

# Stub Stewart—a walk in the park

Stub Stewart State Park is now open for business. With camping, cabins, trails, equestrian camp, and interpretive displays and programs, this new recreation facility has something for almost everybody.

Prior to the park's opening, Vernonia's Voice received a private tour by Chris Havel, OPRD Communication Coordinator for the Director. Chris acted as tour guide, showing us the sites and explaining construction features and the amenities available. "This is a place for people to relax and play," said Havel.

*The following is a comprehensive guide to help you plan your visit to our area's newest attraction:*

**Stub Stewart Welcome Center.** The Welcome Center will include registration for campers and a display room that features information about the ecology, history of the area, Stub Stewart -the man, and displays provided from the communities of Banks and Vernonia.

**Trail system.** With 15 miles of multi-use trails winding throughout the park, there is no shortage of routes to choose from. All but 1 mile of the trails are open to bikes, horses, and hikers. Many trails are named for logging terms like Widowmaker, Bark Spud and Barberchair, and are intertwined and connected with easy access to the system from numerous trail heads. Three and a half miles of the Banks-Vernonia Linear Trail runs through the park. Single track mountain bike trails are being designed, a first for the state parks system.

**Camping Facilities.** The Dairy Creek Camp West loop offers 43 full hook-up RV sites and 12 walk-in tent sites and will have covered wood bins for dry storage. A second camp loop with 35 more RV sites is scheduled to be opened in 2008. At the Brooke Creek hike in camp, guests will find 23 primitive sites along with restrooms and a common fire ring area, all nestled in a stand of older growth trees.



**Cabins.** The Mountain Dale Cabin Village has 15 rustic style cabins with lights, furniture and heat and can sleep 5 people. The cabins will be open all year round. Campers must bring their own bedding and cook outside on picnic tables. There are centrally located showers and restrooms. The cabins have covered porches; some offering great views of the surrounding area. 10 more cabins are planned for the future. There are plans to add restrooms and kitchenettes to three of the cabins.



**Hares Canyon Horse Camp.** The horse camp offers 14 full hook-up campsites, each with a four-stall corral, and 2 double full hook-up sites, each with a six-stall corral. Riders can connect directly to the trail system from the horse camp. This is the only state park horse camp with RV hook-up sites. There is also a day-use equestrian parking area with direct access to the trail system.

**Hilltop Day-use Area.** Parking, restrooms and a trail head system are available for day visitors along with amazing views of the Coast Range. The hilltop area will also make an excellent spot for night sky viewing and stargazing. There are plans to construct an observation tower platform to enhance viewing options.

According to Chris Havel, other activities that visitors might enjoy include bird-watching, wildlife viewing, evening programs at the campground amphitheater, and possibly snowshoeing and cross country skiing in the winter. "I have seen signs of cougar and black bear around the park," said Havel. "There are all kinds of birds

too – owl, woodpecker, hawk, chickadee, wren, and warbler. We also have a beaver pond that is a short hike from the day-use area."



The park has been developed using OPRD's philosophy of sustainability and green construction, using recycled and renewable materials wherever possible, solar heating for restroom water, on-site management of wastewater, emulsified asphalt for parking areas, and native plant landscaping. Even the boundaries for the RV spaces are made from recycled materials – ground up automobile dashboards make up the forms that line the paved areas. "Everything is designed to be low maintenance and to last as long as possible," said Havel, "including the restrooms which are made from concrete. You and I won't ever see them replaced."

Virtually all facilities are ADA accessible including the restroom, shower, and cabin facilities. Paths were constructed with 1/4 minus gravel, to allow easy movement for wheelchairs. The picnic tables and fire-pits were built to allow accessibility by everyone. "The fire-pits are built higher and filled in so someone in a wheelchair can place another log on the fire themselves," said Havel.

The first few weeks will act as a trial period to make sure everything is working. It will also be an opportunity for citizens to get an early view of the facilities. "We want to encourage locals to come see the park and have the opportunity to use it first," said Havel.