

**SB 331****Tillamook County Commissioner Mark Labhart  
Senate Rural Communities and Economic Development Committee  
February 14, 2013**

I urge your support for SB 331 which would result in a fair and equitable split of existing RV registration revenues between the State Parks and Recreation Department and County Parks. Currently, counties have nearly half of all campsites of the combined OPRD and county park campsites in the state, yet counties receive only 35 percent of the revenues with OPRD receiving 65 percent. In 2015, counties' share will fall further to 30 percent at a time when county parks are facing major deferred maintenance needs.

Tillamook County owns and operates 2,700 acres of park land in 50 separate locations and manages 574 campsites. Given the Tillamook County's financial pressures, the Parks Department has been directed to be 100% self-supporting. Therefore, Parks must rely heavily on user fees and RV revenues to finance the operations, maintenance, and capital expenditures for our parks. Based on a recent 2012 study by ECONorthwest, Tillamook County has a backlog of 115 deferred maintenance projects, with a total estimated cost of about \$11.2 million. Most of these projects have been deferred for five or more years and therefore, are becoming more serious and costly as time marches on.

Increasing the apportionment of RV revenues to county parks will benefit Oregonians and all park patrons by helping to correct the number of deferred maintenance projects that have been growing over the years. It will provide a much needed boost to our economy by attracting more visitors and strengthening our overall system of parks and recreation.

Examples of Tillamook County deferred maintenance projects include:

- Barview Jetty Campground: Replacing outdated water lines that have witnessed deterioration, cracks and leaks and valves for drinking water that are rusted and corroded and outdated electrical service panels and lines
- Kilchis River Campground and boat launch: Repairing the boat launch and installing security lighting
- Trask River Campground: Replacing potable water system, lines, storage tank, well and pump.
- Webb Campground: Renovating RV & Tent sites by replacing utilities, installing table pads and replacing outdated, non-code compliant sewer lines.

The funding will enable us to participate in matching grant programs and leverage our available resources. By doing so, we can make necessary safety and health improvements, better serve our campground visitors, and lower our operating costs through strategic energy efficiency improvements.

## TILLAMOOK COUNTY

### Recreational Vehicle Licenses Revenues

Tillamook County owns and operates 2,700 acres of park land in 50 separate locations and in addition manages approximately 300 acres of partner agencies recreational lands and facilities.

With the fair sharing or 50-50 split of the RV licenses revenues Tillamook County Parks would be able to do, over time, much of the following:

1. Actively participate in the matching grant programs and leverage available resources.
2. Begin to make headway on correcting the number of “deferred maintenance projects” that have been growing and collecting over the years.
3. Begin to make necessary ADA improvements in the Parks System.
4. Start to make necessary safety and health improvements to the Parks System areas and facilities.
5. Initiate a cost reduction program through implementing energy efficiency measures resulting in the conservation of electrical power, with an eye to achieving similar results with other utilities.
6. Upgrade existing RV site electrical and other utilities to better serve the Parks Camping Patrons, as well as to keep the campground facilities competitive with other providers in the market place.
7. Make general renovations, repairs and improvements to the parks and camping facilities that in and of themselves are necessary, time sensitive and because of that may not allow the time for and/or be of a magnitude to warrant making a grant application for them.
8. Partner with other public agencies and private entities, i.e. local individuals, groups, families and corporations, who want to assist the Parks Department in providing improvements for the general public.
9. Develop, plan and have the resources to implement a 10 - 15 year CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) whose primary focus is concentrated on the repair, rehabilitation or replacement of park infrastructure.
10. Develop and carry out a program for the stabilization, improvement or expansion of the Park Systems Revenue Centers and day-use facilities and services.

SB 331 addresses a fairness issue. People who pay RV Registration Fees expect those funds to be used for all publically owned parks – regardless of ownership. The current distribution system is inequitable and the results can be witnessed by visiting state and county parks. County parks are not being maintained at a level commensurate to state parks. The prognosis is further inequity as time goes by. SB 311 will benefit all Oregonians and would create an appropriate distribution of RV Registration Fees.