

2016 Iron Horse State Park Trail Recommendations Report Status Check

The following is a January 2020 status update conducted by Washington State Parks on identified issues and management recommendations from Appendix 4 of the 2016 Iron Horse State Park Trail Recommendations Report.

Issue	Management Recommendations	Status
<p>1. Noxious weeds and vegetation management</p>	<p>Generally, as part of the State Parks natural resource management program, control of noxious weeds follows an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach including the use of biological (i.e. goats), chemical, cultural, and mechanical control prescriptions. The least toxic, yet effective, overall approach that is consistent with State and County Weed Board requirements is favored whenever possible. Weeds on and along the trail include yellow Starthistle, rush keletonweed, Canada thistle and spotted knapweed.</p> <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <p>Address generally using the following order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prioritize noxious weed control in proximity to agricultural and grazing uses. 2. Develop weed control prescriptions, provide to the jurisdictional weed board and contract with them to conduct weed control. 3. Have State Parks staff provide noxious weed control and vegetation management but hire contractors and Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) to supplement weed control beyond the resources or capability of State Parks staff. 4. Allow grazing for weed removal in appropriate off-trail undeveloped areas and outside of environmentally sensitive areas. 5. Enter into formal agreements with qualified and licensed land owners and allow them to assist with noxious weed control. 6. Consider the use of stewardship agreements with adjacent property owners as a means to control noxious weeds and provide vegetation management. 	<p>2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with County weed boards to prioritize spraying needs • Fulfilled a 2015-2017 proviso spending approximately \$110,000 on noxious weed and vegetation management (i.e. mowing) • Used Arc Collector Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping to collect geo-referenced trail information including weed management areas • Applied sterilant to approximately 170 miles of trail including both the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (from Lind to the Idaho border) and the Columbia Plateau State Park Trail • Used a Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew for 8 weeks to clear the trail, remove overhanging branches and conduct general vegetation management <p>2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued work with County weed boards to prioritize spraying needs • Continued to collect geo-referenced trail information including weed management areas and areas in need of repair • Applied sterilant to approximately 190 miles of trail including both the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (from Lind to the Idaho border) and the Columbia Plateau State Park Trail • Used 8 weeks of Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew time for weed spraying, fencing and vegetation management • Used 10 weeks of park staff time for spot and boom spraying of noxious weeds

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<p>2. Trespass on private property</p>	<p>Trespass may occur for a number of reasons. In some instances, it occurs when trail users do not have access to potable water or restroom facilities, so they go onto private lands for these purposes. Trespass also can occur during hunting season, as hunters utilize the trail to access private and public hunting lands. Leaving the trail for scenic views can also result in trespass.</p> <p>Management Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park staff will work to provide trail users with informational materials and web resources showing park boundaries and restrictions. 2. Discourage trespass by providing signage, staffing and reaching a level of trail use that discourages trespass. 3. Work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to discourage trespass by hunters. 17 4. Trailheads and camping areas should be located at intervals that eliminate the need for parking or trespass onto private land. 5. Gates, bollards and fencing should be prioritized for areas with identified unauthorized vehicle access. 6. Work with local communities when addressing trespass issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed approximately 1 mile of fencing west of Rosalia in response to adjacent property owner identified issues • Installed “Private Property” signs and “Keep Gates Closed” signs to prevent trespass and encourage proper trail behavior • Gate repair in five locations (east of Lind, Ralston, Rock Lake)

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<p>3. Fencing</p>	<p>Park staff will continue to work with adjacent landowners to resolve fencing issues, such as determining whether fencing improvements in various areas should be the state’s responsibility (e.g. to keep trail users from trespassing on private property) or the responsibility of the private landowner (e.g. to keep cattle off of the trail), or a shared responsibility.</p> <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete a fencing assessment to determine priority areas based on agricultural use, trespass and trail user safety. 2. Prioritize fencing in areas with known issues such as trespassing on adjacent private land. Fencing decisions will be determined on a caseby-case basis and take into consideration the previous relationship between a railroad or other seller and adjacent or underlying landowners. 3. Where viable, look to utilize alternative means to fencing such as signage, to address issues and minimize cost. 4. Generally, when State Parks provides fencing for trespass or livestock control, it will provide separation that is consistent with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife requirements for wildlife passage. Other fencing types may be considered for small areas or to address sitespecific concerns. 5. Consider providing a general funding source that can be available to address fencing needs as they arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gate repair in five locations (east of Lind, Ralston, Rock Lake) • Installed approximately 1 mile of fencing west of Rosalia in response to adjacent property owner identified issues

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<p>4. Trailhead facilities</p>	<p>Generally, trailheads consist of a parking area, potable and/or stock water (if available), vault toilets or comfort stations, signage, picnic tables and/or picnic shelter, hitching posts, and a bulletin board/interpretive kiosk. In some cases, trailheads may also serve as camping areas.</p> <p>Proposed Trailhead Locations from Malden west to the Columbia River:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenova • Rock Lake • Revere • Marengo/Ritzville-Benge Road • Ralston • Lind <p>Trailhead locations in the long-term boundary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roxboro • Warden • Othello 18 • Corfu • Smyrna • Beverly <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generally, trailheads should be spaced 8 -12 miles apart from each other. To the degree possible, towns, former railroad depot sites and other areas of historic significance should be considered for trailheads. 2. Trailheads should be used as a tool to address areas where trespass and other known issues impact adjacent property owners. This may involve locating trailheads away from areas that would promote issues such as trespass or, conversely, in closer proximity to private property to address issues such as parking on private property. Trailhead location should be determined with input from local communities, adjacent property owners and trail users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted grants that include construction of trailheads in Malden and Rosalia

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<p>5. Camping facilities</p>	<p>Typically, primitive camping will be provided on the trail and include, at a minimum, designated tent sites and a vault toilet. In addition to convenience, sites should be chosen for availability of water, scenic views, shade, proximity to communities and width of the trail corridor. Group campsites with road access should also be provided. In some cases, camping areas may also serve as trailheads. Camping facility location and design should be determined with input from local communities, adjacent property owners and trail users.</p> <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generally, camp areas should be 5-8 miles from trailheads and 8-10 miles apart from each other. Both group and individual sites should be provided. 2. To the degree possible, camping area locations should be used as a tool to address areas where trespass and other issues impact adjacent property owners. This may involve locating camping facilities away from areas that would promote issues such as trespass or illegal dumping or, conversely, in closer proximity to address these concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be addressed as trailheads are implemented
<p>6. Trail surfacing</p>	<p>Typical trail surfacing is intended to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian use. Wherever possible State Parks will ensure the trail meets Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.</p> <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As site conditions allow, the trail surface will be approximately 10 feet wide with a running slope matching that of the original Milwaukee Road rail bed which is generally under 2%. Where site conditions do not allow a 2% running slope (i.e. areas with removed bridges, etc.) slopes should not exceed 10% running slope. The trail surface will be compacted 5/8" minus crushed rock or paved in certain areas and will be designed to meet ADA requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressed drainage issue at Squaw Canyon near Malden by removing rock and organics from drainage swales and re-establishing the trail surface • Used a Veterans Conservation Corps position for 3 months of trail repair and maintenance

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<p>7. Bridges, Trestles and Tunnels</p>	<p>Existing bridges and trestles within the planning area range in length from 10 feet to 975 feet. In addition, there are two 400 foot tunnels located along Rock Lake.</p> <p>Existing Bridge and Trestle Gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beverly Bridge (existing closed trestle over the Columbia River) • Cow Creek Trestle (trestle has been removed) • Lind Trestle (trestle has been removed) • Rock Lake bridges 128 and 130 (existing closed bridges) <p>Existing Tunnel Gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunnel 43 and 44 along Rock Lake <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <p>Depending on the type of trestle and crossing needed one of three approaches would be used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-deck existing trestles and provide safety fencing. 2. Replace missing trestles with new trestles or bridges. 3. Re-grade areas with missing trestles to allow for an at-grade crossing rather than trestle replacement. 4. Provide temporary detours as a means address missing trestles and bridges. 5. Conduct a cultural/historic resources survey to determine the historic significance of trestle and bridges. 6. Review existing detour routes to determine if safer and shorter routes exist. 	<p>See info sheet related to 2019-2020 capital projects</p>

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<p>8. Recreational permit requirement</p>	<p>State Parks requires a recreational use permit for individuals and groups using the trail. Due to the remote nature of the trail, the permit serves to provide notification to adjacent property owners when the trail is being used and also to notify recreational users of trail rules.</p> <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The recreational use permit should be eliminated for developed portions of the trail with adequate signage, fencing and educational materials to prevent issues such as trespass and unauthorized use of campfires. 2. If necessary, seek administrative and/or statutory authority to eliminate the recreational use permit requirement in areas where the trail is developed. 3. Until the permit requirement is eliminated Park staff will work towards streamlining the process through the use of on-line and web-based resources for issuing permits and providing property owner notification. 4. Personal information will not be provided as part of the notification process. 5. Work with adjacent property owners to address concerns (i.e. trespass, 20 fire danger, pets off-leash) so that formal property owner notification is no longer required. 6. Work with local communities to determine an alternative to individual permits for local trail users. 	<p>Under review</p>

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<p>9. Long-term boundary</p>	<p>Currently there are gaps along the trail created by private property, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) managed trail and a 30 mile section of active rail line. In some cases trailhead locations may require acquisition of additional land.</p> <p>Existing Gaps – East to West</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pine City – Checker-boarded ownership • Rock Lake north – One mile • Rock Lake south – 500 feet • Ewan – Two miles • West of Ewan 1 – 1400 feet • West of Ewan 2 – 2000 feet • East of Lind – 1500 feet • Warden to Port of Royal Slope – 30 miles of active rail line (Port of Royal Slope and Burlington Northern Santa Fe) • Port of Royal Slope to Columbia River – 40 miles of DNR managed trail Management Recommendations 1. <p>Trail gaps created by privately owned parcels and active rail operated by the concessionaire for the Port of Royal Slope and Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad would be included in the long-term boundary. DNR managed trail would be included in the long-term boundary to advance shared trail management goals. Parks would pursue easements, property agreements, and other means of establishing management for trail 21 purposes. State Parks will work with active rail line operators to explore opportunities such as trails next to the active rail line.</p>	<p>Will be taking over management of 36 miles of DNR trail (see Item E-4, lease with DNR)</p>

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<p>10. Land classification (intensity of recreational use)</p>	<p>State Parks uses a land classification system similar to city and county zoning to determine the level of intensity that can occur for recreational development.</p> <p>Management Recommendations:</p> <p>The following State Parks land classifications would be applied:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recreation classification for more intensive trailheads and camping opportunities within and in close proximity to communities. 2. Resource Recreation classification for the trail corridor and for trailheads and camping facilities that occur at a lower intensity of use. 3. Heritage classification for historic structures, trestles and bridges that are on the National Register of Historic Places or are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunnels 43 and 44 which are each 400 foot long tunnels located along Rock Lake • Trestles 128 and 130 which are, respectively, 60 feet and 190 feet long and located along Rock Lake • The Taunton Substation in Township 15, Range 28E, Section 8 and located approximately 8 miles west of Othello • Beverly Bridge which crosses the Columbia River south of Vantage and is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places 	<p>Done per Commission action.</p>

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<p>11. Protection of cultural, archaeological, and historic properties</p>	<p>Management Recommendations:</p> <p>Consult with tribes that may have an interest in the archaeological and cultural resources on the trail prior to any development activities. State Parks staff will follow the direction contained in the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission’s Cultural Resources Policy 12-98-1.</p> <p>Treatments applied to historic properties, including rehabilitation or enhancement of existing historic structures or new facility construction in historically significant areas must conform to Commission Policy 12-98-01: Cultural Resource Management Policy.</p> <p>A cultural resource management plan should be developed. This plan must be consistent with State Park’s Cultural Resource Management Policy and at a minimum include: 1) a description of the park’s cultural resources, 2) evaluation and conclusions about their significance, 3) outline of the park’s goals and objectives in managing these resources, 4) description and evaluation of current cultural resource management activities, and 5) prescription for an action program to meet the most urgent needs. The cultural resource management plan will be updated as new information and techniques become available to park staff.</p> <p>No significant historic properties will be disturbed as the result of operation, maintenance, or development activities prior to a determination of treatment as part of the trail’s cultural resource management plan.</p> <p>Park staff will consult with the State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP); State Parks Stewardship staff, the Interpretive Program Manager, Archaeologists, and local historical societies, when appropriate, for assistance in protection and management of historic sites and structures, archaeological sites, and Native American cultural sites.</p>	<p>On-going programmatic activity</p>

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<p>12. Protection of natural plant and animal communities</p>	<p>Management Recommendations:</p> <p>Park staff will ensure that all park management activities comply with regulations and policies related to the protection of natural plant and animal communities including RCW 79A.05.035: Additional powers and duties and Chapter 352-28 WAC: Tree, plant, and fungi cutting, removal and/or disposal and Natural Resource Management Policy #73-04-1 Protecting Washington State Parks Natural Resources. The general purpose of the park’s natural resource management program will be to identify additional research needs and to develop and implement additional management policies and prescriptions for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. general protection of important plant and animal communities; 2. specific protection of identified threatened, endangered, or sensitive plant and animal species/associations/communities; 3. management of non-native species; 4. protection of wetlands and riparian areas; and 5. prevention of wildfires. <p>To protect and preserve valuable and sensitive natural resources within the park, staff should: 1) identify and map sensitive resources within the park; 2) manage the trail to limit impacts to sensitive resources; 3) support local stewardship programs sponsored by volunteer groups; and 4) develop mechanisms/tools to prevent non-compatible impacts through development or landscape modification that degrade the view shed.</p> <p>Campsites and trailheads will be constructed within previously disturbed areas, or areas with low habitat value. However, development plans in disturbed sites with documented historical railroad significance will be carefully evaluated.</p> <p>As part of any re-vegetation (following facilities construction or renovation), landscaping, or prescriptive planting projects, first consideration should be given to the use of native plants and avoiding the proliferation of noxious weeds.</p>	<p>On-going programmatic activity.</p>

