

BENTON COUNTY NATURAL AREAS & PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
January 13, 2010

Minutes

Park Board members: Phil Hays, Tom Kirch, Denise Nervik, Margie Powell, Randy Rasmussen, Jay Sexton and Ellen Tappon

Staff: Jeff Powers, Al Kitzman, Mary Simpson

Guests: Mark Miller, Trout Mountain Forestry

I. CALL TO ORDER - Chair Phil Hays called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS FOR ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA – None

III. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 28, 2009 MEETING MINUTES
Approved unanimously

IV. BUSINESS

New advisory board members, Ellen Tappon and Tom Kirch, were introduced and welcomed. The current advisory board roster was distributed.

A. Forestry Consulting Services

- Al Kitzman reported that Trout Mountain Forestry (formerly Individual Tree Selection Management, Inc.) assisted the department with development of the Beazell Memorial Forest Stewardship Management Plan and Fort Hoskins Historic Park Forest Stewardship Management Plan, and continually provides forest and harvest management services through yearly materials and services contracts with Benton County.
- Trout Mountain Forestry currently has a personal services contract with Benton County for forestry consulting services, to develop a forest stewardship plan, including baseline resource assessment, mapping (based on GIS data and digital aerial imagery, followed by extensive field reconnaissance) and timber inventories for 3 county owned forests (Beazell Memorial Forest, Fitton Green, and Fort Hoskins Historic Park), and developed to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification Standards. Timber from subsequent harvests can be marketed as “FSC Certified.”
- Mark Miller noted Trout Mountain Forestry’s great fortune, working with Benton County since the mid-1990’s, with stabilization and planting in portions of Fitton Green; restoration and harvest at Fort Hoskins Historic Park; and accomplishing all parts of 10-year plan/recommendations for Beazell Memorial Forest.
- Mark indicated working with Benton County’s 1,022 forest stewardship acres, incorporating 867 acres of forest lands and 155 acres non-forest (including improvements of valuable meadows)
- Mark reviewed historical highlights of Beazell Memorial Forest, Fort Hoskins Historic Park and Fitton Green, including infrastructure, stewardship management planning, trails, historic renovation and preservation, restoration, controlled burns and harvest.
- Beazell forest management has included a new road system, diversity thinning, wildlife enhancements, aesthetics and FSC Certification. Beazell educational advances include the Forest Education Center, Outdoor School activities, Kings Valley Charter School programs, and site tours. Taylor’s Checkerspot butterfly (candidate endangered species) Oregon populations are found only in Benton County; critical meadow restoration for butterfly habitat has occurred at Beazell. Beazell invasive species control includes reversing fir invasion into meadows; false-brome and scotch broom control and prevention.
- Fort Hoskins forest management includes meadow clearing and oak release for historic upland condition, fir thinning, bio-diversity and FSC Certification. Research projects include native grass/forbs establishment, light studies, burn response, and uneven-aged

forest management. Restoration involves historic vegetation patterns, reducing invasive species, controlled burns, and prairie species plantings.

- Fitton Green (Open Space) Natural Area meadow restoration includes treating brush, trees and weeds in meadows, controlled burns, planting native species, and the Restoration and Reintroduction Education (RARE) program partnerships. OWEB grants have provided oak woodland release, invasive species control and improved upland prairie at Fitton Green.
 - Mark described the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification as a voluntary, market approach, with benefits of sustainability, 3rd party verification (which supports integrity of standards), peer review and “green” premium for logs. FSC certification requirements include following FSC standards; having current site management plans; periodic audits; and no partial certifications. FSC labeled products can be traced back to a certified source.
 - Mark noted the update process for developing the forest stewardship plan, including inventory (acquire aerial imagery, design cruise, field plot measurement, cruise computation, and mapping); public outreach (through NA and Parks advisory board meetings, county publications, press releases, public tour(s), and disseminating information). The NA and Parks advisory board will: serve as a public sounding board; monitor the process; provide critical review; and recommend for final adoption. The plan update process will have a concurrent timeline with the Parks Master Plan (Parks System Comprehensive Plan) process; comprehensive plan objectives will inform the forest stewardship planning; and forest stewardship planning needs and opportunities will inform the comp plan process.
 - The forest stewardship plan for Beazell, Fitton Green and Fort Hoskins should be completed by June 1, with implementation in 2011-12. The forest stewardship plan outline includes: management objectives; background, history; resource assessments (soils, water, fish/wildlife, RTE species, cultural resources, aesthetics/recreation, and forest products); forest health (insect/disease, invasive species); regulations; access roads and trails; tract level reports for the 3 sites; recommendations; timetable; budget; maps and inventory reports.
 - Projections include harvest income every 1-3 years; cost share funds; grant potential; and carbon credit analysis for potential revenue.
- B. Parks System Comprehensive Plan/RFP Update
- Jeff reported that two proposals were received for the January 11, 5:00 p.m., deadline of Request for Proposals, from MIG, Inc. (Eugene/Portland) and David Reed & Associates (Springfield). MIG estimated project cost is \$79,760; David Reed estimated project cost is \$63,210.
 - Jeff reiterated that the 1995 Parks System Comprehensive Plan needs to be updated, though limited funds (\$30,000 - \$35,000) are currently available for the project.
 - The Comprehensive Plan consultant selection committee will include the NA and Parks Advisory Board Chair, Phil Hays.
 - A set (copy) of the proposals is available for review at the NA and Parks Department office.
 - A report on consultant selection should be ready for the February 10th NA and Parks Advisory Board meeting.
- C. Clubhouse Enterprise Fund Update/Spreadsheet Review
- The updated financial plan/spreadsheet for Enterprise Funds/Adair Clubhouse Concession was distributed for review.
 - Adair was a portion of the Adair Air Force station, and the Clubhouse was the old Officer’s Club.
 - Phil noted the immense difference between previous Clubhouse business (with department staff management of reservation calendar/scheduling events and all aspects of maintenance and operations) and current management by Valley Catering through Concessionaire

contract. Prior to the concessionaire contract, the Clubhouse fund was in a continual deficit.

- The Clubhouse Enterprise Fund operation has become a revenue-producer, with funding for Adair Park and other site projects, matching funds for grants, and building reserves. A portion of reserve allocations will be utilized for roof replacement this year

D. Grants/Projects Updates

- Jeff reported that the department received an Oregon Historic Cemetery Grant for improved entrance and directional signage and an interpretive kiosk at Crystal Lake Cemetery.
- Staff is preparing a Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant request for Plunkett Creek trail and bridge construction. The RTP funding is produced from federal gas tax money, and administered through Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The project includes adding gravel to surface portions and using (free) recycled bridge stringers from Public Works. The grant request is for \$50,650, and the total project cost, including in-kind labor and materials, is \$68,100. This project was originally proposed for Biennium 13-15; however, if state measures 66 and 67 fail, State Parks may have less grant funding, and there will be more competition for remaining funds, both federal and state.
- The advisory board requested updated status about the proposed Corvallis-Albany bike path.

E. Joint, Combined Agencies' Meeting

- A joint meeting with the Corvallis Parks and Recreation advisory board and the Greenbelt Land Trust (GLT) is scheduled March 3, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., in the Madison meeting room. Jeff reported that Michael Pope has been hired as the new GLT director, replacing Karlene McCabe.
- Potential partnering focus subjects/projects include: river restoration; trails (Sheep Farm Trail, aka "Northwest Passage" in particular); dogs and leash rules. Coordinating City and County policies is a goal.

F. Other Business

- Randy reported on progress by the Corvallis-to-the-Sea (C2C) Partnership. The Forest Service will begin the environmental assessment process next fiscal year, since much of the route is on/through Forest Service lands.
- Randy noted that the Natural Areas and Parks section of the Benton County website has an old map, showing the proposed C2C route going through Cardwell Hill, rather than the current proposal along Old Peak Road.
- Jeff and the other Avery department heads (Roger Irvin, Public Works and Greg Verret, Community Development) received a copy of Gary Chapman/C2C letter to the Benton County Commissioners, concerning initial approval from Benton County (and other agencies) about designating rights of way on appropriate segments of the proposed trail route. Jeff indicated Benton County's intent to cooperate and facilitate, if at all possible.
- Denise indicated that C2C is mentioned at least nine times in the 1995 Parks System Comprehensive Plan.
- Jeff reported that the draft Prairie Species Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was scheduled to go to the Benton County Commissioners on January 19, with recommendation to forward it to US Fish and Wildlife (F&W) for consideration. However, the regional F&W office hasn't adequately reviewed the draft, so the process is on hold.
- Jeff reported that 2 landowners considering conservation easements, associated with the HCP, for lands to be used to mitigate impacts to the Fender's Blue butterfly (endangered species), have decided on fee simple sales of acreage to Benton County. The acreage sales will require additional due diligence and delay grant acquisitions; however, owning the acreage should mean less management processes by Benton County. One conservation easement continues to move forward.

V. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.