



Oregon

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To: Joint Ways and Means Committee, Natural Resources Subcommittee
The Honorable Chris Edwards, Co-Chair
The Honorable Ben Unger, Co-Chair

From: Tim Wood, Director, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Date: March 7, 2013

Re: Follow up to State Parks public hearing on March 6th, 2013

This is in response to your request for follow-up on the issue raised in the State Parks public hearing on March 6th relating to the ATV program and funding/limitation issues.

The ATV program was moved from ODOT administrative oversight to State Parks in 2000 because the Legislature thought it was more recreational in nature than transportation related. It came with a balance of approximately \$7 million, and each biennium it has generated revenue of \$10-14 million through registration fees and gas tax refunds (the 13-15 revenue projections are \$11.8 million). These funds have been distributed as grants to support the development and maintenance of ATV riding areas, law enforcement (through grants to the State Police and county sheriff's offices), safety training, and administrative costs. The 2013-2015 Governor's Budget requests \$14.5 million for this program plus an additional \$800,000 in Package 105. Package 105 is intended to make more funds available for projects and to reduce the ending balance in the program.

During the economically robust years of 2006-2008 revenue increased, and the balance ballooned to about \$12 million. This exceeded our authorized spending limitation at the time, but in subsequent years of reduced revenue, we have eliminated the surplus so the revenue and limitation are pretty much in balance. We maintain a balance of \$5-7 million in the account to cover ongoing grant commitments and to sustain long-term commitments to law enforcement partners in the event of any dramatic drop in revenue (they need a little time to adjust their workforce deployments).

As members of the public noted in their March 6th testimony, approximately \$2.2 million was swept from the ATV account in the 2009-11 biennium to cover other shortfalls in the state's budget.

Overall, the ATV program and its financial situation are in a positive, balanced status. In cooperation with our ATV Advisory Committee, we continue to explore ways to make the program more efficient and effective. On occasion we may need to approach the E-Board/Legislature to authorize additional limitation for extra-normal land acquisition projects, but overall the program is in financial balance. In fact, we did request additional limitation of \$7,998,319 from the E-Board in June 2008 to fund a large project sponsored by Union County.