

Outdoor

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everyone from lawmakers to volunteers to help plan and oversee outdoor recreation:

■ An outdoor recreation sub-cabinet to lead statewide planning and look at everything from land use fees to grant programs.

■ A citizen advisory committee to lead the newly-created Office of Outdoor Recreation.

■ And an Outdoor Recreation Caucus in the state legislature.

Another idea is to look at ways to bridge the gap between state and federal lands policies — given over half of Oregon's outdoors is managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

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New funding for businesses and recreation projects

This section deals with investing in local business and trails projects.

They propose a \$100 million fund to improve trails, campgrounds and other projects through a constitutional amendment.

Other ideas propose grants to help small recreation businesses grow.

Finally, they propose building on the small progress made in funding search and rescue last legislative session — a fund was established that people can donate into.

Oregon requires counties to have search and rescue teams but doesn't pay

for them, and they can cost millions even with volunteers.

Oregon Outdoors Pass, new laws

One of the landmines for outdoor recreation has been the evolving idea of "recreational immunity" — when you're allowed to sue the state if you get hurt outdoors.

The task force proposes to create new legislation to deal with what could become a costly and complex problem in the future.

Other ideas include a tax easement for private landowners that would allow public access, and creating an Oregon Outdoors Pass — a unified pass that takes the place of the various state parks, sno-park, ODFW and Forest Service passes.

Statewide educational plan, limiting damage from crowds

The final section of ideas includes a lot — but one that jumped out is statewide outdoor education for K-12 that builds on the growth of Outdoor Schools across the state.

The group also proposes the state's tourism bureau, Travel Oregon, promotes "responsible recreation" to combat the growing damage caused by increased crowds on trails and in parks.

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Dancing

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said. But being the one choosing presented a different fear.

"I still had to make them want me," he said. "There still has to be a connection on their end, as well."

"Believing that this experience can lead to something really cool and then just trusting the process ... it was my goal the whole time to keep my mindset on the hopeful side of what could be."

From Mt. Angel to California

Long before Morrissey was potentially dancing his way to love, he was dancing in Mt. Angel's Oktoberfest.

Before graduating from Kennedy High School in 2010, he was president of the Oregon FFA Association and recipient of the Mt. Angel Chamber of Commerce's Junior First Citizen award, among other accolades.

Morrissey has always loved to dance, and growing up in Mt. Angel allowed him to do so during Oktoberfest — something he still does each year.

"I love my hometown of Mt. Angel," he said. "But I had dreams that led me out of there."

Morrissey moved to Southern California in 2011 and currently works as a high school speaker and leadership trainer.

"I'm always traveling," he said. "My lifestyle doesn't make it easy (to date)."

When it comes to a potential partner, Morrissey said he's looking for a woman with big dreams who is passionate about life and compassionate to those around her.

Looking for love on 'Flirty Dancing'

It didn't come as a shock for friends and family when they found out Morrissey was going to be on "Flirty Dancing."

"He has always had this outgoing nature and kind of grows in the limelight of things," said his mom, Teresa Kinkaid.

After a friend tagged him in a "Flirty Dancing" Instagram post several months ago, Morrissey said he connected with a casting director and applied for the show. Before he knew it, he was doing Skype interviews, plenty of phone calls and a dance audition.

They filmed in Mt. Angel this past October and in California about a month later.

Host Dewan was "an absolute angel" to work with, Morrissey said. She took the time to get to know him and was nothing but positive and encouraging throughout the whole process.

"I couldn't have asked for a better matchmaker," he said.

Morrissey said there is a ton of practice and preparation prior to the dances,



L-R: McKenzie and Alex in the Special 2 hour season finale episode of 'Flirty Dancing' airing Saturday, Jan. 25 (8:00-10:00 PM ET/PT) on FOX. MICHAEL BECKER/FOX

but the moment he danced with his matches was "surreal."

"No matter what you do to try to imagine who this other individual might be ... it's, at the end of the day, impossible," he said. "I remember walking up to where the dance begins at, facing away, standing there hearing her footsteps walk up ... it was so wild."

But then came the tough part — choosing who to see again.

Morrissey relied on trusting the chemistry he felt during the dances, his gut and heart when making this choice. He said he had to envision the dance connection translating to one he could see in his life.

"(This experience) took something that I feel so comfortable with, such as dance, (and) really challenged me to overcome something that I'm quite uncomfortable with, which is putting myself out there in that vulnerable way — being open to romance."

An unforgettable experience

Regardless of the outcome, Morrissey is "without a doubt" happy with his experience on "Flirty Dancing."

"Whether or not that individual is someone I still talk to today or not," he said, "the experience itself is so ... challenging and even healing in some ways."

To get to know another person through dance was unique and special, Morrissey said. He hopes people watching the show understand the connection they see on screen is real for those actually experiencing it.

"I will always be a hopeless romantic," he said. "There's not a single bit of me that will ever stop believing that there is some form of a romantic musi-

cal style love story that is possible for just about everyone."

Will Morrissey find love on "Flirty Dancing"? Watch the season finale at 8 p.m. PST Saturday, Jan. 25, on Fox to find out.

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Journal and can be reached at aluschei@statesmanjournal.com or 503-399-6747. Follow her on Twitter @abbyluschei or facebook.com/luscheiabby.

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