

Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan Seen for Park Areas

By JOE COWLEY

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Wednesday's tour of three recreation areas by members of the Jackson county parks and recreation commission convinced them that the county must set up a long-term capital improvement program.

The current allocation of \$12,000 by the county court may not be enough even for immediate projects. Tentatively, these may include widening the present concrete boat-launching ramp at Howard Prairie reservoir to 40 feet, \$3,200, and clearing and disposing of snags at Hyatt Lake which would cost an estimated \$7,500.

The newly enlarged Emigrant reservoir will be in operation this fall which means possible construction of minimum outdoor toilet facilities and picnic units.

Possibly next summer two additional boat ramps, a floating dock and wharf facility, additional showers, a laundry room and a permanent restaurant and concession building will be needed at Howard Prairie reservoir. Emigrant will need one, maybe two, concrete boat launching ramps, outdoor fireplaces and additional parking areas in the near future.

Future Facilities

Hyatt, which Talent Irrigation District Manager Walter Hoffbuhr says will never be drawn down more than six vertical feet after this year, will need further recreation facilities.

But, to give Hyatt reservoir its full recreation and scenic potential of over 916 acres of water surface, snags must be disposed of. The lake will be completely drained until December, but winter weather sets a deadline of Nov. 1 for last snag removal.

Felling of all snags in Hyatt up to the 5,018 foot contour or to the high water mark will cost an estimated \$1,500 to \$2,000, fallers told Hoffbuhr. Twenty eight-hour work days will be needed to fall, burn and pile the snags at an overall estimated cost of \$7,500.

The TID manager figures the snags can be pulled or pushed above the high-water mark. Then they can be burned at leisure. He figures the concessionaire and the irrigation district personnel can boom up drift logs which can be disposed of gradually over a two-year period.

Sinker logs would not be disturbed since they provide natural feeding places for bass and other fish.

Clearing Program

This clearing program as proposed would also affect the scenic and recreation values of 25 home sites laid out by the bureau of land management. An access road around the lake is planned in the near future.

The tour started at Hooper Springs where the county, at the suggestion of former County Judge Rodney Keating, purchased two acres from Hugh Houck, who runs cattle in the area. The acreage has been cleared and a roof is being placed on a concrete block restroom building. A bubbler type fountain will be placed nearby and furnished with water from the natural spring.

A cattle watering trough will be placed up the hill near the park area for the cattle and connected with the county's pipeline from the spring. The spring, fenced off by a wood rail fence, will be left, and perhaps some facility constructed so logging operators can more easily get water for their brakes on their downhill haul without making a left turn across the highway endangering themselves and traffic.

May Widen Area

The temporary parking area may be widened for motorists. Purpose of the newly created park area is to allow motorists to pull off the highway to view the scenery without parking too close to the curve and endangering themselves and traffic. It provides a natural picnic and rest area for tourists on their way to Hyatt and Howard Prairie reservoirs which is what Keating had in mind when he made the purchase arrangements.

Recreation committee members seemed even more impressed with the potentialities of the Howard Prairie area than they were this spring before much of the development was under way.

Discuss Horses

Commission Member Mrs. Marcel LePiniec, Applegate, could see corrals and shelters for privately owned horses and horses to rent. Mrs. Ben Day, Medford, said the Seven Lakes recreation area had 700 horses there in one season. Both women agreed that trails could be marked and perhaps connected with northern California trails providing limitless country for riding.

Other tour members could



TRASH—The big problem for those planning recreation areas are careless picnickers or campers who leave trash piles. This one was photographed last week on the shore of Hyatt Lake in the Talent Irrigation project. The county is gradually installing trash barrels in recreation spots and hopes the public will use them. Such a trash pile as this is the reason farmers don't like picnics on their lands.

envision sailing, canoeing, swimming, water-skiing and fishing activities on the waters of the five-mile long lake during spring, summer and early fall.

Present Concessionaire Robert Johnston figures there will be over 5,000 persons at the lake at the start of next season. He's already planning to take several sailboats in next year.

He is planning 37 trailer house units. Twelve of these will be installed next season. These will be utility types containing refrigerator, stove and sleeping space.

Construct Rest Rooms

The county is now constructing two toilet and shower houses in the trailer area. Johnston hopes to have a permanent restaurant in the area if he obtains the long term lease. He has an 18 months lease now.

The concessionaire will decide fall hunter facilities after his observations this fall. Howard Prairie is a choice spot for geese and ducks, he noted, deer and some bear.

The blue eyes of Rogue River's Mayor John Leyen lit up as he told fellow recreation commission members of possible winter carnivals.

As he talked, fellow tour members could already see varied colored sails of the slim ice craft against the snow covered hills and silver ice. They could see the ruddy glows of warm-up fires on the shores and skaters gliding over the ice in their brightly colored winter caps, jackets or sweaters.

Used For Skating

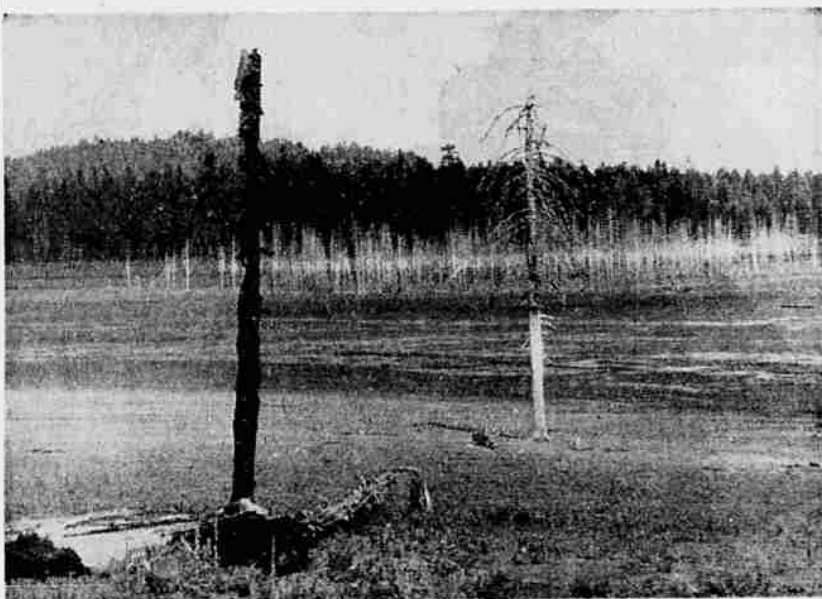
The lake was used for ice-skating by many people last winter and the surrounding hills for strolling or tobogganing.

Howard Prairie reservoir in the Talent project is already assuming the proportions of a year-around recreation area. How well it fulfills the dreams of those who saw this possibility during Wednesday's tour will depend on the foresight of the county court, the demands of Rogue valley residents and travelers, the planning and push of the county parks and recreation commission and the skill of the concessionaire.

A sad footnote to this vision of increased public recreational use were two piles of picnic refuse, tin cans and beer bottles, one already at Hooper Springs area and a large pile on the shores of Hyatt lake.



COMPLETING RESTROOM—Bert Marshall, Central Point, and Jim McGowan, Medford, were preparing timbers for the roof of the rest room of concrete block at the Hooper Springs recreation area off Dead Indian rd. The picture was taken last week as the men rushed work on the building in time to catch the last of the summer season tourists en route to Howard Prairie reservoir.



SNAGS—The two snags in the foreground are typical of the many which poke up from the waters of Hyatt Lake in the Talent Irrigation project. A forest of snags can be seen in the background. The Jackson county parks and recreation commission is considering possibilities of removing the snags by November while the lake is drained. Talent Irrigation district officials say this lake will never be this low again after December.

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