

# Small Group Notes from February 10 Public Meeting

## Punchbowl Falls Group List

Phil W - western rivers

Sara Martin - [pearpeople@gmail.com](mailto:pearpeople@gmail.com)

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## Land

Restrooms – people are gonna go so we gotta control it.

Cheap porta potties at the parking lot were suggested. Something simple cheap to solve the issue

West Fork side should be the priority area for improvements

Remove informal trails and focus on a handful of main trails

Alan was really focused on ADA/paved access from parking to the falls. Either as a path or a lockable gate that senior groups could drive down...

Kayakers would prefer to put-in on the east fork – but up river from the current property line. The west fork sees a lot more kayaker use than rafter use.

The dreamers of the group really wanted a bridge reconnection across the east fork.

There are some safety concerns about the cliff. How to keep it natural but safe. ...most people didn't want guard rails but supported official viewpoints.

## Park Management

Signage – mixed opinions on interpretive signage. Most want to leave it natural and are concerned about the upkeep with signs distributed throughout the park.

Some simple wood directional signs (like forest service directional signs).

Signs only at the parking lot with map.

Permissible Activities: dogs on a leash, no camping, no fires, 24/7 accessibility, cliff jumping (keep sign

Restroom at the parking area. Most thought a 1 or 2 sided pit toilet was best.

Orientation Signage from road? Mixed on whether there should be signage from Dee Highway.

Park fee – mixed take on whether to charge for the park. Most saw problems with policing and collecting the fees.

### **Making it Happen**

Develop friends of the waterfront type of group to help manage the park. Can we group up with the existing friends of the waterfront – what is their status?

Get the message out that we will lose access to this property if we can't find the funding by sending letters to the editor, telling friends, etc.

Is a petition needed?

Present letters of support to the County Commissioners

It would be cool to do a gopro video of the park to help with the grant application and presentation. Wet Planet Whitewater could help with this.

Community Event like in White Salmon to get community members on that section of the river.

It would be cool to have a produced little information film about the park for the grant presentation. Approach the local extreme kayaker film folks.

Make sample letters of support for people to grab from website

Get the word out about the survey on [pdxkayaker.org](http://pdxkayaker.org)

Is there a Spanish version of the survey?

Maintenance should be covered by the county budget with help from volunteer groups like Friends of the Waterfront.

### **River**

Be careful not to step on the tribal rights. Some thought that the conflict was minimized by the nature of seasonal uses on the site (kayakers on high flows, fishing during certain times of the winter, etc.)

Signage at the parking lot could explain the rules with fishing and the tribal rights.

Commercial river rafting will not be impacted greatly by the park because of the fluctuation of the river levels. However public access makes commercial trip stop here viable.

Rafting, kayaking, hikers, and fishing bring positive impacts to the downtown economy in Hood River and the Valley.

Discussion about the large influx of boaters on big water days and then basically no use from this group for majority of the year. How to mitigate the impacts of these large groups is difficult

The lack of easy access for boaters self regulates the number of rafters – maybe this is better?

Are there laws about handicap access requirements (or parking lot requirements) that come with state funding?

February 10, 2015

Punchbowl Falls County Park Visioning Project

## **Participants**

Gloria Krantz

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Trevor Jostad

Larry Martin         [pearpeople@gmail.com](mailto:pearpeople@gmail.com)

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Elmer Ward

John Hart

Kristin Godkin

## **Making it Happen**

1. Reach out to local corporate community for assistance with fundraising and financial donations. Insitu, ICE, Full Sail Brewing, Tofurky, Keen Footwear, Google, Dakine, Clear Creek Distillery, Logston Brewing
2. Contact Friends of Waterfront Park for assistance in setting up a Friends of Punchbowl Park for fundraising and stewardship
3. Contact Lori Stirn from Park and Recreation for support. She is the Chairperson for the State Park grant committee.
4. Contact Columbia Land Trust ,ODFW for possible funding sources.
5. Reach out to local non-profits to help spread the word about the Park and obtain more community support. Organizations such as GO local, Sense of Place tours.
6. Contact Becky Brun for assistance with grant writing, and Gil Sharp for assistance with Pro Bono legal services.

## **River**

1. Maintain limited access for users. No river access by vehicles. Current parking lots would be the furthest private vehicles should be able to travel.
2. The group is very concerned about potential conflict with residents on Iowa Drive. Small parking area and the trail down to the river direct from Iowa Drive is steep and susceptible to erosion. Erosion an issue with stream turbidity and fish habitat.
3. Warm Springs Fishermen are concerned with safety of being below lookout. Many times people can't tell there are men below and either kick or throw rocks over the edge.

## **Land**

1. Trail system needs to focus on fewer, well maintained trails to limit erosion and maintain visual beauty. For example, railroad tie stairs at Iowa Drive location would help stem mud going to river and provide safer area for kayakers accessing this take out point

3. Bathrooms only at main parking lot, preferable just beyond the gate and visually obscured from the road to decrease incidental use from non-park users.
4. Signage is preferable at the parking areas only to maintain natural beauty of the park further in toward the river. Group would like the park to be left as natural as possible.

### **Park Management**

1. Parking lot needs some leveling and the gate to remain closed to vehicle traffic.
2. Long term plans would be helpful to have a suspension bridge from the Iowa Drive side over the river.
3. Need signage to indicate appropriate use- no fire, no overnight camping, day use only.
4. On high traffic days, perhaps a docent for crime protection and directions. This could be sourced from a Friends of Punchbowl Falls organization
5. Possible one way trail in the center of the park? Would help visitors enjoy the solitude and nature of the park.
6. Want to see the pine/White Oak habitat to preserved.

## **Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - February 10, 2015 Notes Taken by Kristyn Fix**

### **· List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?**

- o William Sheeley - wrsheeley@gmail.com
- o Nikki Guerra-Smith - nikkiguerra9@hotmail.com
- o David Winans - dswinans@aol.com
- o Robin W Cochran
- o David Hupp - davidhupp@charter.net
- o Dale Hill - hilldale1@gmail.com
- o Chris Brun, Elmer Ward, Phil Wallin and Carrington Barrs all participated at one point

### **· Make It Happen**

- o Support letters - group shared email addresses and the samples were shared; more support letters will prove more care and concern from the county
- o Letters to the Editor - speak from the heart, pick a few points to focus on, make them short and write the letters from the point of view as WHEN we get the park, not IF
- o Two stages: 1. Local support and 2. Targeting other areas of state with social media
- o We need to get the whole town behind it - local businesses end up sharing a lot of info with tourists and could advertise this park too
- o Dale Hill says there are basically four groups who use this area: 1. Rafters/Kayakers 2. Locals who like nature 3. Fishers and 4. Environmental Educators; by tapping into each of these groups to offer support and support letters, we might also be able to have them get funding sources from small constituent groups; What are these local groups? Teachers? Nature groups such as Friends of Trails? How do we keep them organized?
- o Partnering with other like-minded organizations
- o Newspaper stories to educate community
- o Extra money through grant applications, fundraising, networking with funders
- o Inviting specific groups to forums and to provide input - Downtown business association; Heights business association; City hall meetings; Support from Odell
- o Who will maintain the funding and marketing once this is developed as a park? Volunteers most likely. What is the outreach to get more volunteers?

### **· River**

- o Restored areas are not available for recreation at this time
- o Kayakers have one egress 100 yards south of Falls
- o Iowa Drive gives access to the East Fork - an Iowa Drive resident says that parking is a huge issue and that this area is already over-utilized when waters are high for kayakers and all year round for hikers
- o "When there is water there are fish and kayakers" - busiest from December to March

- o At Iowa Drive there is a steep cliff and it is difficult to access the river except by rope for kayakers
- o Dee would be the best put-in for rafters, but there is a lot of private property that needs to be respected - Kayakers in group says that they try to abide by signs in order to respect launch access; Tribal members disagree stating that kayakers and rafters still put in on private property frequently
- o Tribal fishers have issues with the kayakers running the Falls when they are fishing; May to July is tribal fishing
- o All agree there should not be a boat ramp
- o There should remain a place to take out boats and kayaks before the Falls and to put back in at the Confluence
- o What happens with runoff? Will there be testing and maintaining water quality in order to limit damage?

#### · **Land**

- o Maintenance of the park is very important - this group has three adjacent landowners and one avid user of nature
- o Forest management requires funding and is very important, in addition to trails, access and maintenance; forest management could include logging the hills up to the side for one-time revenue source in order to put money back into the development
- o Disease and bug concern; concern about invasives
- o Near-term Visions: no over-development, preservation, do as little as possible with development, less work and maintenance over short and long-term
- o Long-term Visions: maintenance? Who cares for the park? How frequently? After storms? What is the cost? Will need a large budget.
- o County hopes for volunteers, community involvement, stewardship programs, adjacent landowners and corrections to take care of maintenance
- o Parks/county believe there will be a long-term need for bathrooms, but don't want to just develop up front for no reason
- o Some costs could be FIXED, but not all of them over time
- o One resident brings out one bag of trash per month - trash receptacles are needed
- o Does the operation need to bring in revenue? How to enforce this and avoid paying more taxes?
- o County sees this as a low maintenance park - won't need as much revenue; to be developed based on demand
- o Group recommends trail consolidation with less goat trails
- o Tribal fisheries group members state that there is always an impact, but we can control how we do it responsibly
- o Residents in Dee are experiencing RAPID changes and are fearful that if we give people an inch they will take a mile

#### · **Park Management**

- o Gate should stay so people won't drive in; but it is ugly and should be equipped with more secure lock that is difficult to cut; possibly could use the gate AS signage

area feel less wild, but wouldn't necessarily take away; it's probably not necessary onsite at each interpretive area, but rather at the entrance

- o Signs may deteriorate
- o Possibly a sign at parking lot with map and historical information including habitat and geological
- o Elmer Ward - information is always helpful for diverse users; father signage is from the resource, the less people are likely to interpret and retain
- o Signage can be the most cost efficient way to educate people - group asks if this is supposed to be an educational site? Could tours/interpretive groups just post small signs with numbers on them and county would be responsible for maintaining a pamphlet that corresponds?
- o Loop trail is a great idea, although it will have a steep grade. One way trail is not a good idea because people will not abide
- o Suspension Bridge - met with much concern regarding structure, maintenance and engineering; another artificial addition; cost of repairs; more foot traffic on Iowa Drive trail; where would the access be and how intrusive?
- o Day Use Only - dogs on leash; no camping and no campfires
- o Warning signs for swimming and diving
- o Guardrail on cliff defeats purpose of sightseeing - we should consult risk management; development may open up liability vs. just leaving it natural
- o Toilets - yes at the trailhead, but we should wait and see what the use is to determine; if it might be necessary in the future we should build it into strategic plan now
- o Less "official" signage offsite for Punchbowl - just small signs; no signage for Iowa Drive
- o How will this be accessible online? On the county website?
- o Elmer Ward - potable water, pit toilets and garbage are pretty basic at parks, especially near parking lot

## Notes from Feb. 10 Punch Bowl Forum

### Group:

Chuck Gehling with HRSWC

Sam Doak – Dee resident, sdoak@me.com

Buck Parker – Odell resident buck.parker@sbcglobal.net

Catherine Loke – attended first forum as well, kayaker? catherine.s.loke@gmil.com

Tim & Ellen Heltzel – Dee neighbors close to Iowa drive, but Dee is second home.

timheltzel@comcast.net

eheltzel@hotmail.com

Linda Maddox,

Scott Baker – HRVPRD parksprograms@gorge.net

Mikel Diwan (joined in onPark Management portion) mikel.diwan@co.hood-river.or.us

### Park Management:

1. Interpretive signage – what's the take on it? Natural and social history, geology, habitat, stewardship of area and park information and rules, education – giving an opportunity to tell the story of Punch Bowl Falls. Why this place is special. Indian fishing area then and now.

**Scott Baker** – Signage at the lookout would detract from the place, Just a good place to be.

**Chuck** – Put the sign back near parking, entrance area or more obscure area so the dynamic spots are not compromised.

**Linda** – Just signage at the parking lot.

**Take away** – No signage at the view sheds. Signage meant to enhance the area and promote stewardship.

2. What about restrooms and garbage?

**Tim** – restroom – not yet.

**Scott** – Seasonal port-a-potty for now, see how much it is used and then go from there with the longer term goal of getting a CXT type later.

**Chuck** – manage it based on reality.

**Take away** – Something needs to be there. A portable, non-permanent type in the beginning with the plan of something permanent down the line – budget for this.

3. Entrance – Leave the gate.

4. Safety and minimizing accidents. This falls in with signage. Information Kiosk/ Rules and Regulations at the parking/gate area.

**Catherine** – signage at the gate.

**Buck** – are rocks a problem? Chuck answered yes, near the jumping area – they can fall on tribal fishing area but rock is fairly stable so not to much of a problem.

**Catherine** – nice to have some bolt in the rocks so EMS/Fire Dept can have easier time with rescues. **Michael** said that's pretty affordable.

Sign age for safety and other rules (eg. No fires, no overnight camping, dogs on leash, hour of operation – dawn to dusk) as Mike was listing these examples, Scott Baker wanted to make sure that we weren't listing these rules as if they were a done deal.

**Take away** – not too many signs as they get vandalized – especially the deeper into the park one goes as the public is not there to catch the perps.



## **Making it Happen:**

How can we strengthen the support for a good grant application and make the application stronger?

Educate more folks and create more interest groups.

Grant ask is \$578K. This will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt with OPRD

**Buck** – try to get in touch with the Lyons Club, the JC's. Get a group of volunteers to lead tours and build interest. Once a week in summer.

**Scott** – only have until April 1 so not time for tours in summer. Need letters of support soon. Also a long term commitment on behalf of the County. They need to write in a line item in their budget towards future maintenance of the Park. They are the applicant and have to show they have skin in the game. Lobby the County to do this. Talk to the County Commissioners.

**Chuck** – yes, not showing public support/county commitment these last few grant application cycles were grounds for rejection.

**Tim** – Get a petition going.

**Buck** – Need to know what the costs will be for maintenance, show that to the County, see what the County can commit to and put that in the application.

**Polly** - Proposing some type of group like Friends of Punch Bowl Park is one way to show support and public buy-in. Seed money.

**Sam** – what about crowd funding? Local donors? Demonstrates the Co. needs to buy into it too. We already have 550 interested people (survey).

Feb. 16 bring it up at BOC meeting.

Other sources of revenue – ODFW or LWCF

## **River:**

*(Ron and Dan ran this but they didn't pull as much information from as tell us what goes on here recreationally and said we could ask them questions. It would have been good if I saw their work sheet ahead of time to see what their guidelines were supposed to be).*

Ron pointed out the one take out above the falls and said kayakers were okay with they way things are now - but rafters need more access and tend to make more impact. Dan – they drag their rafts over vegetation.

Kayaker/Rafter difference – harder for rafters to manage their equipment due to size. Need roads for hauling. They will not get as much out of this park if it remains low profile.

**Chuck** – there is a less steep area for raft access across Punch Bowl road - up an private road. Could we get an alternative easement there for rafts?

**Scott** – Any discussion about River left for raft access. Ron: no. Scott: River left portage would be easy to do. Dee often not enough water.

Tim – Anyway an access easement could be purchased if we don't get the grant? Ron: yes, you can with WRC.

**Chuck** – WRC will sell with a conservation easement - but that is not an access easement. Access easement

**Dan** - fishing use is broken up during different times of year. Spring Chinook at Punch Bowl and Winter steelhead at Iowa Dr. side.

**Ron** – Basically rafting will be on low end of priority as their need will be hard to accommodate if park remains primitive.

No one wants the road punched through for general vehicular access. Trail instead? Dan turn road into trail?

**Chuck** – must still keep it as a road for power line and fisheries access even though it's gated most of the time.

**Scott** – when it becomes a county park there will be more folks.

### **Land:**

Trails – Keep them as they are or consolidate them? How to manage the land. Do people care about cleaning up after ice storms, controlling invasive species, bug issues (tree disease), etc.

I described the possibility of a short loop trail that Heather and I walked on Sunday 2/8.

**Linda Maddox** said yeas to extra trail and others concurred.

Foot Bridge from Punch Bowl to Iowa Drive portion?

**Tim and Ellen** said no tho this which prompted the discussion about more emphasis on the amenities to happen on the Punch Bowl portion of the park first anyway. We then talked about the fact that there is land available for eventual parking near Iowa Dr. further back in the woods a little to the east. This could be part of a longer term plan.

**Sam** – Iowa Dr. neighbors neighbors can have access if it becomes a public park, so the general public should be able to access it as well.

The good thing about parking further back in the woods is that it will take pressure off the end of Iowa Drive and divert the “crowd”.

**Scott** asked what is this land zoned in general and I told him Forest land.

**Tim and Ellen** – no overnight camping!

**Take away on development** – Develop west side (Punch Bowl road side) first. Don't have to plan for 'the most' in the beginning. Gradual approach. See what works. Overall yes on consolidation of trails.

**Heather** put in that we can build a wild, natural place into the plan that we submit in the OPRD grant.

**Elizabeth** asked what is the criteria for the OPRD grant?

**Scott** – scoring is based on recreational opportunities and amenities. LGGP is about promoting outdoor recreation so they look so applications that fulfill this score higher. Punch Bowl should have score higher this last time but it didn't tell the story of public buy-in, or have a skin in the game commitment from the County or a line item for yearly maintenance in the County budget.

**Scott** also said that the use of this particular park changes throughout the year (doesn't necessarily close down in the winter like Tucker). There are also different grants we could go for – LWCF.

**Linda** – talk to BOC Commissioners to encourage County to support park maintenance. Work up a proposed budget for maintenance.

Kick starter funding.

**Chuck** – will retract his bias for no picnic table if that helps with the OPRD grant!