

# Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

July 17, 2008

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Agenda Item: 14a

Information

Topic: Acquisition Program Update

Presented by: Cliff Houck

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**Background:** Commission update on Acquisition work

## **Murtha Ranch**

Preliminary negotiations have begun with Western Rivers Conservancy who will close in August and become the owners of Murtha Ranch. Western Rivers has offered to work on grant opportunities and the possibility of a public fund drive to reduce the overall cost of Murtha Ranch. An appraisal of the property has been completed for Western Rivers Conservancy's purchase in the amount of \$7,875,000 (the appraisal has been submitted for review). The appraisal includes the 8,015 deeded acres and control of approximately 10,000 acres of BLM leases.

Conversations regarding use of the property under OPRD ownership, and management of the BLM grazing leases are also topics. This property may be an opportunity to use all remaining funds within this biennium to purchase an interest in the ranch, and a right to acquire the remaining interest in future bienniums.

## **Rogue Valley Greenway**

Jackson County has responded in writing that they are interested in negotiating with OPRD about county property at Hardy Riffle and Nugget Falls. A 14.5 acre "Elks" site on the Rogue River, that would connect two large tracts of County land, would be of interest for a possible trade. OPRD is in negotiations with the owner of the "Elks" site. This site will provide a trade for the Hardy Riffle and Nugget Falls property as well as save a great recreational property for Jackson County.

Also in the Rogue Valley, portions of Upper and Lower Table Rocks have come into negotiations. Table Rocks were designated in 1984 as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern to protect special plant and animal species, unique geologic and scenic values, and education opportunities. Fairy Shrimp, a federally listed species, inhabit the seasonal pools on top of Upper and Lower Table Rocks. Working with TNC in making a purchase of 1730 acres + on the two sites will bring partners to the purchase including OWEB, USFW (sec 6 grant) and others. Discussion on management of the property has taken place with BLM which owns, along with TNC, the remaining lands at Upper and Lower Table Rocks. The BLM and TNC properties have developed access trails, restrooms and parking lots which could serve the OPRD purchase. These two acquisitions would complement the recent donation of the Fort Lane property.

**Minto-Brown Island**

Negotiations continue on Minto-Brown Island with Boise Cascade. While the price of the property has been in agreement for some period of time, issues regarding testing of the site and liability remain. A recent meeting with DEQ provided assistance in what OPRD will need to accomplish with Boise to insure the condition of the site for recreational use.

OPRD plans future meeting with the City of Salem as a partner in management of this site and with Boise to clarify our needs to limit liability and to insure that use of the property by the public is safe.

**Marr Ranch**

The masterplan process has identified a 3-4 acre parcel on the north end of the Marr Ranch property scheduled for a residential subdivision. ODOT has requested that the subdivision and OPRD day use area share a common driveway; this request creates operational problems (gate closures) for the Park and is not desired by the property owner. The subdivision will have a significant affect on the viewshed and feel of the day use area. Contact has been made with the owner and an appraisal has been ordered to see if a property purchase might be the solution.

**Action Requested:** No action required

**Prior Action by Commission:** Continued updating of the Commission on acquisition work

**Prepared by:** Cliff Houck