

RURAL TOURISM STUDIO – SOUTHERN OREGON COAST
ADVENTURE TRAVEL & OUTDOOR RECREATION WORKSHOP NOTES
February 22, 2017 | Mill Casino, North Bend

FACILITATORS:

- Kristin Dahl, Vice President, Destination Development, Travel Oregon
- Scott Bricker, Manager, Destination Development, Travel Oregon
- Elena Vizzini, Coordinator, Destination Development, Travel Oregon

ATTENDEES:

- Albert LePage, National Coast Trail Association
- Allison Richards, Cardinal Services, Inc.
- Bart Taylor, Erickson Designs
- Brian Kraynik, Prosper Landing
- Courtney Flathers, OSU Sea Grant
- Dana Nichols, Greater Bandon Association
- Daniela Pavoni, Siuslaw National Forest
- Dave Lacey, Oregon Coast Visitors Association
- Deborah Will, Oregon Coast Water Taxi
- Deborah Yates, Reedsport Main Street Program
- DeeDee Murphy, Reedsport/Winchester Bay Chamber of Commerce
- Donna Freeman, Tour de Frons
- Donna Villarreal, Itty Bitty Inn
- Elizabeth Spona, CONNECT! the Boardwalks
- Elizabeth-Claire Knox, Coos Bay Downtown Association
- Emily Groves, 42 & Spruce Downtown, Inc.
- Fiona Bai, Port of Coos Bay
- Harv Schubothe, Greater Bandon Association
- James Heinrich, Seven Devils Adventures
- Jerry Schneider, Coos County Foster Parent Association
- Jessica Lloyd-Rogers, LUEDF
- Joe Paulet, Neptune Birch
- Joe Benetti, Benetti's
- John Blanchard, Sharkys Charters
- Julia Graves, Company
- Julie Miller, Bandon Chamber of Commerce
- Karen Wagoner, Lous Bay View Vacation rental
- Karen Moore, Moorishly
- Katherine Hoppe, The Mill Casino Hotel & RV Park
- Kathryn Simonetti, Coquille Chamber of Commerce
- Kay Claybourn, Native Species Center at Powers High School
- Laura Mays, Friends of South Slough Reserve
- Linda Phillips, Port of Bandon
- Lisa Crockett, SW OR Workforce Investment Board
- Lonne Mays, Friends of South Slough Reserve
- Marcie Nunnally, Comcast Spotlight
- Margery Whitmer, Betty Kay Charters
- Marie Simonds, Wild Rivers Coast Alliance
- Marty Giles, Wavecrest Discoveries
- Mary Urban, Coquille Chamber of Commerce
- Matthew Mozzachio, Coos County Parks Advisory Board
- Melissa Cribbins, Coos County
- Melva Campbell, Charleston Merchant's Assoc.
- Michael Gray, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Michael Will, Oregon Coast Water Taxi
- Miles Phillips, Oregon Sea Grant / Oregon State University Extension
- RJ Benner, Coos Bay - North Bend VCB
- Rob Gensorek, Basin Tackle
- Sage Coleman, Coos Maintenance LLC
- Sara Stephens, Neptune Birch
- Scott Cooper, Alternative Youth Activities
- Stacy Gavette, The Oregon Connection
- Steven Leskin, Port of Siuslaw
- Timothy Scahill, Wild Rivers Coast Alliance & Bandon Dunes Golf Resort
- Tom Baake, Westways Press
- Trish Mace, Charleston Marine Life Center
- Twila Veysey, Bayside Coffee
- Zach Flathers, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw

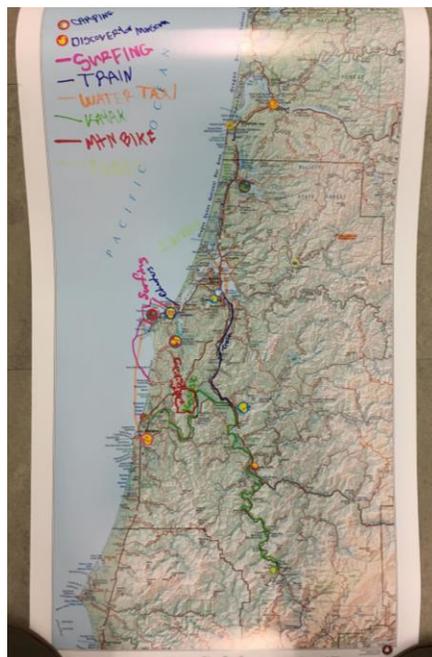
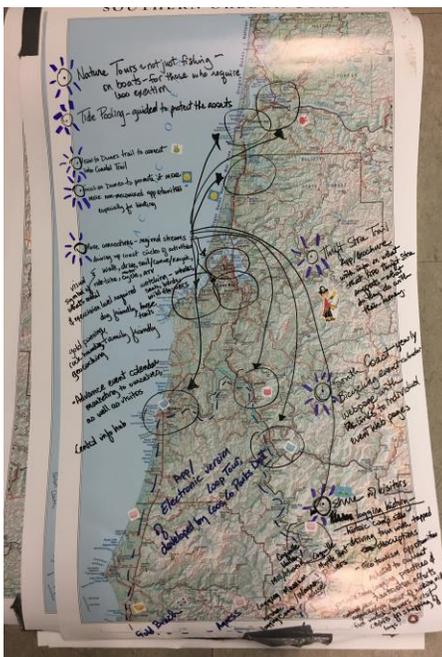
The following notes are intended to be supplemental to the presentations. For full program information and presentations visit Industry.TravelOregon.com/SouthernOregonCoast. Also included on this webpage are the slides presented at the evening networking reception held on February 21.

GROUP DISCUSSION: WHAT WOULD WORLD-CLASS OUTDOOR RECREATION AND ADVENTURE TRAVEL LOOK LIKE HERE?

- Linkage of the Coquille River to Coos Bay
- Central booking locations for flat water paddle experiences on Umpqua, Coos and Coquille Rivers
- Water recreation on vessels that embrace/reflect this history of the region and its previous industrial drivers
- Completion of the Oregon Coast Trail
 - Includes hut system and quality primitive camping sites
 - Easily accessible and signed from Hwy 101
- Local tourism organizations collaborating and sharing knowledge of recreation assets, access, and connectivity
 - Coordinating regional visitor communication
 - Developing shared itineraries
 - Creating and information sharing network
 - Highlighting priority areas for connection
- A visitor center at the airport
- Recreation experiences that cater to different skill levels, ample experiences safe for families
- Fishing experiences are easily connected with processing and cooking facilities so visitors can enjoy their local catch.

ASSET AND IDEAL OUTDOOR RECREATION MAPPING

Table groups were given a map of the region and asked to brainstorm ideas for connecting and building off key tourism assets and develop ideas for what they would like to see in the region. See below for a sample of maps:



PANEL SESSION: LOCAL OUTDOOR RECREATION-BASED BUSINESSES

Note: See website for panelist presentations.

1. John Blanchard, Sharky's Charters
2. Dave Lacey, South Coast Tours
3. Karl Maxon, South Coast Bicycles
4. Brian Menten, Waxers Surf Shop & Shark Bites (restaurant)

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

John Blanchard, Sharky's Charter

Q: How much do you charge for your charters?

A: (John) Half day \$150; full day is \$300. This is about half of what they charge in Vancouver, B.C. We feel obligated to charge less.

A: (Rob G) Don't settle for less! Don't under value the service you offer.

Q: For summer season, how far out to you book boats? Do you have a flexibility to scale up?

A: I'm already sold out for July (in February) and currently don't have ability to scale up to meet peak demand.

Dave Lacey, South Coast Tours

Q: How big is your stand-up paddle (SUP) boarding clientele?

A: Not as big of an uptick as I expected but we are just coming off year one.

Q: Where are your clients going after they leave your tour?

A: Redwoods, but I often refer them to Oregon State parks

Q: What is your perspective on conditional use permits on county parks and would you be willing to offer money to support access on county lands?

A: Every agency is different to work with when it comes to permitting, for example the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is much more lenient than the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). I don't have much experience with county parks, not sure there is a need for a permit unless you are having an event. From the tour operator standpoint, I'd be open to paying for permits if it helps maintain the public land and amenities.

Brian Menten, Waxers Surf Shop

Q: What have you done that's worked to engage your employees?

A: Comes down to my management style. I hire folks that are flexible between front and back of house and get along. I understand the financial burden of this type of job as it does not pay a huge amount, but I also allow the cashflow of business to be a resource for employees which builds morale. We offer recreation benefits and access to venue for their personal events – they have free access to what the business offers – like co-op model

Q: How do you approach that "travel like a local" mentality in your marketing and onsite experience?

A: (Brian) Recommend our neighbors as if I'm sending visitors to my friend or family member

A: (Dave) Customer service is key. I incorporate apparel and giveaways to add the "cherry on top" special service for people. I offer rides if people need it. I recommend adding an area on our website for "things to do" or offer direct booking options for lodging or other activities.

A: (Karl) People use our shop as an important source of information. We act as a concierge and know the visitor amenities that people are looking for. Recommend hotels during booking of tours

ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING VISITOR WANTS AND NEEDS

Participants were split into five groups and give a visitor "persona" for typical visitor market demographic for the Southern Oregon Coast. Groups were asked to outline the wants and needs of that visitor type in the categories of 1) Infrastructure 2.) Business Goods and Services and 3) Marketing & Communications, create an itinerary for that visitor type, and through this exercise, note any gaps or opportunities in services, infrastructure or marketing for delivering the type of travel experiences each visitor type was seeking.

1.) "Couple from Medford"

PERSONA CATEGORY: Grazer

NAME: Eddie Lin, age 33 **HOMETOWN:** Medford, OR

MARITAL STATUS: Single **INCOME:** \$54,000

TRAVELING WITH: Girlfriend and another couple of similar age / interests

ACTIVITIES / INTERESTS: Generally active in the outdoors both for motorized and non-motorized excursions. Interested in becoming more acquainted with water sports and experiences.

REASON FOR TRAVELING: Planning a weeklong trip in Oregon. Excited to try new water sports and activities such as clamming and fishing, but doesn't have a lot of experience; has limited financial resources and plans to camp and value engineer his trip.

Gaps & Opportunities

- Quality restaurant with quick breakfast between Medford and Charleston
- Nowhere to cook local catch in Charleston
- Lack of rentals in Charleston area, rely heavily on shuttling equipment from Coos Bay

2.) "Female Biking Couple"

PERSONA CATEGORY: ADVENTURER

NAME: Lesley Stracks, 53 **HOMETOWN:** Denver, CO

MARITAL STATUS: Married **INCOME:** \$75,000

TRAVELING WITH: Wife of similar age / interests

ACTIVITIES / INTERESTS: All types of cycling and river adventures including fishing

REASON FOR TRAVELING: Participates in organized rides with Adventure Travel companies. Follows Travel Oregon on Facebook where she learned about the great cycling in Oregon. They are interested in renting a variety of bike types to possibly do road, beach and mountain bike rides, as well pairing their trip with some time on the water.

Gaps & Opportunities

- Entire experience required advance planning and coordination with businesses, could do this "on demand"

3.) "Single mother from Minnesota visiting family"

PERSONA CATEGORY: ADVENTURER

NAME: Mary Kasperson, 47 **HOMETOWN:** Minneapolis, MN

MARITAL STATUS: Divorced **INCOME:** \$95,000

TRAVELING WITH: 2 Children - Finn (age 11), Emily (age 14)

ACTIVITIES / INTERESTS: Avid fly fisher and camper. Wine enthusiast.

REASON FOR TRAVELING: Learned to fish from her father and has been tying flies for years. Loves to explore new rivers, camp and spend her money on great wine and food. She wants to enjoy a fishing vacation with her kids learn about the Pacific Northwest culture and ecosystem.

Gaps & Opportunities

- No guest chef to hire create a "farm to table" meal for excursion (Solution: OCCI?)
- Need a shuttle from Bandon to Coquille River
- Need more activities for children along Coquille River put-outs (example: rope swing)
- Need more artisan craftsman and historians/naturalists/interpreters to partner for river tour in enhancing the multi-day river excursion.

4.) "Nature Enthusiast Family"

PERSONA CATEGORY: GRAZER

NAME: Suzan Beaty, 42 **HOMETOWN:** Albany, OR

MARITAL STATUS: Married **INCOME:** \$57,000

TRAVELING WITH: Husband and three kids (ages 7, 10, **ACTIVITIES / INTERESTS:** Fishing, general soft adventure (hiking, boating) scenic drives, farm to table meals.

REASON FOR TRAVELING: Spring break trip for kids. Haven't spent an overnight in Southern Oregon Coast before and excited to try some of the activities with the family that heard about from another family's recent visit.

Gaps & Opportunities

- Vacation rentals and yurts in short supply especially in high season
- One stop pre-trip planning resource
- Paper maps
- Trouble finding the locations, need for signage off Hwy 101
- Ready access to boats on demand (no pre reservation needed)
- Need to hire local guides
- Several interpretation centers are closed on weekends

5) "Young, single ladies weekend getaway"

NAME: Cheryl Fajardo, 28 **HOMETOWN:** Beaverton, OR

MARITAL STATUS: Single **INCOME:** \$48,000

TRAVELING WITH: 3 female friends

ACTIVITIES / INTERESTS: Generally active in the outdoors. Likes to hike and bike west of the Portland region.

REASON FOR TRAVELING: Has an annual 3-day trip is excited to check out the Southern Oregon Coast with friends and is looking for a lower expense trip. Excited about social time with friends, but interested in

getting out and getting her heart-rate up in the outdoors, having a quaint evening eating out and cooking the rest of the meals.

Gaps & Opportunities

- Lack of grocery or fresh food providers with convenient hours for buying local product to cook at the vacation rental.
- Not enough evening activities to entertain millennials
- Need for taxi transport, especially to facilitate going to bars at night
- Lack of WiFi service
- Wayfinding needed to identify hard to find hikes

AFTERNOON ACTIVITY: DISCUSS HIGH LEVEL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES TO FOCUS ON FOR OUR ACTION PLANNING SESSION

Out of the workshop discussion, the following strategic areas surfaced as a priority for consideration for action planning.

1.) Create a regional outdoor recreational trails plan and alliance (focus on land and water based trails)

- Coordinate trails plan with motorized and non-motorized and user types (and potential conflicts)
- Address Signage/Wayfinding priorities
- Inventory trails among agencies and land managers / owners
- Advocate for increased federal/state agency staffing and funding support
- Engage in SCORP to help identify strategies and stakeholders
- Engage regional and state tourism partners to create visitor communication resources for what's known, possibly develop maps
- Ensure the strategic planning process is inclusive, which could be a foundation to establish trust to move forward to a regional trails coalition to take on advocacy, stewardship, etc.
- Ensure efforts between land trails and water trails are coordinated

WHO'S DOING THIS ALREADY? WRC Alliance Funded Draft Regional Trails Plan, hasn't been vetted north of Bandon, yet.

2.) Develop regional water trails and water recreation access

- Develop quality start and end points
- Inventory equipment rentals and guide services
- Seek state designation as recreation water trail (Coquille River)
- Consider and/or develop a recognition/certification program for guides
- Ensure stakeholders are part of an inclusive partnership to accomplish a seamless visitor experience
- Engage emergency management services

WHO'S DOING THIS ALREADY? Brian and Dave

3.) Create a sport fishing and charter network to expand tour offerings and services

- Develop access to recreational equipment available onsite / at fishing locations
- Offer a beginners guide on catch and clean, distributed on visitor websites and existing visitor communication channels
- Establish a sport fisher network or association?
- Engage entrepreneurs to develop or add on infrastructure and services
 - o Visitor kitchens

- Fish cleaning stations
- Classes?

WHO'S DOING THIS ALREADY? – No one.

4.) Develop transportation and shuttling services to support outdoor recreation access and connectivity

- Enhance transportation information through visitor communication channels (website, visitor centers, visitors guide, etc.)
- Negotiate flat rates for large scale events
- Develop shuttle services with current providers based on priority locations
- Repurpose non-operational transport (rail)

WHO'S DOING THIS ALREADY? – No one.