

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PARKS

February 5, 1997 Hearing Room E

1:00 P.M. Tapes 3 - 4

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Mark Simmons, Chair

Rep. Michael Fahey, Vice-Chair

Rep. Mike Lehman

Rep. Leslie Lewis

Rep. Jim Welsh

STAFF PRESENT:

Pat Zwick, Policy Analyst

Marjorie Taylor, Administrative Support

MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD:

County Participation in State Parks

State Park Alternatives

State Parks and Recreation Department Budget Overview

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

Tape/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 3, A		
		For the record, written information packet submitted as (EXHIBIT A) .
005	Chair Simmons	Calls the meeting to order at 1:17 p.m.
<u>COUNTY PARTICIPATION IN STATE PARKS</u>		
	Bill	

015	Penhollow	Representative of the Association of Oregon Counties
017	Penhollow	Speaks of relationships of levels of jurisdictional responsibility between state and county parks.
027	Bob Kefer	Parks Manager, Lane County.
038	Kefer	Speaks of all counties' willingness to look at working with state parks. Since 1992, Lane County has worked with State Parks, Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Agencies contract through county parks to do routine maintenance.
048	Kefer	Partnerships have improved the maintenance process in Lane County, cutting costs and improving service.
052	Kefer	Recently, Lane County has considered consolidating with State Parks and the Army Corps of Engineers.
059	Kefer	Partnerships must be looked at in terms of efficiency and the amount of revenues generated.
067	Kefer	Indicated that most county parks agencies are in worse conditions than they were in the height of the 1970's.
074	Gary Combs	Parks Manager, Coos County - The public doesn't care what type of park they visit, be it state or county.
080	Combs	Coos County has cooperative agreements for approximately 15 park facilities with the Bureau of Land Management, 13 boat ramps work in cooperation with state Fish and Wildlife, and they also have host and volunteer programs.
084	Combs	In 1982 the Coos County parks program was decreased by half.
088	Paul Korbeulic	Parks manager, Jackson County - In the last five years, over \$1,000,000 was cut from the Jackson County parks budget.
093	Korbeulic	Parks were transferred to other jurisdictions and public/private partnerships were developed to help solve the problem.
097	Korbeulic	If counties are to take over the operation of state parks, there needs to be revenue behind that idea.
107	Korbeulic	State and County parks in Jackson County honor each other's fee structures.
112	Rep. Welsh	Asks for examples of public and private partnerships that are working.
117	Korbeulic	There are several examples of public/private partnerships - primarily concessionaires. Some park properties have been leased to private developers
124	Korbeulic	A few park parcels that didn't lend themselves to parks

		have been sold.
127	Combs	County provides staffing, operational dollars, and capital improvement to several properties supervised by Bureau of Land Management.
137	Combs	State Fish and Wildlife owns boat ramps and the county operates the parks associated with the ramps.
143	Combs	Coos County has shared equipment and manpower on short term projects with the State Parks Department.
148	Keefer	Lane County uses many private concessionaires to operate some marinas, campgrounds, and entire parks.
158	Keefer	The county parks department gets a larger revenue percentage with the use of concessionaires, but the county is responsible for capital improvements and infrastructure.
163	Keefer	The public/private relationship is based on how efficient and effective the concessionaire is.
167	Rep. Fahey	Asks how the county prevents concessionaires from taking more profitable parks.
172	Keefer	There is a program in place for making requests that solves the problem.
182	Keefer	Lane County has used many on-site caretaker contracts. Somebody lives on-site to take care of the day to day tasks.
187	Korbeulic	There are some parks that don't have revenue generating ability.
199	Korbeulic	Private/public relationships won't solve all of the funding problems.
202	Combs	In Coos County, of the 36 park facilities, at least 60-70% of the parks are not cost effective.
216	Combs	Some people don't use the park facilities because the fee is too high.
220	Chair Simmons	Asks how much revenue the fees generate.
224	Korbeulic	Fees make up about 30% of the budget.
232	Korbeulic	The parks are public properties and the departments are public servants - people don't want to pay a lot for the services.
237	Combs	Coos County has three revenue generating areas: park fees; RV fees; and maintenance assistance funds.
250	Keefer	Many times the social benefits of parks are forgotten about.
266	Combs	Bike trails need some attention. There are consumers who would like to use them but can't, due to low number or

		poor maintenance.
274	Chair Simmons	Asks if fees charged reflect the cost of operations.
277	Korbeulic	Not in all cases. It depends on the nature of the facility.
284	Rep. Lewis	Comments that the parks must be paid for by the taxpayers since they are public parks, but the question is who pays - whole population or the users of the facilities.
297	Combs	Agrees - there are times when users feel doubly charged due to fees and taxes to maintain the parks.
307	Korbeulic	The problem with relying on user fees is that income is not consistent.
316	Chair Simmons	Acknowledges the presentation.
330	Chair Simmons	Calls for Paul Hanneman.
STATE PARK ALTERNATIVES		
333	Paul Hanneman	Private citizen from Cloverdale, Oregon.
339	Hanneman	Was appointed to the "Save our Parks" Critical Issues Council.
353	Hanneman	Worked in depth on issues related to state parks and how to keep them open (EXHIBIT B).
364	Hanneman	Indicates that the Council report contains suggestions for improvement and ways to find funding.
378	Hanneman	Lists Council ideas for improvement: work with local governments; contracting for park services; expanding the host program; increase volunteer program; increase prison inmate work.
TAPE 4, A		
009	Hanneman	Disagrees with the idea of extending Oregon Department of Transportation duties into wayside areas.
016	Hanneman	Agrees with the idea of expanding the park host program - a host takes care of the park and does minor upkeep.
029	Hanneman	Two ideas can build cost savings and a base of public support.
035	Hanneman	First is contracted maintenance - bid offers should be made on a competitive basis.
049	Hanneman	The Parks Department would have to build communication in local areas to get the bids out.
055	Hanneman	Second is a regional volunteer coordinator program - a paid volunteer coordinator would find local citizens for a

		local volunteer corps.
081	Hanneman	The difference between state workers and someone who is a volunteer coordinator is that the coordinator knows how to find local citizens to volunteer with the state.
105	Hanneman	There is currently a volunteer coordinator in the Parks Department, but that person must be elevated to a higher position so that nothing can pass without discussion of volunteer use.
114	Hanneman	Suggests the creation of a new state advisory committee on volunteer programs.
123	Hanneman	This committee develops structure from Salem to the other volunteer coordinators.
137	Hanneman	Local service and community club meetings are where volunteers will come from.
159	Hanneman	If private contractors don't live up to their bids, they should not continue
166	Rep. Welsh	Asks what the discussion of the Council was on possible methods of clean up and maintenance.
170	Hanneman	The task force recognized that state inmates are not what they once were
182	Hanneman	Some inmates from the Sheridan Federal Correctional Institution are doing a fine job of maintaining parks.
207	Rep. Lewis	Verifies that the volunteers are not state employees, but local community individuals who have been contracted by the state to volunteer.
214	Hanneman	Under a personal services contract the state doesn't have to pay for benefits or withholdings.
219	Rep. Fahey	Asks if volunteers will go on the Oregon Health Plan.
225	Hanneman	It depends on what the contract is for.
230	Rep. Fahey	Asks how the state will choose which parks to delegate volunteer usage.
239	Hanneman	The Parks Department would have a program implemented to help choose which parks need the help the most.
285	Rep. Fahey	Makes a statement about how well state employees operate in overtime conditions. We need to give proper Full Time Equivalence (FTE).
296	Hanneman	The volunteer program wants to find a place for volunteers to fit in the scheme and not displace workers.
320	Rep. Fahey	Acknowledges the volunteer idea for the state parks.
328	Hanneman	Volunteers need to be showy to create spark and life for

		the program.
338	Rep. Lewis	Verifies that volunteers would be locals helping out.
384	Hanneman	Explains that in the Coos/Coquille area, the watershed rehabilitation project worked because the coordinator had been there for 40 years and knew all of the locals and how to pull them into the program.
TAPE 3, B		
006	Rep. Fahey	Indicates that with state workers and volunteers, he wants to see similar benefits compared.
015	Rep. Welsh	Verifies that there are ideas that could work or are working, but parks need to be looked at individually. There is some coordinating between different jurisdictions.
030	Hanneman	There is duplication between state, county and federal agencies, but there needs to be coordination.
045	Hanneman	Citizens need to take action by asking if agencies have spoken with one another to coordinate work efforts.
053	Rep. Welsh	Asks if there are parks that should be shut down due to lack of use.
056	Hanneman	The task force report lists some parks that could close due to low use in the off season. The state is concerned about costs and at the time, the task force was hesitant about choosing parks.
075	Rep. Lehman	Asks if some parks should be expanded or if new parks should be built.
081	Hanneman	The task force was more concerned with how to keep current parks than build or expand.
098	Rep. Lehman	Asks if the Parks Department deserves the glowing reports that it has been given.
103	Hanneman	Yes, they are sensitive to the current problems and the current crisis is helping to change ways.
121	Chair Simmons	Asks how much savings would be gained with an aggressive volunteer program.
129	Hanneman	It depends on the distance, supplies, and time given by volunteers. Better estimates could be made after a biennium with the project in place.
149	Hanneman	The savings could be approximately 50%, but it depends on the distance and services provided.
157	Chair Simmons	Indicates that the committee can take a park by park look at the issues.
163	Hanneman	Offers a field trip of the coastal parks to the committee.
168	Chair	Calls for Bob Meinen.

	Simmons	
<u>STATE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET OVERVIEW</u>		
185	Bob Meinen	Director, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) - Provides an organizational overview (EXHIBIT C).
195	Meinen	There are six sections to the agency: Office of the Director; Parks Operations Division; Planning and Development Division; Administrative Services Division; Reservations Northwest; State Historic Preservation Office.
210	Meinen	Explains Federally mandated programs that have been attached to Parks.
217	Meinen	There are 669 positions in the department with 358 being seasonal.
227	Meinen	Speaks of the legislatively mandated programs. First is the field operations program.
234	Meinen	OPRD concentrates on the management of lands and properties in eight geographical areas.
241	Meinen	Provides a summary of infrastructure responsibilities.
249	Meinen	OPRD oversees more that 1300 structures totaling over one million square feet.
276	Chair Simmons	Asks if there is cost break down for all parks in the state.
277	Meinen	There is a break down later in the packet.
280	Meinen	OPRD operates on the basis of a central hub and centralized management.
296	Meinen	Ocean Shores Program - "Beach Bill" of 1967 - OPRD is responsible for managing all 362 miles of the Oregon coastline.
302	Meinen	The Ocean Shores Program costs about \$1.5 million per biennium to operate, and since the bill was passed there has not been a direct appropriation to maintain the program.
312	Meinen	Scenic Waterways - passed by voter initiative in 1970
316	Meinen	Ballot Measure 7 in 1988 added over 1000 miles of rivers to the program.
326	Meinen	The 1970 Scenic Waterways law was probably the first land use management law in the state of Oregon.
332	Meinen	Recreation Trails Program - passed in 1971 - there are many partnerships with volunteers, federal, state, and local agencies.

343	Meinen	Historic Preservation Program - concentrates on working with the National Parks Service to designate historic register listings.
361	Meinen	Speaks of the employee break down in the Department - Legislatively approved 428 Full Time Equivalents (FTE).
TAPE 4, B		
004	Meinen	Provides summaries of typical positions in the organization and points out that there is a volunteer coordinator on staff.
014	Meinen	The volunteer coordinator oversees about 33,000 people.
019	Meinen	Relates that since at least 1983 the number of FTE and positions has remained the same.
029	Meinen	For reference, in 1975 OPRD had 460 FTE with 28-30 million visitors, now there are 428 FTE with 40-45 million visitors.
038	Meinen	Revenues in comparison to other states - general fund national average is \$14 million whereas Oregon's is \$3.1 million.
049	Meinen	Park User Fees - National average revenue per camper is \$2.74 and Oregon is \$4.74.
062	Chair Simmons	Asks if the statistics reflect the fact that most state charge for day use.
064	Meinen	Nationally there are larger units, fewer of them, and more restricted access such that funds can be collected easier.
069	Meinen	Dedicated Funds - the national average is \$4.1 million and Oregon gets \$9.2 million.
075	Meinen	Describes pie charts of the Governor's recommended budget - where fees come from and where they're spent.
103	Meinen	Breaks down department expenditures.
112	Chair Simmons	Inquires to the difference between central and eastern Oregon.
115	Meinen	Central Oregon is the Columbia River to the California border between the Cascades and Prineville Reservoir. Eastern Oregon is east of the John Day River.
124	Meinen	Explains a chart describing the Governor's recommendation for the coming biennium. It does not keep the parks open, fund increased park costs, or fund negotiated salaries.
144	Meinen	Explains different packages for funding.
182	Meinen	Describes summaries included with the proposed budget.
192	Meinen	Speaks of repair and rebuilding needs.
202	Meinen	The OPRD needs investment to take care of what they

		have.
207	Meinen	There is concentration on trying to rebuild buildings and repave.
235	Meinen	Describes what major improvements need to be done in parks from all over the state.
275	Meinen	Continues to speak about parks and their needs.
290	Meinen	Speaks of the ages of OPRD buildings and a schedule for improvements and repairs. There is a need for a long term investment tool
318	Meinen	Describes budget and visitation history.
329	Rep. Lehman	Asks about a visitation spike during the 91-92 season.
354	Meinen	The spike was caused by good weather and a good value.
369	Meinen	There are additional issues that need to be discussed later.
377	Chair Simmons	Adjourns the meeting at 3:02 p.m.

Submitted By, Reviewed By,

Marjorie Taylor, Pat Zwick,

Administrative Support Policy Analyst

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A - Parks Information, written materials packet, Committee Staff, 26 pp.

B - State Park Alternatives, Letter to "Save our Parks" Critical Issues Council, Paul Hanneman, 1 p.

C - Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Budget Overview, Bob Meinen, 89 pp.