

ECOLA STATE PARK

## BRACING FOR WINTER



Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Visitors to Ecola State Park take in one of the many scenic views in the area Tuesday.

## Small improvements could foreshadow bigger changes

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

**A**s Ecola State Park braces for winter, some issues continue to haunt it, but changes intended to improve the park's offerings are on the way.

For years, the park has made do with one full-time ranger supplemented by a variety of part-time and seasonal staff. Some years park managers have had to go without a full roster of those extra hands. In the last few years, landslides and other unexpected disasters hit the park — a massive landslide snipped a popular trail between Ecola Point and Indian Beach recently — forcing rangers to adjust what tasks take top priority. Minor tasks have continued to pile up.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,023

the amount of acres Ecola State Park encompasses

313,808

the estimated amount of visitors that travel to the park each year

A trail reroute to Indian Beach and possibly an entirely new road into the park to avoid landslide areas — as first proposed in a 1975 master plan — are still a ways off. In the meantime, funding for a second full-time park ranger at

Ecola and Tolovana will help staff tackle long-deferred maintenance and bring the 1,023-acre state park known for its sweeping views and lush forest trails closer to service level standards, said Park Manager Ben Cox.

Now, said Cox, “we’ve been able to focus a little more work there. Just little things here and there.”

A grant from the federal Recreational Trails Program for work in other state park areas that fall under Cox’s oversight will impact Ecola State Park indirectly.

“It does relieve a little bit of the financial pressure and should allow us to spend some local resources on some of those trails within Ecola,” Cox said.

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Visitors return to the main parking area at Ecola State Park after admiring a few of the many scenic viewpoints of the coast Tuesday.



## Warrenton will require parks in new subdivisions

Applies to projects with 20 lots or more

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON — Developers with plans to build new subdivisions in Warrenton will be required to provide parks.

The City Commission unanimously approved recommendations Tuesday night from staff and the Planning Commission to add new standards for subdivisions as well as street width to the development code.

The code change does not affect the many housing projects in the works now, but will impact future plans, Planning Director Skip Urling said.

Any new subdivision with 20 lots or more will be required to provide a neighborhood park. Developers will have to devote at least 5 percent of the project area to parkland. Residents of the subdivision will be responsible for the maintenance.

Planning Commissioner Paul Mitchell has been a vocal proponent of requiring developers to include parks in their plans. As new plans came before the commission this year, he consistently asked what, if any, parks were already located nearby or if the developers planned to provide a playground or park area.

Requiring parks in subdivisions provides “more opportunities for residents within a shorter service radius,” concluded a staff report submitted to the Planning Commission in November. “It would enhance the quality of place offered by the city.”

With the park requirement, City Commissioners also established new road standards Tuesday.

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## Cannon Beach lukewarm on water rate package

Councilors concerned rate increase will not provide enough revenue

By BRENN A VISSER  
The Daily Astorian

CANNON BEACH — City councilors had mixed reaction to the water and wastewater rate increase proposal presented by the public works committee at Tuesday’s work session.

The committee recommended to fund 50 percent of all projects detailed in the water master plan and 75 percent in the wastewater plan with a rate increase. The 20-year plan is required by the state, and projects would focus on rehabbing or replacing a variety of systems, including brittle water lines and water storage tanks.

The proposal would keep the city’s current rate structure and raise the average homeowner’s water bill from about \$50 a month to about \$70. The increase would be phased in over five years and generate \$2.1 million and \$1.6 million for water and wastewater projects.

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## State parks added \$1.1 billion to economy in 2016

Fort Stevens had second-largest economic output

By JACK HEFFERNAN  
The Daily Astorian

Fort Stevens State Park was the second-largest contributor to the \$1.1 billion added to the state economy from all of its parks in 2016, according to an Oregon Parks and Recreation Department study.

Fort Stevens, with a \$40.1 million contribution, is second to Silver Falls State Park

southeast of Salem, which accounted for \$58.4 million. State parks also supported 16,000 full and part-time jobs to support more than 54 million visitors.

Coastal parks saw the highest visitation levels and totaled roughly half of the total statewide spending.

“The findings are clear: when state parks succeed, so do Oregon communities,” state Parks and Recreation Department Director Lisa Sumption said in a statement. “We want to keep it that way, so we continue to look at what we can do to improve visitors’ experiences.”



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