

- o Plans for a gasoline service station, a large moorage to accommodate private craft as well as boats for rent and a swimming pool, did not reach fruition. The Lodge reportedly burned down in the late 1950s.

Historic Features

The Brian Booth State Park area has been shaped by the many uses of the land. The area represents a beautiful modified natural landscape that has been home to Native Americans, trappers, timber harvesters, farmers, and recreational uses over time. There are no known significant cultural resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in the park. However, cultural associations with the site and the scenic setting indicate that telling its stories is important and will help explain how the natural landscape has been transformed over time.

Archaeological Features

An inventory of the park and a review of report findings were conducted in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). At this time, there are no known archaeological sites recorded within the area. A pedestrian survey of 3.5 acres of the park property revealed no archaeological resources.

Historic Beach Highway

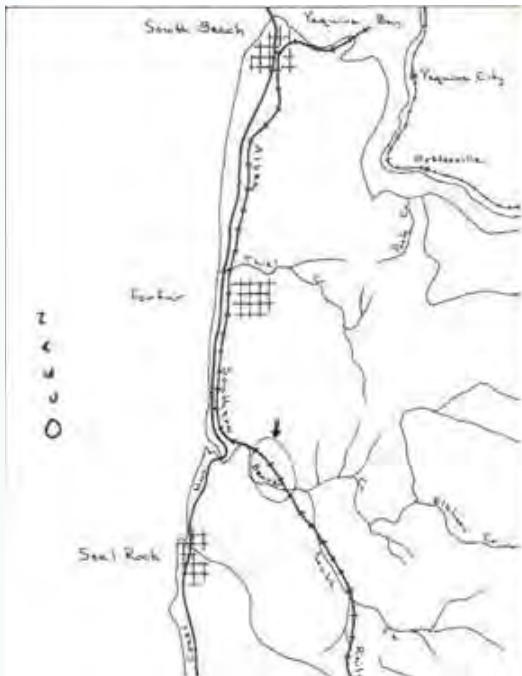


The entire park property was mapped with ratings representing the relative probability of finding archeological resources. Most of the park is rated as “high probability,” certain isolated areas are rated as “very high probability,” and some of the property is rated as “low probability.” Given the history of use by Native American tribes, there is an overall high likelihood of archaeological resources present in the park.

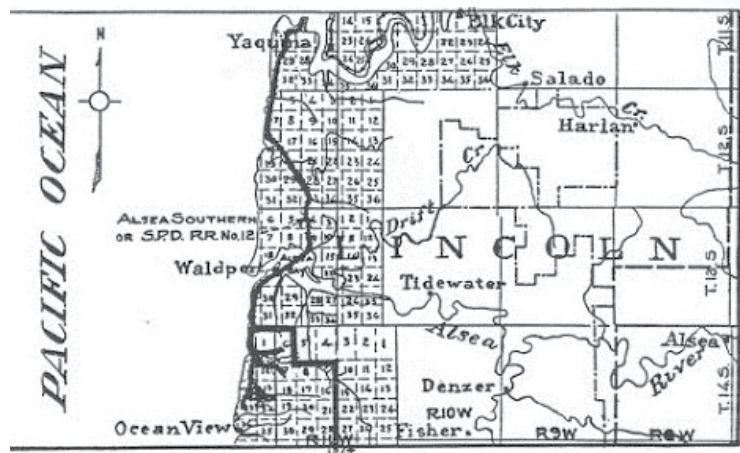


Railroad Trestle


Railroad Map



Historic Spruce Company Camp Near Waldport



SOUTH YAQUINA DISTRICT
SPRUCE PRODUCTION RAILROAD No. 12

A photograph of a person hiking on a dirt trail through a dense forest. The person is wearing a blue shirt and dark pants, and is walking away from the camera. The forest is lush with green trees and foliage, and the sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect on the trail.

CHAPTER 4: VISITOR EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT

The summarized information presented in this chapter serves as a basis for evaluating needs for and opportunities to provide recreational, educational and interpretive experiences for visitors to Brian Booth State Park. Included are summaries of key information relevant to the mid-coast sub-region on participation and trends in various visitor experiences now or potentially offered at the park, as well as information on the activities offered by the various recreation lands and providers in the sub-region. The information sources relied upon for this chapter include studies completed for, or referenced by, the recently updated Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the Oregon Trails Statewide Action Plan, the web sites of agencies managing the sub-region's various recreation lands, and the Interpretive Assessment report prepared by OPRD as background information for this Plan.

Visitor Experiences Currently Offered at Brian Booth State Park

Visitor experiences at the park are currently centered around the facilities at long-established Ona Beach and the more recently established Beaver Creek Natural Area. Beach activities, picnicking and barbecuing, motor and non-motor boating, fishing and sightseeing are the traditional activities supported at Ona Beach. Beaver Creek Welcome Center, which is staffed full time, offers park information, limited natural resource interpretive displays, and views across the marsh to the south Beaver Creek uplands. Non-motor boating on the Beaver Creek Water Trail is supported by a temporary floating launch a short distance from the Welcome Center, about 2 ½ miles upstream from the boating access at Ona Beach. A hiking trail system with over 5 miles of trails takes hikers through the forest and meadows of the south Beaver Creek hills, although this activity is currently not well supported by available parking. The upland trail system and the water trail provide opportunities to see a multitude of bird species, occasionally a beaver or otter, as well as the local elk herd that frequents the Beaver Creek hills.

Interpretive and educational programs at, or supported by, the park are just beginning to grow through the efforts of park rangers supported by volunteers and outside partner organizations. Through the collective efforts, the park offers ranger led programs mostly with natural resource themes, guided hikes, birding tours and kayaking tours, as well as opportunities for community service projects and community outreach.

Visitor Audiences

A diverse demographic has been present in at the park, engaged in a variety of activities. Fishermen, hikers, kayakers, canoeists, picnickers, beach goers, local families and tourists all have a significant presence. Large contingents of birders and naturalists have been present, and large clubs and groups have repeatedly asked for presentations and guided hikes. The park is becoming an outdoor learning laboratory for environmental education. Other Public Recreation Lands, Facilities and Programs in the Sub-Region

Other Public Recreation Lands, Facilities and Programs in the Sub-Region

The Central Oregon Coast sub-region is roughly defined by various sources as the coastal portions of Lincoln and Lane Counties, from Lincoln City in the north to Florence in the south. Brian Booth State Park falls roughly in the middle of this area, near the southern border of Lincoln County. Outdoor recreation opportunities in this area are provided primarily by Oregon State Parks, Lincoln and Lane County Parks, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Figure 4.1 in this chapter geographically illustrates public lands and outdoor recreation areas and facilities in the Central Coast sub-region. The discussion below highlights the major providers and facilities.

Other Oregon State Parks

In addition to Brian Booth State Park, 35 other state parks are located within the Central Coast sub-region. The majority of these parks are viewpoints or recreation sites that provide access to the beach; all of the parks are within several miles of the coast. Hiking opportunities at these sites are primarily along portions of the Oregon Coast Trail. There are numerous whale watching, tidepooling, birding, and other wildlife observation opportunities.

Five state parks with campgrounds are located along the coast between Lincoln City and Florence.

- Beverly Beach State Park has over 278 campsites – 51 full hookup, 75 electrical, 128 tent, 21 yurts, 3 group camps, and a hiker/biker camp.
- South Beach State Park has over 317 campsites – 227 electrical, 60 tent, 27 yurts, 3 groups camps, and a hiker/biker camp.
- Beachside State Recreation Site has over 76 campsites – 32 electrical, 42 tent, 2 yurts, and a hiker-biker camp.
- Carl G. Washburne Memorial State Park has over 67 campsites – 7 electrical, 51 full hookup, 7 walk-in tent, 2 yurts, and a hiker/biker camp.
- Devil's Lake State Recreation Site has over 90 campsites - 25 full hookup, 5 electrical, 50 tent, 10 yurts, and a hiker/biker camp.

Recreation Indicators from South Beach State Park

Indicators of need or demand for recreation opportunities can be gleaned from recent survey data for state parks in the vicinity of Brian Booth. The following statements are based on findings from 2011 survey results for South Beach State Park:

- Nearly all overnight visitors and more than two-thirds of day use visitors live more than 31 miles from the park. Most non-local visitors come from out-of-state, the Portland Metropolitan area, or the Willamette Valley.
- The majority of overnight visitors feel that campsites are too crowded, with too little screening.
- More than a third of visitors brought dogs.
- Approximately two-thirds of visitors would like to see more opportunities for wildlife observation and hiking.
- Nonwhite populations are underrepresented.
- The vast majority of visitors arrive in a personal motorized vehicles. Bicyclists account for around 2% or less of visits, while hikers account for even less.
- About one-fifth of visitors are over the age of 60. Around ten percent have disabilities related to walking.

Lincoln County Parks

Lincoln County maintains 12 parks, including 5 day use parks, 3 campgrounds, and 2 waysides, covering a total area of approximately 100 acres. Most of the parks are located in the coast range interior and provide boating access to major rivers like the Siletz. The County park system has a total of 2.5 miles of hiking trails. Three of the parks have or provide access to a nature trail, but only one, Mike Miller Park near Newport, caters primarily to hiking and wildlife observation. Overall, the park system appears to be focused on providing fishing, boating, and other river-access opportunities, with an additional focus on camping and day use opportunities. Elk City Park, Jack Morgan Park, and Moonshine Park have campgrounds. Elk City, 22 miles inland on the Yaquina River, has 12 campsites with no RV hookups. Jack Morgan,

inland along Hwy 229, has 13 campsites with no RV hookups. Moonshine Park is located on the upper Siletz River and has 42 campsites, including 2 group sites and 2 RV/trailer drive-through sites, with no RV hookups.

Lane County Parks

Lane County operates 14 parks within the area of interest, including 11 day use parks, 2 campgrounds, and 1 wayside. The parks are clustered around Florence on the coast and inland near Deadwood and Mapleton. Seven of the parks provide boating access to the Siuslaw River. None of the parks have hiking trails, with the exception of Heceta Beach outside Florence, which has a short trail to the beach. Harbor Vista Campground, on the coast just west of Florence, has 38 campsites with some electric and water hookups. Camp Lane, east of Mapleton, features a historic lodge with dormitory style sleeping quarters as well as Adirondack campsites, tree house sleeping structures, and a yurt.

U.S. Forest Service

The Siuslaw National Forest encompasses a large portion of the coast range in the Central Oregon Coast and provides a number of opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, camping, wildlife watching, and wilderness exploration. Most of the recreation opportunities in the Siuslaw are concentrated along the coast between Florence and Yachats. There are very few developed facilities between Waldport and Lincoln City. The Siuslaw has two scenic areas and three wilderness areas. The following summarizes Siuslaw National Forest recreation lands and facilities in the sub-region:

- Cascade Head Scenic Research Area: 2 trailheads and 9 miles of hiking trails. Excellent wildlife observation including whale watching.

- Cape Perpetua Scenic Area: 2 campgrounds, one with 37 sites, and a group campground. Several day use areas and numerous hiking trails with access to old growth forests, rock features, and wildlife viewing including whale watching.
- Drift Creek Wilderness: 6,000 acres, 8.5 miles of hiking / biking trails. Features one of the coast range's largest remaining old-growth stands, northern spotted owls, bald eagles, spawning Coho and Chinook salmon, resident steelhead and cutthroat trout.
- Cummins Creek Wilderness: 9,000 acres, 6.5 miles of hiking, biking, and horse trails. Features old growth Sitka spruce forest, northern spotted owls, salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.
- Rock Creek Wilderness: 7,500 acre wilderness with no developed facilities or trails.
- Cape Mountain Trails Area: 2 horse camps and 17 miles of horse trails.
- Alder Dune and Sutton campgrounds: 2 campgrounds with associated day use areas, several miles of hiking trails accessing the beach, dunes and coastal forest.
- PAWN trail: One-mile hike through old growth douglas-fir forest along the North Fork of the Siuslaw River.
- Self-guided trail near Mapleton with historic interpretation of pioneer settlement.
- Archie Knowles campground east of Mapleton.
- Blackberry Campground. Nearby day use area.
- River Edge Campground: Group campground only. Nearby day use area.
- Canal Creek Campground: Group campground only.

- Drift Creek Falls Trailhead: 1.5 mile hiking trail to Drift Creek Falls.

The Nature Conservancy

Cascade Head Preserve, a 270-acre preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy, offers hiking trails and nature observation within the Cascade Head National Scenic Research Area.

National and Statewide Recreation Indicators

The following relevant national and statewide indicators were taken from in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2013-18 (SCORP):

- Walking, hiking, visiting nature centers and viewing wildlife and natural scenery are among the fastest growing outdoor recreation activities in the U.S. according to 2009 results from the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment.
- Equestrian activities are expected to increase significantly across the U.S. over the next 50 years.
- In Oregon, activities like walking, hiking, biking, and wildlife and nature observation are increasing in popularity across a variety of demographics including youth and the aging population.
- Among Hispanics, the fastest growing ethnic group in Oregon, walking and camping are the top two activities that people would like to do more often.
- In providing for universally accessible recreation, findings from the SCORP suggest prioritizing accessible trails, picnic areas, sightseeing areas and historic sites.
- RV permit sales have declined in Oregon by 20 percent over the last decade and a half.

- Motorized boat registrations have declined in Oregon by 15 percent since 2003. In 2011, there were more instances of non-motorized boating than motorized boating.
- Hunting and fishing license sales have been in steady decline since the mid-1980s. Even among rural youth, activities like horseback riding, camping, and biking appear to be more popular than hunting or fishing.

Indicators from Statewide Trail Plans

Two components of the Oregon Statewide Trails Action Plan 2005-2014 are relevant to planning for Brian Booth State Park: The Non-motorized Trails Plan and the Water Trails Plan.

The Oregon Non-motorized Trails Plan included statewide and regional-level analyses to identify priority projects for distribution of Recreational Trail Grant Program funds.

- Statewide priorities identified in the plan include needs for trail connectivity, trail maintenance, more trails in close proximity to where people live, additional non-motorized trails, trail accessibility information, and regional interagency coordination and cooperation in trail management.

- Priorities identified for the northwest region of the state include needs for trail connectivity, additional non-motorized trails, and additional funding for trail acquisition and development.

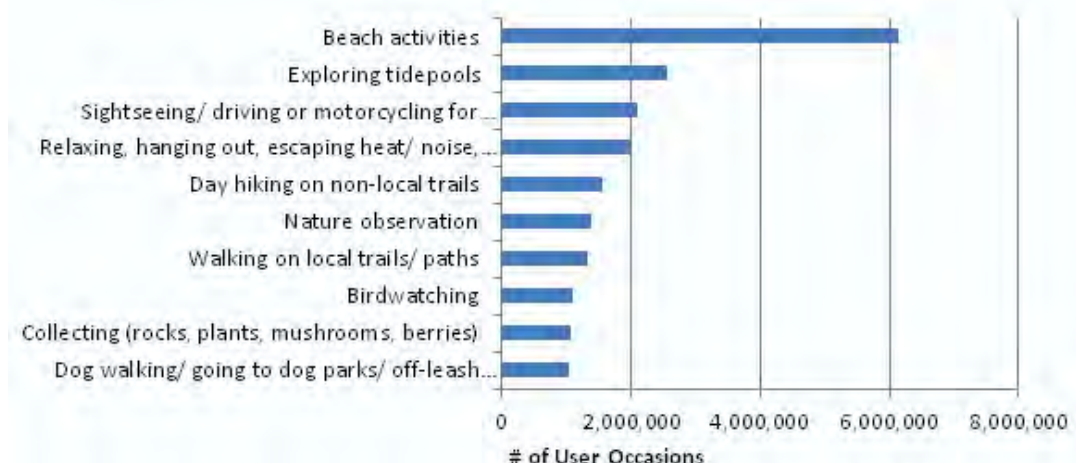
The Oregon Water Trails Plan proposed a state administered water trails program to better manage the growing demand for paddle sports. According to recreation providers, statewide needs for water trail development include water access sites and support facilities, overnight camping facilities, directional signage, maps, brochures and other marketing tools to properly market new water trail opportunities.

County-Level Recreation Indicators

Recreation Participation in Lincoln County

As reported in the SCORP, the 2011 Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey asked residents across the state to describe their outdoor recreation activities. Participation in each activity was measured by “user occasions,” defined as the number of times an individual participates in a recreation activity. The graph below summarizes the top outdoor recreation activities in Lincoln County:

Top Recreation Activities in Lincoln County (2011)



Recreation Facility Need Indicators for Lincoln County

The 2013-2017 SCORP data included two methods for identifying priority park improvements at the county level. The first method uses surveys of public recreation providers to identify priority projects in urban/suburban and rural areas. The second method uses responses from the statewide survey of Oregon residents rating their perceived need for investment in different recreation facilities. The top priorities among Lincoln County recreation providers and residents are listed below in order of priority:

Top Priorities Among Recreation Providers in Lincoln County (in order of priority):

- Group campgrounds and facilities
- RV / trailer campgrounds and facilities
- Tent campgrounds and facilities

Top Priorities Among Residents of Lincoln County (in order of priority):

- Dirt / other soft surface walking trails and paths

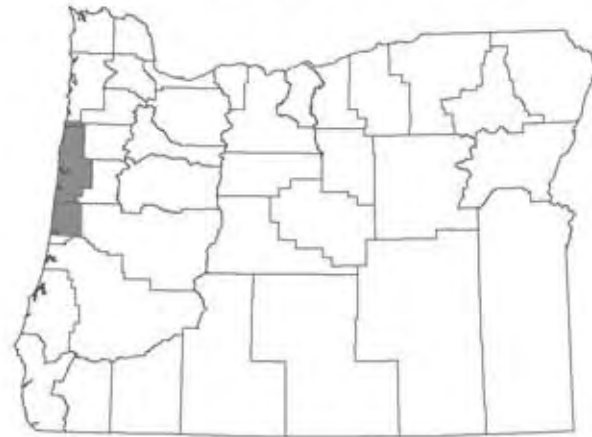
- Public access sites to waterways
- Nature and wildlife viewing areas
- Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (Natural Play Areas)
- Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups
- Off-street bicycle trails and pathways
- Community gardens
- Paved / hard surface walking trails and paths
- Designated paddling routes for canoes, kayaks, rafts, drift boats
- Off-leash dog areas

Camping Preferences in Lincoln County

The 2011 Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey completed for the SCORP also asked residents to rate their camping preferences, asking how likely they are to use different types of campsites and what they perceive as needs for different types of campsites near home. The following summarizes campsite priorities among Lincoln County residents:

Priority	Likely to use	Need close to home
1	Drive-in tent sites	Drive-in tent sites
2	Cabins or yurts with electricity	Cabins or yurts with electricity
3	Cabins or yurts with plumbing & electricity	Cabins or yurts with plumbing & electricity
4	RV sites	Hike-in tent sites
5	Hike-in tent sites	RV sites
6	Other type (undefined)	Tied: hiker biker & other type(undefined)
7	Hiker biker sites	

Central Coast Region



Land Manager

- BLM
- Local Government
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- USFS
- The Nature Conservancy
- OPRD

Recreation Facility

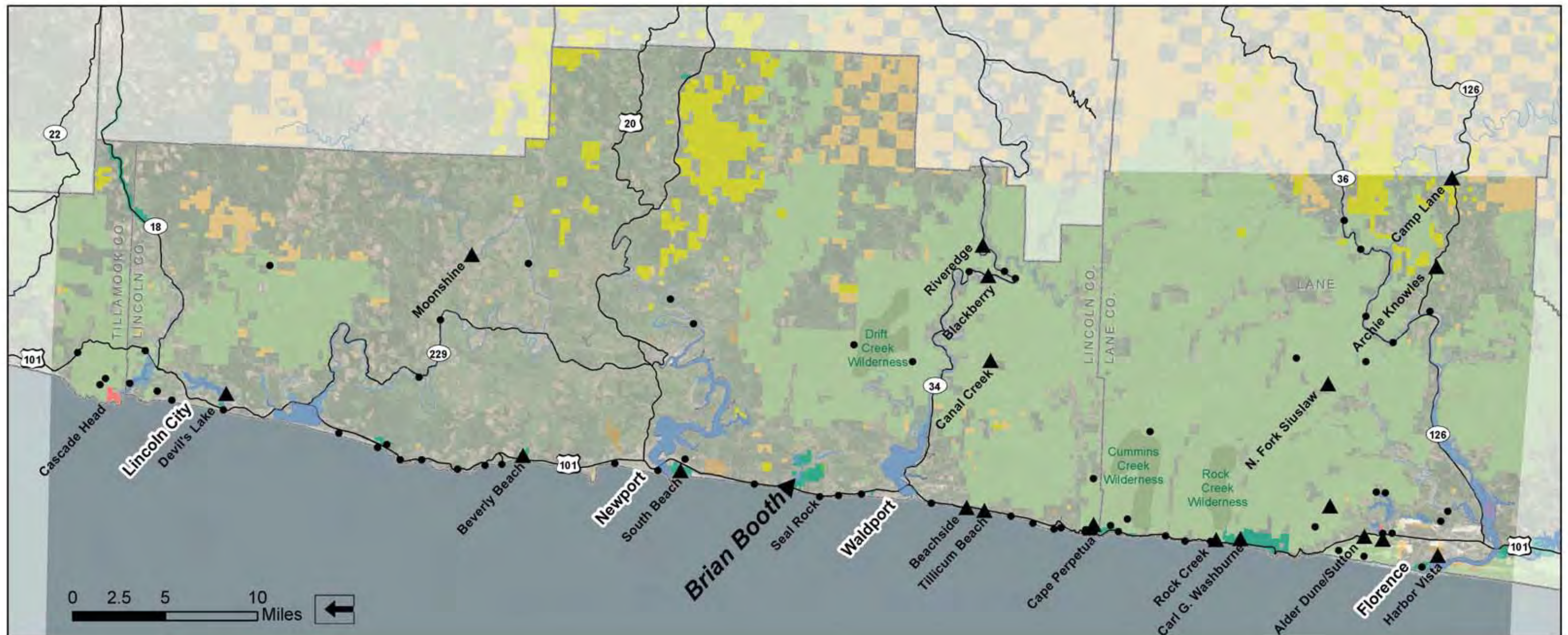
- Campground
- Day Use / Trailhead

Figure 4.1 Mid-Coast Recreation Context

September 2013



Nature
HISTORY
Discovery





CHAPTER 5: AGENCY MANDATES

The Mission

The mission of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is:

To provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.

This mission gives the agency a dual mandate: serve people by operating the state park system and protect park resources so future generations may also understand and enjoy them.

Each of our parks is an individual place where people play, picnic, camp, rest, hike, renew and everything in between. They are an everyday reminder of the things that make Oregon great, and their very existence is a testament to what Oregonians collectively value.

Oregon's outdoor recreation and cultural heritage values are explained in state law; Oregon Revised Statute Chapter 390 opens by stating the well-being of Oregonians is in large part dependent upon access to the state's outdoor recreation resources for their physical, spiritual, cultural and scientific benefits.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is empowered by state law to provide outdoor recreation and heritage programs and plans. The Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission (the department's citizen oversight body), positions the agency to function at a high level by aligning programs to the powers and duties granted by state law, and by observing and planning for emerging trends. Those laws direct the department to focus on four areas:

1. **State Park System:** Create and run a state system of parks that protects and manages resources in order to provide recreation opportunities.
2. **Natural resources:** Exercise forward-thinking, sustainable land stewardship in state parks and along ocean shores and state scenic waterways. Protect state park soils, waters, plants and animals.
3. **Statewide recreation advocate:** The agency is Oregon's lead advocate for outdoor recreation. Through research, financial and technical assistance, OPRD provides an Oregon context for federal, state and local governments to collectively fulfill their outdoor recreation-oriented missions.

4. Heritage Programs: Work to preserve and protect Oregon's heritage and historic resources.

The Centennial Horizon

The Centennial Horizon—a vision document that looks ahead to 2022 and the 100th anniversary of the state park system—is a series of principles developed to guide the work and priorities of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in fulfillment of its mission. Eight principles compose the Centennial Horizon:

- Principle One – Save Oregon's Special Places
- Principle Two – Connect People to Meaningful Outdoor Experiences
- Principle Three – Taking the Long View
- Principle Four – Engage People Through Education and Outreach
- Principle Five – Build the State Park System with Purpose and Vision
- Principle Six – Attract and Inspire Partners
- Principle Seven – Prioritize Based on the Vision
- Principle Eight – Oregon's Parks will be Tended by People Who Love Their Work

The first three principles play a substantial role in park acquisition, planning and development. The remaining five principles support the first three by offering more specific direction for park operations and programs. Each principle is more fully defined by a series of strategies and actions that change over time as opportunities arise. The full document is available at the department web site: <http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/>.

The State Park System

Three criteria define different kinds of state

parks: the natural setting, facilities and primary purpose. These criteria help OPRD plan the management and visitor experiences at each park, and combine to create nine types of state park system properties: parks, recreation areas/sites, scenic corridors/viewpoints, greenways, heritage areas/sites, natural areas, trails, and waysides. State scenic waterways are a special category; the state doesn't own scenic waterways, but works cooperatively with the property owner to preserve each waterway's scenic and recreational qualities.

The Oregon state park system contains more than 100,000 acres, nearly all of it natural resource-based. There are more than 300 properties in the system, including 174 developed for day-use, 50 campgrounds, and 110 undeveloped parcels along the Willamette River Greenway.

2012 Park System Plan

The Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission has been engaged in doing long term business planning for the state park system. They have focused on developing a greater understanding of how the park system functions and what financial opportunities and challenges are likely over the next ten years. The Commission has reviewed the current business model; the relative mission impact and economic viability of various park system activities; the ways in which the park system creates value and wealth for the state; and projections of future revenues and expenditures. A number of strategies have been examined and refined about how best to sustain the park system and to continue and improve its valuable contributions to the state economy and to the quality of life for Oregonians. These are summarized in a set of policy directions in the following areas: service delivery, park system maintenance, park system enhancement, workforce maintenance, and park system funding. This park system plan summarizes this work, and is intended to be

used to guide investment, decision-making, and staff effort. The state park system generates significant wealth and value in Oregon, and good decisions today can keep this source active and contributing.

System Maintenance Strategy

The strategy for maintenance of the park system is to:

- Maintain up-to-date land and facility condition and mission effectiveness assessments;
- Consider profitability, mission impact, and economic activity prior to every
- maintenance investment decision to reduce under-performing assets and
- related activities;
- Complete preventive maintenance on facilities with high mission impact; and
- Reserve and dedicate a portion of earned revenues to a fund to be used for preventive maintenance.

Determinations about system maintenance investments should rely on many of the criteria provided in the section above. Where maintenance can bring a lower performing property more in line with these criteria, then they are better maintenance projects to consider. The system maintenance metrics for consideration are:

- Percent of scheduled preventive maintenance tasks completed;
- Ratio of facility-closure months to total park facility program months;
- Percent of lands and facilities with condition assessments less than five years old;
- Asset condition index; and
- Ratio of under-performing assets to total assets.

System Enhancement Strategy

The strategy for enhancement of the park system is:

- Create new projects, parks, programs, and services without expanding existing department staff;
- Focus land acquisitions on improving performance of existing parks and addressing under-served markets; and
- Create opportunities for new trails, water access sites, nature viewing, and learning about history by finding internal savings and generating external support.

Determinations about system enhancement investments should rely on many of the criteria provided in the section above. Where enhancements can bring a lower performing property more in line with these criteria, then they are better enhancements to consider. The system enhancement metrics for consideration are:

- Current operating expenditures for previous biennium enhancements;
- Change to park system staffing levels;
- Percent of parks with significant in-holdings, adjacent unprotected natural areas, or access problems;
- Percent and density of Oregonians within a 60 minute drive of five or more destination parks; and
- Value of external support towards capitalization of enhancements.

Resource Management Role

The natural resources staff of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for land stewardship, marine conservation and the rocky intertidal shores, several permit programs, department-wide resource policies, and park plants and animals. We strive to

provide a safe environment while maintaining the natural beauty and historic importance of our parks.

OPRD is committed to managing the natural, scenic and cultural resources within the Oregon State Park system. The agency writes plans and conducts management to balance resource protection with recreation use; resources are the essential foundation for nearly all forms of recreation.

The following categories best sum up OPRD's approach to resource stewardship:

- Forest Health
- Fish & Wildlife
- Ecosystems
- Invasive Species
- Protected Species
- Natural Heritage Sites
- National Register of Historic Places, Sites and Districts
- Historic Buildings
- Cultural Landscapes
- Iconic Oregon Views and Scenic Corridors

Role as Recreation Advocate

OPRD connects people to meaningful outdoor experiences by protecting Oregon's special natural and historic places. This inherent tension between recreation and preservation, between the needs of today and tomorrow, has always defined the mission of Oregon State Parks. ORS 390.010 declares the state's broad policy toward outdoor recreation. In summary:

1. Present and future generations shall be assured adequate outdoor recreation resources coordinated across all levels of government and private interests.

2. The economy and well-being of the people are dependent on outdoor recreation.
3. Outdoor recreation opportunities should be increased commensurate with growth in need in the following:
 - o Oregon's scenic landscape
 - o Outdoor recreation
 - o Oregon history, archaeology and natural science
 - o Scenic roads to enhance recreational travel and sightseeing
 - o Outdoor festivals, fairs, sporting events and outdoor art events
 - o Camping, picnicking and lodging
 - o Tourist hospitality centers near major highway entrances to Oregon
 - o Trails for hiking, horseback riding, bicycling and motorized recreation
 - o Waterways and facilities for boating, fishing and hunting
 - o Developing recreation in major river basins
 - o Access to public lands and waters having recreation value
 - o Development of winter sports facilities
 - o Recreational enjoyment of mineral resources.

Planning Framework

In a critical first step for a park-specific plan, OPRD staff compiles data from department and other statewide or regional plans. This background information is used as a lens through which the park master plan is first shaped. This data is used to inform and develop a framework for the park plan, and is then taken to the public for comment and discussion. Public advice and goals for the statewide system are then synthesized

to produce the values, goals, strategies, and management actions to become the comprehensive, long-term plan for a park like Brian Booth.

- A park-specific plan therefore includes information on:
- Mission and mandates that define the role of OPRD (Oregon Constitution, Oregon Revised Statutes, and Oregon Administrative Rules.)
- OPRD goals and objectives (Centennial Horizon, Commission Investment Strategy, Legislative Performance Measures, and Oregon Benchmarks.)
- Existing OPRD organizational structure and roles of visitors, volunteers, staff, external parkland managers, and other partners.
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, State Trails Plans, Regional Interpretive Frameworks

This background information defines the context for a state park comprehensive plan.

Values Based Approach

A critical component of the state park comprehensive planning process is the involvement of the public, stakeholders, and partners that have interest in the property. As a state agency accountable to the public, OPRD seeks to engage the community in a discussion to develop a sense of public interest, concern, and desired experience. The agency looks to the community to help identify potential opportunities, conflicts, and desired outcomes for the property. Feedback from the public process helps relate a sense of place to potential outcomes for management actions. These values help to develop an analysis framework to view the resource inventories and recreation assessments so that a better sense of future condition or experience can be defined.

Values that have been identified for Brian Booth State Park are:

Value 1 - Natural Resources: We value the park as a unique and predominantly natural place.

Value 2 - Cultural Resources: We value the cultural history of the park setting, forces that have shaped the landscape and its inhabitants, and features that represent these dynamics.

Value 3 - Visitor Experience: We value the park landscape and the benefits it brings to those who experience it through recreational, interpretive and educational activities.

Value 4 - Community: We value how the park helps strengthen the local community through its contributions to public health, livability and the local economy, and how community relations also benefit the park and its visitors.

These values have close ties to the elements of the OPRD mission that relate to natural, cultural, scenic and recreational resources. These values, explored further in Chapter 8, provide another layer of analysis to interpret the existing conditions and future potential of the property.

Summary

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department staff is continually involved in the long-range review of state park system properties. A Comprehensive Plan is an assessment of resource and recreation opportunities, and management recommendations. The plans include management guidelines for each park's natural, cultural, visitor experience and community values, goals, strategies, and actions.

In the following sections the layers of analysis will be developed and discussed in greater detail, so peoples' values and park goals as well as management strategies and actions can be understood in terms of the agency mission, landscape condition, and public needs and values.



CHAPTER 6: ISSUES AND IDEAS

Opportunities for Public Input

Understanding public concerns, perceptions and desires related to park use and management is essential in formulating a park plan. At key times during the planning process, OPRD held meetings with a stakeholder committee, park neighbors and the general public to ask for input on issues and ideas related to the future of the park. Multiple meetings were also held with OPRD's Planning Core Team and Executive Team during the process to hear the ideas of agency staff with experience and expertise related to the park. The following is a summary of key concerns and suggestions raised in the planning process.

Natural Resources

- √ The park is an important part of a multi-partner effort to preserve and restore ecological functions and values of the lower Beaver Creek Watershed. The park is also an important link in broader restoration efforts for the larger watershed.
- √ Significant natural habitats are present in the park. Invasive plants are widespread and abundant in some areas, however, much of the park retains a natural character and provides valuable habitat for wildlife. Marshlands and patches of late seral forest are highly significant. Mature conifer and hardwood swamps and scrub-shrub wetlands are also notable.
- √ Most of the Beaver Creek marsh and adjacent floodplain in the park is a dedicated Natural Area under the state Natural Heritage Act.
- √ Much of the park landscape shows the effects of past forestry and agricultural practices. There are numerous opportunities for restoration of botanical and habitat values.
- √ Conifer plantation forests of young to moderately young age cover the largest share of the Ona Hills uplands. These forests need thinning, disease removal and under-planting to promote healthy succession. Currently, the natural resource values of these forests are marginal.

- ✓ Former pastures in the Beaver Creek uplands contribute to scenic values, and also contribute to habitat diversity. While most pastures should be restored to native forest, a few are particularly valuable for their scenic and habitat contributions.
- ✓ There may be some opportunities for improving hydrologic functions altered by past practices of ditching, diking and stream channelizing in the marshlands. The merits of such projects need to be explored in cooperation with interested conservation groups and agencies. Culverts need to be assessed for fish passage and hydrologic obstructions.
- ✓ Invasive non-native plant species have taken over certain areas of the marsh. Certain other areas of the marsh where natural resource values remain largely intact are at risk from invasive plants. Controlling the spread of invasive species is a top priority.
- ✓ Two at-risk native plant species, one identified and another tentatively identified, are present along the open dune. Yellow sandverbena was positively identified. Plants that appear to be big-headed sedge will need positive identification when flowering. These are priority sites for management of invading European beachgrass and scotch broom.
- ✓ Possible introduction of invasive wildlife is a concern, especially invasive aquatic species potentially introduced at boating access facilities.
- ✓ The Nutria population is rapidly growing, causing damage to native vegetation and reportedly showing aggressive behavior toward kayakers.
- ✓ Native wildlife species are abundant in the park, especially in the biologically rich marsh and floodplain environment.

This presents opportunities related to wildlife observation, interpretation and environmental education. However, an appropriate balance is needed between visitor uses and wildlife management to prevent unwanted, unintended impacts on important wildlife resources.

- ✓ Salmonid species are present in the Beaver Creek system, including federally and state listed coho salmon.
- ✓ The steep topography limits opportunities for facility development over much of the park's upland area.
- ✓ Ocean flooding occurs over the marshlands in storm surges. Blockage at the mouth of Beaver Creek from sand accretion limits tidal influence in the marsh at other times.
- ✓ Flooding in the Ona Beach picnic area is a frequent occurrence which has caused trail damage and killed native vegetation.
- ✓ Stream temperatures exceed standards in the Beaver Creek system during the summer months. Opportunities to improve stream shading may be limited in the park due to the expanse of marshland adjacent to the stream channel through most of this reach.
- ✓ The federally and state listed marbled murrelet may inhabit late seral conifer forest patches in the park. A bald eagle nest is located in one of these forests. Protocols set out under state and federal ESAs must be followed for any park management actions near these areas. Special care must be taken to manage refuse in the park to avoid attracting corvids that raid murrelet nests.
- ✓ Generous upland forest buffers between park facility development areas and the marshlands have been recommended by conservation interest groups. Development

sites have been chosen based on relevant factors that affect the development suitability of different sites, which include natural resource constraints, size of contiguous area, distance from needed infrastructure and management feasibility. Between the chosen development sites and the marsh, a minimum horizontal buffer of 350 feet can be maintained, supplemented by the vertical separation dictated by steep topography.

- √ Comments also addressed the siting, design, and densities of trails, which are important considerations with regard to potential impacts on natural resource values. Minimizing trail impacts along riparian corridors and other key wildlife areas is recommended. Trails that reach into these resource areas should be limited to a few places where they cross through them, and a few carefully designed sites intended to bring visitors to the edges of resource areas for visitor experience.
- √ The park is rich in scenic resources associated with the landscape. While certain scenic corridors are obvious to visitors, mainly the beach and the Beaver Creek marshlands, there are multiple existing and potential viewpoints along existing or potential trail corridors. The scenic settings associated with upland forests are variable, most of which could be improved through natural resource management prescriptions needed for botanical and habitat reasons.

Natural Hazards

- √ Emergency response operations and public information are key concerns for park management. One of the highest management priorities will be to establish an emergency management plan in cooperation with local emergency response

planners and providers. The park would serve as a refuge in an emergency such as a tsunami or major storm requiring evacuation from surrounding areas.

Cultural Resources

- √ There are no significant historic structures in the park, and no significant archeological sites have been identified. However, over most of the park there is a high probability of finding archeological resources. Protocols for preventing impacts on important archeological resources set out under OPRD's Cultural Resources Policy will need to be followed for all ground disturbing activities.

Vehicular Access

- √ Highway safety is a concern as it relates to proposed visitor vehicle access to the Ona Hills. This concern prompted a traffic study conducted by consultants in coordination with ODOT early in the planning process. The study found that the accident rate along this reach of the highway is mostly related to road conditions and driver behaviors through the highway curves, rather than vehicles turning on and off the Highway through this reach. Still, highway safety improvements in the 101 right-of-way will be needed to establish the park entrance. ODOT has approved a plan prepared by the traffic consultants for improvements in the highway right-of-way needed for park development, based on estimated traffic generation related to types and capacities of park facilities proposed. The traffic study also found that the intersection of Beaver Creek Road and the Highway is functioning within standards, and will continue to function appropriately with park development and future increases in traffic.

- ✓ The existing trail system in the south Beaver Creek hills, which attracts a number of hikers, currently has no designated parking area. Currently, visitors park in an unimproved, undesignated area off the shoulder of South Beaver Creek Road outside of the park property to access the trail system. OPRD is exploring possible property acquisition to establish a south trailhead parking area.

Recreation Development Potential

- ✓ A key concern raised in public meetings is that park popularity and the level of visitation could degrade the natural resource qualities and outdoor experiences that people come to enjoy. An appropriate balance is needed between resource protection and visitor capacities provided by park development.
- ✓ Areas suitable for development of visitor facilities in the park are limited due to the valuable and sensitive natural resources in lowland areas and certain upland forests, and the steep topography over much of the upland areas. Opportunities for new park development are located in the Ona Hills, generally along the existing main primitive road corridor.
- ✓ Although natural resource constraints and issues related to highway access safety limit the potential capacity of the park, a range of camping styles and related amenities are suited for the Ona Hills area, including drive-in and walk-in tent sites, all-season camping structures (camper cabins or yurts), a small equine camp and a hiker biker camp. A few remote Adirondack campsites are also being considered.
- ✓ Because of highway safety concerns, visitor campsites designed for large RVs are not being proposed. To accommodate

numerous large vehicles turning on and off the highway would require highway improvements beyond what has been approved by ODOT.

- ✓ All-season camping units (cabins or yurts), while generally popular, were mentioned as facilities that could support outdoor education groups engaged in multi-day learning activities.
- ✓ Some comments suggested providing a limited number of primitive campsites in Beaver Creek Natural Area. Hike-in sites and paddle-in sites were suggested. Other comments were opposed, based on concerns about the difficulties of managing the campsites, the risk of fires and possible impacts on wildlife.
- ✓ A few Adirondack campsites served by an upland trail have been proposed on a narrow ridge in the Ona Hills. This proposal has also drawn a few opposing comments related mainly to difficulties of management.
- ✓ One or two comments questioned the need for more campground facilities, pointing out that other campgrounds in the vicinity are closed seasonally for lack of use.
- ✓ Beaver Creek Natural Area is generally regarded as an area that should be kept free of new park facility development and managed with emphasis on natural resource protection, allowing certain facility improvements supporting environmental education and interpretation. Some people feel that the more recently acquired commercial timberlands in the Ona Hills should also be managed as part of the Natural Area despite OPRD's intentions in acquiring the property for campground development.

Administrative Facilities

- ✓ OPRD has an opportunity to acquire the ODOT administrative facilities adjacent to the park in the Ona Hills. An agreement has been established for OPRD's eventual acquisition of the facilities, which offer enough space for the administrative needs of Brian Booth State Park and OPRD's surrounding Coast Region.

Trails

- ✓ Suitable development areas in the Ona Hills are separated from Ona Beach by Highway 101. There is no designated highway crossing for safe access to the beach from Ona Hills by trail. ODOT has clearly indicated that establishing a designated at-grade highway crossing is not an option. A study completed by engineering consultants has identified alternatives for crossing the highway with a trail involving construction of an underpass or overpass.
- ✓ There is currently no trail connection from the Beaver Creek Welcome Center to the south Beaver Creek upland trail system, which are separated by marshlands. OPRD is exploring alternatives to provide a trail connection, which involves either developing a trail along the county road right-of-way, developing a boardwalk trail across the marsh, or a combination of these.
- ✓ Local equestrians have requested that OPRD provide horse trails in the park. Reportedly, the trail riding opportunities are limited in the Lincoln County area.
- ✓ Opportunities for new trail development in the park are mostly in the Ona Hills area. A well-designed trail system would substantially add to the desirability of the Ona Hills area for camping. A range non-

motorized trail uses are possible, including hiking, biking and equestrian uses.

- ✓ The existing trails in the south Beaver Creek uplands are too many and too dense for the area they cover, which affects trail experience and discourages much of the wildlife that may otherwise be present. Some trails need to be decommissioned and allowed to revert to natural habitat.
- ✓ To enhance visitor experience opportunities, nature trails have been proposed that would reach into patches of late seral forest. Care must be taken in locating, designing and managing such trails to avoid unwanted impacts on the sensitive wildlife they now or potentially support.
- ✓ Any trails that reach across the Beaver Creek floodplain up to or across the marsh, although desirable for visitor experience, wildlife viewing opportunities and interpretation, need to be carefully designed and limited to a few locations to minimize disruption of wildlife.
- ✓ The current park ownership does not connect between Ona Hills and Beaver Creek Natural Area. Opportunities for property acquisition or easement are being explored for purposes of establishing a trail connection and to facilitate more efficient land management.
- ✓ A couple of comments suggested providing trails for mountain bikers. A mountain biking single track loop trail is being considered in a remote area of the park where forest conditions have deteriorated to a point where clearing and replanting is needed. This trail could be designed in conjunction with forest restoration. The length of trail allocated to exclusive mountain biking would be relatively short, but would be connected to the multi-use trail system. As

an alternative use of this area, a disc golf course has also been proposed and is also under consideration. This alternative could also be designed in conjunction with forest restoration.

- ✓ The Corvallis-to-the-Sea (C2C) Trail Partnership continues to seek a connection from its North Beaver Creek Road trail route past the Beaver Creek Welcome Center to campground facilities in the park using a route that avoids Highway 101.
- ✓ The Seal Rock Trails Group has expressed interest in establishing a trail connection between the park and the Seal Rock community across private properties of willing landowners. A general location has been identified for a connection to the park.
- ✓ The Beaver Creek Water Trail is a popular feature of the park. The possible need for managing potential conflicts between motor and non-motor boating access at the boat ramp should be explored. A safer and easier to use floating kayak launch is needed to replace the temporary launch near the Welcome Center. No additional parking for the Water Trail is being proposed.
- ✓ A few comments pointed out the need to close some trails seasonally during wet conditions.

Visitor Programs

- ✓ The opportunities for environmental education and interpretation at the park are many, and various groups have expressed interests in this aspect of park development. Comments pointed out the value of interpreting the rich cultural history of the region and vicinity and how

it has influenced landscape changes. An assortment of biological, geological and hydrological features within and around the park are worthy of interpretation.

- ✓ The park offers multiple opportunities for facilities supporting visitor programs, including the existing Welcome Center (proposed to be renamed the “Beaver Creek Nature Center”), two sites for potential future use as learning extension facilities (existing pole barn site and home site) and development of a program amphitheater and a Junior Ranger gathering shelter. In addition to daytime learning activities, the two learning extension facilities under consideration could potentially allow pre-arranged overnight camping by special use permit for organized groups.
- ✓ There are various opportunities for establishing partnerships, or building on existing partnerships, with local organizations for purposes of offering visitor programs at the park and engaging park staff in public outreach activities. There is significant interest among local partner organizations in establishing cooperative educational programs, using the park for teaching environmental education and outdoor skills.

Neighborhood Concerns

- ✓ A few of the park’s closest neighbors raised concerns about possible impacts on neighboring properties with the proximity of park facilities and visitors. Concerns were raised about the potential for trespass, visual impacts, traffic noise along the park road, campground noise and air pollution from campfires, suggesting a need to optimize the forested buffer next to this neighborhood.

- ✓ A park neighbor reported seeing human waste near the small parking area that serves the kayak launch in Beaver Creek NA, suggesting that a restroom be installed there.
- ✓ The potential for trespass onto private property was raised as a concern related to visitor use of upland trails, the Water Trail, and in general. Clear signage at key locations was suggested as a solution.
- ✓ One or two comments reported unauthorized camping at Ona Beach near private property, asking for information on who to contact for enforcement.

Miscellaneous Other Public Comments

- ✓ Several meeting participants raised concerns about dogs. A common concern is that dogs harass wildlife. Some suggested that dogs be disallowed, at least in Beaver Creek Natural Area. Others stressed the need to enforce rules requiring dogs to be leashed. One or two comments suggested providing a fenced off-leash dog area.

- ✓ One person recommended that waterfowl hunting be allowed in the park, pointing out that hunting has been a traditional recreational use in the rural area that should be supported.
- ✓ A couple of people asked whether the shooting range would be removed, and to where. OPRD is working with Oregon State Police to relocate this facility.
- ✓ Fire protection was mentioned as a high priority for park management. Fire protection measures will be a key part of OPRD's planning for emergencies and for park operations in general.
- ✓ Common concerns were raised about the potential for increased noise and traffic, littering and other unwanted consequences of park development and use.
- ✓ One or two comments suggested offering more wilderness solitude among park visitor experiences.





CHAPTER 7: OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Strategies for a successful park arise from understanding the park's opportunities and constraints. This chapter characterizes the park by its opportunities for managing and enhancing natural resources and opportunities for providing places and facilities that support visitor experiences. Opportunities are summarized for separate but related areas of the park that represent different landscape features. The separate areas are considered collectively to determine how they can be managed as a whole to protect or improve the integrity of important park resources while providing for recreational uses and other visitor

experiences. On the basis of opportunities and constraints, this Plan defines areas that will be managed with emphasis on natural resources and areas where the emphasis will be on visitor support facilities. A successful park plan blends resource management and visitor uses in a way that sustains or improves the quality of both.

The following table summarizes management intentions by opportunity areas, followed by narrative summaries of what the seven areas offer. Figure 7.1 depicts opportunity areas geographically.