



## Oregon Statewide Trails Plan

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### STATEWIDE TRAILS PLAN ISSUES WORKSHOPS

#### NORTHEAST REGION

##### LaGrande Public Recreation Provider Session (Daytime) 4/1/03

(Northeast Region includes Willowa, Union, Grant and Baker Counties)

#### Motorized Trail Issues

A. There is a need for standardized trail signage to provide consistency and continuity between riding areas in the region. Resource managers should use a common set of trail signing, information and regulation standards (6 dots).

B. The state and ATV Allocation Committee need to better define the funding priorities for the allocation of ATV Grant Program funding dollars. Funding should be based on stated priorities so all grant applications are evaluated in a more objective manner. For example, although there have been implicit long-term guarantees in terms of maintenance funding, there is no stated grant program commitment to fund the maintenance of existing trail systems. As a result, agencies are sometimes hesitant to propose new trail development projects (6 dots).

C. The current ATV Allocation Committee focus is on funding ATV trails for trail riders. It is important to emphasize that trail riders are a single user segment of the overall ATV riding community. Other substantial user segments include those using ATVs for hunting and road and meadow riders. Since all ATV user groups are financially supporting the ATV program through permit purchases, we have a commitment to better serve the entire ATV riding community—not just the trail riders (6 dots).

D. There is a need for additional motorized camping areas and related facilities (staging areas, restrooms and amenities) to minimize damage to existing riding areas within the region. Such motorized development should be separate from other non-motorized facilities. For example, the current mixed-use facilities in areas such as Honeyman Memorial State Park are not large enough or constructed properly to withstand increasing motorized use levels. The overall camping and staging area design should enable users to easily recognize the different riding opportunities available at the OHV area. The design should also incorporate loops, fencing and signing to minimize environmental damage. In addition to camping and staging areas, there is also a need for play areas, short trail riding opportunities for children and longer trail riding opportunities for adults. (6 dots).

E. There is a need for better coordination among agencies in the development and distribution of OHV information (including maps and brochures) to the riding public. It is critical that vendors provide such OHV riding information with each ATV sticker purchased. We should also develop a one-stop website for OHV riding information within the region using a standardized interagency GIS mapping format (4 dots).

F. We need to emphasize that motorized recreation (in both winter and summer) is a vital contributor to the economies of a number of small rural communities within the region (2 dots).

G. Need for better coordination with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) over riding areas and use of OHV's. There is growing level of conflict between OHV users and hunters during the hunting season. As such, there is a need to better educate hunters on existing OHV rules and regulations. A suggestion was made that when hunter purchase a tag from ODFW, that in addition to hunting regulations, they also receive information about OHV rules and regulations (2 dots).

H. We need to be able to provide safety training for motorized users on prearranged schedule throughout the year. Such a prearranged schedule is needed to ensure that the riding public has the adequate lead-time necessary to take advantage of available training opportunities (1 dot).

I. There is a need for increased Law Enforcement and Emergency Response as motorized use continues to grow in the region (1 dot).

J. There is a need for signage providing recognizable wilderness area boundaries and other jurisdictional boundaries during the winter months. This need is associated with an increase in high marking on south side of the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area due to the increased power and mobility of snow machines. It's very hard for snowmobilers to use maps to identify actual boundaries on the ground (1 dot).

K. There is a need for additional snowparks in the Northeastern corner of the region (1 dot).

L. There is a need for additional scientific research and documentation regarding the impacts of motorized use on wildlife (e.g., the Starkey study) and on soil disturbance. Such information will help to address a marked division between motorized users and other recreationists regarding the true impacts associated with motorized use. Each group brings their own set of biases to the table in the absence of sound scientific documentation. In order to make sound motorized management decisions, we need impact information based on sound science (1 dot).

M. There needs to be some assurance that agencies will continue to provide OHV riding opportunities for the long-term. We must not lose funding for riding areas or management planning (1 dot).

N. A growing number of Oregonians have made the investment of \$6,000 or more for an ATV. These people are going to find a place to ride—one way or another. As riding areas are closing, more and more people are beginning to ride in unauthorized areas such as our scenic corridors. Impact damage in such unauthorized areas will continue to increase as more designated OHV riding areas are closed. Resource managers must proactively address this problem by doing a better job in providing information on which single-lane roads and trails are currently open for ATV use and to get that information out to the riding public (1 dot).

O. The ATV Grant Program is the primary funding source for providing and maintaining motorized trail opportunities in the state. The U.S. Forest Service has very little money available for OHV maintenance. As a result, the stability of the ATV Grant Program is of critical importance to the future of the sport in the state of Oregon (0 dots).

P. There is great potential within the region to develop a regional trail system through the connection of existing trails. Such connectivity would satisfy a need for long-distance riding opportunities (0 dots).

Q. There is a need to better plan for separation of uses (motorized, and non-motorized and hunting) to ensure that all recreationists are getting the type of experience that they want. Such separation of uses is of particular need in high-use areas (0 dots).

R. The upcoming federal competitive sourcing process has the potential to reduce the amount of trail maintenance that will be completed on USFS and BLM trails in years to come. The planning effort should investigate what affect competitive sourcing may have on overall trail maintenance, volunteer recruiting, and the ability to qualify for federal and state grant monies for trail maintenance (0 dots).

S. There is a need to consider interagency coordination and sharing of OHV trail heavy equipment to more efficiently use such expensive equipment (0 dots).

### **Non-Motorized Trail Issues**

T. There is a need to secure long-term funding for non-motorized trail maintenance within the region. This issue is especially relevant with U.S. Forest Service trail maintenance. Currently, the agency is charged a burden assessment for every trails grant that they apply for—19.5% of the total grant request which goes directly to cover paperwork expenses. As a result, all U.S. Forest Service trail maintenance money within the region goes directly to cover burden assessment associated with motorized trail grants. Since OPRD administered grant programs do not

pay for overhead expenses, there is literally no money left for non-motorized trail maintenance and law enforcement on Forest Service lands within the region (8 dots).

U. There is a need to minimize off-trail resource impacts associated with non-motorized trail use within the region. For example, trail users often take short cuts on switch back trail sections. Educational and interpretive programs can play an important role in reducing such impacts (7 dots).

V. There is a need for connectivity between community trail systems, greenways, outlying state parks and forestlands within the region. There are many opportunities to develop loops bridging the gap between urban and rural areas potentially providing economic opportunities for local communities within the region. Potential projects included connecting Clyde Holiday State Park and Mt. Vernon and a Snake River Breaks Trail from Farewell Bend State Park up the Snake River to connect to the Hells Canyon Wilderness Area (6 dots).

W. There is a need to address equestrian/mountain biker/hiker user conflicts on non-motorized trails within the region (4 dots).

X. Northeastern Oregon contains an incredible resource-base for developing mountain biking opportunities. There is a need to identify and market mountain biking opportunities within the region. We should also strive to connect those mountain biking opportunities to communities where appropriate (4 dots).

Y. There are a different set of users for urban and wildland trails within the region. For example, large numbers of people who live in LaGrande (particularly women and ethnic minorities) do not feel comfortable going out on a Forest Service gravel road or using maps to following existing non-motorized trails on federal lands. As a result, there is a need for well-marked day-use trails within the region to satisfy these types of urban residents. Interpretive features could also help to educate urban residents to encourage their use of wildland trails (3 dots).

Z. There is a need for good design standards for non-motorized trails within the region (0 dots).

AA. There is a need for non-motorized trail signing standards within the region (0 dots).

BB. At this time, we are providing a trail s for a traditional set of linear activities on wildlands within the region. There is a need to identify any new opportunities that people may wish to participate in, but current facilities and resources do not accommodate at this time. Perhaps the trails survey could be used to identify such latent trail demand (0 dots).

CC. There is a need for development of long-distance trails within the region. Unfortunately multiple ownership and easements barriers are difficult to overcome, and will limit the ability of federal agencies (USFS and BLM) to take a leadership role in developing long-distance trail opportunities in the region. Local communities will have to take a stronger lead in developing such trail opportunities. It would be helpful if the statewide trails plan could identify tools to use in working with private landowner to develop trail access across private lands (0 dots).

DD. There is an opportunity to purchase irrigation ditch corridors within the region for development of multi-use trails (0 dots).

### **Water Trail Issues**

EE. There is a strong need for a non-motorized boater education program providing information on how to properly launch and use a non-motorized watercraft, safety training for running rivers (e.g., what they will need and what to expect), how to comply with existing federal and state regulations, and so forth. Simply providing information at launch area kiosks and in brochures is not adequately preparing people for dangerous conditions they may encounter during their river trip. In addition, search and rescue efforts on isolated river stretches are often very difficult, time consuming and costly. To proactively address this problem, we need to educate people before getting on the water (13 dots).

FF. There is a need for central information source for interested non-motorized boaters to access regarding flat water and whitewater paddling opportunities within the region (such as the OPRD website). The site could include information such as access locations and other trip information (10 dots).

GG. We should consider the potential for conflict between an increasing number of non-motorized watercraft using current facilities developed and paid for by motorized boaters. Non-motorized boaters often take much more time to clear the boat ramp area than motorized boaters (4 dots).

HH. There are a large number of range fences crossing waterways in Northeastern Oregon posing a potential risk to paddlers on these waterways (3 dots).

II. There is a need for guide brochures for paddling rivers in the region. River Guides typically include information such as put in and take out locations, route maps, campsite and day-use locations and public and private land ownership boundaries. Such information will assist paddlers to make the right river use decisions on their trip. River guides can also be used as a marketing tool for drawing paddlers to the particular water route (1 dot).

JJ. There is a need for overflow parking facilities when launch site parking is full (1 dot).

KK. There is a need for boat launch hosts at major launch and landing areas within the region to provide necessary safety information at the time of departure (1 dot).

LL. Paddling opportunities in this part of the state are very seasonal due to seasonal flow rate cycles. As a result, we need to provide information regarding the times of the year with adequate water levels for paddling (0 dots).

MM. Current water access facilities within the region are minimal and in need of maintenance (0 dots).

NN. There is a need for a water trails toolbox for water trails planning within the region (0 dots).