

CAPE BLANCO AIRPORT AREA



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY



Conducted for:
Curry County Oregon

Funded in Part Through a Grant From:
USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant

Prepared By:
John Irwin

Submitted:
January 2, 2008

In this feasibility study we asked:

How might this facility and the adjacent county-owned property add value into today's regional economy?

Six Alternatives Considered

- Alternative 1:* Hold Property for Future Use
- Alternative 2:* Natural Resources Extraction on County Parcel
- Alternative 3:* Sell County Property 311S15-4200
- Alternative 4:* Land Swap of County Property 311S15-4200
- Alternative 5:* Develop an Airport Industrial, Business or Technology Park
- Alternative 6:* Cape Blanco Airport as an Ecotourism and Art Tourism Portal

But first some background information →

Amazing WWII Artifact

Constructed on 398 acres of land between 1944 and 1945 and leased to the US Navy

Now owned and operated by the State of Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA)



Runway in fair condition
at 5100 x 150 ft

Weight bearing capacity:
Single wheel: 115,000 lbs
Double wheel: 185,000 lbs
Double tandem: 340,000 lbs



Not included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS),
making this airport ineligible for federal funding

Airport Background – 2

- The Airport has no aircraft fueling facilities. None are planned. Users rely on fueling capabilities of Gold Beach and Bandon, where fuel prices sometimes vary considerably.
- Aircraft based on the field: 4
- Aircraft operations: avg 56/month
- No published instrument procedures at 5S6.
- The Airport has a partial parallel taxiway with a bituminous surface.
- The Airport has an apron, with a bituminous surface, which provides parking for 10 aircraft.



Airport Background - 3

Airport Sanitation



Extensive Drainage System

Wind indicator
but no other
working lighting
and/or navigational aids



ODA Draft Report

- Classified as a Category V – Remote Access/Emergency Service Airports and **should** provide appropriate facilities and services commensurate with its system role.
- The existing airport facilities were compared to the minimum and desired criteria for a Category V airport which identified **NO** airport facility and service needs.
- This is a non-NPIAS airport and not eligible for federal funding.
- Expansion of the Airport was noted as the main citizen concern regarding the Airport.
- The most important items that Cape Blanco State Airport could do to promote economic growth are to increase runway length (by 3,000') and improve/add navigational aids.
- ODA unsure if the city of Denmark and Curry County would be supportive of a funding mechanism to finance future airport developments.

ODA Draft Report

- The airport sponsor (ODA) should consider rehabilitating the apron and taxiway pavement as they are in fair to poor condition. Several areas have significant cracks that have widened and vegetation is growing up through the surface.



ODA Draft Report

- Non-complaint RSAs on both runway ends due to significant vegetation and rough grade conditions.
- The airport sponsor (ODA) should consider removing the vegetation and grading the RSAs to meet the FAA design standards.



Toward Ocean



Toward 101

ODA Draft Report

- Install signage along county and state roads leading to the Airport.



Hm... There is a sign on 101 at the Airport Road turn-off to the airport.

ODA Draft Report

There are perceived operational limitations which include:

- Runway length
- Taxiways
- Navigational aids
- Terminal amenities
- Fixed Based Operation (FBO) services (e.g., fuel)
- Inclement weather significantly reduces the “usability” of the Airport
- Aircraft parking/storage



ODA Draft Report

- Feasibility of a state operated and subsidized air shuttle service was investigated.
- This air shuttle service would link various communities within the state.
- Significant improvements would be necessary to accommodate the type of aircraft required to provide an air shuttle service at this Airport.
- No tracking of flights between the regional airports was available.
- Even though there is an interest from the survey respondents, it is **unlikely** that this Airport could support this activity.

ODA Draft Report

- Repair runway lights



Typical Broken Light



Very Few Not Broken

- Replace the beacon light



Where did it go?



- **Critical safety issue!**

Potential for Industrial, Business or Technology Park on Cape Blanco Airport

- Airport is **not** for sale or lease.
- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) are particular about what happens to airport property.
- Available airport property needs to be retained for future airport use.
- ODA has indicated a willingness to consider leasing additional land at the airport for hangars or other similar uses.
- Infrastructure challenges (e.g., sewage disposal, access to water, power, telecommunications) will be faced by anything other than hangar development.
- On the airport property there is some additional opportunity for building on leased land. This would be on the side of the airport already developed (near existing hangars).
- There is insufficient land between the runway and the county-owned property to support development in that location.

Curry County Owned Property

The county-owned parcel would require extensive preparations to provide a shovel-ready site. This would include:

- inventorying plant and animal species
- providing an access road
- leveling and installation of drainage
- obtaining a ready supply of water (i.e., a well).
- installation of sewage disposal facilities
- provisioning of power and telecommunications

Curry County Owned Property

Zoning

- County parcel 3115-00-04200-00 R23869 is zoned as a Public Facility (PF). The PF zone is applied to publicly and privately owned areas for the development or maintenance of needed public facilities and services, for example, all public highway, road and street right-of-ways are included in this zoning designation.
- “Land designated for Public Facilities (PF) use which is transferred to private ownership by a public agency shall automatically revert to the comprehensive plan and zoning designation of the majority of the immediately adjacent lands upon transfer to private ownership.”
- Adjacent land is zoned Agricultural (AFD) and Forestry-Grazing (FG).
- **Located** in the Port Orford Enterprise Zone - Enterprise zones target ‘for-profit’ business operations that do not compete significantly within the local economy and that bring in outside income.
- **NOT located** in the Port Orford Urban Growth Boundary.
- **NOT within** the Port of Port Orford district – there is an interest in some day exploring expansion of the port district to include the airport area.

Curry County Owned Property

Soils

- **BLACKLOCK SERIES:** Consists of poorly drained soils that are shallow to an ortstein pan, and formed in sandy marine sediments. These soils are in depressions on marine terraces. They are underlain by a **cemented pan at a depth of 12 to 20 inches**. Slopes range from 0 to 7 percent. The mean annual precipitation is about 70 inches and mean annual temperature is about 52 degrees F.
- **DRAINAGE AND PERMEABILITY:** **Very poorly or poorly drained**; slow to medium runoff; moderate permeability in the upper part of the solum, very slow in the cemented pan and moderately rapid in the underlying material. The water table is perched above this impermeable layer and is at or near the surface.
- **USE AND VEGETATION:** Most areas of this soil are in native shrubs and trees and are used for wildlife habitat. This soil has **limited use for timber production. Intensive uses are for cranberry bogs, pasture, occasional home sites and recreation such as campgrounds and hunting**. The native vegetation is shorepine, sitka spruce, Port-Orford-cedar, western hemlock, evergreen huckleberry, rhododendron, salal, madrone, swordfern, azalea, spirea, sedges, rushes, and water-tolerant grasses. Gorse has invaded some cleared areas.

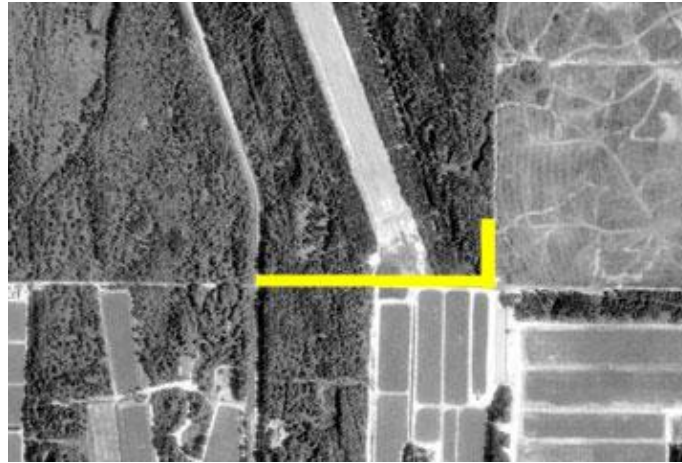
Curry County Owned Property

Plants

- Much of this area is underlain by low nutrient Blacklock soils, which means that trees that grow here are often stunted and not suitable for timber production.
- This same low-nutrient environment means that there is a **high likelihood** of rare and unusual plants, for example Western Lilies (*Lilium occidentale*). The Western Lily is a rare plant that grows only in southern Oregon and northern California, within 6 miles of the sea; in areas with the unusual Blacklock soils (this is hardpan with organic material on top that remains wet much of the year).
- The Western Lily is a federally endangered species protected by the Endangered Species Act. The county property does support a population of Western Lilies .
- There is another potentially rare plant to consider: bog clubmoss (*Lycopodiella inundata*). This is not endangered or threatened but rare.
- **Any development must consider the implications of protected and rare species as such development could be considered detrimental. Changing the drainage and therefore the hydrology in the area could also affect these endangered plants.**

Curry County Owned Property Infrastructure - *Access Road*

- A road would need to be constructed to gain access to the county's property.
- Rough estimates indicate a total length of 1,500 feet using the shortest route from Airport Road to the county property.
- Estimated build cost is \$300,000



- Given the current assessment of compromised RSAs by ODA and footprint of the state lands the implication is that the access road would need to be installed on private land.
- No estimate of additional costs for this solution was immediately available (i.e., land acquisition for the road or easement).

Curry County Owned Property Infrastructure - *Power*

- There is power to the airport hangars.



- There is **no power** to the county land under study.
- Bringing power to the county property will require an engineering study by Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative to determine power needs and the best route for reaching onto the property. Sizing the power delivered depends on projected uses for the property.
- This engineering work might be combined with telecommunications engineering.

Curry County Owned Property Infrastructure - Water

- There is **no water service** at the airport or at the county-owned land.
- Wells do exist around the property in question.

<i>Property</i>	<i>Well Depth (feet)</i>	<i>GPM</i>
2901	41	10
3000	41	10
4100	62	30
4005	40	80

- Rough investment estimates for developing a producing well are computed at \$20/foot for drilling and \$15/foot for materials. The estimated cost of the pump was not available without additional engineering work. Miscellaneous other costs would also be incurred. The dollar amount for that would depend on how the well was built (sand, etc.). Using these numbers the following cost of well development would be estimated as follows:

<i>Well Depth (feet)</i>	<i>Estimated Investment (Drilling and Materials)</i>
40	1,400
65	2,100

- These investment numbers only address a portion of the costs. Total costs to develop a producing well could range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 or more.

Curry County Owned Property Infrastructure

Sewage Disposal

- There is **no sewage disposal** at the airport or at the county-owned land nor is there a nearby sewage disposal treatment plant. A “porta-potty” provides for this need in the area of the airport hangers.
- The soil profile indicates relatively shallow material on a hard-pan floor with poor drainage characteristics.
- A sewage disposal system would need to be sized to meet the needs of any proposed development.
- Factors impacting the cost of such an investment would include identifying a viable location on the property, the type of system to be installed and the processing capacity of the system.

Transportation

- Surface transportation for hire is **not** readily available to either the airport or to the adjacent land.

Curry County Owned Property

Infrastructure - *Telecommunications*

- There is **no** telephone at the airport. No estimate of cost for providing telephony to the airport or county property was obtained.
- Broadband capacity is growing for the area but does not exist there today. Verizon and Charter Communications have fiber runs down highway 101. Likely the closest connection point to either of these service providers would be in Port Orford.
- Curry County recently completed an expansion of their internal communications capabilities over wireless. A new county antenna on the east side of 101 can be seen from the airport runway. Line of site communication could be enabled but this would not be available for commercial purposes under current county policies.



- **Curry County lacks telecommunication route redundancy** now considered critical to any light industrial manufacturing or other form of business requiring continual availability of telephony or broadband communications.

Gross Estimate of Investments to Bring this Property to a Shovel-Ready Status

- The following estimates are very rough, preliminary and subject to change. The purpose is to give some idea of the possible costs involved to bring this county parcel to a shovel ready status (i.e., readied for development).

<i>Element</i>	<i>Estimate</i>
Engineering	30,000
Access Road	300,000
Power	unknown
Water	10,000
Sewage Disposal	unknown
Leveling and drainage	unknown
Telecommunications	unknown
Environmental Assessment and Inventory	unknown
Project Management	30,000

- The “unknowns” require additional information to cast a complete estimate. Even so, we **estimate the cost to the county of preparing this land for a business park in the range of \$500,000 to \$800,000 or more.**

Measure 49

- In 2007, the Oregon legislature placed Measure 49 on the November 6, 2007 special election ballot. It passed with 62% in favor. The measure overturns and modifies many of the provisions of Measure 37.
- The implications of Measure 49's passage on development of the county parcel are not clear at this point, save that it creates yet another barrier/challenge to development.
- Sweet Ranch owners indicate that this has changed development plans for their property, which is adjacent to the airport.
- No doubt legal opinions and court cases yet to come will help clarify this emerging situation.

Other Airport Industrial, Business or Technology Park Activity in the Region

- Somewhat surprisingly there is a very low level of airport industrial, business or technology parks in association with the airports of the region. Photographs from the air really bring home this point. Here are just a few:



Astoria



Bandon



Brookings



Crescent City



Cave Junction



Florence



Gasquet



Gold Beach

- Many airport managers would like to see such development but are faced with a number of development challenges , not unlike those for this property.

Alternative 1

Hold Property for Future Use

- Land values will only increase
- Market forces will increase the demand for airport expansion some time in the next 10 years
- No apparent direct expense of holding this property “as is” until some future date

Alternative 2

Natural Resources Extraction on County Parcel

- Logging potential of trees on this property has been evaluated previously and found to be of **limited or no** commercial value.
- Trees that grow here are often stunted and not suitable for timber production.
- High probability of rare and endangered plant species on this parcel.

Alternative 3

Sell County Property 311S15-4200

- Sale of the property to the state is ill-advised as the county would only receive 6% of the sales price.
- Sale of the property to a private party would convert this parcel into a taxable property. A rough estimate for the sale price is \$136,810 (using \$2,138 per acre of nearby parcel 3114-00-03900 R20984) to \$895,860 (using \$14,000 per acre Real Market Value of adjacent parcel 3115-00-04100 R14343).
- On sale of the property to a private party the zoning would likely revert to either agricultural or forestry/grazing, unless other action was initiated. This along with Measure 49 implications likely would constrain the use of the property to some form of agricultural use, such as a cranberry operation.
- One thought is to explore sale of this property to a land conservancy group. That use would be consistent with the state parks property that exists on the other boundaries of the airport property.

Alternative 4

Land Swap of County Property 311S15-4200

- Might better position the county to develop an industrial, business or technology park in more favorable circumstances (i.e., location) for such development.
- No specific parcel was identified.
- The land swap might be done with private, state or federal land owners.



Blue = State

Green = Federal

Alternative 5

Develop an Airport Industrial, Business or Technology Park

- Regional airports, especially when combined with a neighboring industrial, business or technology park, can be valuable assets in overall regional economic development.
- These airports often do not operate at full capacity since the neighboring facilities and industrial parks lack the interest of investors, and vice versa.
- Many challenges for development of an industrial, business or technology park present themselves in this situation. By no means are they insurmountable but the cost to benefit must be fully understood.
- Typically airports that have developed profitable airport industrial parks started with very large tracts of land. Most airport industrial, business or technology parks have well over 100 acres.
- The amount of usable land is severely restricted by the geography at the airport. This is similarly true of the adjacent county-owned parcel. For example, a road would need to be developed to provide access to the county-owned property.

Alternative 5 (continued)

- Because this property has not been disturbed, it would trigger the need for an Environmental Impact Report. The Western Lilly **DOES EXIST** on this land.
- Airfield Runway Requirements indicated by ODA are for an 8,000 foot runway. The airport is very usable by smaller aircraft, including jets, but the ODA deems 8,000 feet as necessary for support of commercial shuttle aircraft.
- Surface transportation and parking are an issue.
- Lack of sewage disposal infrastructure at the airport. The airport currently has no septic system and no plans to construct such.
- Lack of a developed water system and no plans to construct such.
- Lack of power and telecommunications to the county-owned parcel.
- Strong potential for protected species.
- Poor highway access. It takes approximately an hour and a half to two hours to reach I-5 over mountainous terrain on secondary roads.

Alternative 5 (continued)

- Airfield Runway Requirements indicated by ODA are for an 8,000 foot runway. The airport is very usable by smaller aircraft, including jets, but the ODA deems 8,000 feet as necessary for support of commercial shuttle aircraft.
- Airport runway expansion would have to extend into either Oregon State Park lands or into an adjacent farming operation. Neither would seem to be in the planning horizons of the ODA.
- Non-NIPPIAS status means the airport is not eligible for FAA funding. This imposes a substantial barrier to obtaining funds for improvements.
- Surface transportation and parking are an issue.
- Lack of rail access. Traditionally, goods manufactured at industrial parks, can easily be transported by air, truck or rail to markets.
- Lack of access to a large population. One reason many airport industrial parks are successful is that within a relatively short distance there is access to large populations of people. The population of Port Orford is 1,190. The entire population of Curry County is 22,358.
- Measure 49 implications
- Transfer to a private party requires the PF zoning to revert to the zoning of the majority of other properties in the area (i.e., agricultural or forest/grazing).

Alternative 5 (continued)

Air quality

- Concern for **air quality** and the impact to global warming has been raised. This is a serious issue. Only thorough air quality **monitoring** over a period of time would accurately and definitively determine whether or not there would be an air quality issue.

Noise

- Landing and take-off patterns mean that any overhead traffic over the city of Port Orford is more likely from folks having a “look-see” (i.e., tourists, coast guard, etc.).
- Take-offs and landings are required to be at a minimal level of 2,000 feet when passing over the reefs immediately offshore. Wind tends to carry the sound inland.
- While noise is an issue for some, it barely is noticed by many. Reports from persons having lived immediately at the end of the runway or just up airport road (near 101) indicate that noise from aircraft was not an issue.
- Only a detailed sound survey and **monitoring** using instruments will establish the exact noise levels and noise distribution.

Alternative 5 (continued)

Workforce

- The skill sets necessary to support light manufacturing, including assembly work, or customer service work (e.g., call centers) are **not present in sufficient quantities** to support attracting a new business entity to the immediate area.
- In addition low-end manufacturing/assembly work is most at risk to be offshored.
- There is a resurgence of manufacturing in the US but it is more knowledge-based and requires a higher level of technical and people skills than present in today's north Curry County population.

Conclusion

- **Not** a viable development opportunity at this time due to a variety of economic and market considerations.

Alternative 6

Cape Blanco Airport as an Eco Tourism and Art Tourism Portal



Alternative 6 - continued

“The many natural resources of the county are varied and unique. They include the outstanding visual quality of the landscape, diverse forest products, abundant anadromous fish and wildlife species, economically important mineral deposits, and agricultural products such as specialty crops.

The landscape is rapidly becoming the most valuable natural resource of the county. Tourism and related businesses are developing into a major enterprise. The wealth of water, wildlife, and scenery and the sunny weather attract thousands of visitors annually.”

Alternative 6 (continued)

- Tourism already contributes to the region's economic well-being.
- Opportunities exist to add new dimensions beyond the traditional approaches to tourism as practiced in the region.
- System-wide concepts are worth exploring for further developing and marketing regional tourism assets and managing access to those assets.
- It's about becoming even more organized and well-defined, crafting a more system-wide approach to Eco Tourism and Art Tourism.
- Today the airport, along with highway 101, already provides a viable entry-point into north Curry County.
- Even without any airport expansion there is the opportunity to enhance regional economic development by utilizing this asset in conjunction with expanded promotion and organization of the area's spectacular natural resources and art offerings.
- Negative impact from increased use of the airport for this activity likely will be very low.

Alternative 6 (continued)

- The current approach to tourism generates a number of low-paying jobs and is dependent highly on the “accidental tourist” stopping for food or lodging as they pass through the county.
- **Not** proposing elimination of current approaches but rather there is opportunity to **add a new dimension** of tourism, one that attracts a demographic with greater disposable income and a willingness to pay for a value-added experience.
- The Eco Tourism and Art Tourism approach targets a different demographic; ***people that leave their homes to travel to north Curry County secure in the knowledge that their experience will be of the highest quality and a notable moment in their lives. In exchange they will spend more money than the casual tourist, money that will stay in the regional economy. It's not a vacation, it's an “experience”!***
- The market development approach suggested involves more than ads, brochures and Web sites, although those remain as critical and integral parts of an overall system-wide strategy.

Alternative 6 (continued)

Natural beauty and many related attractions already exist

Here in no particular order is a short list:

- Spectacular ocean views with great whale watching opportunities.
- Port of Port Orford, a working harbor with long history as a fishing and lumber port.
- Elk River fish hatchery
- Wind surfing at Floras Lake State Park
- Cranberry bog tours
- Newburg State Park
- Oregon Islands
- The Elk and Sixes rivers are well known throughout the Pacific Northwest for their fall and winter steelhead and salmon fishing, as well as trout, in season.
- Float trips are available on the Elk and Sixes rivers.


Alternative 6 (continued)

Natural beauty and many related attractions (continued)

- Fall colors
- Battle Rock City Park
- Cape Blanco State Park
- A hike up the three mile trail to the top of Humbug Mountain provides impressive vistas of the Oregon coast.
- Picnicking
- Humbug State Park campground
- The black sands of Humbug Beach.
- Cape Blanco Light Station
- The Port Orford Lifeboat Station (Coast Guard Station #318)/Port Orford Heads State Park.
- Paradise Point State Recreation Area
- Ocean, lake and river fishing

Alternative 6 (continued)

Natural beauty and many related attractions (continued)

- Active artistic community, with at least eight art galleries owned and operated by working artists
- Ocean surfers ride the waves at Hubbard Creek and Battle Rock State Park.
- Patrick Hughes House
- Surfing → 
- Gift shops
- Restaurants
- Kite flying
- Beachcombing
- Camping
- Bicycling (e.g., Oregon Coast Bike Route) and hiking (e.g., Oregon coast Trail) paths/trails
- Crabbing
- Blacklock Point

Alternative 6 (continued)

Natural beauty and many related attractions (continued)

- Clamming
- Hikes through the pristine forests include groves of the rare Port Orford cedar.
- Garrison Lake
- Prehistoric Gardens
- Historic Cape Blanco Airport
- Bird watching
- Boating and kayaking
- Sailing

Alternative 6 (continued)

Art Tourism Opportunities

- One aspect of tourism that can be associated and integrated with Eco Tourism is Art Tourism.
- Some regions have identified artists and creative people as among their best resources.
- A number of area Web sites do promote regional artists, and there are quite a few top-notch artists in the region.
- Many have studios that are open to the public at designated times.
- Four area artists' work examples follow.



"Footed Earthenware Platter"
by Linda Tarr



Glass Bowl
by Chris Hawthorne



Oregon Coast
by Curtis Hempt



Basket Weaving
with native materials
by Shannon Weber

Alternative 6 (continued)

Annual Events

- February Annual E.S.A. Sorority Valentine's Traveling Bake Sale
- March Port Orford/Langlois School District Spring Break
Whale Watch Week at Battle Rock
- April Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Buffington Park
Spring Beach Clean-up
Opening of Historical Sites: Cape Blanco Lighthouse, Historic Hughes House and Port Orford Lifeboat Stations Museum
- July Annual Fourth of July Jubilee
- September Art and Seafood Festival
- October Fall Beach Clean- Up
- December Bazaar Holiday with five unique bazaars
Annual Christmas Children's Weekend
Historic Hughes House Christmas Tours
Winter Whale Watch Week at Battle Rock

Alternative 6 (continued)

- Eco Tourism, recreational and educational travel based on natural attractions is a promising means of advancing social, economic, and environmental objectives.
- It offers regions new opportunities for small-enterprise investment and employment and increases the area's stake in protecting their biological resources.
- Making Eco Tourism a positive economic and environmental tool requires policies that foster responsible nature tourism development, broad-based and active local participation in its benefits, and conservation of a region's' biological heritage.



Path to Blacklock Point at Airport Entrance

Alternative 6 (continued)

- Tourism is now the world's largest industry. Nature/Eco Tourism the fastest growing tourism segment!
- Eco Tourism is a *Global Business*.
- So... what Is Eco Tourism?

"Environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples."



Port Orford is Ideal
for Whale & Bird Watching

Alternative 6 (continued)

- Most tourism in natural areas today is not Eco Tourism.
- Eco Tourism can be distinguished from nature tourism by its emphasis on *conservation, education, traveler responsibility and active community participation*.
- Specifically, Eco Tourism possesses the following characteristics:
- Conscientious, **low-impact** visitor behavior
 - Sensitivity towards, and appreciation of, local cultures and biodiversity
 - Support for local conservation efforts
 - Sustainable benefits to local communities
 - Local participation in decision-making
 - Educational components for both the traveler and local communities
- Eco Tourism is a unique branding opportunity for a region.
- Eco Tourism can increase the level of education and activism among travelers, making them more enthusiastic and effective agents of conservation.

Alternative 6 (continued)

- Increased tourism to sensitive natural areas in the absence of appropriate planning and management can become a threat to the integrity of both ecosystems and local cultures.
- Fluctuations in climate, currency exchange rates, and political and social conditions can make over-dependence upon tourism a risky business.
- Eco Tourism can provide a viable economic development alternative for local communities with few other income-generating options.
- Eco Tourism targets upscale market opportunities. This is a demographic that has money to spend and is happy to spend it, when they are properly stimulated and rewarded. These travelers seek *“authentic experiences”*.
- By organizing opportunities that appeal to this demographic for engaging with the area environment, art and other aspects of a high quality experience, additional revenue can be attracted to the region.

Alternative 6 (continued)

Here are a few ideas for “packaging” this experience.

- Guided tour packages:
 - Fall color photography shoots up the rivers and along the by-ways.
 - Diving experiences in the reefs.
 - Whale-watching
 - Pick-up and return to the Cape Blanco Airport by area lodging establishments.
 - Tours with high focus on educational components of the ecology and history of the region.
 - Bird watching
 - Plants of the region
 - River and ocean shore trips
 - Working port tours
 - Local history
 - “Catch and release” fishing
 - Crabbing
 - Training and supervised kayaking and canoeing
- Lodging, preferably in small lodges, country inns or “bread & breakfasts” vs. larger facilities.
- Dining (even on the trail) featuring local organic foods .
- Entertainment such as book readings and reviews with area nature authors or “quality” time with artists in their studios.

Alternative 6 (continued)

- Eco Tourism has the potential to touch many aspects of the north Curry County area and its residents in a positive way, if implemented in a holistic manner.
- This means addressing the complete cycle or chain of events related to Eco Tourism .
- Potential to develop a light manufacturing opportunity associated with branded North Curry County Eco Tourism related products from the area.



Alternative 6 (continued)

Some thoughts on getting started:

- **Not** a one time event but rather a **multi-year process** that will evolve. *Yes, it can be messy at times, especially in the first throes of getting organized.*
- It **must be a community-owned effort**. The community **must** have the prerogative to determine what level of additional development might occur over time to facilitate additional growth of this type of offering.
- Development of a community developed and owned strategic framework is critical and will help guide efforts over the years. *Outside facilitation is recommended highly.*
- Identify an Advisory Committee (AC) drawn from a variety of north county interests and residents.
- Initially the AC would inventory resources and offerings using a visitor's perspective. Understand resources already in existence and to craft a strategy for a systematic way to coordinate, offer and execute a high-quality eco-tourism experience. *So much is already in place.*
- Make the establishment of north Curry County as the eco tourism destination of choice, and not just in Oregon. ***This is a global business!***

Alternative 6 (continued)

Some additional thoughts on getting started:

- Identify and mobilize funding for potential private Eco Tourism investments. Eco Tourism enterprises, like most business ventures, need operating capital.
- Formulate fiscal policies to promote Eco Tourism and to maximize its economic and environmental benefits.
- Encourage exchange of information and know-how about Eco Tourism opportunities and operations. *Education and awareness building!*
- Eco Tourism promotes environmentally responsible tourist operations that conserve energy, recycle waste, and instruct staff and tourists on proper behavior in parks and protected areas.
- ***Monitor and certify the performance of ecotourism activities.*** *Eco Tourism certification is a differentiating factor and leads to product and services branding reflecting a high quality experience.*

Alternative 6 - Summary Remarks

- The phrase “**economic development**” is often reacted to with **alarm**, perhaps with good cause given the truly abysmal results from a number of poorly visioned and executed projects.
- As sure as we sit here today having this discussion, development of one form or another will occur.
- To not address the future with a framework for development that takes the best interest of the long term health and welfare of the community into consideration is pure folly.
- The question to be addressed is how we will address the inevitability of the future: *why not frame a future that channels energies toward stewardship of the area’s natural beauties while promoting a sustainable way to share these highly desired features?*
- This approach in no way forecloses opportunity for business parks or other such investments but seeks to position a balanced and controlled approach.

Closing Remarks

- Six alternatives were analyzed.
- Development of the airport and the adjacent county-owned land does **not** appear to be a viable opportunity at this time due to a variety of economic and market considerations.
- Land swaps or sale of the county property may be acceptable alternatives.
- There appears to be an incredible economic development alternative afforded to north Curry County from Eco and Art Tourism. The airport is but one small part of implementing this opportunity. *Go with your strength. This is it!*

Respectfully Submitted By:

John Irwin

J Irwin Community Informatics Consulting

“Knowledge is for sharing!”

(541) 664-2456

jirwin@callineb.net or

jirwin@mind.net

www.callineb.com

Download this presentation and the complete study at:

<http://curryecondev.org/StudiesProjectsSurveys.htm>

Or

<http://www.callineb.com/documents.htm>