunities.
4. Recreation providers will enter into coordinated efforts with other public and private organizations to market the benefits of public recreation.
5. Recreation providers will market the benefits of public recreation to the voting public.
6. Clearly define outcomes and benefits of recreation facilities and programs as part of budget request packages and marketing and educational materials.
7. OPRD, ORPA, SDAO and OPA, and other recreational agencies and organizations will work in a cooperative manner with lawmakers to gain support for public funding of recreational facilities and programs.
8. Recreation providers will offer outdoor skills education (e.g., hunting, fishing, camping, etc.) to a growing urban and changing rural population to foster life-long interest and involvement in outdoor recreation activities.

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Develop a recreational user fee collection model(s) for combining or sharing user fees across agencies.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #3**

1. OPRD will take a leadership role in working with federal and state agencies and local recreation providers to facilitate the development of user fee collection models that provide access across the spectrum of recreational users.
2. Monitor the pilot project of reciprocating fees between the USFS Fee Program and State fees at parks in the Columbia Gorge.

**STATEWIDE ISSUE H:**

**RESOURCE PROTECTION/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

Recreation providers feel a greater emphasis should be made, especially in metropolitan areas, to strike a balance between protecting natural resources and providing outdoor recreational opportunities. They stated an inherent conflict between providing adequate natural resource buffer areas and providing public access to these resource areas. They argue that 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, some recreation providers reported a need to develop educational programming to encourage responsible recreation behavior, especially in sensitive ecosystem types such as wetlands, riparian areas and tidal pools. Others felt that visitor centers, kiosks, sign structures and waysides are needed to get information out to the recreating public.

Finally, recreation providers stated a need for an increased effort to stop the spread of noxious weeds by recreational vehicles. They reported a need to more effectively enforce regulations designed to keep recreational vehicles on established roads and in campground areas. According to recreation providers, 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.

**Goal:**  
Provide quality outdoor recreation experiences in a sustainable manner to ensure the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Develop resource management tools and strategies to protect natural resources while continuing to provide quality recreation opportunities and meet increasing demand.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #1**

1. Resource managers and recreation providers will develop a clear understanding of user need and behavior and their relationship to environmental impacts.

2. Resource managers will identify sensitive environmental areas that are or could potentially experience environmental damage from recreational use. Resource managers will cross-check recreational use with sensitive ecosystem maps to minimize or prevent ecosystem damage.
3. Where appropriate, providers should harden the design of new and existing recreational facilities to ensure that facilities can handle increasing visitor use.
4. Where appropriate, providers should identify necessary visitor use controls (e.g., use level restrictions, parking capacity reductions, and restrictions on motorized access) to protect recreational resources and facilities.
5. Where appropriate, providers should develop and promote high-use recreational areas to redirect visitor use away from environmentally sensitive areas.
6. Where appropriate, recreation agencies and organizations should educate resource managers, economic developers, politicians and the public on the importance of maintaining a balance between economic development and natural resource protection.
7. Land management agencies should educate the recreating public on techniques to reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

All public recreation providers will develop environmental education programs fostering an appreciation for recreational resources and facilities and encouraging proper visitor behavior.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #2**

1. Encourage resource managers and recreation providers to seek out opportunities to become better informed about their environment and educate others.
2. Develop interpretation programs to instruct park visitors about use, user ethics and user behavior, not only for environmentally sensitive areas, but for recreational facilities as well.
3. Provide environmental education programs applicable to diverse user populations.
4. Continue to work with public schools to integrate environmental education for children and adults into their curricula to create continued awareness of the threats and benefits of the State's natural systems.

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

All public recreation providers should adopt and promote "sustainability" practices.

"Sustainability" means using, developing and protecting resources at a rate and in a manner that enables people to meet their current needs and also provides that future generations can meet their own needs. Sustainability requires simultaneously meeting environmental, economic and community needs.

**Strategies/Actions For Addressing Objective #3**

1. Develop sustainable recreational facility standards and use guidelines.
2. Educate employees on the concept of sustainability and methods to improve the efficiency of public facilities and services.
3. Educate the general public on the concept of sustainability and how it pertains to their every day lives (e.g., promoting recycling and energy and water conservation).
4. Evaluate both the costs and benefits associated with tourism development and promotion to ensure long-term resource sustainability.