



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C
Salem, OR 97301-1271
(503) 986-0707
Fax (503) 986-0794
www.oregonstateparks.org



Department of Forestry
State Forester's Office
2600 State Street
Salem, OR 97310-1336
503-945-7200 / FAX 503-945-7212
<http://www.odf.state.or.us>



February 4, 2014

Honorable Arnie Roblan, Chair
Senate Committee on Rural Communities and Economic Development
347 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Senate Bill 1516

Dear Chair Roblan and members of the Committee:

We are pleased to appear before you in support of Senate Bill 1516. The bill would do much to advance our exploration of a rails-and-trails concept along the former Pacific Railway and Navigation Company line, between Tillamook Bay and Banks.

As you know, our two departments—Forestry and Parks and Recreation—have joined with many partners to answer the initial call from Tillamook County and the Port of Tillamook Bay to begin to evaluate how this visionary project might come to fruition.

You have heard from many interests about the benefits and challenges of the project, and will continue to do so. We won't delve into those details today, other than to urge passage of SB 1516, which gives our agencies specific direction and authority to work with local jurisdictions and private partners to look more deeply at all aspects—including costs, benefits, development and operation—of a Salmonberry recreational corridor. Further, it charges us with investigating the full range of public and private funding sources, and with reporting back to the Legislature in 2015.

SB 1516 provides a solid foundation for our work, ensures that communities and stakeholders will have a role in the process, and provides the Legislature with additional opportunities to evaluate the potential public benefits of a Salmonberry recreational corridor.

We extend our thanks to the Committee for your support and consideration, and to Senator Johnson for her work in bringing this legislation forward. We're happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,


Doug Decker
Oregon State Forester



Lisa Van Laanen
Interim Director, Parks and Recreation



Creating the Salmonberry Corridor



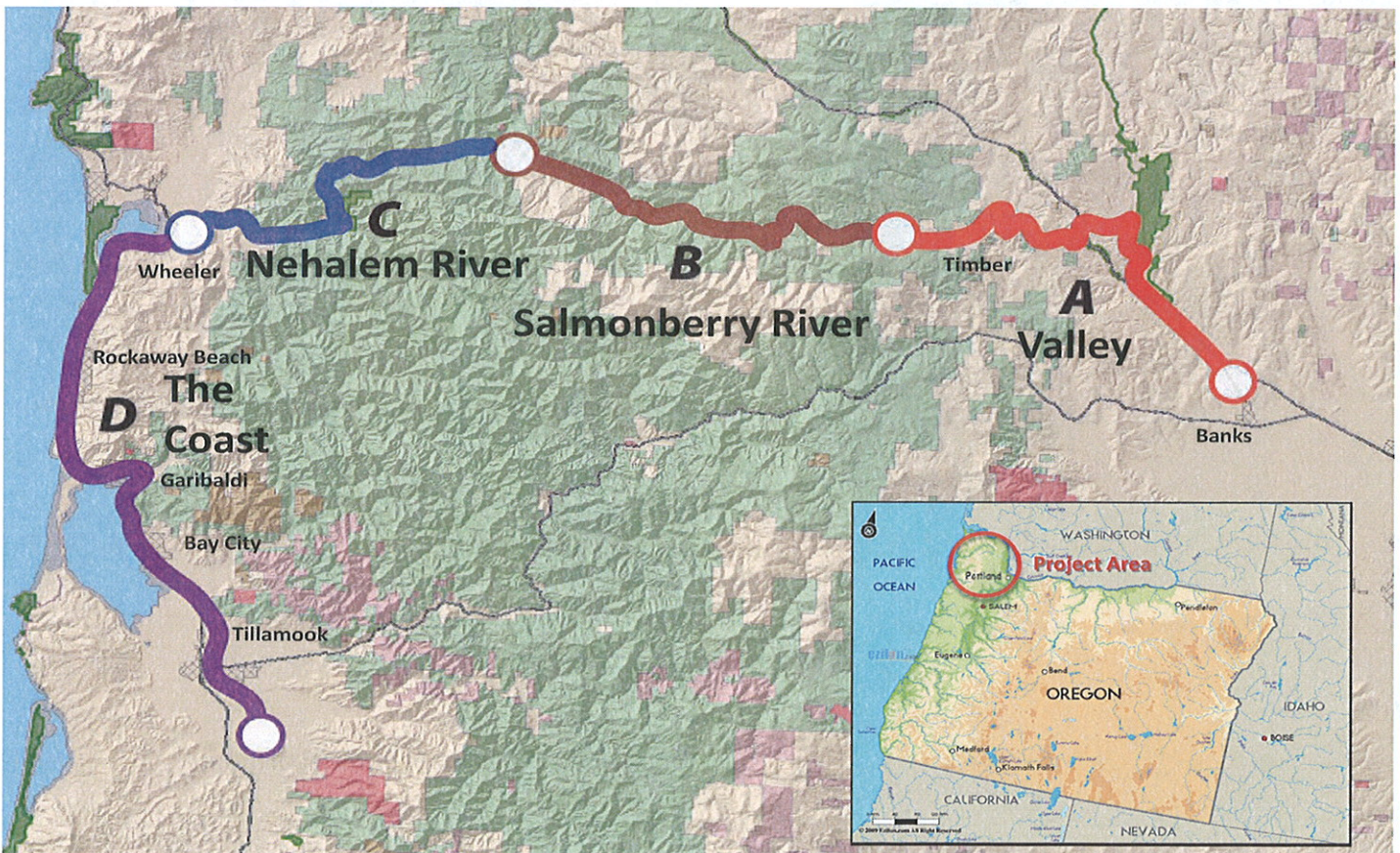
Vision

Historic storms and flooding in 2007 devastated portions of the rail linkage across the Oregon Coast range through the Salmonberry Canyon in the Tillamook State Forest. Recently, a local idea has been gathering interest and support to re-link communities along the rail corridor—from Banks to Tillamook—by converting the no-longer functioning portions of rail line to a trail, and by adding a trail adjacent to the viable sections of rail. The goal is a new public trail that takes advantage of the existing wide network of recreation trails and facilities, while connecting communities and spurring local economic development in this part of Northwest Oregon.

A coalition of interested parties has formed, working with the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and the Oregon Department of Forestry, to carefully think through the best approach to realizing this vision. A planning team is underway with an evaluation of trail options with the goal of creating concepts for public review and approval. Along the way, we're talking with stakeholders and adjacent communities to ensure their vision, hopes, and wishes are worked into the plan.

Timeline

The planning team is currently preparing options for each of four corridor segments. These options will be reviewed by the Coalition in the Winter and Spring of 2014. The options will be refined and a Corridor Master Plan prepared for adoption by December 2014.



Total Corridor Length= 84.4 miles



Salmonberry Corridor Coalition

The Salmonberry Coalition represents a broad range of interested parties and stakeholders. Participants include:

Betsy Johnson, Oregon State Senator
Oregon Governor's Office
Port of Tillamook Bay
City of Garibaldi
City of Nehalem
City of Manzanita
City of Rockaway Beach
City of Tillamook
City of Wheeler
Tillamook County
Washington County
Economic Development Council of Tillamook
Oregon Coast Visitor Association
Washington County Visitor Association
Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad
Cycle Oregon
Oregon Equestrian Trails
Oregon Department of Forestry
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Oregon Department of Transportation
Oregon Department of Energy
Oregon Recreation Trails Advisory Council
Portland State University
Columbia Pacific Economic Development District
Northwest Steelheaders
MODA Health Services
Bike Gallery
Western Rivers Conservancy

For more information on the Salmonberry Project, please contact:

Doug Decker
Oregon State Forester
503-945-7211
doug.s.decker@state.or.us

Rocky Houston
Project Manager
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
503-986-0750
rocky.houston@state.or.us