Park

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survey that asked respondents questions geared toward determining what the current and desired future uses are of the site.

The surveys and forums are attempts from HRVRC to attract the state's attention when Hood River County applies for a grant this spring to purchase the land around Punchbowl Falls after unsuccessful applications in past years.

WRC bought 20 of its 102 acres along Punchbowl Falls from Longview Timber in 2006 and the remainder from PacifiCorp in 2010 for the purpose of preserving the land for public access as well as for fish habitat. The land under WRC's ownership includes land south of the falls and stretches past a popular sandy beach located north of the falls at the confluence of the East and West forks of the Hood River.

Last year, WRC agreed to sell the $1.1-million property for half its appraised value if the county could procure a $578,000 Oregon State Parks grant. The request was unsuccessful and ranked 32 out of 36 projects around the state, but Staten said the public process that will help shape this year's application should boost the project's ranking — whether it will boost it enough remains to be seen.

During the forum, Josh Kling, assistant program director for WRC, noted that his organization had purchased the area several years ago because of a desire to preserve the confluence of the East and West forks of the Hood River and to prevent the construction of "trophy homes" along the river cliffs. WRC has said it may have to sell the land to another private group, which may decide to limit public access, but Kling assured those in attendance at the forum that WRC has not given up yet on the establishment of a public park and would continue to work with the county to do so.

Staten added that the area is important because it's one of the few areas that provides legal public access to the Hood River. She said the old logging road that people travel to get to the falls would be "easy to turn into something ADA accessible" and allow more people to enjoy the park.

No matter how people enjoy Punchbowl Falls, Staten said preserving access was one of the emerging themes that came out of the forum.

"Again and again we hear how rare and precious public river access is on the Hood River. The whitewater and angling communities consider it a uniquely valuable spot," she said. "People talk about its rugged wild beauty and the importance of maintaining that character if it was a public park. People want to accommodate users in a way that minimizes impacts to habitat."

The public will have another opportunity for comment on Tuesday, Feb. 10 in a public forum that will occur at the same time and place as the last. Before that forum, Staten said she plans to meet with additional Punchbowl Falls users such as kayakers and anglers as well as the residents of nearby Iowa Drive to hear their thoughts on the matter. All the information is then to be turned into a "tangible plan" by mid-March, according to Staten, as one of the grant deadlines is reportedly April 1.

Those who wish to provide input on the project can contact Heather Staten at heather@hrvrc.org or 541-490-5225. The survey can be found online at surveymonkey.com/s/punchbowlfalls.

Photos by Ben Mitchell

A PUBLIC FORUM regarding a proposed county park at Punchbowl Falls drew about 60 participants last week, with another 400 individuals filling out online surveys about what level of development and kind of uses they would like to see at the site. At top, HRVRC President Polly Wood (far left), talks with forum attendees and examines maps of the Punchbowl Falls area. Above, Josh Kling, WRC assistant program director, chats with another forum attendee, Jason Wells.

Dee

Continued from Page A1

process, which would have involved filing an appeal with the Hood River County Board of Commissioners, but the deadline came and went without HRVRC filing with the county. With no appeal and a non-decision by the planning commission, the county's original decision to approve DeeTour was affirmed.

HRVRC Executive Director Heather Staten was asked why the group had decided against pursuing the appeal.

"Our board deliberated a very long time on whether to appeal DeeTour to the board of commissioners," she said. "It was never our overarching goal to deny the project; ultimately we felt our concerns could more effectively be addressed through a different approach."

Staten added that HRVRC continues "to have concerns about contradictory parts of the zoning code and lack of public process for certain applications" and plans to "work with the county to modernize and clarify some of the problematic code sections" as well as "continue to monitor the DeeTour application and the deferred decisions on traffic, stormwater, stream protection overlay and floodplain that will eventually be reviewed by the county engineer and agencies."

What Staten is referring to are the approximately 50 conditions imposed on the application by the county which must be met before building can begin. The conditions include such items as completing a full sound analysis by a sound engineering professional to ensure the venue does not violate county noise ordinances, submitting a traffic control plan to the Oregon Department of Transportation, and creating a minimum 44 parking spaces for bicycles.

Originally, DeeTour developer Jason Taylor had planned to break ground by late spring of 2014 and open by that same summer, but a flurry of polarized public feedback regarding the project prompted Taylor to greatly scale down the proposal — reducing parking for 3,000 vehicles to 437 as well as reducing the size of the stage and pavilion for the venue. Taylor now says he doesn't know when DeeTour will open, or when construction will start.

"I don't know what the timeline is," he told the News. "There are so many conditions, I really don't know. It's all on the greaseboard.

"There's an enormous amount of work to do there," Taylor added.

According to the commercial land use permit issued by the county last September, Taylor is required to meet the conditions set forth by the county and have DeeTour operational within two years.

Library District seeks candidates for board posts

Hood River County Library District is candidates to run for its Board of Directors. The District was created by a vote of the citizens of Hood River County on Nov. 2, 2010, following the closure of the Hood River County Library, a department of Hood River County.

The new District has a five-person elected governing board that focuses solely on how the libraries can best serve Hood River County. There are two openings on its Board of Directors. Interested individuals are encouraged to attend any of the next three Board of Directors meetings on Jan. 20, Feb. 17, and March 17, all at 7 p.m. at Hood River Library

The District is an independent unit of local government dedicated to library operation in Hood River County and is governed by an independent, unpaid Board of Directors elected by the local community. Board members serve 4-year terms and meet monthly. The Board is responsible for setting higher-level library policies, establishing and keeping on track the District budget, determining the strategic direction of the District, and supervising the Library Director. Board members must reside within Hood River County.

Individuals interested in running must submit a District Candidate Filing form SEL 190 to the Hood River County Elections Office by Thursday, March 19. Contact Library Director Buzzy Nielsen for additional information at buzzy@hoodriverlibrary.org or 541-387-7062. More information about the Library District Board of Directors, including contact information and minutes from previous meetings, can be found at hoodriverlibrary.org/about-us/board.

■

The filing period has started for the Special District election on May 19, 2015.

Filings for special district seats are accepted through March 19, which is also the deadline for districts to file a measure for the May election.

Potential candidates can find the filing form on the Hood River County Elections website. All applications must be in our office no later than 5 p.m. on March 19.

For details contact the Hood River County Elections office at 541-386-1442.

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Gentle Giants in Danger

In shallow salty waters and rivers, a large, slow-moving creature swims and grazes. It is called a manatee. A shy and very gentle herbivore, it is completely harmless.

For almost 50 million years, manatees have grazed the earth's tropical lagoons, rivers and bays. In Florida alone, there were once thousands of manatees. But now there are less than 3,000 in Florida. They are in danger of becoming extinct.

Varoooom! All too often the people who like to go boating in these same waters ignore the *Caution* signs. Manatees get cut by the sharp propellers and many die from these run-ins.

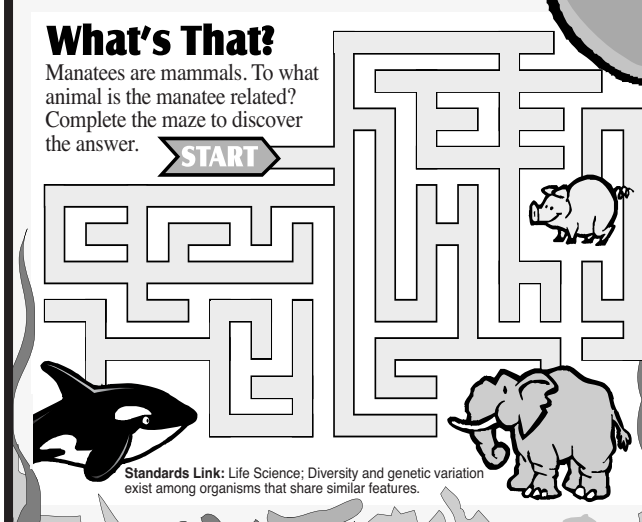
The warm, shallow waters where manatees live are disappearing or becoming polluted. This loss of habitat is another reason manatees are endangered.

Standards Link: Life Science; Living things depend on one another and the environment for survival; the physical conditions of the environment can change and these changes can be detrimental.

What's That?

Manatees are mammals. To what animal is the manatee related? Complete the maze to discover the answer.

START



Standards Link: Life Science; Diversity and genetic variation exist among organisms that share similar features.

Worrisome Waters

When manatees accidentally eat trash left behind by humans,they can die. Help clean the lagoon by finding all of the things that don't belong.

Standards Link: Scientific methods; Sort objects by attributes.

Manatee Facts

Manatees come up for air every ___ to ___ minutes.

Adult manatees eat over ___ pounds of water plants each day.

Manatee calves are ___ feet (___ meter) long when they are born and weigh about ___ pounds. They grow to be about ___-feet-long and weigh about ___ pounds.

THE MANATEE SECRET CODE

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Standards Link: Life Science; When the environment changes because of natural or man-made forces some animals struggle to survive or become extinct.

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

MANATEE
GENTLE
GIANTS
DANGER
MERMAIDS
CALVES
TRASH
WARM
WATERS
SWIMS
SALTY
TEAM
CLEAN
FACE
TALES

S	R	E	T	A	W	S	G	A	V
G	E	F	A	C	E	I	S	T	S
H	E	S	D	I	A	M	R	E	M
S	E	N	H	N	I	L	L	E	A
A	T	M	T	W	A	A	V	N	E
R	A	S	S	L	T	A	W	E	T
T	N	T	C	L	E	A	N	E	S
D	A	N	G	E	R	E	C	L	U
B	M	A	I	M	S	A	L	T	Y

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognizing identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

From the Kid Scoop Lesson Library

Animals in Sports

Look at the sports pages of your newspaper. How many teams are named for animals? Why do you think each team chose that animal name? If you were to name a team the Manatees, what kind of sport would they play?

Standards Link: Social science; Connecting current events to students' lives.

Write On!

I Met a Mermaid!

Finish this story.

Manatees are the state marine mammals of Florida

In 1981 singer/songwriter Jimmy Buffet and Bob Graham, who was then governor of Florida, started the Save the Manatee Club because manatees were put on the international endangered wildlife list.

The goal of the club is to protect the habitats where manatees live and reduce manatee deaths due to human interaction.

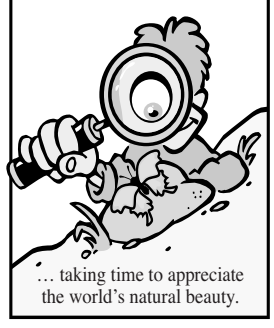
On their website you can watch manatees on their web cam during the season. The scars on their bodies identify individual manatees.

You can also adopt a real manatee through the club and help protect those manatees at one of three locations in Florida. On registration you get a full biography and a picture of "your" manatee.

For more information go to savethemanatee.org/coolstuff and to adopt call 1-800-432-5646.

What a Character!™

Observant is ...



… taking time to appreciate the world's natural beauty.

Kid Scoo-doku™

Complete the grid by using all the letters in the word **WAVES** *in each vertical and horizontal row. Each letter should only be used once in each row. Some spaces have been filled in for you.*

V	W			S
	A		V	
W	V			
	E			
	S	A		

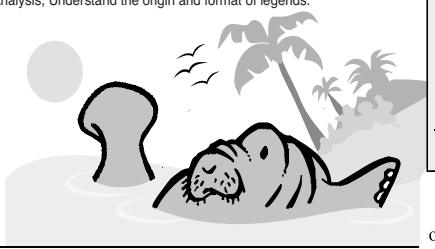
The Mermaid Legend

Long ago, sailors told tales of lovely sea creatures called mermaids. When early European explorers first saw manatees, they thought they were mermaids. Christopher Columbus wrote in his log book that they were not as beautiful as he had thought they would be.

"They are not as beautiful as they are painted, to some extent they have a human appearance in the face."

Standards Link: Literary Analysis; Understand the origin and format of legends.

Find at least five differences between what Pirate Pete ***thinks*** he sees and what is ***really*** there.



Standards Link: Visual discrimination; Find similarities and differences in common objects.

Extra! Extra!

Manatee Math

Look through the newspaper for numbers that add up to the length and weight of manatee calves and adults.

Standards Link: Math; Compute sums.

FACE FACTS: When manatees greet each other they nuzzle each other on the face.