



# Parks Progress Report

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## Welcome

Welcome to the second in a series of updates from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The work that goes on across our park system spans projects large and small, and includes everything from fixing sewer lines to restoring trails to talking to families about “playing it safe” on the beach. All of it is important.

This progress report shows how our park system is growing and improving, both in highly-visible and unseen ways. Large construction and renovation projects are a big part of the picture, but so are stories of projects completed with highly-skilled volunteers, or done with dollars leveraged in unique or creative ways.



With the passage of Measure 66, Oregon State Parks can, for the first time in decades, begin to significantly address the backlog of maintenance and repair problems that have plagued the parks for years. In the months ahead, we will highlight some of the stories behind the budget dollars.

I invite you to see what we're doing in the parks. Make it special by visiting us on State Parks Day June 3 (always the first Saturday in June). On that day, parks across the state will be hosting a variety of fun and educational activities for kids, parents, adults and visitors of all interests. Visit [www.prd.state.or.us](http://www.prd.state.or.us) and click on "calendar" for more information.

*Laurie Warner*

Acting Director, Oregon Parks and Recreation

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### Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

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- John L. Blackwell, Vice-Chair (Dist. 1)
- Charles “Jody” Calica (East of Cascades)
- June Spence (West of Coast Range)
- Sara Vickerman (Dist. 5)
- Shelley L. Briggs (Dist. 4)
- Nik Blosser (Dist. 3)



# Park Improvements

## *Silver Falls (OR 214, 26 miles E of Salem)*

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One of the oldest, most treasured and heavily-used (700,000 people per year) parks in the system, Silver Falls has been suffering with decaying buildings and antiquated sewer and water system for decades.

Faced with aging heating and electrical systems, insect infestation, and weather-related deterioration, the South Falls Lodge received a \$800,000 structural and cosmetic facelift in the past two years. Thanks to Legislature-approved funding, this historic building was renovated with a new, insulated cedar-shake roof, upgraded wiring, columns, rails and structural supports for the porches, and a new propane heating system replacing the oil furnace from the early '40s. The storage garage behind the Lodge also received a new roof and doors.

Inside the Lodge, the space was reconfigured for the food concessionaire and the Friends of Silver Falls Nature Store. The basement was completely gutted, to install I-beam supports for the floors. New doors, windows, lights, rebuilt fireplaces and refinished furniture all grace the majestic interior.



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*The South Falls Lodge at Silver Falls State Park will be rededicated in a ceremony at the park on **State Parks Day, June 3, 2000.***

Renovations to the building—a sterling example of heavy timber and stone construction—were largely completed with Douglas-fir lumber from the park itself—"blowdown" from the powerful winter storms. Much of the labor was carried out by Department Of Corrections inmates.

A massive \$3+ million water, sewage and electrical system replacement has begun at the park, finally rectifying the problems created by years of budget-induced deferred maintenance. New wells, new and larger drainfields and a state-of-the art sewage treatment plant are now in the construction phase. Work on this much-welcomed project will continue over the next few years.

Other projects at the park include a new restroom/shower building, picnic shelters, trail restoration, roadwork, roof repairs and footbridges.





*Patio masonry work done in 1999 salvaged much of the original flagstone rock from the early days of the park.*

### *A Priceless Piece of Oregon*

Silver Falls State Park, the jewel of Oregon's state park system, is crowned by the historic South Falls Lodge. The lodge was completed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) 1942-43.

The beautiful original furnishings in the lodge were crafted by the CCC from myrtlewood from designs by Margery Hoffman Smith of the Oregon Arts Project.

The original furniture – 25 tables, 82 chairs, 11 benches and a large dining room bureau – were made from only two myrtlewood logs. But what logs they were! At 40 feet long and 5 feet in diameter, they are unheard of today. Even 60+ years ago, when they were harvested, they were “something unusual,” as then-State Parks Superintendent Samuel Boardman put it.

Myrtlewood, then as now, was noted for its beauty and strength, but also for its penchant for warping. How could furniture be made from them? After having the logs milled, he faced the unpleasant news that the only way to combat warping was to perform a new method of drying called “kiln drying” on it – and the only place to get that done was Michigan.

Oregon State College (now Oregon State University) saved the day. Its experimental kiln dried the myrtlewood. The furniture (which has never warped) has graced the park system ever since.

The massive, beautiful furniture you see in the Lodge today is being carefully preserved. The latest round of refinishing will be done by summer, 2000.



*The myrtle furniture had slowly scattered through the park system over the past 60 years, but after a search, all pieces have now been returned to the lodge.*



# Park Improvements

## ***Cape Lookout (12 miles SW of Tillamook)***

After several years of fierce winter storms, loss of buildings and campsites, and campground closures, the protective dune at Cape Lookout required rebuilding.

Sitting as it does on a thin ribbon of sand south of Tillamook Head, the park's location truly cuts both ways. The park offers unparalleled access to the beauty of the Oregon coast. Miles of trails, beaches and scenic vistas and a modern campground (complete with RV and tent sites, an amphitheater and yurts) have served hundreds of thousands of Oregonians dating back to the 1930s.

But a series of high winds and tides chewed through the foredune that shelters the campground from the ocean. Dozens of campsites were lost, as was a restroom building, trails, amphitheater and part of a road.

Reconstruction is under way. Nature has dictated some locations in the park are unsuitable for camping, so we've elected to landscape the area rather than replace the campsites. The dune was rebuilt by laying 3,200 enormous



*Contractor Jeff Ward of CMTS explains how the fabric (Anti-wash Geo-jute, a material never before used in Oregon), will protect the dune until the American dune grass takes hold.*



sand-filled fabric bags along a line mimicking the location of the original dune, then covering the barricade with loose sand. A special open-weave fabric was laid over the new dune, and native beach grass was planted. The fabric will enable the sand to resist erosion until the grass matures, a process which takes six months to a year. Then the fabric decomposes. New waterlines and a rebuilt amphitheater are already in place.

The park stands ready to serve Oregonians for another season.



### ***Wallowa Lake (Off OR 82, 6 miles S of Joseph)***

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Gearing up for a major upgrade (to 50 amps) of the electrical system for Wallowa Lakes's 121 electrical campsites. This \$250,000 project should attract and keep RV customers, whose modern rigs demand higher capacity power.

Construction of a new fish cleaning station for the lake is slated for fall, 2000. This will be cost-shared with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

### ***Lake Owyhee (Off OR 201, 33 miles SW of Nyssa)***

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Built a new roadway, parking area and entrance to a future group camp. The \$52,000 project was cost-shared 50-50 with the Bureau of Reclamation.



*The paving work at Lake Owyhee will provide safer access to the many campers who use the site.*



*The new boat ramp at Stewart provides access to Lost Creek Reservoir, a popular southern Oregon boating and fishing destination.*

### ***Joseph Stewart (OR 62, 35 miles NE of Medford)***

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\$57,000 project replaced old floating dock (that no longer floated properly) with a new, wider one. Added new walkway by dock. Cost-shared with Marine Board.

### ***OC&E Woods Line State Trail (OR 39, Klamath Falls)***

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This 100 mile rail-to-trail conversion is built on the old railbed of the Oregon, California and Eastern Railroad (OC&E). Upgrades to the surface, trailheads and parking, plus new mile markers and gates on the trail will all be made possible in summer, 2000, thanks to the cooperation and shared budgets of a number of agencies. Funds for the \$41,000 project will be shared by the National Recreational Trails Funding Program (Symms grant), private donations, and a lot of help from the Klamath Rails to Trails partners.

# Program Improvements

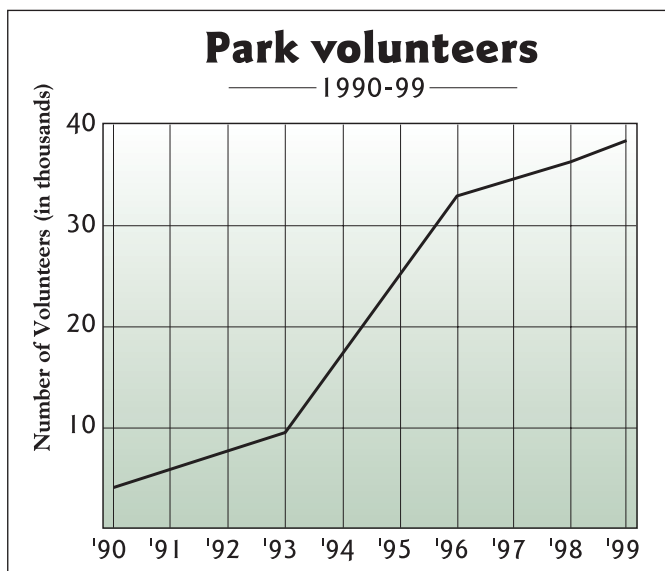
## Volunteers

OPRD's partnerships with volunteers is legendary. Without volunteers, our park system could not function successfully. The numbers tell a story of commitment and community spirit: more than 36,000 people donate almost half a million hours of their time and skills as park hosts, beach cleanup volunteers, members of friends' groups, and more.

Volunteerism is more than good community relations. It's good business, too. Professional educators, architects, engineers and a score of community groups such as the Boy Scouts, Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, equestrian groups, hiking and fishing organizations, Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism and many more donate or sharply discount the costs of their services via partnerships with individual parks. These partnerships result in a direct cost savings to the parks, with benefits like giving youth groups valuable work experience. The Boy Scouts in particular enjoy a unique bond with the park system: Sunset Bay, Joseph Stewart, Shore Acres, Bullards Beach and many more have been the beneficiaries of Scout projects. New playgrounds, improved trails, new fences and picnic tables are just some of the projects they've worked on.

Local tradespeople participate, too: one recent example is a company that power cleaned all the boat docks in parks along the Columbia River. In the same area, the Friends of Vista House donated \$100,000 towards the maintenance of Oregon's famous viewpoint. OPRD matched that donation dollar for dollar.

Thanks to legislative recognition of the multiplying effect volunteers have on park operations and maintenance, OPRD has recently been able to add a second fulltime employee to its volunteer services section. Matching park development needs with skilled volunteers in the community is the primary focus of this position. In the next year, OPRD will rely more heavily on database management of available volunteers, and will introduce a new 1-800 number for prospective and seasoned volunteers.





## *Beach Safety*

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Oregon's coastline is long and rugged. Its 362 miles are filled with breathtaking scenery: pounding surf, towering cliffs, dramatic chasms – and, of course, beaches. Unfortunately, coastal waters can be deceptively dangerous: “sneaker” waves and harmless-looking logs and driftwood can seriously injure or even kill unsuspecting beachgoers. In the past 10 years, log rollover deaths and wave-related drownings have claimed several lives and caused serious injuries. It's not acceptable.

OPRD operates 72 properties along the coast, and we take our responsibility for visitor safety seriously. The 1999 Legislature recognized the critical importance of this issue. They earmarked roughly \$243,000 for an enhanced Beach Safety Program and a new fulltime Beach Safety Coordinator.

With millions of coastal park visitors a year, that's a lot of people to reach and educate. A unique way to reach large audiences helped kick off OPRD's campaign: more than 100 movie screens on the north coast and in Portland, Salem, Albany, Corvallis, Eugene and Bend ran safety messages for the entire month of March. The combined audience totaled some 700,000 viewers. Also in March, four different television commercials hit the Portland and Eugene airwaves to capture the spring break crowd that heads out to the coast. Hundreds of spots were shown during key viewing times. On tap: more spots during June and July.



## *Local Community Grants*

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The 1999 legislature allocated over 11% of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's Measure 66 funding to a Local Community Grant program to be managed by the department. The program offers matching funds (up to 50%) for the acquisition, development and rehabilitation of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The \$5 million program is open to projects large and small, from eligible agencies such as city and county parks, METRO, port districts and park and recreation districts.

Information, instructions and the application itself are all available online at [www.prd.state.or.us](http://www.prd.state.or.us). Grant applications are being accepted until April 28, 2000.

# Park project summary

The Oregon State Parks Progress Report is published 2-3 times per year by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

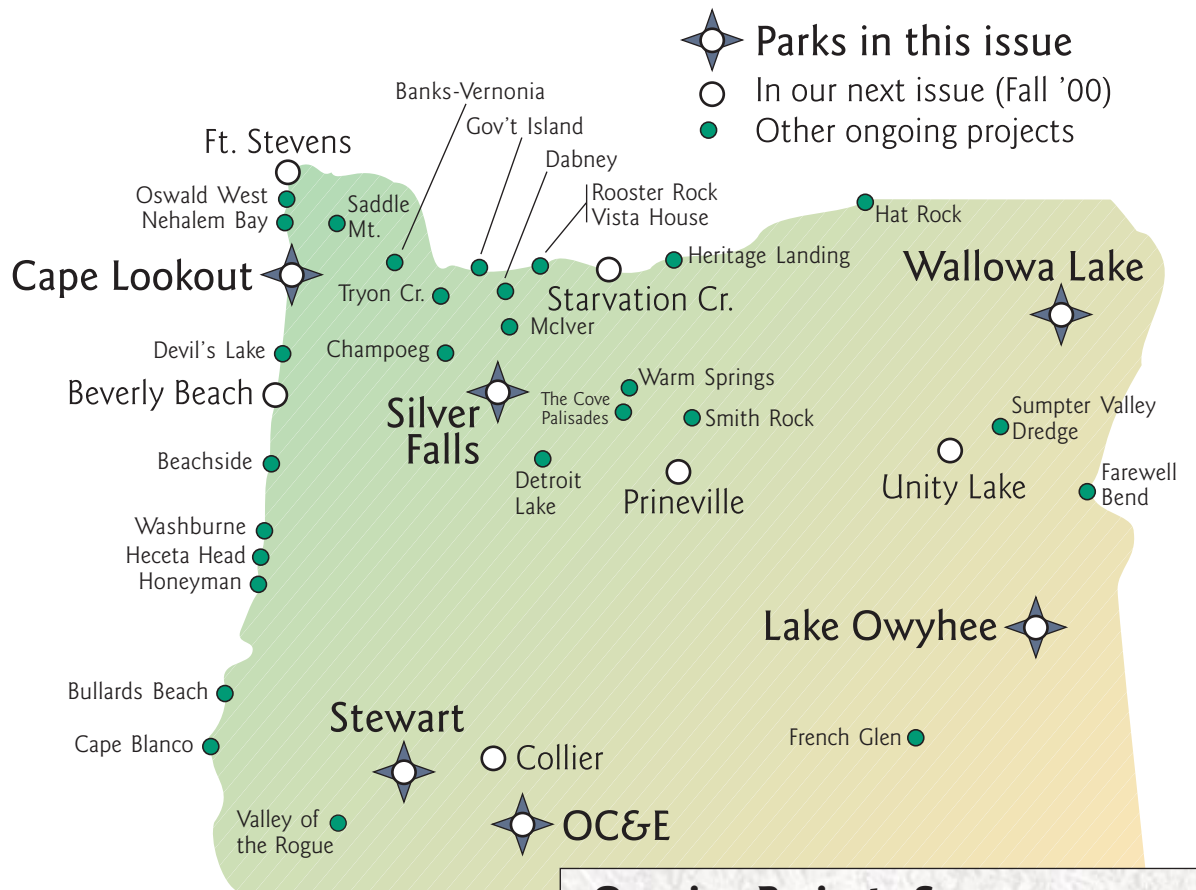
For more information on any project, or to add or remove an address from the subscription list, contact:

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Ongoing Projects Summary	
Type of Project	# Statewide
Sewer/water	14
Restrooms/showers	13
General construction	7
Roadwork	7
Boating	6
Campground expansion	2
Other	16