
BENTON COUNTY NATURAL AREAS & PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

**January 8, 2025
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Avery Parks Building
360 SW Avery Ave**

Committee Members Present: David Smith, John Turner, Phil Hays, Bryce Downey, Elizabeth Spatafora, and Miles Phillips.

Committee Members Absent: Carol Walsh and Ben Watts.

County Staff Present: Jesse Ott, Natural Areas, Parks & Events Deputy Director;
Adam Stebbins, Natural Resources Coordinator.

I. BUSINESS

A. Approval of December Minutes (5min)

The board approved the minutes as presented.

B. Action Items- Jesse (5min)

C. Prairie Species HCP 3-Year Monitoring & Project Updates - Adam (20min)

Adam provided overview of the Benton County Prairie Species Habitat Conservation Program (HCP) program with specific focus on recent project work and current 3-year effectiveness monitoring cycle. The 3-year monitoring is required under the Benton County HCP to compare trends in habitat quality over time, with focus on threatened and endangered plant and butterfly species. Adam gave details on the significant (over \$2 Million) funding provided to Institute for Applied Ecology and partners for Taylors Checkerspot habitat and captive rearing/reintroduction. The group requested the Taylors checkerspot promotional video and related materials and asked if there is anyone leading this or a publicity campaign.

D. Ft. Hoskins Signage Review - Jesse (30min)

Jesse presented the current Fort Hoskins Signage updates handout showing existing/past signage at Fort Hoskins. Jesse stated the Oregon Historic Resources Board provided the funding to update the signs. Phil stated that the subcommittee has discussed and met regarding updates, but participation has decreased. Jesse then stated that the type of recommended material is the metal sign and adhesive material within the Public Works sign shop.

Phil stated they have updated the design for the Commanders House sign using national park service standards (lower text count) and it was shared during the meeting. David stated that the goal was to update the interpretation plan, and the signage updates were the first step. The group discussed that there is a need to get signage updates completed and installed, after reducing the text and QR codes for more information. Phil also discussed the possibility of developing Wi-Fi and electrical service but there is significant cost for this. David moved that the existing sign designs and layout should be printed by the Benton County Public Works Sign Shop and be placed on site. The group agreed and Jesse will move forward with the sign shop on producing new signs.

E. Strategic Operations Work Policy Review - Jesse (20min)

The group discussed the Strategic Operations Tool and Historical Archives project. Jesse discussed that IT does not allow producing a new web page. Jesse stated that Microsoft Teams may be allowed for public to access data files- this would require a specific permission login. The drop-down menu on teams would provide access to priority data. The group discussed editing the documents in teams, and then when final can be updated to website such as in the current document library. David suggested and the group agreed that the STOPT webpage framework should be used for the updates. Jesse motioned that IT would start the board accessible Microsoft Teams project and group agreed. Website updates based on the STOPT structure will be prioritized and completed before next parks board meeting.

F. Park Project Updates - Jesse (10min)

Jesse stated that advocating for budget is high priority right now during the budget planning period. David asked when the budget proposals could be reviewed, and Jesse stated that there should be prepared budget estimates that are accurate by March 2025. Jesse stated that he has completed a couple tours of Jackson-Frazier Wetland with congressional delegation and lobbyists. They are supportive of the project and will likely be asking for \$2.5 million for congressional allocation, but this is to be determined.

III. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

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