

2 > PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Master Plan Task Force studied conditions, trends and attitudes in the county and solicited public input to establish a framework for the preservation, restoration and enhancement of recreational lands over the next ten years.

> **Master Plan Task Force Meetings**

The update to the 1992 Recreational Lands Master Plan is primarily the work of the Master Plan Task Force, which met monthly beginning in December 2004. The county retained the services of Illahee Group, a private consulting firm specializing in park planning and design, to assist in completing various component parts of the plan. Input from county and state staff, state and national parks representatives and local citizens was included in the team's deliberations.

The Task Force undertook a series of comprehensive, on-site inventories of designated county parks and other land used for recreation. Members assessed the current condition of each property and evaluated possibilities for future use.

Five goals were identified along with supporting objectives and action strategies that provide detailed guidelines of park standards, physical improvements, operations and maintenance, and administrative functions. These are reviewed in *Chapter 5: Park System Goals, Objectives and Action Strategies*.

A new park classification system was developed that will serve as a guide for the ongoing management and use of county parks and other county-owned holdings. It will also provide direction for the development of new facilities. The classification system recognizes the diversity and variety of uses within the park system and is described in *Chapter 6: Definitions and Standards*.



Task Force Mission Statement:

The mission of Clatsop County Parks and Recreation resource planning is to improve the quality of life and environment in the county by creating a more healthful, desirable and prosperous urban and rural community.





Trails were recognized as an important part of the Recreational Lands Master Plan because of their innate ability to connect people to parks, waterfront areas, businesses and neighborhoods. Terry Bergerson, an outdoor planner with the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, made a presentation to the Task Force at the meeting on July 28, 2005. The popularity of walking as documented in our local survey also spurred development of recommendations regarding land and water trails as a key element of the Recreational Lands Master Plan.

Subcommittees were formed to address issues regarding public outreach, funding, policy recommendations and planning for the community symposium held Dec. 7, 2005.

The Parks and Recreational Lands Master Plan includes recommendations for the overall park system, financing strategies and the aforementioned trails report, along with extensive appendices with source documentation.

The full record of the Task Force including meeting minutes and supporting documents is retained in the county's public records file.

The Oregon State Parks Statewide Trails Plan goes the extra mile by including three components: non-motorized trails, motorized trails, and water trails. Oregon is the first state in the United States to give water trails equal billing.

Read the plan at oregon.gov/OPRD/PLANS

> Park Opinion Survey

A survey measuring public awareness and attitudes about Clatsop County Parks and recreation programs was conducted during August 2005. Surveys were handed out at key venues, mailed and made available online at the Clatsop County Web site. The objective was to obtain information that would be useful in preparing this report (Appendix B – Survey Form and Results).

Sixty-five surveys were returned. Nine of these were submitted online. Of the remaining surveys, 26 were from a random mailing to households in Clatsop County.

The results of the survey process are contained in Appendix B. Key findings are highlighted here:

- When asked about favorite outdoor activities, walking/hiking received the largest percentage response of any item (83%). Beach activities and biking were mentioned by over half of the respondents, and fishing and wildlife viewing/bird watching by nearly half.
- Many survey respondents said they had no knowledge of many parks included in the survey or the breadth of recreation opportunities available. One Seaside resident said, "County parks are seriously under-advertised." Suggestions included better signage, brochures and maps of park facilities.
- The most heavily used county park was Cullaby Lake Park. 62% of all respondents visited the park at least once in the last 12 months. Sigfridson Park was the least-used county park and also scored lowest in name recognition.

"I think county parks are seriously under-advertised. I've lived in the county for 20 years and regularly use state parks ... really had NO idea there were so many county parks!"

*Survey respondent
Seaside*

Favorite outdoor activities identified in local survey (ranked by percent who participate)

<i>Walking/hiking</i>	<i>83%</i>
<i>Beach activities</i>	<i>55%</i>
<i>Biking</i>	<i>54%</i>
<i>Wildlife/bird watching</i>	<i>49%</i>
<i>Fishing</i>	<i>49%</i>
<i>Swimming</i>	<i>39%</i>
<i>Natural & open spaces</i>	<i>37%</i>
<i>Non-motorized boating</i>	<i>31%</i>
<i>Motorized boating</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>Tent camping</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>Playgrounds</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Golf</i>	<i>19%</i>
<i>Educational</i>	<i>19%</i>
<i>Hunting</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>RV camping</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Target shooting</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>ATV</i>	<i>14%</i>
<i>Sport fields</i>	<i>14%</i>
<i>Basketball</i>	<i>11%</i>
<i>Archery</i>	<i>8%</i>
<i>Horseback riding</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>Skating</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Tennis</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Yurts</i>	<i>3%</i>

- Survey participants were asked if they had enough information about specific recreation opportunities. Walking/hiking registered the largest response. Just 26% say they currently have enough information about walking/hiking. 51% say they want more.

Other comments referenced the need for more trails and ATV (all-terrain vehicle) ride areas, parking and other fees, lack of restroom maintenance, crowded campgrounds, and recreational impacts of LNG (liquefied natural gas) storage facilities.

> Public Workshops

Two public meetings were held in Clatsop County in October 2005. The objectives of these meetings were to gather public comment on preliminary master plan findings and to solicit additional opinions about parks and recreational lands in Clatsop County. Comparisons are made to state data in Chapter 3 of this report.

“County parks are not well distributed geographically.”

“Link the trail system in Tillamook forest to trails in Clatsop forests. Include equestrians.”

“Develop more shared-use trails.”

“Parks need signs.”

“Put in a bike trail from Fort Stevens to Seaside.”

“I had no idea there were so many parks.”

-- Comments by workshop participants

The first meeting was held on Oct. 6, 2005, at Astoria’s Red Lion Inn. The second meeting was held on Oct. 13, 2005, in Seaside at the Bob Chisholm Community Center. Both meetings lasted approximately 90 minutes. Public notices, newspaper articles and radio play were used to publicize the events.

Fifteen participants, five in Astoria and ten in Seaside, attended the workshops. In addition, the meetings were staffed by Task Force members and attended by members of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners.

Community comments were gathered from questionnaire forms, post-it note statements adhered to displays, and text written directly on maps. A summary of comments is contained in Appendix C.

The need for better awareness of county parks was reinforced, just as in the survey. Participants advised promoting a park or other recreational opportunity in each weekend section of *The Daily Astorian*. Better signage was requested.

“Everyone needs a place to enjoy. ATVs, bikes, horses and hikers.”

Participants made specific requests for:

Workshop participant

- A shared-use trail and mountain bike system at Carnahan Park.
- A horse camp at Cullaby Lake.
- Parking for horse trailers and large trucks at DeLaura Beach.
- A bike trail from Fort Stevens to Seaside.
- An ATV park and campground on Nicolai Mountain.
- More mountain bike trails.
- Greater effort to limit dumping, vandalism and damage to the dunes being done by four-wheel drive vehicles at DeLaura Beach.

> Commissioner Presentation

The Recreational Lands Master Plan Task Force reported to the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners. Chair Carolyn Eady made a presentation on Sept. 28, 2005, to review progress on inventories, goals and priorities, and steps necessary to complete the work of the charter and finish the plan on schedule.

“Our parks offer a wealth of opportunities for health, fitness and wellness, social interactions, economic gains and environmental stewardship. We want to engage our residents in making this a working document that preserves our most precious and valuable resources now and for the next 100 years.”

> Symposium: “Hidden Presence, Undiscovered Treasures”

Seventy-eight people gathered on the evening of Dec. 7, 2005, to acknowledge and celebrate the recreational resources of Clatsop County, and to review work to date by the Recreational Lands Master Plan Task Force (Appendix D). The symposium was held at the Rilea Armed Forces Training Center, 200 years to the day after Lewis & Clark’s Corps of Discovery arrived at the present-day location of Fort Clatsop.

*Mary Blake
The Daily Astorian
Dec. 1, 2005*

It was an event of historic significance as guests took the opportunity to look closely at Clatsop County's recreational and natural resources, and at what the community will preserve and enhance as a legacy for future generations. Those attending included business leaders, elected officials, planners, parks and recreation advocates, history enthusiasts and interested citizens of all ages.

“Talk to everybody. When you give people a chance to buy into your plan, they’ll support it.”

*Frank Jagodnik
Executive Director
Oregon Parks &
Recreation Association
Dec. 7, 2005*

“Parks mean so much to someone like me.”

*Greta Passetti, Seaside,
who made a daily
exercise regime out of
walking trails in Clatsop
County as she recovered
from a debilitating
stroke, speaking at the
Dec. 7, 2005 symposium*

Speakers included State Representative Debbie Boone; Clatsop County Commissioner Helen Westbrook; Chip Jenkins, superintendent of Lewis & Clark National Historical Park; Frank Jagodnik, executive director of the Oregon Parks & Recreation Association; and Carolyn Eady, chair of the Recreational Lands Master Plan Task Force.

Neal Maine, executive director of the North Coast Land Conservancy and member of the Task Force, presented a slide show featuring his original photographs. Testimonials from citizens Greta Passetti, Margo Lulich and Lujac Desautel spoke to the personal benefits of parks and recreation. Mary Blake, general manager of the Sunset Empire Park & Recreation District, served as master of ceremonies.

Harking back to 1805, lights in the mess hall were turned off and candles lit to summon guests to dinner. The meal included elk stew, salad greens with pine nuts and dried berries, homemade bread and freshly churned butter. Utensils were basic, appetites hearty.

In keeping with the spirit of Lewis and Clark, guests at each table were asked to engage in a discussion of the county's "undiscovered treasures" and provide a summary of their observations. Innovative ideas for parks and other recreation facilities came from people who use them on a regular basis or who are curious and want to know more.

Comments echoed those gathered in our community survey and centered on four key areas, suggesting the need to:

- **Raise awareness of parks and facilities.**

A number of guests said they did not know about some county-owned properties. They said there is an immediate need to install more signage as long as signs are aesthetically pleasing and “respectful” to visitors.

- **Build parks closer to major population centers.**

Interest centered on parks and facilities closest to incorporated areas. There was also a desire for trails connecting all parts of the county, with parks serving as trailheads.

- **Involve youth and volunteers.**

High school students suggested organizing a Youth Corps, and building on the theme of “making memories” that last a lifetime through organized events at parks and other play spaces. The students and many others embraced the concept of taking ownership of their local parks.

- **Strengthen connections.**

Guests expressed the need for better connections on many levels – for example, a single network of trails linking local communities to hiking and biking paths, and other attractions. Chip Jenkins said it would take just a few signs to direct users of the county’s Lewis & Clark boat launch to the Lewis & Clark National Historical Park’s Netul Landing canoe and kayak launch site just a mile away. From there they could follow a hiking trail to Fort Clatsop.

“Kudos to rec committee”

I attended the Rec Lands Symposium at Camp Rilea this week and I’d like to say good job to all the fine people who both organized and presented the program, but also those in attendance ...

The year-long work put forth by the Rec Lands Master Plan Committee is producing big value and benefit for the entire region. We all owe them a large vote of confidence and appreciation for their fine work ...

As a past member of the Rec Lands Advisory Committee, I am very proud of the terrific work being accomplished. You continue a fine tradition of advancing the interests of land stewardship and access and responsible use of our wonderful lands and recreational areas. You do us all proud. Quality of life in our region is being preserved by your continued service and unwavering commitment.

RICHARD JOHNSON
Warrenton
From a letter to
The Daily Astorian
Dec. 9, 2005

Others advised strengthening connections by partnering with schools, timber companies and other entities, and for purposes of education and outreach across jurisdictions. (Appendix D – Summary Comments.)

Figure 1 – Symposium Mapping Exercise

