

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

June 11, 2024

Agenda Item: 6b

Information

Topic: 2025-2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Update

Presented by: Caleb Dickson

Background: To remain qualified for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants, each state must prepare a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years. The last SCORP for Oregon was completed by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and accepted by the National Park Service in 2019. Since 2022, OPRD has been preparing the 2025-29 Oregon SCORP, titled *Balance and Engagement: Sustaining the Benefits for All Oregonians*. To produce this SCORP, OPRD contracted with Oregon State University's Center for the Outdoor Recreation Economy to assist in project administration and to coordinate research.

The primary focus of the plan is to help identify priority projects for grant funding. In addition, the planning effort provides up-to-date, high-quality information to assist recreation providers with general park system planning in Oregon. With the completion of the 2025-29 plan, the state will have eligibility to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) through the end of 2029.

Information Presented:

The following are key components of the plan:

1. **SCORP Public Engagement:** The planning effort is guided by the 33-member SCORP Advisory Committee, a survey of Oregon residents, and a survey of Oregon outdoor recreation providers. In addition, the public have opportunities to provide feedback on the plan through open house events and a review of the draft documents.
2. **2022 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey:** A substantial investment was made to conduct a representative statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their outdoor recreation participation in Oregon and their opinions about parks and recreation management. A total of 4,055 randomly selected Oregonians completed the survey.
3. **2022 Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Surveys:** The plan includes surveys of recreation providers located within Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) and located in dispersed settings. Survey results help to identify outdoor recreation funding priorities and top management issues and challenges.
4. **Oregon Outdoor Recreation Benefits:** There are research studies by Oregon State University that estimate the health and economic benefits of outdoor recreation to Oregonians. There is also a study by Earth Economics that examines the economic contribution of outdoor recreation to Oregon's economy in terms of total spending and employment.

5. **Engaging with Underserved Communities:** For issues of equitable inclusion of diverse communities, participation for specific demographic groups were compared, alongside relevant constraints for a few groups of interest (low-income Oregon residents, residents in a household with a disability, and racially/ethnically diverse residents). Management recommendations are developed based on survey responses, advisory committee insights, and literature review.
6. **Balancing Conservation and Recreation:** For concerns with crowding and balancing conservation with recreation, residents identified their personal response to crowding, their preferred management action, and their priority of natural resource impact. Public recreation providers were also surveyed on these issues. Management recommendations are developed based on the survey responses, advisory committee insights, and field perspectives.
7. **LWCF Open Project Selection Process Review & Scoring:** Oregon has developed an Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) that provides objective criteria and standards for grant selection based on Oregon's priority needs as identified in the 2025-2029 SCORP. The OPSP connects SCORP to the use of LWCF grants for meeting high priority outdoor recreation resource needs.

Caleb Dickson will provide a summary of these important planning components.

Next Steps:

1. Public review of draft plan (May-June 2024).
2. Submit final plan to Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission for adoption (July/August 2024).
3. Submit final plan to National Park Service (September 2024).

Prior Action by Commission: Approval of LWCF planning grant request (September 2021).

Action Requested: None.

Prepared by: Caleb Dickson