

NATIONAL COAST TRAIL ASSOCIATION

PO Box 2491, Eugene, OR 97402 / 503-335-3876 / www.CoastTrails.org

Keeping The Coast For Everyone!
through advocacy, education and action
for recreational trails, public access and coastal preservation

February 27th, 2017

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Capitol Building
Salem, Oregon

Hello:

My testimony today can be summarized in two words, "exceptional exception."

The Oregon Tourism Commission, doing business as Travel Oregon, is an agency primarily funded by a 1.8% statewide transient lodging tax.

Travel Oregon's mission is to inspire travel that drives economic development. Through innovation and partnerships, they share the stories of Oregon's people and places, deliver world-class experiences and ensure the preservation of Oregon's way of life and natural places.

Travel Oregon is literally an award winning agency, and in a word, exceptional.

A recent January 2017 report prepared for Travel Oregon included information for the Southern Oregon Coast region.

Here's three excerpts . . .

"Not surprisingly, **beach activities are the most common denominator for visitors to the Oregon Coast** . . . shopping, **visits to parks** and historic sites, and **hiking/backpacking are also popular.**"

Also . . .

"For day visitors, Sunset Bay State Park is the busiest of the region's 11 state parks: the park hosted 1,360,386 visitors in 2015. Of the four parks that offer overnight camping, Bullards Beach State Park is the busiest destination: the park hosted 105,976 overnight visitors in 2015."

And . . .

"Data about visitation to parks is another source of information about visitor volume. Visitation has rebounded past pre-recession levels. In fiscal year 15-16 (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016), **the eleven state parks in the Southern Oregon Coast region hosted 4,331,586 day-use visitors and 248,586 overnight campers.**"

Wow. Over 4 million visitors and almost a quarter million campers on the south coast alone. And so I think it would be a reasonable jump to expect such high numbers would also be found on both the central and north coasts, too.

This information alone strongly suggests that **the beaches and state parks of the Oregon coast in and of themselves inspire travel that drives economic development, that their very existence markets them.**

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's Agency Request Budget Narrative for 2017-19 notes . . .

"**The Oregon state park system, one of the most popular in the nation, delivers consistent, high quality direct services to more than 50+ million park visitors each year.** It symbolizes Oregon's commitment to a Healthy

Environment and provides critical access to nature and the outdoors for the people of the state. The 92 year-old system is a national leader in protecting natural and cultural resources, creating memorable outdoor recreation experiences, and helping to generate environmentally-based local economic activity. The working capital necessary to operate the park system comes primarily from user-fee-generated, Other Funds and constitutionally-dedicated Lottery Funds."

In a word, the Oregon state park system is also exceptional.

It's also a vital resource, one that significantly attracts visitors with resulting major positive economic impacts around the state, and especially along the coast given the large number of state parks there.

The mission of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is to provide and protect outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historic and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.

And the agency also has jurisdiction over the ocean shore.

And as Senate Bill 745 clearly states, there are many potential issues along the Oregon coast that need to be addressed including . . .

- (a) Visitor safety;
- (b) Emergency responses;
- (c) Beachfront armoring and sand management;
- (d) Marine debris response and removal;
- (e) Increased and expanding recreational use;
- (f) Increased tourism;
- (g) Growing demand for beachfront development; and
- (h) Responses to increasingly severe storm and erosion events.

So, here's my pitch. Simply, given that Oregon State Parks has jurisdiction to manage the ocean shore in addition to their other coastal recreation areas, and given that the agency's own facilities for camping and other lodging such as in cabins and yurts generate lodging taxes that currently go to Travel Oregon, that it would seem -- unlike typical commercial lodging that's not usually an attraction in and of themselves -- that Oregon State Parks is in a word, an exception.

In other words, unlike typical commercial lodging, the beach and state parks already are some of the big attractions on the coast that essentially market themselves. Also, since the agency has to deal with ocean shore issues, that Oregon State Parks are an exception in the sense that they should be allowed to keep the lodging tax they generate through their own campsites, yurts, cabins and other overnight facilities at coastal state parks such that they have the additional funding needed to address the unique issues presented in coastal recreation areas.

Overall, therefore, Oregon State Parks is the exceptional exception.

Finally, our interest in this bill, as the nonprofit National Coast Trail Association working to complete and maintain the 400-mile Oregon Coast Trail from the Columbia River to the California border, a significant portion of which uses the coast's 200 miles of beach and 150 miles of existing inland trails, many within Oregon State Parks, our interest is enhancing the ability of the agency to do what needs to be done to provide a quality recreational trail experience to visitors along the length of the Oregon coast. Therefore, **we support Senate Bill 745,** to establish an Ocean Beach Fund, direct the amount of transient lodging tax revenues from state recreation area lodgings along the ocean shore received by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to this fund and to spend its moneys for expenses of managing state recreation areas along ocean shore.

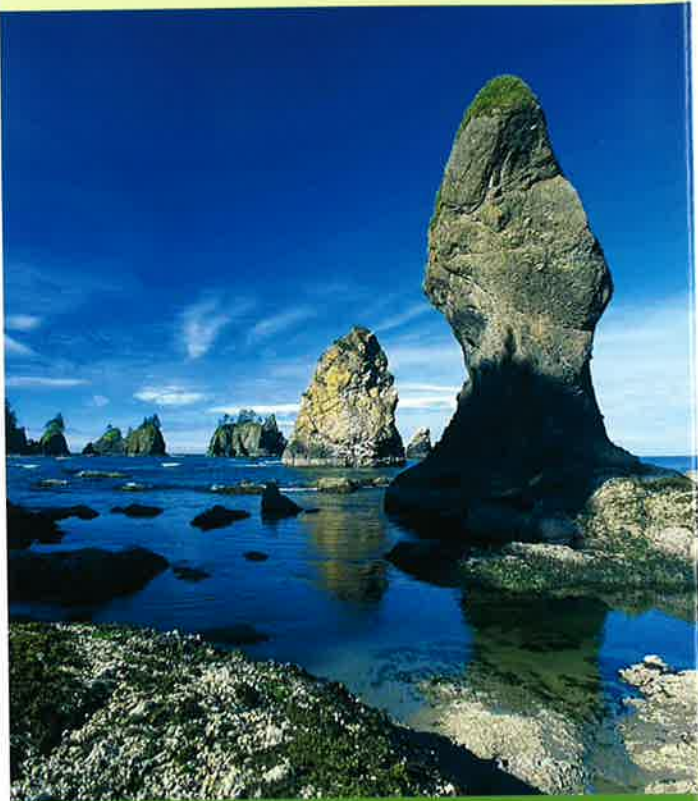
Thank you for listening and this opportunity to speak.

Respectfully,

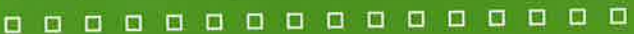


Al LePage, Executive Director

cc: Board of Directors, *National Coast Trail Association*



"Point of Arches" Washington Coast © Ross Hamilton Photography .com



Be part of the dream . . . Join Today!

Regular \$24 "Double" \$48

"Trail Blazer" \$120 (\$10/mo.)

"Trail Angel" \$180 (\$15/mo.)

"Trail Saint" \$365 (\$1/day)



National Coast Trail Association
PO Box 11045
Portland, OR 97211-0045
www.CoastTrails.Org



**"Keeping the Coast
for Everyone!"**



"Boardman State Park" Southern Oregon Coast © NCTA

**National Coast Trail
Association**



Purpose & Programs



**TRAILS,
PUBLIC ACCESS &
Saving SPECIAL PLACES!**

EDUCATION & ADVOCACY . . .
promoting coastal trails

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT . . .
working for recreation & access

CONSERVATION . . .
helping to protect special places



Past Projects

Oregon & Washington Coast Trails
- organizing volunteer trailwork
- researching & crafting plans
to build missing trail sections

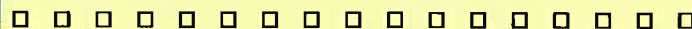
**Lewis & Clark Fort-to-Sea Trail
& Sunset Beach State Rec. Area**
- organizing, advocacy & lobbying

Inspiration Point in Cannon Beach
- advocacy & fundraising to save it

Lower Columbia River Water Trail
- planning & outreach

Corvallis-to-Sea "C2C" Trail
- planning, outreach, assistance

Historic trails / expedition routes
- special events & media advocacy



The **POTENTIAL** is to realize . . .

**A complete Oregon Coast Trail
& Washington Coast Trail**

**A preserved "coastal greenway"
of "eternal landscapes" along
the entire West Coast!**

**PLUS a complete 1800-mile
"West Coast Trail" for America!**

**It's PEOPLE who make trails
& conservation happen . . .
Potential is realized through
EVERYONE's support . . .**

Potential & People



Oregon Coastal Trails Council

The legislature created the Oregon Coastal Trails Council as part of an act to create a system of long-distance trails. The council identifies and recommends routes for trail development to the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation. Besides the Oregon Coast Trail, the council also develops trails in almost every county in the state.

State recreation trails program:

Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation
1000 Commercial Street NE, Suite 1002
Salem, OR 97301
503-586-1688 ext. 246
oregonstateparks.org

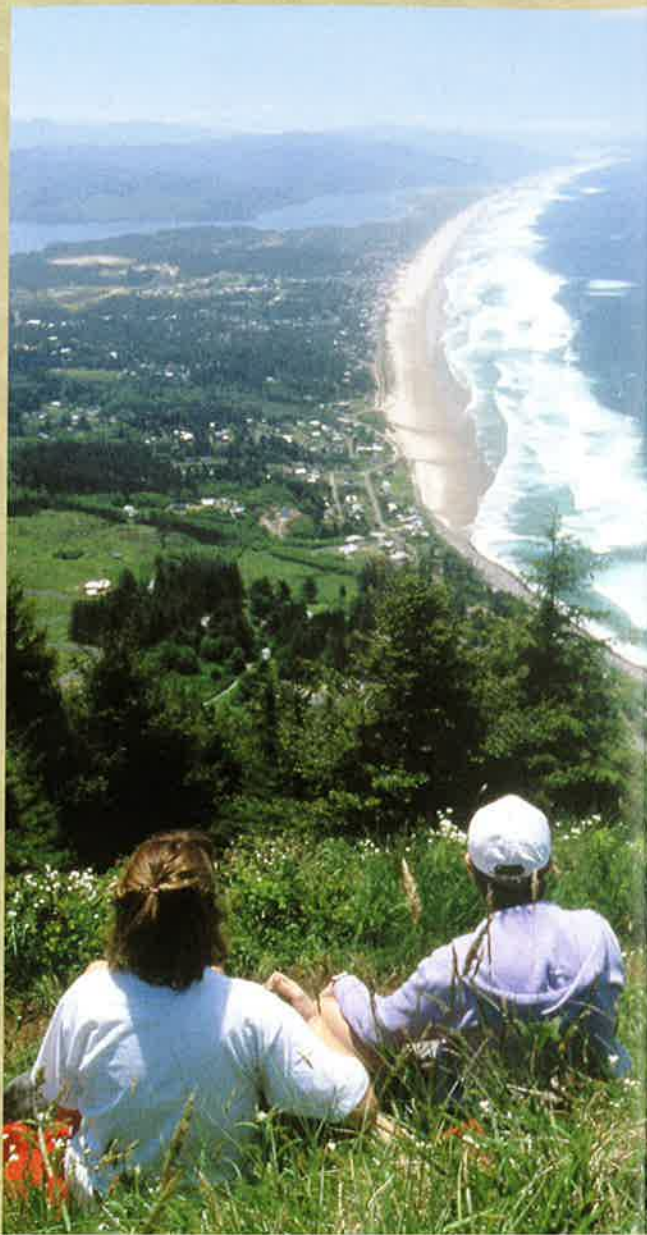


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Oregon COAST TRAIL

Nature
HISTORY
Discovery



Cannon Beach

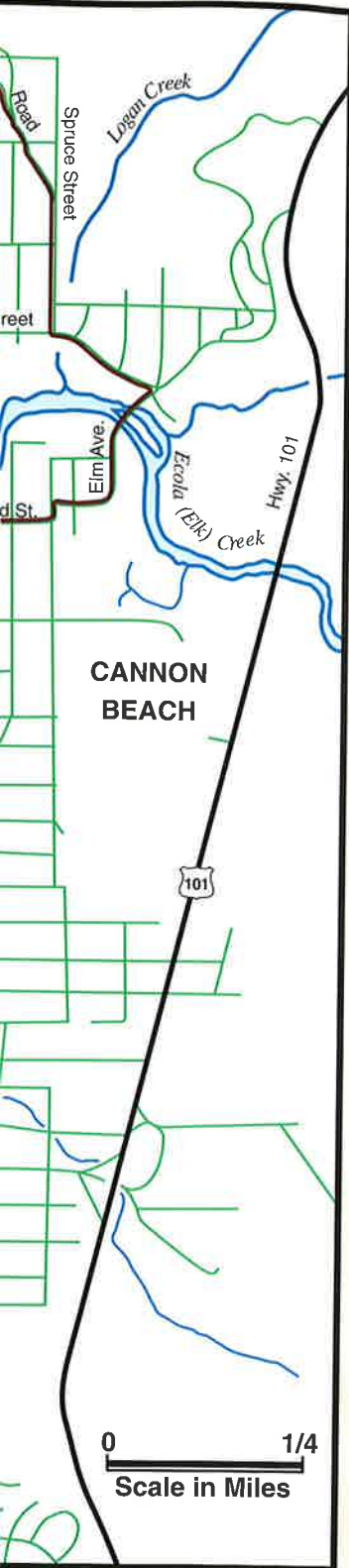
“RULES OF THE ROAD”

- Stay on the trail and pay attention to signs warning of beach and trail hazards.
- Carry tide tables, and ask at information centers and state parks about conditions along the way. Some headlands may be passed only at low tides.
- Build fires on beaches downwind and away from driftwood piles.
- Camping is not allowed everywhere. Ask for information at state park offices.
- Be aware that bicycles and horses are prohibited on some trail segments, especially those on the headlands.
- Carry water on long stretches of beach.
- Be prepared for wind and rain as well as sunshine.
- If you carry it in, carry it out.
- Learn how to identify and avoid poison oak, which grows along much of the coast.

RESPONSIBLE HIKING

Most hikers are careful, and conscientious about keeping Oregon's trails as natural as possible. No matter how good our intentions are, though, all natural resources become degraded by use. Trails—and the places they lead us to—can become scarred and damaged, so when you hike, please keep the following in mind:

- Stay on the trail! Even if conditions are not ideal, it's best to keep on track. It's good for the trail, and good for you, too, keeping you away from poison oak, snakes, unstable surfaces and more. Walk in the middle of the trail—walking on the edge increases damage to vegetation and soil, causes erosion and creates visual scars.
- Learn about the area you're hiking in. Are there any regulations or special conditions you should be aware of?
- Walk single file on marked trails. In open country, you can reduce the impact of footsteps by spreading your group out. Divide large groups of people into smaller groups whenever you can.
- Please do not take or make a shortcut! If you do, it will cause others to do the same, leading to erosion, mudslides and loss of vegetation and habitat. This is especially important on switchbacks. Switchbacks are there for a reason: they make the climb easier for you, and the zig-zag pattern helps slow erosion.
- Keep right when meeting other hikers. Uphill hikers have the right of way. Treat other users with respect.
- Try to find a flat campsite spot without vegetation. A pre-existing site is best.
- When setting up camp, stay at least 200 feet from creeks, rivers and streams. Animals need the water to drink and will likely be scared off by your presence if you're too close. Soil and vegetation near water are especially sensitive.
- If you pack it in, pack it out. Leave the outdoors better than you found it.
- Don't burn or bury trash. Bury human waste at least 6 inches deep, and at least 200 feet from any water sources.



Want to REALLY see Oregon's Pacific Ocean shoreline? You can't get any closer to its magnificence than by hiking the Oregon Coast Trail.

The majesty of Oregon's 362-mile coastline unfolds around every bend as the trail crosses sandy beaches, meanders through forest-shaded corridors, follows highway shoulders and traverses majestic headlands. The majority of the route is on the beach. Most other segments wind through state parks or other public lands, but trail easements or permits from generous private landowners have provided important links. (Please respect the rights of these landowners by staying on the trail.)

Hikers who plan to experience the whole trail, or a major stretch of it, need a detailed point-to-point guide, which can be purchased at bookstores or magazine outlets. Be sure to take binoculars and a camera. Wildlife guides for whale and bird watching would be helpful, too.



Shore Acres



Cape Arago

HIKER/BIKER CAMPS

Almost every coastal state park campground offers a hiker-biker camp. Look for the symbol (at right) on the map. These camps consist of open areas for hike-in, bike-in tent camping with a water source nearby. Showers and restrooms are within easy walking distance. Rates are \$4 per person.



THE SNOWY PLOVER

The ghost-like snowy plover sprints along the beach and seems to disappear when it stops. The sand-colored plover has a perfect camouflage for its habitat where no plants grow and driftwood cover is sparse.

That is one reason you will be fortunate to catch a glimpse of this bird, one of many species you will hear, and possibly see along the Oregon Coast Trail. This rare bird was added to the list of endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1993. The plump sparrow-sized (6-7") snowy plover has a slim, black bill, blackish legs and a black mark behind the eye. The dark breastband of its close relative, the semipalmated plover, is reduced to a black mark on each side of the breast.

Well-camouflaged eggs occupy the sandy scrape of these insect-eating birds. Sometimes several clutches are produced during the breeding season (March 15 to September 15). The birds are easily disturbed, and nesting success decreases when recreational use increases. Predation, and planting beach grass to stabilize dunes also have a negative effect on snowy plover numbers.

Please observe signed nesting areas by restricting your activities to

10 15 20
Miles

PACIFIC OCEAN

60-mile route at the Columbia River
miles north of Fort Stevens State Park
is on the beach between the south jetty
the beach is prohibited along this stretch.

Necanicum River, has grocery stores
map for route.

wards Tillamook Head and go inland to
to Ecola State Park's north trailhead,
signs.

t. Head south down a slope to an
Point and enter a parking lot.
Point from the parking lot.

entrance road to stop sign. Turn left,
non Beach map for route.

pe. Silver Point, Humbug Point and
passed at low tide in the summer.

rk, cross over Hwy. 101 to Webb Avenue,
n south and cross Arch Cape Creek on

climb over Arch Cape to Hwy. 101.
rail.

n, then to Oswald West State Park. The
st corner of the picnic area. Cross Short
hill. Keep left at the fork.

hibited from the north city limits
Mountain.

imbing Neahkahnie Mountain.

d to a gravel road, turn west to Hwy. 101.
a Road. Hike to Nehalem Bay State Park.

vides ferry service across Nehalem Bay.
em Bay to the Nehalem south jetty.

k. Return by park road to 101 at the north

ugh Garibaldi to Tillamook. Follow signs to

e Coast Trail at the end of 5th Street.



Head south on Hwy. 101 to trail from Carl Washburne toward beach. Trail ascends north face of Heceta Head to lighthouse. Descend to parking lot and head south on 101. Hike across the dunes and along the outflow of Lilly Lake to the beach.

Follow the beach to Rhododendron Street. Travel Hwy. 101 to Florence.

Go to the Oregon Dunes NRA South Jetty Access Road. Hike to the beach. The Siltcoos River and Tahkenitch Creek may be forded at low tide in the summer.

Stay on the beach to Three Mile Road/County Road 247. Follow the gravel road to 101, then go through Reedsport and Winchester Bay to County Road 251. Return to the beach and head to Horsfall Beach Access Road.

Follow the road to Hwy. 101. Go to North Bend.

Follow signs to "State Parks and Charleston."

The trail picks up at Sunset Bay State Park picnic area. At the end of the trail, hike back out to the junction of the Seven Devils Road. Follow it to Seven Devils Wayside and the beach.

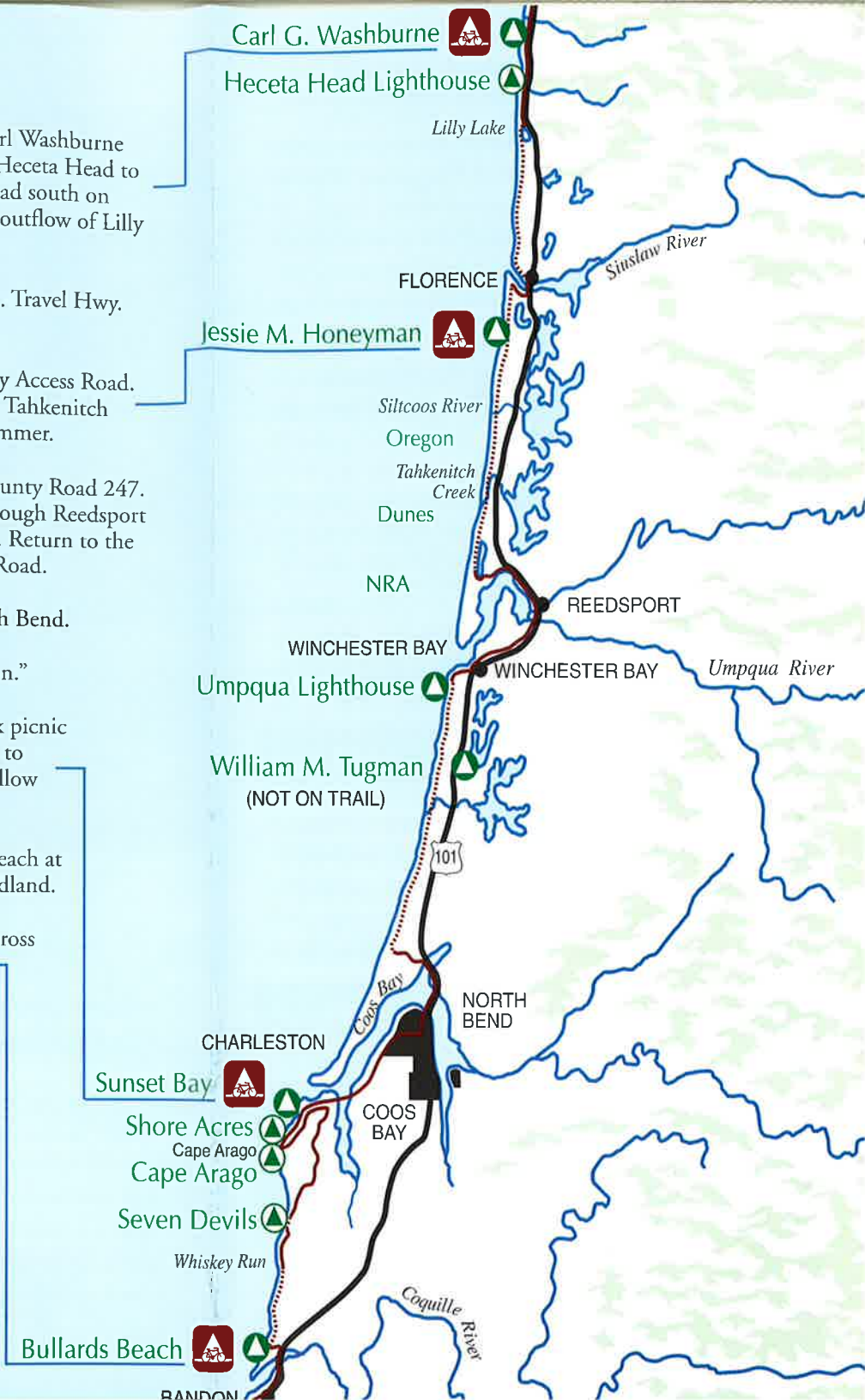
During high water, a trail leading to the beach at Whiskey Run offers a way around the headland.

Travel to Bullards Beach State Park. Go across the Coquille River to Bandon.

Return to the beach at the Coquille River South Jetty. Four Mile Creek and New River may be passed at low tide in the summer.

Look for the Coast Trail sign post south of Floras Lake. Follow trail over Blacklock Point to Sixes River. Cross at low tide. Go to Cape Blanco campground.

At the south end of the campground, follow a road down to the beach. The trail stays on the beach



the beach, and go to Netarts. Return to Cape Lookout State Park.

Ascend to the top of Cape Lookout, near a

out trail. Take a hard left and descend to the

ke. The outlet can be forded at low water in

out Galloway Road to the Three Capes Hwy.

over Cape Kiwanda.

Wwy. 101.

Return to the beach along the camp road.

Wwy. 101 on Mt. Angel, then Hawk Streets.

h side of Hwy. 101.

lead to the junction of Three Rocks Road and

nn in Lincoln City. Return to beach.

uth of the Siletz River, then to

Wwy. 101 through Lincoln Beach

Bowl State Park.

oolock Shores Motel. Return to

north of the motel.

State Park. Continue south to

Yaquina Bay Bridge.

ollow signs to the Hatfield

west at the first through street

beach at the south jetty.

quina jetty to Beaver Creek,

urn to the beach in Ona Beach

Rocks.

r. 101.

urn to the beach and

Club. Return to Hwy. 101

a Waldport. On 101, go to

k and the beach.

and just north of Yachats. Hike

s.

st on the east side of 101.

d the headland; cross a

Perpetua. Follow the trail

une State Park. Return to 101.



101 at Paradise Point and go to Port Orford. Rocky Point is one mile south of Port Orford.

From Rocky Point, cross 101 and go up a side road (see Oregon Recreation Trail post). Keep right, go through gate, descend to Humbug Mountain State Park. Hike to Euchre Creek.

At Euchre Creek, hike along the shoreline to Nesika Beach. Return to 101. Cross 101 near Geisel Monument to the Old Coast Hwy. Hike south on the gravel road, cross 101 and continue on the old coast road to Otter Point Wayside. Follow signs to the beach. Travel to the Rogue River North Jetty, then hike east to Wetterburn Road and the Rogue River Bridge. Follow city streets to the south jetty.

The Coast Trail is on the beach from the South Jetty of the Rogue River to Hunter Creek.

At Hunter Creek, hike 101 to the top of Cape Sebastian State Park. From the parking lot, hike down the trail to the beach.

The trail follows the beach to Pistol River, which may be forded at low water. Or, return to Hwy. 101.

From Pistol River State Park, go to Arch Rock.

Through Samuel Boardman State Park, the trail parallels Hwy. 101.

Follow Hwy. 101 through Harris Beach



LEGEND

- Beach Trail
- Inland Trail
- Hiker/Biker Camps
- State Park, with Campground
- State Park, Day-use Only