



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

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Meeting Summary: Smith Rock State Park Master Plan Public Meeting II – Development Concepts + Public Comment

Date: October 24th and 25th, 2017 Public Meetings Bend Parks and Recreation Department and Deschutes County Fair and Expo Center, Redmond

OPRD Staff: Julia Cogger, Scott Nebeker, Jerry Winegar, David Stipe, Scott Brown, Josie Barnum, Ian Caldwell, Chris Parkins, Steve Memminger, Paul Patton and Carrie Lovellette.

Small Group Break Out Session Meeting Highlights:

PARKING AND CIRCULATION

C: Do not construct a new entrance into the park

C: Work with the county to install a gate or booth on NE Crooked River Drive to be used during busy seasons or on busy weekends to control traffic. Develop a "neighbor pass" or something similar that would allow neighbors through the gate/booth. This option would need planning to ensure cars would be kept moving smoothly when the gate is closed and neighbors and emergency vehicles would not get stuck in traffic jams.

C: The idea of using technology or an app to notify people of when the park was full was well received.

C: Instead of a road through the area, build a small (probably non-paved) parking lot in the hay field which gives access via Canyon Trail to a new bridge at the southern tip. This parking lot, or possibly the RV lot could be seasonally closed.

C: Adding more parking may not be a bad idea, 100 spaces or so.

- o Expand the parking lot at the Rex or the current RV/Overflow lot, add a parking lot at the hay field on Wilcox or at the Vanderbilt property (across from the current RV/Overflow lot).
- o Off-site parking with a shuttle.

C: Dedicate a parking lot that was short term parking only. Like 30 minutes.

C: Charge extra for buses or large groups.

C: Do not put parking lot on Vanderbilt property (OPRD land on East side of Crooked River Drive)

C: Consider making the temporary parking lot a permanent lot and expand a green/day use space at North Point

C: Be sure the visitor center is not visible from the canyon and consider putting it in the hay field by Wilcox; Perhaps shuttle people into the park (reduce traffic flow)

C: Do not build a new entrance road in the undeveloped area. We find solitude and peace there.

C: Work with county to make parking on Wilcox and 17th a no parking zone.

C: Keep day use parking at the north end of the park by paving current overflow lot. Will increase need for north bridge.

C: Put a parking lot with or without a visitor center at Wilcox hay field but do not build a new road.

C: Most everyone recommended removing the parallel parking along NE Crooked River Drive and replacing those spaces with spaces in another lot due to safety concerns and irritation with trying to drive down the road when pedestrians are in the travel lane.

- Adding a sidewalk/trail along the parallel parking was also suggested.
- Still provide spaces for RV, bus and trailer parking

TRAILS AND CAPACITY

C: If and when the new Rim Trail extension is added, it may get pedestrians off the road allowing parallel parking in that area to be utilized again.

C: New bridges and loop trails spread visitors out which changes our current congestion problems.

A: The figures used to calculate ideal capacity for the park assumed all current park trails would be saturated with users (evenly dispersed). New trail additions would need to be factored into the overall capacity of the park. Natural resources, facility degradation and staffing must also be considered when estimating an appropriate number of users within the park.

Q: What percent of park users were only at the park to access BLM land? (The Marsupials/Grey Butte Trail)

- OPRD could move one of the trail counters up to Burma to get better data on this

WELCOME CENTER

C: Folks weren't terribly excited about having the new proposed welcome center at the RV lot due to viewshed issues. They would like it to be "tucked back in" someplace where it blends in with surroundings like the current welcome center.

CAMPING

C: Allow sleeping in vehicles in the bivi. This was a big one. People understood the need for a reservation system but they want to sleep in their vans.

C: Park users like the Bivi and its current location. Do not allow RV's in the Bivi area.

C: Leave the bivi where it is, just expand it a little, add group space, and more common space. Don't change it into a regular campground as it will ruin the atmosphere.

C: Put gate on existing bivi to control traffic

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

C: Climbers were concerned about "management plans" and how OPRD would institute one. Some regulation would be ok as long as it was done correctly.

C: Consider starting a friends group which consulted with guides and other climbers and climber groups to regulate certain aspects.

C: The need for a management plan should be addressed in the master plan but acknowledged much studying and planning would need to occur before one is established.

C: Climber: large groups are the primary problem with crowding on routes (primarily university programs and climbing clubs)

People liked the small break out session approach.