

Funds to level wheelchair barriers

By NANCYANN LOFGREN
Of the Emerald

Handicapped persons will find most University buildings accessible by June 1980, thanks to \$1.8 million recently appropriated by the Oregon Legislature.

"It is not our intention to make every space on campus accessible to the physically handicapped," John Ireland Hunderup, vice chancellor for facilities planning says. "Our effort is to make all programs accessible."

The University's allotment is part of \$8 million given to the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE).

Although Hunderup says the cost to make every square inch accessible would be "astronomical," he insists, "We cannot deny the handicapped the opportunity to come to college because of their disability."

The University's rehabilitation is supposed to be completed by June 1980, according to federal regulations.

Renovation will include installing elevators, building ramps, adding lower drinking fountains, making more bathrooms accessible, and other structural improvements.

The planning office has outlined three priority areas for improvement: functional centers, such as the library and the computing center; buildings used for student activities or

specialized instructional and research activities, such as the EMU and McArthur Court; and housing units and areas of general interest, such as the YWCA and community education.

Dan Valentine, assistant director of the University's planning office, explains that historical buildings will not be ruined by this renovation. Care will be taken to preserve the Universi-

ty's aesthetics, he says.

"If there is no way into a building without destroying its historical significance, we won't do it," he says.

Hunderup says it is unfair to compute the cost of this project into the number of handicapped students. That type of reasoning denies the social good of enabling handicapped people to become wage producers, he says, adding that the program "will remove the potential for future handicaps."

The ramps and elevators can be used as a service function, he says. They will have an "indirect impact by benefiting healthy persons and keeping them in shape."

Studies have shown that the

expense of accessibility pays for itself quickly, Valentine says. The money saved from supporting quadriplegics for 20 years — at an average yearly cost of \$12,000 — will turn these people from a "liability into an asset," he says.

Buildings accessible to the handicapped will increase in value, Valentine says.

When asked what the effect the recent Supreme Court ruling on handicapped accessibility has on this campus, Hunderup replied, "it has no impact upon the types of accomplishments that we are dealing with."

The Supreme Court decision was a very narrow case dealing with program effects, not on architectural barriers, he says.



Emerald photo

Even a small step may pose problems for handicapped people. The University is mandated to eliminate these barriers by June 1980.

Swim spots

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lamette, the park is located at the end of Seavey Loop Road (off Franklin Boulevard).

- Wildwood Falls offers picnic tables and is worth the drive east of Cottage Grove on Row River Road, past Culp Creek and up the gravel Lower Brice Creek Road.

- Martin's Rapids also has picnic tables, but the directions to get there are less complicated. Drive east on U.S. 126 to the Goodpasture Covered Bridge just west of Vida, then right on Goodpasture road.

For hikers, the U.S. Forest Service maintains the McKenzie River National Recreation Trail, which begins 55 miles east of Eugene off U.S. 126 and follows the river for 16 miles. Overnight hikers can take advantage of three tent campgrounds along the trail.

Persons who prefer to bathe au naturel may encounter some problems. No exceptions have been passed to the 1976 Lane County anti-nudity law, and a source within the Lane County Commissioners Office says that "it is unlikely there will be under the present board."

Technically, Lane County ordinances don't apply to Forest Service lands. The Rider Hot Springs, located near Cougar Lake, is a popular nude bathing spot.

"People have been skinny-dipping up there for a long time," says Joe Stockbridge, recreation officer for the Forest Service. "We do not have a regulation which prohibits nudity on national forest lands," he adds, but "we do believe the Lane county ordinance is applicable."

However, the Forest Service

is worried about the environmental aspects of nude swimmers, not the physical — Stockbridge says the abundance of swimmers poses problems for the springs. But unless the swimmers appear on the road, about a quarter-mile away from the springs, they should encounter no problems, according to Stockbridge.


Two other hot springs are popular among area residents: the Belknap Springs, at the junction of U.S. 126 and Highway 242, and the Kitson

Springs, east of Oakridge on Kitson Springs Road.

Most of the above parks can be found on a map sold by Lane County which names and describes all county-area recreation sites. The map is available at the Public Service Building at 125 East 8th Ave. and costs \$1.

For further information, call the Eugene Parks and Recreation Department at 687-5310, the Lane County Parks and Open Spaces Division at 687-4231 or the Willamette National Forest at 687-6521.

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