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Oregon wants to bridge the gaps in the state's 362-mile coastal trail

By Tiffany Eckert (KLCC)

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The Oregon Coast Trail stretches along the state's entire 362-mile coastline from Washington to California. There are some gaps along the way — disconnected sections of trail that pose safety concerns for hikers. Now, the public is being asked to weigh in on plans to reconnect the trail.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is creating an plan for connecting the trail and improving access for day- and thru-hikers. The agency is gathering public comments through an online open house on the Oregon Coast Trail website.



A hiker passes along Ecola State Park on the Oregon Coast Trail.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

About half of the Oregon Coast Trail is along sandy beaches. There are overland sections across headlands, forests, rivers and even through some coastal towns.

Diane Navarrete with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department said about 10% of the Oregon Coast Trail has gaps.

“People have to either walk along Highway 101 in unsafe conditions,” she said. “Or there’s just a gap – and you can not get from point A to point B – and you have to find an alternative route before you can continue on your hike.”

Though Parks and Rec is leading the planning effort to make the Oregon Coast Trail continuous from border to border, the agency will work in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, the Association of Oregon Counties and Oregon Solutions.

The action plan will identify gaps in the hiking experience and determine actions and funding needed to improve and maintain the trail over time.

Navarrete said they hope to have a suite of possible solutions to present by this spring and a draft action plan by summer. She anticipates repairs and improvements will take years.

The Oregon Coast Trail was authorized in 1971 by the Oregon Recreation Trails Advisory Council and developed and is managed as part of the state park system of Oregon.

To learn about the Oregon Coast Trail action plan and give feedback, visit the online open house at bit.ly/OCTOpenHouse1 any time now through Feb. 11 to view a presentation of the project and provide feedback.