

Blue Mountain CAMP Preliminary Recommendation Public Meeting October 19, 2010, 6-8 pm

State Parks staff hosted a virtual public meeting to discuss Stage 3 of the Blue Mountains Park Classification and Management Planning (CAMP) process. This is the first of three public meetings to be held about this topic. The second and third meeting will be held on November 8 and November 9 in Dayton and Ritzville, respectively, and will be conducted in person.

The meeting included review of the Preliminary Recommendation for each of the three parks that are part of this CAMP including: Palouse Falls, Lyons Ferry and Lewis and Clark Trail state parks. About 26 people signed in. Participants were able to see and hear the presentation and were encouraged to type in comments and questions through the Question-and-Answer feature of MS Teams Live Event. General comments and questions were submitted throughout the meeting. In addition, participants were asked to respond to the recommendations proposed for each park. Miscellaneous questions are addressed at the end of the document. Staff responses are addressed in italics. More information about this project is available on the project webpage: <https://parks.state.wa.us/1072/Palouse-Falls-Lyons-Ferry-Lewis-and-Clar>

Lewis and Clark Trail State Park

1. Would you keep the highway entrance to the south side the same?

If the park property located on the south side of Highway 12 remains in State Park ownership, there is no reason to expect the entrance to change. However, if the property were to be surplussed – meaning transferred to another entity and its key function changed, there could be design improvements made to facilitate the new function.

2. If the land is transferred to WSDOT would it remain in recreational use?

One concept being discussed is turning the property over to WSDOT to manage as a highway rest stop. If that were to occur, we would expect WSDOT to provide facilities and support functions similar to other highway rest stops. That said, it seems possible that some of the existing facilities could remain. Picnicking and walking would seem to be not incompatible with rest stop functions. However, we have not had serious conversations about this with WSDOT so there is nothing definitive at this time.

3. In the proposed expansion, have the landowners been contacted yet?

Yes, property owners who own property within a proposed long-term boundary are contacted with written notice during Stage 2 of the CAMP process. This is when alternatives are being considered, which was done last year prior to the public meeting held in December. Then, when we move into the Preliminary Recommendation stage, we also attempt to reach property owners, to talk about their property, and their interests

and concerns. Property owners on the west and east sides of Lewis & Clark Trail State Park are open to potential expansion.

4. I like the idea of expansion on the north side providing more river access. Great idea.
5. That stretch of Highway 12 could use a rest stop.
6. How many times are Class A motorhomes turned away versus people with tents or campers or on bicycles, who might rather enjoy the smaller, cozier experience?
The existing campground does not have large enough spaces for some motorhomes and no pull-throughs. We never turn anyone away, but we aren't certain about how many folks leave after driving through or don't reserve at all due to the lack of large sites. With future expansion the park would provide a mix of improved and expanded overnight accommodations including spaces for larger RVs, tents, bike campers and group camps, to serve a diverse range of interests and range of fees.
7. What about the L&C heritage marker? Will it be moved?
There are no plans to move the marker at this time. Once the long-term boundary and land classifications are approved by the Commission, a management plan is developed, which identifies specific implementation measures for achieving the CAMP vision. This may include an interpretive plan, which would likely consider the marker and appropriate interpretation of this feature.

Palouse Falls State Park

1. Do you plan on buying land from the private property owners that border Palouse Falls State Park, or will the current State holdings suffice?
Buying land from property owners within the long-term boundary is one tool for managing uses in these areas; however, depending on the interests of the adjacent property owners, other tools such as conservation easement or other management agreements could be used. Currently, there are several properties proposed in the long-term boundary at Palouse Falls. If owners of these properties are interested, these lands can be managed consistent with the goals and values of the park. State Parks only pursues agreements and acquisitions when there is a willing seller.
2. Why are heritage uses being considered? These parks should remain camping, hiking, and day use parks
Heritage areas are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of unique or unusual archaeological, historical, scientific, and/or cultural features, and traditional cultural properties, which are of statewide or national significance. Heritage areas are being proposed at Palouse Falls and Lyons Ferry state parks because of the existence of

areas that meet this definition. Heritage areas require conditional approval for some recreation uses but can also have camping, hiking and day-use areas.

3. What agency or departments, or tribes would be responsible in case of fires?
There are several emergency responders who assist to fight fires. State Parks contracts with DNR to provide fire protection. However, depending on location and severity of the fire, local responders may also assist.
4. The campground was not the greatest; removing it would not be a huge loss.
5. It has been a number of years since I have ben there, what happened to the potable water?
There is a new well at Palouse Falls so potable water will be available in the future.
6. Could you give a few examples of what 'restorative activities' would be under the preliminary recommendations?
Restorative or restoration activities include things like weed removal, replanting, and other actions to eliminate the social trails and return the landscape to its native condition as much as possible. It also includes graffiti removal off the rock face.
7. Making safer trails will really help.
8. No more trails. You can't handle what you have now and it will only make get worse.
9. What kinds of activities would people be able to get permits for? There are several established rock climbs just below the upper falls. Would rock climbing still be allowed in these areas?
There are no established climbing routes at Palouse Falls; however, some visitors do so without it being a permitted activity at this location. The Natural Areas classification does not allow for rock climbing activities. Special Activity Permits (or Recreation Use Permit – Audra to confirm) may be applied for where the use proposed is for interpretive, research and/or educational purposes (e.g. night photography, astronomy, and/or service projects).
10. So i know there are established climbing route in the area and it looks like you would be restricting access.
As noted in #9 above, there are no established climbing routes at Palouse Falls.
11. I think our local emergency services will be happy if access to the falls is limited.

12. Conditional Uses for Commission Action are excellent. Particularly paving the county road which is seasonally in terrible shape, paving parking area for fire control, picnic area improvements and some irrigation for grass and trees.\
13. How would you get utilities (water) to the orientation center? Are there water rights available for this level of development?
At this point, the orientation center is just a concept. The purpose of this step in the planning process is to identify the long-term vision including long-term boundary and land classifications for the park. A management plan will be the next step, which will include more consideration of design and facilities at the park. that is something we would need to investigate.
14. Will there be an effort to 'tell' the stories of the native Palus/Palouse Indians as well as the first homesteaders and settlers in the interpretive center?
This is a concept currently. If we were to develop a visitor facility, we would develop an outreach effort with interested tribes and other stakeholders. *The management plan mentioned above (#13) will include recommendations for interpretive improvements.*
15. That was a great place for astronomy, a very dark place. Something to keep in mind.
16. How can you enforce no trail access?
There are several ways to enforce no trail access. The first is to identify the areas that need protection. Sgnage is another tool, as well as education about the dangers and prohibitions on access. Another way that we manage public use is to provide a staff presence. Enforcement is another, which could range from providing a more visible enforcement presence to issuing citations for violating the rules. As the management plan is being developed for this area, public access management will be addressed; not just on the trails but also in other areas of the park.
17. Many including myself have used this park for many years. Please do not create or change the park to become a bureaucratic mess. Leave it alone
18. What are the details of the proposed permit entry to Palouse Falls State Park? EG: Would that be permit required for year-round access, or only for the high-use season in the spring?
Considering the lack of cell service in the vicinity, would all trips to Palouse Falls need to be planned in advance/drop-in would no longer be an option? And since Lyons Ferry does not currently have camping facilities, would there be a period where camping would cease to be available at Palouse Falls and not yet be available at Lyons Ferry.
The idea of a permit or registration system has not been vetted, nor are there any specific plans to implement any kind of a system at this time. Like many other public recreation land managers, State Parks is exploring tools for managing visitor use. With

projected population growth and huge public demand for access, in some locations we'll need to look at ways to protect the visitor experience as well as natural and cultural resources, both of which are part of the State Parks mission. An online registration system is just one of the tools being explored. This could be implemented with the existing camping reservation system (CAMIS). If it were to be implemented, it would only be used for registration purposes at the beginning. This will help us understand more about visitor demand and over time could be used to manage access during high volume times/seasons. This is not a sure thing at Palouse Falls but is one option to consider. If it were instituted at this or any other park, it would be done as a pilot. The first step would be to make visitors aware of it and encourage registration before visiting the park. Over time, the system could be used to reserve a parking spot at the park and/or limit the number of people who can visit the park at any one time.

Regarding whether there would be a time when camping ceased at Palouse Falls and was not yet available at Lyons Ferry:

There is no proposed grace period to wait for camping to be developed at Lyons Ferry State Park. That project is currently under way and funding is lined up for permit, design and construction. Camping is currently not allowed at Palouse Falls and won't be opened again if the Preliminary Recommendation is approved by the commission next year. .

Lyons Ferry State Park

1. Adding campsites, both for RV and tents is great.
2. Does the yellow on the spit area mean no access, or just heritage designation?
The yellow color on the map indicates a Heritage area.
3. What happens to Lyons Ferry if the dams along the Snake River are removed?
We can't speculate as to the future of dams on the Snake River or the impact on Lyons Ferry at this time.
4. Have you considered a name change that reflects the much deeper tribal use of the park?
A name change here could be considered that is more reflective of the cultural significance of the site. If you have ideas about that, please feel free to provide that input.
5. With everything going on in our state these days, specifically coming out of our Governors office, it is very refreshing to see that Parks is still looking to preserve our

states wonders without negatively impacting of Washingtonians. I support making these parks safer as well as going to look at the falls, not grafitti and "climbers" traversing the wonderful view.

6. Thank you for the detailed maps and information, all downloadable, on the Parks website, concerning the proposed changes!