

## Chapter 2

### Current Conditions

#### Overview

Straddleline ORV Park is located on a 155 acre site along the Grays Harbor/Thurston County line. The site is adjacent to State Route 8 and divided between the two counties with 78 acres of land in Grays Harbor County and 77 acres in Thurston County.

The site consists of a motocross track, drag strip, flat track, parking and camping areas, a grandstand, restrooms and an activity hall. It is one of three ORV track facilities in Washington State that serve the needs of off-road vehicle users and the only site located in Western Washington. The site also serves as trailhead access for Capital Forest, an 800,000 acre tract of timberland managed by the Department of Natural Resources. Capital Forest is open to the public for use as a multi-purpose recreation facility.

Grays Harbor and Thurston counties acquired the site in 1977 using Washington State All-Terrain Vehicle program funds to purchase the property. Since that time, Thurston County has developed, renovated, maintained and managed the park through the use of park generated revenues and IAC grant funds.

In November of 2002, Thurston County Commissioners closed the facility. The park remained closed until October of 2005 at which time Grays Harbor County operated the park for the period of one month to retain the park's ability to operate under Thurston County's non-conforming use zoning. Funds to temporarily open the park were provided by the IAC through a \$59,000 maintenance grant. Subsequently the IAC has provided an additional \$15,000 to Grays Harbor County to develop a business plan that explores the operational feasibility of the park.

Due to the fact that the park has been closed for approximately three years, no maintenance has been performed. The park has also suffered several vandalism incidents resulting in damage to the concession stands, restrooms, and gates. Before October's opening by Grays Harbor County, several ORV enthusiasts and park users volunteered their time and labor to clean up the park and remove brush and debris. A total of 37 people volunteered 152 hours to clean up the park, track and trails, clear brush, and repair some of the necessary plumbing and electrical at an estimated value of \$1,786.00. (ESD Professional and Skilled Labor Valuation Rates)

#### Authority

Management of the park has been abdicated by Thurston County and Grays Harbor County is examining the possibility of re-opening and managing the park. Grays Harbor County has received fee title under a quitclaim deed from Thurston County to the Straddleline ORV Park property. Grays Harbor County now owns and maintains the land and fixtures that comprise the park.

## **Physical Setting**

Location - Located on the boundary line between Grays Harbor and Thurston Counties the site is 16 miles west of Olympia and within a two-hour drive radius of the Seattle/Tacoma, Everett, and Portland metro areas. The park is situated in a narrow valley bounded by steep, hilly terrain and heavy soils. Forested state lands surround the park on three sides with SR 8 bordering the park to the north. The natural surroundings of the park help to contain the noise and dust generated by ORV use. The land to the north of SR 8 is under private ownership consisting of scattered single family residences and forest lands.

Facilities – Straddleline is an intensive use facility which includes 5 miles of trail bike trails in the park and access to over 100 miles of trails within Capital State Forest. It offers over 150 acres of open riding, 1 mile MX track, 1/8 mile flat track, off-road courses, sand drag strip, kids mini MX course, 4-wheel drive obstacle course, camping, meeting/dance hall, heated restrooms with showers, concession stand with restrooms, covered grandstands, a main office and caretakers residence.

Land Use - In Grays Harbor County the park is zoned for General Development 5 (G – 5) as a conditional use (recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds). Thurston County has zoned the site as Rural Residential/Resource (RRR 1/5) with a non-conforming use designation. This status refers to a type of land use that is no longer allowed in the zoning district but allows legally established uses to continue.

Planning Area – For the purposes of this business plan, the planning area for the Straddleline ORV Park consists of the entire 155 acres located within the park boundaries. (Please refer to Map #1 Straddleline ORV Park)



## Inventory Analysis

The following categories identify existing park inventory as transferred to Grays Harbor County:

I. Total Land Area: 155 Ac.

### II. Production Area:

Track & Infield	19 Ac.
Flat Track	10 Ac.
Grandstand	11,050 sq. ft.
Grand Prix Area	8 Ac.
Pits & Staging	5-15 Ac.
Concessions	734 sq. ft.
Restrooms	1,686 sq. ft.
Trails	6 mi.
Kids Track	5 Ac.
Meeting Hall	3,000 sq. ft.

### III. Support Area:

Access & Auto Parking	25 Ac.
RV/Tent Camping	30 Ac.

### IV. Service and Open Space:

Maintenance Area	5 Ac.
Maintenance Shop & Office	3,240 sq. ft.
Residence	1,100 sq. ft.
Open Space	70 + Ac.

### V. Capital Equipment and Condition Analysis:

- Air compressor - Working, good condition
  - Backpack blower/3 – 2 working, 1 not working
  - Brush rake - Working condition
  - Cat backhoe - Fair condition, needs some repair, has exceeded life expectancy
  - Concession wagon - Fair condition
  - Electric range/2 – 1 in meeting hall, working, fair condition; 1 in caretaker residence - Working condition
  - F-150 pickup – Not working
  - Fax machine – Like new
  - Forks for loader - Poor condition, have exceeded life expectancy
  - Front deck mower - Working condition, has exceeded life expectancy
  - Generators/2 - 1 working in good condition the other not working
  - Honda water pump - Good working condition, has exceeded life expectancy
  - John Deere 650 dozer - Working, fair condition
  - John Deere lawn tractor - Not working, poor condition, has exceeded life expectancy
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### Capital Equipment (cont.)

- Line trimmers/3 – 1 working, 2 not working
- P/A system – Working, good condition
- Refrigerators/2 – 1 in concessions wagon, working/fair condition; 1 in meeting hall, working/good condition
- Stihl chainsaw/2 – Fair condition
- Utility trailer - Fair condition

### VI. Miscellaneous Equipment:

- Aluminum ladder
- Arc welder
- Baseboard heaters - 2 (new)
- Bleachers/10
- Cash register/3
- Chairs - 4 folding, 7 regular chairs
- Desks – 1 metal, 1 wood, 1 with shelf unit
- Washer
- Electric griddle, restaurant style
- Field striper
- File cabinets - 1 small, 2 large
- Garbage cans
- Hoses
- Motorcycle, Honda XR 200 – Needs repair
- Picnic tables
- Playground equipment
- Shower surround
- Speakers/2 - large, outdoor
- Starting lights/2 sets
- Tables/3 - 1 desk table, 1 small table, 1 large conference table/6 chairs
- Table saw
- Telephones – 2
- Tools - miscellaneous
- Trunks/2 – (old style) marked “drag lights”
- Water heater/3

### **Service Area**

Regional Market Area - The regional market area for the Straddleline ORV Park consists of Washington State, the northernmost portions of Oregon State and Vancouver B.C. with a 2005 estimated population of 8.5 million.

Primary Market Area - The primary market/service area is comprised of 19 counties in Western Washington with a total estimated population of 4.9 million. (OFM April 1, 2005) [Appendix A – Western Washington Counties.] (Please refer to Map #2 ORV Parks in Washington State.) This represents a growth (from 4.6 million) in the primary market

area of 300,000 persons since 2001. Of this population there were 70,242 registered ORV owners and 123,302 registered motorcycle owners in 2004. These figures represent about a nine percent growth in the ORV user market in the last four years. [Appendix B – 2004 ORV Permits]

### **Recreational Uses**

Grays Harbor County intends to open the Straddleline ORV park to the widest variety of permitted uses to satisfy as much of the existing demand as possible. Established uses at the park include individual recreational activities, competitive and sponsored events, specialized activities, ORV safety and training, and access to the Capital Forest.

Individual recreational activities may include: motocross practice, trail riding, track practice, and cross country riding.

Competitive, sponsored and organized events may include: motocross racing, 4x4 events, dirt track racing, drag racing, sprint racing, trail events, rallies, poker runs, and ORV special events.

Specialized recreational activities may include: RV and tent camping, children's play opportunities, dances, parties, group and individual picnics, ORV shows and merchandising.

ORV safety/use training may include: full size 4x4 vehicles, motorcycles, ATVs, rally cars, go-karts, and off road buggies.

Capital Forest Trail Access – The Park serves as the ORV trail access to Capital Forest and offers a trailhead staging area, trail use orientation and safety training.

### **Evaluation of Existing Recreational Opportunities**

Within Washington State there are only two other sites that are comparable to the Straddleline ORV Park site; the Airway Heights ORV Park in Spokane County and the Horn Rapids ORV Park in Benton County. (Please refer to Map #2 ORV Parks in Washington State.)

- ◆ Spokane County (Airway Heights) ORV Park  
Located near Spokane, Washington, the park features a variety of 4-wheel drive, off-road, motorcycle, go-kart and ATV events throughout the year as well as safety and education programs and skill clinics. Activities range from family and group outings to events that are state, regional, national and international in scope. The park operates mid-March to mid-October.
- ◆ Horn Rapids ORV Park.  
Located near Richland, Washington, the park offers an open riding area, a motocross track, 4x4 relay track, 4x4 obstacle course, sand drags, restrooms with showers, a campground, go-kart track, group shelters, play ground equipment and spectator areas with bleachers. The park operates year-round.

## MAP #2 – ORV Parks in Washington State



There also exist several other isolated ORV opportunities within the state. Other available ORV areas are most commonly comprised of trails or tracks of land operated by the State Parks Department or other county jurisdictions. The Department of Natural Resources furnishes available riding areas on the Olympic Peninsula as well. These sites are non-developed riding areas. The closest ORV riding areas to the Straddleline site are located in:

- Capital Forest – The Capitol State Forest, adjacent to Straddle Line ORV Park, is managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and provides trail and forest road riding ORV opportunities. ATVs, 4x4s, and motorcycles are allowed on designated trails and the forest roads. There are over 100 miles of trail bike riding in the Northern half of the forest and approximately 575 miles of forest roads in entire system. Trail riding is closed November 1 to April 1 to protect forest resources. Access to Capitol State Forest ORV riding can be made through Straddleline ORV Park.
- Elbe Hills – Located in Elbe Washington, a distance of 72 miles. This area consists of seasonal trail built for short wheelbase four-wheel drives.
- Elochoman – Located near Cathlamet, a distance of 110 miles. This trail was designed for trail bikes only.
- Tahuya State Forest – Located south of Bremerton, a distance of approximately 50 miles. This site offers 39 miles of trails for trail bikes and for short-and-long-wheelbase four-wheel drives. Several campgrounds offer places to stay.
- Evans Creek - Just North West of Mt. Rainier National Park, a distance of approximately 85 miles. The site offers 20 miles of trails for short-wheelbase 4WD vehicles and trail bikes.
- Lower Dungeness – Located 10 miles south of Sequim, an approximate distance of 90 miles. This area offers a 14 mile loop using about eight miles of road. If you are not "street legal" you must retrace your route.
- Mason County Fairgrounds – Located near Shelton Washington, a distance of 8 miles. Although ORV's have used the fairgrounds and its property in years past, it was never officially "open" for that purpose. As of December 10, 2005 the Port of Shelton, which includes the Mason County Fairgrounds, has officially CLOSED the fairgrounds and adjacent property to all ORV use.

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation maintains a list of ORV sites in its publication, Off-Road Vehicle Guide.