



## John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Long-Range Interpretive Plan



# John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Long-Range Interpretive Plan

Prepared by:

Interpretive Planning, Harpers Ferry Center, and  
John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

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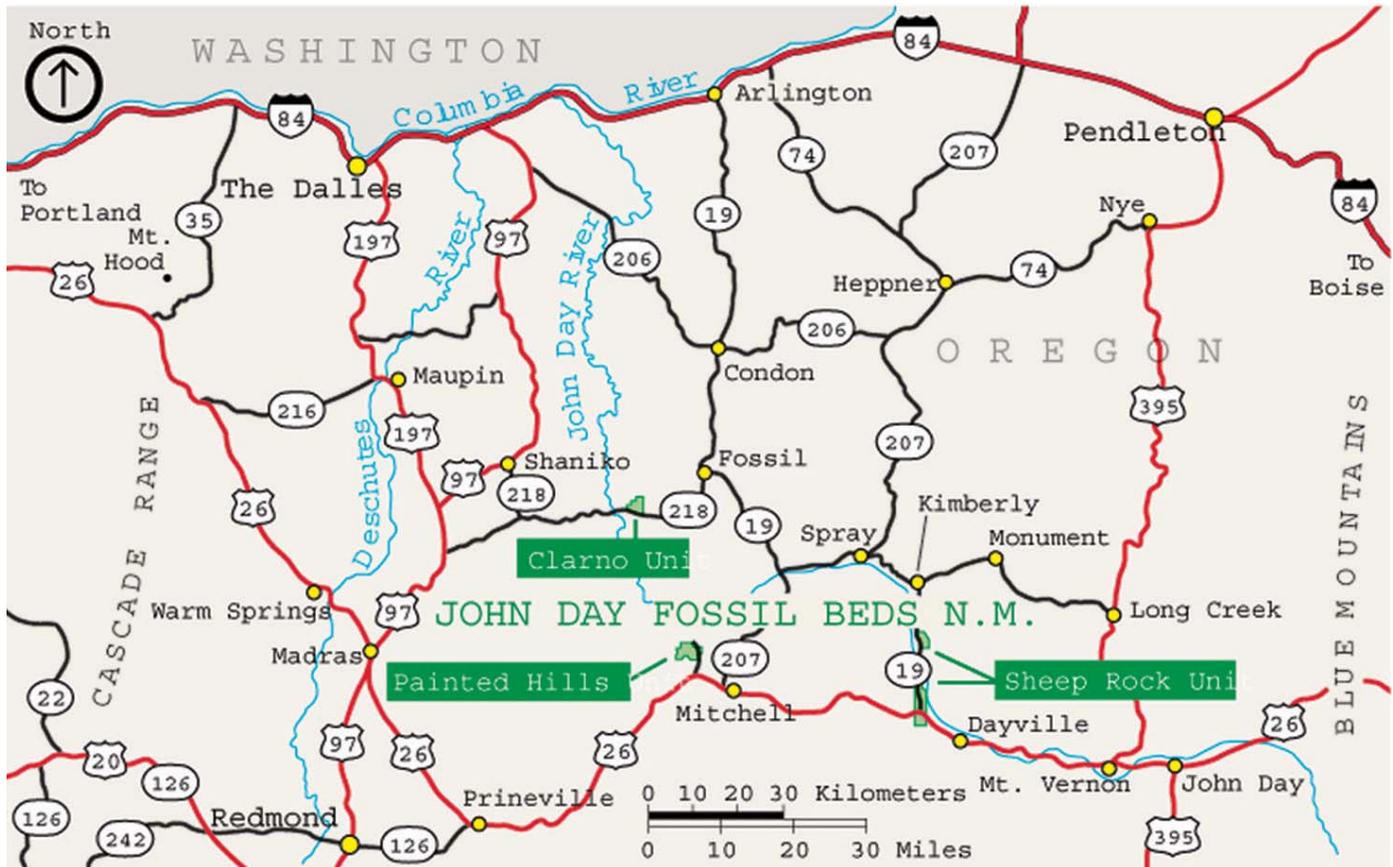
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This map illustrates the location of the three units of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

## INTRODUCTION

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*... No region in the world shows more complete sequences of tertiary land populations, both plant and animal, than the John Day Basin.*

- Ralph W. Chaney, paleobotanist

Located in eastern Oregon, the 14,000 acre John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is comprised of three units: the Clarno Unit and Painted Hills Unit are located in Wheeler County, Oregon and Sheep Rock Unit is located in Grant County, Oregon. Together these parklands protect a small portion of a 40+ million-year-long, fossil record of earth's history, a record which documents the diversity of plant and animal life that existed 54 – 6 million years ago during the Age of Mammals.

In calendar year 2007 John Day Fossil Beds National Monument requested and received Servicewide funding to initiate a Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) with the National Park Service's Media Design Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. During LRIP project scoping park Superintendent Jim Hammett defined the need and challenge for this plan:

*People are passionate about this place – the significance of park paleontological resources, the “state of the art” paleontology research center and museum exhibit located in the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC), and the surviving features of the Cant Ranch. We have learned through our planning of TCPC that if we can come up with a specific direction for the interpretive program and consensus within the park and from our partners on the direction of interpretation and visitor services, we can make it happen. Distillation is the key.*

Park staff and partners gathered together for two Long-Range Interpretive planning workshops held in October 2007 and August 2008. The purpose of these workshops was to analyze existing conditions, establish a vision to guide the Interpretive and Visitor Services program for the next 10 years; and make recommendations to address program deficiencies. This LRIP is a direct result of the aforementioned workshops and is consistent with all park planning documents. The plan outlines recommendations for the next decade. Recommendations address future interpretive services, facilities, interpretive media and the partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program. The intended audience for this plan includes park and Pacific West Regional Office staff, partners, stakeholders, interested visitors and future contractors.

The primary goal of this Long-Range Interpretive Plan is to promote park resource values through specially planned visitor experiences and excellence in interpretation. Realization of this vision requires new project and staff funding, strong internal collaboration and external partnering. In sum, in the words of Superintendent Hammett: “we can make it happen”.

## The Planning Process

The goal of the interpretive planning process is not simply the creation of a plan. The ultimate goal is the development of a cost-effective, tightly focused, high quality park interpretive program that effectively addresses all audiences and achieves management goals.

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) recommends actions that should occur over the next 8-10 years. It identifies park themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide array of interpretive services, media, programs, and outreach activities to communicate the park's mission, significance, themes, and values. It will join the park-produced Annual Interpretive Plan and Interpretive Database to make up the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) for John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

Though the park legislation, purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals should remain constant over the life of this plan, new scientific discoveries and research may require changes. Also, media and programs may require updating as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further design documents will need to be prepared to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.



Sheep Rock Peak and the John Day River.

## Executive Summary

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is a 14,000 acre park comprised of three units: the Clarno Unit and Painted Hills Unit located in Wheeler County, Oregon and the Sheep Rock Unit located in Grant County, Oregon. Parklands protect a 40+ million-year-long fossil record of earth's history and documents the diversity of plant and animal life that existed 54 – 6 million years ago. Each unit shares an important place in the protection of fossil resources, magnificent and varied scenery, and contains a variety of park trails and visitor support facilities. The park hosted 113,418 visitors in 2008, a 10 % drop from 2007 due largely to high gas prices during the area's peak tourism season.

During calendar year 2007 the park requested and received Servicewide funding to initiate a Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) with the National Park Service's Media Design Center in Harpers Ferry, WVA. During the workshop participants defined a park vision to guide the implementation of this LRIP and the delivery of the Interpretive and Visitor Services Program (I&VS) for the next decade:

*The Interpretation and Visitor Services staff seeks to engage monument visitors to form enduring connections to support the preservation of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument and the mission of the National Park Service. The monument will be recognized as a leader in resource-based educational programming, fostering life-long learning and stewardship. Utilizing the park's diverse resources, facilities and*

*partners, the interpretive program will provide a range of informal and formal programming and interpretive media to meet the needs of park visitors -- from the first-time visitor to the student learner and the scholar alike.*

- Park Vision Statement for Interpretation and Visitor Services

## Summary of Significant Plan Recommendations

The goal of this Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) is to promote NPS stewardship values through specially planned visitor experiences and excellence in interpretation. Realization of this vision requires new project and staff funding, strong internal collaboration and external partnering. The intended audience for this plan includes park and Pacific West Regional Office staff, partners, stakeholders, interested visitors and future contractors. This LRIP is concurrent with all park planning documents. Significant plan recommendations include:

- *An infusion of funds is needed to expand the interpretive program and support opportunities for professional development.*

The park will seek program monies to fund interpretive positions now vacant due to insufficient funds. The 2006 Park Business Plan documents the need for a 37% increase in FTE, or staff levels. Considering salary differences, this recommended 37% increase in FTE would be met by a 30% increase in funding. These funds will:

- Improve resource protection, interpretation and orientation through a more balanced coverage at all three units during the peak visitor season. And,
- Expand collaborative programming and internal training. The I&VS staff, Resource Manager and Paleontology team will work together to develop an annual interpretive program schedule and training plan that supports the expansion of the I&VS program.

Future ranger facilitated programs may include:

- Connecting visitors to the park's active research program in the paleontology lab. With the addition of an audio system, at scheduled times, visitors will be able to observe fossil preservation work and hear a staff person describe the work from inside the laboratory.
- Providing ranger-led hikes to research sites to observe the park paleontology team at work and have an opportunity to interact with team members.
- Offering a periodic seminar series for the general public. Presentations will reflect current park specific research topics or issues, and other timely Servicewide special emphasis topics such as climate change. Program presenters may be park staff or invited speakers. The program

audience is twofold: future program advertisements will seek local attendance at the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC) auditorium and reach Internet visitors through program videocasting, podcasting and webinars.

- The conversion of the park's successful education program to an elementary grade through high school curriculum-based education program. The re-designed program will meet State and undergraduate curriculum standards and utilize the videocasting capabilities of the TCPC to include an educational outreach component for students unable to travel to the park.

Internal training will: support the delivery of the I&VS program. Session topics will reflect natural and cultural resources and issues, interpretive themes, the Servicewide Interpretive Development Program, local geology related to prominent land features and staff developmental needs related to job performance.

- *Improve park accessibility through the following measures:*
  - Conduct a formal, summative evaluation of the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center's (TCPC) new visitor center facility and museum exhibits. Include accessibility specialists/consultants in this assessment. This evaluation should consider the plaza area outside the structure, the entryway, lobby area



The Clarno Palisades

and associated exhibits within this space, museum exhibits, and associated trails. The evaluation should assess the interpretation and presentation methods, and the effectiveness of how the new facility and exhibits meet accessibility standards. Based on the evaluation findings develop a plan to prioritize and implement recommended improvements.

- Conduct a formal, summative evaluation of the James Cant Ranch public facilities. Include accessibility specialists/consultants in this assessment. This evaluation should consider the structures, grounds, and associated trails. The evaluation should assess the interpretation and presentation methods, and the effectiveness of how the visitor service areas meet accessibility standards. Based on the evaluation findings develop a plan to prioritize and implement recommended improvements.
- Seek funding to add audio descriptions and assistive listening for the park's existing orientation film to meet current accessibility requirements. The park film is open-captioned. It should also be audio described and assistive listening systems should be provided to people who are hard of hearing.
- Develop at the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC):
  1. Museum exhibit audio program,
  2. Audio description tour for visitors who are blind or have low vision. Note: The audio description tour includes orientation and visual descriptions of the exhibits, including the fossils and murals. The audio description tour should point its listeners in the direction of any tactile objects existing or being created as a part of the exhibit revisions.
  3. A Companion TCPC museum guide publication.

These three media projects should be developed at the same time. Note: a short segment of a draft-Thomas Condon Paleontology Center Museum guide exists and could serve as the start for this project. These products would enhance visitor understanding of the relationship between the TCPC museum and the natural features and fossil resources in the park.

- *Help visitors understand the relationship between the TCPC museum dioramas and the park's 21st century landscapes.*
  - Develop a parkwide sales publication such as a park hand book and companion audio tour, for a general audience. Because the drive

- time between units is not really conducive to an auto tour, a park handbook with a companion audio program is recommended as a way to invite visitors to explore the park and become immersed in its story. The proposed publication should focus on all three units and could be used as a guide to discover what park features and activities each unit has to offer. The audio program could be developed at the same time as the handbook; or, at a later time, depending on funding availability.
- Explore the installation of webcams and outdoor monitors and speakers parkwide in order to connect the three units physically via technology. The park staff has expressed a desire to improve visitor understanding regarding the resources preserved at each unit; a facilitated media experience may encourage visitors to travel to the other units; or, at least make an intellectual connection to the resources preserved in these areas. If this recommendation is unrealistic due to extreme weather and high sun glare, or vandalism/theft concerns, at a minimum, provide rangers at the Clarno and Painted Hills units a portable mp3 that plays video and stores photographs. The mp3 player would be used as an interpretive tool by the unit rangers, when conversing with visitors about the site's significance and most interesting features.
  - Utilize artwork and graphics created for the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC) in all new interpretive media. This will help to improve visitor understanding regarding the exhibit dioramas depicting fossil assemblages at park units; and, if Clarno or Painted Hill is a visitor's first contact with the park, the images may prompt a future visit to the Sheep Rock Unit's TCPC.
  - *Develop several important media projects to improve visitor orientation, understanding and support for monument resources and activities.*
    - Procure a one-way mike and speaker (that can be turned on or off as appropriate) near the lab window in the visitor center lobby. This will give interested visitors the opportunity to see what the scientists are working on in the lab and allow the staff person inside (scientist or interpreter) to describe what they are working on. The park should consider a two-way system, such that visitors can ask questions.
    - Seek funding to produce a new 15 – 20 minute park video. The current video while accurate is now dated. The video was produced before the new Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC) was constructed. The focus of the audiovisual production should be on what the JODA fossil record reveals about earth history and evolution

over the past 40 million years. Using the new TCPC museum artwork, this production should help the viewer envision what the region may have looked like millions of years ago, incorporate soundbites from explorers and paleontologists of the past, as well as soundbites from present-day subject matter experts and paleontologists. The current film title “A Place of Discovery” works very well and is very popular, and conceptually a similar theme should be carried through to the next production.

- Seek funding to create a signage and wayfinding master plan for the park. Each unit requires a well-planned arrival experience. The experience starts with strategically located NPS signs that follow Servicewide identity and messaging standards. The wayfinding master plan would document all the signs in use and make recommendations for updating the signs to conform to the National Park Service UniGuide Sign Standards.
  - Seek a one-time major funding allotment for wayside planning, design, fabrication and installation. This would bring all outdoor exhibits up to current standards and incorporate new research and artwork produced for TCPC. Significant messages must be out in the park where people are recreating. New waysides will provide site specific interpretation,
- new artwork for the TCPC museum exhibit and context so visitors can connect what is viewed at a specific location to the broader story of 40+ million years of earth history preserved within the monument.
- Create companion videos and audio programs for the Cant Ranch Historic District. In addition to the artifacts and text used in the current ranch house exhibit, add a more interactive component by using motion control on still images in combination with an interpretive narrative that includes soundbites from primary sources and a compelling music track. Although this site will be included in the development of the parkwide handbook and audio tour, additional audio stations in the barn and other ranch structures (where there is power) can add important animal and work sounds and oral histories to more fully bring this historic site to life.
  - Develop an interpretation display/exhibit case at the Painted Hills Unit visitor contact station, and any new station developed at the Clarno Unit, with realistic replicas and information that is professionally complementary to the visitor center at the Sheep Rock Unit.

- *Strengthen and utilize existing park partners and seek new partners to support the expansion of the interpretive program.*
  - Develop a shared group list serve to improve inter-group communications; determine who will maintain the behind the scenes technology to support the list serve
  - Create and produce an interagency publication with shared land use protection messages.
  - Plan and conduct an interagency special event for local and regional residents
  - Develop an interagency education program for a targeted age appropriate audience. The interagency team will identify the topic areas that they feel needs the most attention; and then seek assistance from local school representatives to develop and implement a sustainable program. Consider combining resources to develop an advanced placement science related course that combines classroom lessons with access to agency professionals and resource features. Seek special funding if required.
- Work with the park cooperating association “Discover Your Northwest”, formally called the Northwest Interpretive Association, to develop more park specific interpretive sales materials on a variety of topics (perhaps in partnership with the new “John Day Associates” friends group). Expand future products available to include items of interest and price to appeal to school children. Request the Association to market park specific sales items on their internet sales website; and, provide a link to their website from the park website.



2007 LRIP workshop participants.

## Legislation



PHOTO CREDIT: UCMIP 0077

Early 1900s paleontologists at John Day Fossil Beds.

During the late 19th century, the John Day River Basin in east-central Oregon gained worldwide prominence as a region rich in fossil resources. As early as 1931, the State of Oregon began working with noted paleontologist John C. Merriam to identify and set aside lands having the most significant fossil deposits and placed them under the protection of the Oregon state park system. Three state park sites became the heart of what is now John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

The park's enabling legislation was part of an omnibus bill authorizing seven national park areas on October 26, 1974. Specific provisions describing John Day Fossil Beds National Monument include:

### *Title I*

*Section 101. (a) Unless otherwise provided hereafter, the Secretary of the Interior (herein after referred to as the "Secretary") is authorized to acquire by purchase with donated or appropriated funds, donation, exchange, or by transfer from another Federal agency such lands and interests in lands as hereafter provided for establishment as units of the national park system as follows: . . .*

*(2) [the ] establishment [of] the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Oregon, those lands depicted on the map entitled "Boundary Map, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument", numbered NM-JDFB-20,014-A and dated June 1971: Provided, That the national monument shall not*

*be established unless and until the State of Oregon donates or agrees to donate the Thomas Condon-John Day Fossil Beds, Clarno and Painted Hills State Parks: Provided further, that the secretary shall designate the principal visitor center as the "Thomas Condon Visitor Center"; . . .*

*Section 104. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, not to exceed, however the following: ...*

*(b) John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, \$400,000 for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands and \$4,435,200 for development.*

President Gerald Ford signed the legislation authorizing Public Law 93-386 on October 26, 1974; and following the Federal Register notification, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument was established on October 8, 1975. Today the park encompasses 14,000 acres in the John Day River Valley and is comprised of three separate units. These units include: the Clarno Unit and Painted Hills Unit located in Wheeler County, Oregon, and the Sheep Rock Unit located in Grant and Wheeler Counties, Oregon.

Public Law 95-625 was passed on November 10, 1978; the legislation addressed the boundary issues at each of the units and enabled the park to better protect significant fossil sites.

## Background for Planning

Following the passage of the October 26, 1974 legislation creating John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, in June 1975, park headquarters was established in the community of John Day, Oregon, a small city suitable for facilitating long-range planning and oversight of the new national park. The travel distance from John Day headquarters to the Sheep Rock Unit was 37 miles, 73 miles to the Painted Hills Unit, and 120 miles to the Clarno Unit. Park Headquarters remained in John Day until 1994, then moving to the Sheep Rock Unit.

Very modest facilities were available at each of the units. The state had constructed parking lots, overlooks and restrooms. The NPS initiated a modest interpretive and visitor services program using temporary trailers, permanent law enforcement rangers and a seasonal staff of ranger/interpreters. Over the next twenty years the park's interpretive visitor services program grew from a summer seasonal interpretive staff to a year round program led by a Chief of Interpretation. In 1995, Superintendent Jim Hammett reorganized operations, and the park's first Chief of Interpretation position, supervised directly by the superintendent, was established.

The park's administrative history [Floating in the Stream of Time](#), Chapter Four: "The Formative Years" summarizes the early years of national monument management. It mentions that, initially, Lava Bed National Monument's Chief Ranger Ben Ladd was asked to keep an eye on JODA parklands. Later, on September 28, 1975, Ben Ladd was officially named as the first

superintendent of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

After the first summer season, Superintendent Ben Ladd and the NPS planning team re-initiated park planning undertaken prior to the monument's establishment. Early in the General Management Planning scoping, Superintendent Ladd expressed concern that the park did not truly understand the scope and significance of the resource. Paleontologist John Rensberger of the University of Washington was contracted to assess the significance of fossils located on the monument's lands. Rensberger's comprehensive report indicated that:

- The lands within the Painted Hills and Sheep Rock Units had the best examples of evolutionary transitions in situ of any terrestrial fossil deposit in the world. He estimated that parklands contained 95% of the region's known paleontological resources. However,
- There were serious problems at the Clarno Unit. Planning documents showed there were incredibly significant fossil resources outside of the legislated boundary, on a nearby ranch. The proposed Clarno boundaries were changed to include the Mammal Quarry and Nutbeds.
- A comprehensive field research program was needed in order to inform and guide future resource protection, interpretation and education. The report outlined interpretive themes for each unit and identified relevant literature.

Four years later, on November 10, 1978 Public Law 95-625 addressed the boundary issues at each of the units enabling the park to better protect significant fossil sites. However, six more years passed before the first trained professional paleontologist, Theodore Fremd, joined the park staff in July 1984 – almost ten years after the park’s establishment. During the next 25-years, this critical position evolved from fieldwork, laboratory preparation, and collections care to encompass coordinating research efforts and preparation of paleontological research plan; along with fossil preservation, analysis, and the preparation of fossils for exhibition. The administrative history notes that due to the achievements of Chief Paleontologist Fremd and the professional standards established at the Monument, the park’s role and identity in the Pacific West Region and the National Park Service evolved in to a leadership position in the field of park conducted and curated paleontology.

During the earliest years of operation, the National Park Service (NPS) continued negotiations with the James Cant family to acquire a portion of their ranch near the Sheep Rock Unit to serve as the park’s future visitor services and administration facility. Park planners considered this the best location because the Sheep Rock Unit is located on state highway routes and it was the nearest unit to the headquarters in John Day. In 1976, the NPS acquired 876 acres of the ranch, the main ranch house and several significant outbuildings. At that time, there may have been a verbal understanding between Superintendent Ben Ladd,

James Cant, Jr. and former park administrator/Klamath Falls Group Superintendent Ernest Borgman that the park would also interpret ranching in north-central Oregon; and, furnish two rooms of the ranch house with Cant family furniture (a period of time determined by the loan of original furnishings from the Cant family). Documentation for this agreement is not on file, though stories of this verbal agreement have been handed down verbally over the decades.

The NPS staff immediately followed through with this commitment by conducting oral history interviews with area residents. While a verbal understanding regarding the interpretation of the ranch may have been reached during land purchase negotiations, the park’s administrative history documents in footnote 34, chapter 4 that surviving correspondence and several superintendents’ reports address in part the NPS’s intent to interpret the ranching history of the James Cant Ranch in some way. These documents should be referred to during future interpretive planning for Cant Ranch facilities.

After an architectural study and significant facility upgrades, the ranch house opened as the new visitor center in May 1978; and, the following year the official park dedication occurred on the front porch and lawn on August 23, 1978. Although the new visitor center was a significant improvement, Superintendent Ladd’s annual reports to the regional office reflect a growing frustration that the Cant Ranch House was competing with the primary reason the park had been established: to interpret the region’s

fossil story. In 1984, the Cant Ranch was listed on the National Register of Historical Places as a 200-acre historic district including the main house, ranch structures and irrigated fields.

The park worked to address this interpretive challenge by establishing a fossil demonstration exhibit in the ranch bunk house, where visitors could view first hand ongoing fossil preparation and talk with the park paleontologist. While the creation of the fossil demonstration lab/public exhibit was an improvement, it was actually the increased understanding of the richness and diversity of the 40+ million-year-long fossil record and a growing collection that led to significant changes in interpretation and visitor services.

Finally, in 2001, the park received approval to proceed again with renewed planning (ongoing since the 1980s) for a paleontological research facility, with visitor center facilities and exhibits, to be located away from the James Cant Ranch. In January, 2004, the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center opened its doors to the public. The center's fossil museum was later dedicated and opened in August 2005.

The "Thomas Condon Paleontology Center" (TCPC) is located within the Sheep Rock Unit, just a few hundred yards from the Cant Ranch, and in direct view of Sheep Rock peak.

### Critical Planning Documents Affecting Interpretation

The John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Long-Range Interpretive Plan is an implementation plan for interpretation, education and visitor services. This LRIP proceeds under the guidance of:

1. "Preferred Alternative B" in the final June, 2009, General Management Plan (GMP) which articulates the following goals:
  - *"Natural" conditions in the monument would be restored where considered most effective.*
  - *Visitor opportunities would be expanded through improvements in existing facilities, establishment of new trails, and increased interpretive efforts. Sustainability of the monument's operations would be stressed.*



A 44-million-year-old Clarno ant fossil.

And, is consistent with:

2. The 2006 John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Business Plan, and the
3. 2008 John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Museum Management Plan.

Interpretive Issues and Influences:

During the Long-Range Interpretive planning workshop the planning team focused on the following topics:

- How can the park effectively increase personal services, similar to what is now offered at the Sheep Rock Unit, at the Painted Hills and Clarno Units, and their nearby communities? (Each of these two units receive about 25% of the total, annual park visitation for JODA, about 30,000 visitors each.)
- What ways can the paleontology operations and the interpretation/visitor services (I&VS) operations work together to improve the park visitor experience, such as having interpretive staff benefit from periodic field work experience?
- During the next decade, what interpretive opportunities should the park staff explore at the historic Cant Ranch, such as seeking partnerships with historical societies?
- The Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC) is the primary interpretive facility in the park. How can the I&VS staff help visitors make intellectual connections between

the museum exhibit and specific park areas/unit features? This question considers two visitor arrival experiences: (a) when visitors come first to TCPC before exploring the park; and (b) when visitors stop at the Clarno and Painted Hills Units or one of the sites within the Sheep Rock Unit before coming to TCPC.

- Accessibility: where and how can the park implement the concept of “universal access”; what facilities and programs need attention to bring the park into compliance with existing accessibility statues; and how can technology help with interpretive/programmatic access.
- What is the most likely and effective approach to creating an interpretive guide, or book, to the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (with appropriate thematic statements), or assist the paleontology staff in creating a definitive scientific guide? Desired park interpretive goal: production/availability of this item in the next three years? The park interpretive staff has expressed a need to expand the scope of park specific in depth interpretive materials offered – whether these future materials are park and park partner authored interpretive materials available for free or available for purchase at the park bookstore.
- What cost-effective and innovative technology should the park consider for future interpretive media? Desired program goal: technology that would help address significant

park features and values, reach new audiences and overcome staffing limitations?

- Park partnerships, how best and in what ways can the agencies and partners work together to:
  - Provide for unified land use messages, as well as, preservation and stewardship ethics to recreational visitors?
  - Create standardized messages and stories of the historical and natural resources throughout the John Day Country, striving for accuracy, consistency, and sustainability?
  - Expand educational outreach to regional schools and colleges using available park and partner resources. This discussion will include on-site (field trips), school visitors and outreach through long distance learning via the internet?
  - Provide for programs, tours, and staffing for -visitors to the John Day Country, that allow for shared resources and/or facilities in an effective and sustainable manner?

#### Other Considerations:

- There are dozens of American Indian pictographs within Picture Gorge and in other locations throughout the park. Currently the pictograph sites within the gorge are not promoted by the park; there are safety concerns regarding visitors parking in the gorge; and, the safety of the historic pictographs is a concern

as vandalism has occurred. In 1994, visiting tribal leaders from the surrounding area ask park staff not to point out the pictographs in Picture Gorge for fear of vandalism. In a verbal agreement made then, the park staff has since respected this request. An interpretive handout is available on pictographs at the TCPC visitor center. This park policy is followed at all units.

- Not all aspects of park interpretation were discussed in detail during the LRIP planning process and were left to later discussion and planning. The park is a place of discovery and with discovery change occurs. This is a very exciting reality that can only add to, change, and improve future programs, interpretive media, partnerships and planning documents that are intended to maximize the visitor experience.



A view of the Painted Hills Unit.

## Purpose and Significance Statements

Park purpose statements summarize the reasons a park is included in the National Park System. They are derived from the legislation that created both the National Park Service and a specific park. Purpose statements provide the foundation for park management and use.

Statements of significance describe a park's distinctive natural, cultural, and recreational resources and values. These statements are the factual rationale for national recognition of the site; they provide the foundation for park management and use; and describe the park's distinctiveness to help place the park in its regional, national, and international contexts. Significant statements are the basis for the development of the park's primary interpretive themes.

During the park's recent general management process, the planning team reviewed and updated the park's purpose and significance statements and the interpretive themes. The park's General Management Plan (GMP) anchors this Long-Range Interpretive planning endeavor.

### Park Purpose

The purpose of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is to preserve, and provide for the scientific and public understanding of, the paleontological resources of the John Day region and the natural, scenic, and cultural resources within the boundaries of the national monument.

## Park Significance Statements

### Primary Significance

1. The John Day region contains one of the longest and most continuous Tertiary records of evolutionary change and biotic relationships in the world; this outstanding fossil record heightens our understanding of earth history. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument contains a concentration of localities that are a major part of that record.
2. The John Day Region is one of the few areas on the planet with numerous well preserved and ecologically diverse fossil biotas that are entombed in sedimentary layers and are found in close proximity with datable volcanic rocks; these biotas span intervals of dramatic world-wide paleoclimatic change.

### Other Significance

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument contains regionally representative scenic, natural and cultural landscapes – notably, the Cant Ranch National Historic District, which represents the history of sheep ranching in the region.



James and Elizabeth Cant family portrait, circa 1920.

## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes capture the essence of the park's significance. They include the most important stories and represent core messages that every audience should have the opportunity to learn about.

Interpretive Themes:

- Tie directly to park purpose and significance statements;
- Use tangible park resources (people, park features such as fossils, rivers, vistas, diaries, animals, etc) to communicate key concepts, stories, ideas or messages to be communicated
- Relate to broader universally understood concepts (for example: time, struggle, conservation, love, prejudice, justice, childhood, etc.)
- Through a descriptive sentence or sentences communicate the essence of what is said in a complete and understandable fashion. Historical and scientific terms are written in layman language.
- Answer the "so what" -- addressing relevancy to 21st century visitors – why is/should this be significant to me

Interpretive themes are used to guide the development of a park's future interpretive program, and elements that include personal services (ranger and park partner conducted programs) and interpretive media. Park themes should also be used to guide an evaluation of the interpretive program and future recommendations made to address noted program deficiencies.

## Primary Interpretive Themes:

1. At John Day Fossil Beds National Monument:
  - There are great numbers of fossils
  - There is a great diversity of fossils
  - The fossils are very well preserved
  - The fossils represent an unusually long time span
  - The fossils are datable
 Thus, it is a wonderful place to study earth history.

The following two themes were developed by park scientists to enhance theme number one above.

2. The large sequence of fossil biotas and paleosols in the John Day region shows us that climate and life are intrinsically linked and continually changing.
3. There are multiple, well-preserved fossil assemblages in the John Day region that represent over 40 million years of the earth's history and may be dated with great accuracy.

## Secondary Interpretive Theme

4. The landscape and people of the John Day region have been shaped by many factors; a major influence was sheep ranching, which was economically very important to the John Day region in the early 20th Century.

## Visitor Experience Goals

Visitor experience goals describe what opportunities for physical, intellectual, and emotional experiences should be available for visitors to John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (JODA). These experiences will be available to visitors of all abilities, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

The desired outcome of JODA operations is to manage visitor-resource interactions to maintain resources unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations while ensuring that opportunities exist for the widest variety of visitors to forge meaningful connections with park resources. The following visitor experience goals will guide the development and implementation of the monument’s interpretive program. Visitors to John Day Fossil Beds National Monument will have opportunities to:

- Interact with the park staff informally and formally in a way that respects their personal rights and viewpoints, and their expectation to receive courteous treatment and factual information.
- Learn about the park resources and nearby attractions before, during, and after their visit, and how best to experience these resources and opportunities in a safe, comfortable, accessible, sustainable, and rewarding manner, suited to each visitor.
- Understand the mission of the National Park Service such that it may encourage and inspire personal stewardship ethics, and as a next step, allows for the possibility of becoming engaged in the preservation of the park through projects sponsored by the park, park’s Friends Group, park partners or Volunteer-In-Parks (VIP).



Interpretive Rangers on the Story in Stone Trail viewing touch waysides.

- Have the adventure of “discovering” ongoing paleontology and seeing fossils, and inspiring support for the monument as an active place for scientific work having inherent value for understanding the natural processes of our world.
- Better imagine the vastness and continuity of Earth’s history and understand where the John Day Fossil Beds fits within Earth’s timeline and geologic story.
- Realize and appreciate that John Day Fossil Beds is a special place to study many aspects of past life, and factors that had affected life, during most of the Age of Mammals.
- Appreciate and respect the scientific data revealed from studying nature’s ancient history, not only as a source for explaining nature’s current conditions, but as a source for predicting likely future conditions.
- Learn about and appreciate the monument’s natural resources and their intimate role in the John Day River region, such that they will want to protect and preserve these vital resources.
- Learn about and appreciate the archeological and historical stories that played out within the park landscape and region over the last few hundred years.



A visitor views fossils in the museum-gallery.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

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### Visitor Profiles

In 2008 113,418 visitors came to John Day Fossil Beds National Monument; visitation dropped by ten percent from 2007 and may be directly related to a significant increase in the cost of gasoline nationwide. Visitor use varies seasonally; it is greatest during the months of June, July, and August. Visitation during these months consistently constitutes 45% - 50% of the park's annual visitation. Visitation is lowest in December, January, and February but begins to pick up as the weather warms and school groups begin to visit in May. Visitation is limited to day use only and is greatest during the summer holiday weekends (Memorial Day, July 4th, and Labor Day).

As part of the GMP planning process, the NPS partnered with the University of Idaho's Park Studies Unit to conduct a visitor survey. Their 2004 report describes the results of a visitor study at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument during August 29-September 4, 2004. A total of 396 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Visitor groups returned 310 questionnaires for a 78% response rate. The following information is an excerpt from the 2004 John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Visitor Study:

- Sixty-four percent of visitor groups had two people and 20% were groups of three or four.
- Sixty-seven percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Most visitors (99%) were not with a guided tour group. Fifty-one

percent of visitors were male and 49% were female. Sixty-nine percent of visitors were aged 36-70 years and 12% were children aged 15 years or younger. Most visitor groups (76%) reported that this was the first visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM in their lifetime.

- International visitors from England (18%), Canada (15%), Holland (15%), and seven other countries comprised 6% of the total number of visitors to the park. United States visitors were from Oregon (61%), Washington (14%), California (7%), and 24 other states.
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about John Day Fossil Beds NM through maps/brochures (46%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (35%), and highway signs (33%).
- Thirty percent of visitor groups' primary reason for visiting this part of eastern Oregon was to visit John Day Fossil Beds NM. Viewing scenery (41%), seeing fossils (21%), and visiting Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (14%) were the most common reasons for visiting John Day Fossil Beds NM.
- On this visit, the most common activities that visitor groups participated in were viewing scenery (90%), taking photographs (66%), and visiting Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (61%). Thomas Condon

Paleontology Center (63%) and Painted Hills Overlook (54%) were the most visited sites by visitor groups.

- The average visitor group expenditure during this visit to John Day Fossil Beds NM was \$108. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of group spent more, 50% spent less) was \$58. The average per capita expenditure was \$50.
- In regard to use, importance, and quality of park services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used visitor services and facilities by the 269 respondents included highway directional signs (87%), visitor center exhibits (60%), and brochure/map (51%). The visitor services and facilities that received the highest combined “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included Thomas Condon Center exhibits (90%, N=152), trail exhibits (82%, N=100), and assistance from park staff (80%, N=93). Assistance from park staff (94%, N=87), Thomas Condon Center exhibits (92%, N=140), and trail exhibits (85%, N= 92), were the services that received the highest combined “good” and “very good” quality ratings.
- Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at John Day Fossil Beds NM as “very good” or “good.” Two percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as “very poor” or “poor.”

### Annual Visitor Survey Card:

Regarding the annual visitor card surveys at JODA, conducted with the assistance of the University of Idaho, the park has achieved high visitor satisfaction ratings over the last ten years. Four hundred survey cards are given out each July. The following data reflects the over-all ratings given, developed from the survey results each year. Achieving “satisfaction” was measured by the combination of GOOD and VERY GOOD ratings given by visitors under various categories. AVERAGE and below ratings were not considered as satisfactory. Before the opening of the TCPC, all 400 survey cards were given out in one unit of the park, alternating each year. With the TCPC opening the cards have been distributed, 200 to the Sheep Rock Unit, 100 to the Painted Hills Unit, and 100 to the Clarno Unit, each year.



A local artist on the Cant Ranch grounds.

**Percentage of park visitors satisfied overall with appropriate facilities, services, and recreational opportunities:** For this measure, the following ratings were achieved the last ten years:

- FY-99 ... 95%
- FY-00 ... 94%
- FY-01 ... 92%
- FY-02 ... 86% (caution given: too few cards returned)
- FY-03 ... 90%
- FY-04 ... 98% (first year TCPC open, ranch house exhibits open mid-summer)
- FY-05 ... 94% (TCPC fossil museum/gallery opened late summer; high construction in TCPC)
- FY-06 ... 97%
- FY-07 ... 96%
- FY-08 ... 97%

**Visitor Understanding:** For this measure, the comments by visitors indicating the primary park themes learned from their visit to the park, the following ratings were achieved.

- FY-99 ... 75%
- FY-00 ... 81%
- FY-01 ... 93%
- FY-02 ... 92% (caution given on data, too few cards returned)
- FY-03 ... 71%
- FY-04 ... 83%
- FY-05 ... 78%
- FY-06 ... 84%
- FY-07 ... 75%
- FY-08 ... 83%

## Personal Services

This section of the LRIP will:

- Provide an assessment of program needs common to all park units; and
- Include a separate description of the Sheep Rock, Clarno and Painted Hills units. These descriptions will outline what facilities, media and services are available for park visitors; and, discuss specific areas that the LRIP planning team identified as needing improvement.

### Assessment of I&VS Program Needs Common to All Park Units

The 2006 John Day Fossil Beds National Monument (JODA) Business Plan helped the interpretive staff and park management team to develop and quantify Interpretive Program Operational Standards; the new program standards are included in Appendix C. Following a program evaluation, the Business Plan identified the need to increase I&VS staff levels to 6.4 FTEs parkwide. This means a 30% increase in staff funding is needed to meet Servicewide I&VS standards.

JODA interpretive program standards reflect several anchor Servicewide documents including: Director's Order 6: for Education and Interpretation, the 2007 Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan, the 2007 Interpretation and Education Renaissance Business Plan and the Servicewide Interpretive Development Program.

The 2007 Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan identified five areas of emphasis for NPS units to focus on improvement of interpretation and visitor services Servicewide:

- Engage People to Make Enduring Connections to America’s Special Places;
- Use New Technologies;
- Embrace Interpretation and Education Partners;
- Develop and Implement National Standards; and
- Create a Culture of Evaluation.

The following assessment of JODA’s existing conditions for I&VS parkwide will be done through the lens of this Servicewide planning document.

- **Engage People to Make Enduring Connections to America’s Special Places:**

- a) Engaging people to make enduring connections to America’s special places is a primary staff objective. Each year the NPS conducts an annual survey of public satisfaction at national park units. The John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Visitor Survey Card consistently shows high visitor satisfaction ratings for park facilities, programs and services. The factors that contribute to this high rating include:

- Incorporating NPS Interpretive Development Program (IDP) concepts into interpretive staff training for all permanent and seasonal employees.
- Since a major goal of interpreter training in the IDP is that the interpreter act as a catalyst for the visitor to connect to the resource, we should require all permanent full-time park ranger/interpreters to participate in the IDP; and, receive certification of competency for products submitted for evaluation. (This requirement is incorporated into annual performance plans.)
- Developing within the JODA interpretive staff certified IDP instructors and evaluators.

Together these interpretive business practices have significantly improved the quality of park interpretive programs and media over the last decade.

- b) Significant accessibility improvements are needed parkwide to meet minimum standards set by law, and/or the broadest interpretation of the intent of the law, to expand recreational and educational opportunities for visitors. The 2001 JODA Accessibility Survey Report summarizes the status of facilities and programs throughout the park. This

report was completed by the Chief of Interpretation using the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and standards established through the American Disabilities Act. All three units of the park, including TCPC, were rated as “marginally accessible”. Current facility and programmatic accessibility leaves the park vulnerable to complaints. The development of new interpretive media to address programmatic accessibility is an important next step for I&VS. Facility modifications will also need to be addressed.

- c) Outdoor Wayside Exhibits, displays and exhibit bulletin boards can be graded as “average to good” considering condition, message accuracy, and effectiveness. As of 2008, the park has 151 outdoor exhibits. The Sheep Rock Unit has 79, the Painted Hills Unit has 39, and the Clarno



An interpretive ranger leads a hike into Blue Basin.

Unit has 33 outdoor waysides and exhibits. The park Superintendent has expressed that the existing number of outdoor exhibits is the maximum number that can be effectively maintained within current staff and funding limitations.

The exhibits are in transition from year-to-year with replacements, upgrades, and maintenance. Annually, through the use of visitor donations (approximately \$6,000 per year), the park is able to replace three or four wayside exhibit panels and bases; (less each year as the costs of these items increase). This is a small percentage of the total number of outdoor exhibits requiring attention to meet quality standards.

Development of new wayside exhibits is accomplished primarily by park staff which offers a considerable savings, rather than using outside design and production companies. However, the slow rate of wayside replacement or improvements yearly and the change in Servicewide exhibit design standards means the park has various wayside exhibit styles and appearances in the park. A one-time major funding allotment for wayside planning, design, fabrication and installation would bring all outdoor exhibits up to current standards.

- **Use New Technologies:**

Recent improvements in hand-held technology and software (including more affordable and durable options) make new technology increasingly attractive as a method to improve I&VS. Electronic media will be considered as future options to:

- Address program and site accessibility,
- Provide new program opportunities for on-site visitors; and
- Connect with new audiences through an expanded education and outreach program.

- **Embrace Interpretation and Education Partners:**

- a) The JODA staff recognizes that interpretive and educational partnerships throughout the region are an important part of the park's future. The remote nature of the park's location means that the park and staff are very visible in the local communities in the John Day region.
  - The park has received very positive feedback from citizens and educators regarding new facilities and media at the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center and James Cant Ranch.
  - During the past five years, the park has

received an increased number of requests from community organizations expressing a desire to be more actively involved in park recreational and educational activities (such as the BLM, USFS, Chamber of Commerce, OPLI, etc.).

As a result, planning efforts for the LRIP embraced local, state and federal partners. A wide range of organizations and groups were invited to participate in planning discussions.

- b) During FY07, a hiring opportunity enabled the interpretive staff to re-describe the duties of one position and implement a recommendation in the Business Plan. One interpretive staff member is now designated as the "Outreach and Partners Program Coordinator". Their primary responsibilities include initiating and developing partnerships and scheduling and presenting interpretive outreach programs throughout the region. This change in operational focus is vital to foster new staff and partner conducted educational programs. Feedback within the local community and the region has been very receptive to the establishment of this new position.
- c) *Internal partnerships* between work groups are critical to the success of any park. Working together as a

team occurs in many ways at JODA -- such as sharing staff time and expertise – these kinds of efforts build esprit de corps that in turn fosters excellence in service. It is a goal of I&VS to inform the public of the contributions of all JODA work groups regarding park resource protection and visitor service goals.

Frequently informal interpretive contacts highlight specific activities or projects that illustrate how long-term park goals are supported by individuals or different work groups, in day to day operations. Interpretive conversations may touch on preservation of natural or cultural resources, park issues, sustainability, recent studies, safety, etc. The interpretive staff will explore how best to integrate this type of informal interpretation into future media products so these topics are more visible and tangible to the general public and the staff.

***d) The Paleontology and Interpretation Partnership:***

In order to provide the best visitor experience possible, it is crucial that the I&VS and Paleontology staffs work to maintain an excellent internal working relationship for public programming to reach its full potential.

The interpretive staff has direct public contact; one important task is to explain the work of the paleontology

staff. The interpretive staff enables the paleontology staff to focus on other important responsibilities. While the nature of day to day work can be inherently different within I&VS and Paleontology, both work groups share the common commitment to build enduring connections with the American public to support and protect inherent resource values at JODA. During the LRIP planning workshops participants spent time discussing how the Paleontology and Interpretive staff could collaborate in the future to improve the visitor experience. Many ideas discussed in these sessions were incorporated into the “parkwide recommendations” section of this document; and, Appendix F includes several future training and program ideas.

The park’s administrative history reveals that throughout its history as a national park, JODA staff members recognize that a strong science program is a critical component of an effective resource preservation and interpretive program. At this writing, many long-time staff members are preparing to retire. It is important to capture in writing, successful inter-divisional work objectives and lessons learned to guide future I&VS programs and practices.

- **Develop and Implement Professional Standards**

Like many professions in the National Park Service interpretation continues to mature and develop as a profession. Servicewide professional standards, position descriptions with benchmark performance standards and the corresponding Interpretive Developmental Program reflect the understanding that in order to maintain relevancy with park visitors an interpretive program and program staff must be grounded in standard trade practices and in depth resource information.

- Current and new I&VS staff are, and will continue to be, directed to learn, practice and demonstrate professional interpretive standards.
- Present and future JODA interpretive staff members will model, teach and share lessons learned (pertinent to Servicewide I&VS standards) for all JODA staff and volunteers conducting programs for the general public meeting.

- **Create a Culture of Evaluation**

JODA's I&VS operation has received feedback from many sources including the annual visitor survey card, register comments, and general verbal feedback from the public. Frequently, this type of feedback becomes the final evaluation. Future evaluation at JODA should expand and incorporate new evaluation techniques/studies available to help with program assessment.

This evaluation process will include a mechanism for gauging the public's understanding and appreciation of the park's mission, significance, and relevance, as well as, how well we provide the opportunity for the public to "connect" to the park resources emotionally and intellectually.

## The Sheep Rock Unit

The Sheep Rock Unit contains three parcels of land totaling 8,916 acres and is bisected by the John Day River. Situated along State Highway 19, northwest of Dayville, Oregon, the park's prominent natural features include Picture Gorge, Sheep Rock, Goose Rock, Blue Basin, and Cathedral Rock. The General Management Plan designates most of the land in the Sheep Rock Unit as "primitive". The GMP specifically addresses several park features areas and associated future management actions, including:

**John Day River:** NPS managers would continue to focus their efforts on vegetation management and plantings along the riparian area. In addition, in this alternative NPS managers would take actions to restore the river's hydrologic and riparian function in the monument. Dikes and rock barbs would be removed when the banks are stabilized either through the reestablishment of riparian vegetation or other factors.

**Butler Basin:** no changes would occur regarding the management of Butler Basin that surrounds the paleontology center. Visitors would continue to be allowed to hike in the area so long as they were not on exposed paleosols.

**Research Natural Area:** One research natural area exists in the monument in the Sheep Rock Unit. The Sheep Rock Research Natural Area was nominated in 1985 and includes approximately 920 acres. It is composed of two geographically separated sites: the Rock Creek and Waterspout Gulch sites. The Rock

Creek site includes 440 acres and the Waterspout Gulch site includes 480 acres. Both of these sites are in steep, rugged topography, are relatively inaccessible, and are unaffected by past livestock grazing. The research natural area would continue to be managed to protect its pristine qualities.

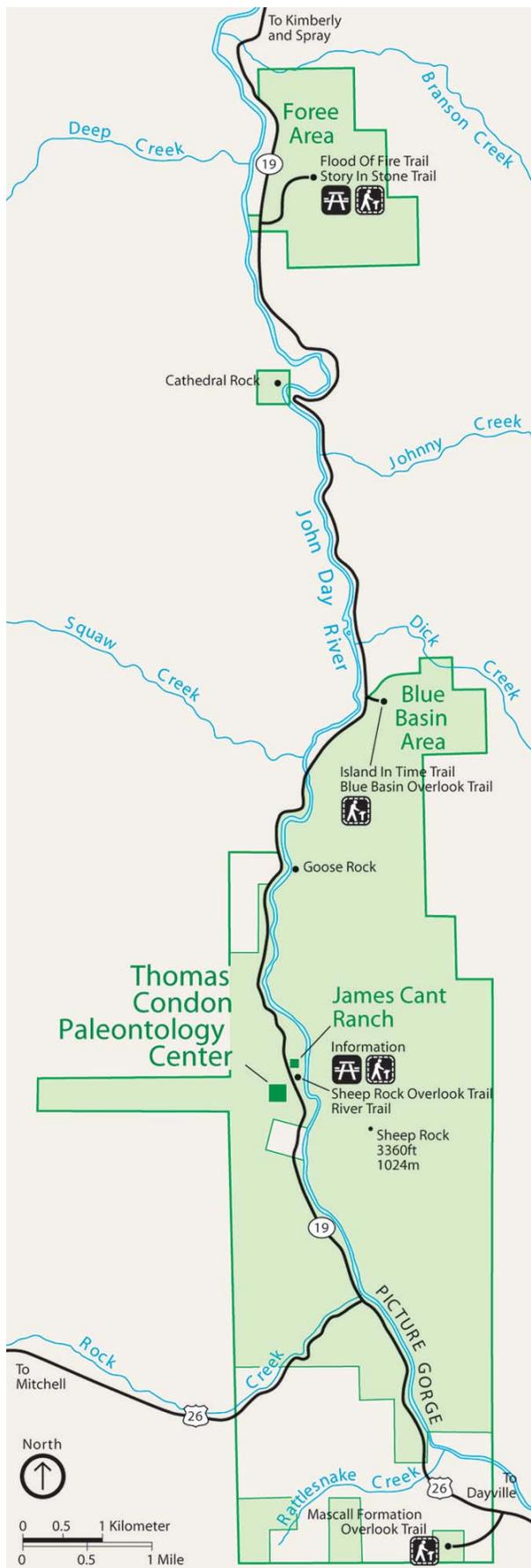
## Existing Facilities

### Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC)

The TCPC is impressive and one of the newest long-term undertakings within the park. The exhibits are stunning and only a few years old. The murals bring the deep history of the park's story to life. The hundreds of fossils are fascinating to view. The facility was developed to engage both the 1st-time generalist/visitor and more informed visitors (such as a fossil enthusiast or a visiting paleontology scholar). New museum exhibits reflect the most current scholarly studies and information is presented in a hierarchy.

The TCPC is the park's primary public contact and research facility. A multipurpose structure, it:

- Serves as the park's primary visitor center for the three units.
- Includes a museum-gallery that displays rare fossils in murals and dioramas depicting eight specific locations and points in "deep time," across 40+ million years. Evidence of these ancient ecosystems and their corresponding flora and fauna are documented through the park's 40+ million-year-long fossil record.



The Sheep Rock Unit

- Has trained ranger/interpreters and volunteers scheduled to rove the museum; and, cover the visitor center desk. The interpretive staff provides orientation, interpretation and sales assistance at the visitor center desk. A modest cooperating association bookstore is located here.
- Contains a large window overlooking the fossil preparation laboratory. Visitors can observe paleontologists work with recent fossil finds or make fossil casts (models) for the park’s “hands on” education program and for other museums.
- Includes an auditorium; the park’s 18-minute orientation film is shown hourly or by request.
- Has an auditorium and a separate classroom that are utilized to provide educational programming. The fossil lab, classroom and auditorium are equipped to facilitate outreach programs via video teleconferencing.
- Has a state of the art fossil preparation laboratory, collections storage, a library and archives to support field investigations and ongoing scholarly research.

TCPC’s visitor facilities are designed in such a way to appeal to the general public and scholar as well.

The General Management Plan describes the continuing importance of the TCPC:

*Thomas Condon Paleontology Center would continue to serve as a primary visitor contact/ interpretive focal point for the monument. No new service facilities would be provided. NPS managers also would work with the Oregon Department of Transportation to explore possible safety measures or options for visitors to safely cross State Highway 19 to access Cant Ranch. These measures could include lowering speed limits or putting in a crosswalk.*

### **Analysis of Needs for the TCPC:**

- The complexity and diversity of the paleontological and geological stories displayed in the TCPC need to be addressed in more effective ways interpretively. The impressive displays generate in-depth visitor questions on science that are sometimes difficult to explain. Some suggestions to improve the effectiveness of interpreting these stories at the TCPC include:
  - A museum handbook and/or audio tour would help guide visitors through the exhibit and enhance understanding.
  - Increase staffing to keep the TCPC open longer daily and through the year, lengthening the opportunity for visitors to experience the exhibits.
  - Increase staff training and tenures to develop knowledgeable science interpreters; possibly creating subject-to-furlough positions to replace seasonal positions.

The park stories are so diverse and complex an interpreter needs about three full years of study and experience to become comfortable answering most science questions generated by the public at the TCPC. There is over 50 million years of natural history to learn about and interpret.

- Program and facility accessibility to and within the TCPC, needs to be improved:
  - Provide automatic entrance doors providing universal access.
  - Provide accessibility for people who are blind or have poor low vision.
  - Improve accessibility for the deaf, mentally disabled, or those who have a learning disability.
  - The park film is open-captioned. It should also be audio described and assistive listening systems should be provided to people who are hard of hearing. Open-captions are not considered a substitute for assistive listening. Provide assistive listening systems that can be used for the current film and for any future one.
  - The viewing height of many display areas, and the way specimens and labels are displayed on the displays platforms, are too high and

need to be adjusted for shorter people (children) and those in wheelchairs.

- Text size needs to be increased for many exhibit labels, with effective contrast used.
- The park can request technical assistance from Harpers Ferry Center for the evaluation of the quality of the display of the current video to verify that the playback master and projection are providing the optimal resolution.

### The Cant Ranch

The 200-acre James Cant Ranch Historic District is located .25 miles north of TCPC. The Cant Ranch Museum and the park's headquarters are located in the 1917 historic ranch house. The ranch house museum includes three rooms and a hallway containing exhibits that discuss the settlement of the area, the regional wool industry, the development of the James Cant ranch, and exhibits about famous



The James Cant ranch house, circa 1920.



An alligator lizard found in Rock Creek, Sheep Rock Unit.

paleontologists that explored the John Day Region. Visitors can also walk the historic ranch grounds and visit the remaining outbuildings including a large barn with exhibits and original machinery. Wayside exhibits in the barn connect the local and regional sheep industry story to the Cant Ranch structures and artifacts. Excellent reference sources are the [Cultural Landscape Report: Cant Ranch Historic District](#) and the [Environment, Prehistory and archaeology of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument](#).

The following excerpt from the General Management Plan outlines proposed future ranch facilities:

*The James Cant Ranch Historic District would continue to be managed to maintain its cultural landscape and features. As part of the cultural landscape, the four fields would continue to be leased for hay production, with flood irrigation, sprinkler irrigation, and traditional and modern agricultural practices being employed. However, management would focus on improvements in sustainability of the agricultural operation, such as improving water conservation through land leveling and/or sprinkler installation. The National Park Service would continue to irrigate the fields under its existing water rights. The focus for the Cant Ranch barn would continue to be on preservation, including some rehabilitation. Public restrooms would be available inside the Cant Ranch house, accessible during normal monument business hours.*

The ranch stands alone as a unique resource to present the region's cultural history. Through the surviving buildings and landscape, this section of the park provides a strong link to local residents and regional visitors. It is well documented that it was a Cant family tradition to invite residents to socials and dances. There are lots of stories in the community about their experiences at the ranch during its heyday and the Cant family hospitality. The ranch provides a window to the past and might be considered as a location for future NPS and partner sponsored special events.

The current interpretive program emphasis ties historic ranch activities to the national woolen industry story. In 2007, a new interpretive trail was established. The trail begins at the rear of the ranch house and takes visitors through the yard and into the barn and sheep-shearing shed; wayside exhibits are placed along the trail.

The Cant Ranch seems to be the perfect epilogue to telling the long history of the park because it tells the story of those who have inhabited the landscape in the recent past relative to John Day Fossil Beds' deep history. For those visitors who may not be as interested in paleontology or geology or for those who may be intimidated by these subjects, use the Cant Ranch as a way to make the connection to the deep past by presenting these recent inhabitants in relation to the long continuum of the park's natural history story where possible. Many famous paleontologists visited the ranch in the past, which could provide a good connection between the ranch and science stories.

## Analysis of Needs for the James Cant Ranch:

- The ranch is missing from the park's Unigrid brochure produced in collaboration with Harpers Ferry Center. It will be added to the brochure design, beginning in 2010.
- Tie the ranch story in with the TCPC (and park fossil story) in clear and significant ways, as well as, improving ties to local and regional stories of significance. Using the history of previous paleontologists that visited the John Day Fossil Beds would prove an effective approach.
- Document information about the esoteric and old structures, remains, and equipment about the ranch grounds before knowledge of their history, use, and operation is forgotten or lost.
- Though some people come just to see the ranch, use their ranch experience to promote the TCPC. Make use of the TCPC to promote the ranch. The ranch house used to be the main park visitor center for over 25 years. Returning visitors sometimes stop first at the ranch house and fail to visit the TCPC.
- There are outbuildings other than the barn and sheep shearing shed located on the grounds of the James Cant Ranch are not in use or do not contain any exhibits/ displays.. The log cabin, empty and stable, predates the Cant family history at the ranch. The potential interpretive use of these buildings should be evaluated.
- Accessibility to the ranch facility, exhibits, outbuildings and trails needs to be improved. Except for the house and one picnic site being accessible to those in wheelchairs, several other ranch facilities open to the public are not currently considered accessible for several types of disabilities. An accessibility assessment is needed for the ranch facilities to determine possible improvements.

## The Sheep Rock Unit Trail & Overlook System

The trail system is located in several different areas of the unit including the:

- Foree Area:

The 0.25-mile Flood of Fire Trail crosses a ridge to a viewpoint overlooking the John Day River Valley and the surrounding basalt cliffs. .

The 0.25-mile Story in Stone Trail skirts a basin of blue-green claystone of the John Day Formation and features touchable exhibits. This formation contains fossils of mammals that lived here about 30 million years ago. Properly maintained, this trail is traversable by people in wheelchairs with slight difficulty due to degree of slope in spots. It is accessible to blind visitors using a cane with the use of a self-guiding audio tape.

- Blue Basin Area:

The Island in Time Trail is a 1-mile self-guided nature trail. This gently ascending trail leads to an

amphitheater carved out of the blue-green John Day Formation. The volcanic ash, now turned to claystone, yields a rich variety of vertebrate fossils. Interpretive wayside exhibits and fossil replicas are placed along this trail, which is considered by many visitors as the most scenic and educational trail we have in the park.

The Blue Basin Overlook Trail (called the “quote trail” as it displays old quotes about the area) is a 3-mile hike reaching a 600 ft. gain in elevation. A strenuous, but rewarding, loop trail brings you to a spectacular vista overlooking the John Day River Valley and Blue Basin. The dirt trail may be impassable in wet weather.

- James Cant Ranch Area:

The River Trail begins at the James Cant Ranch parking lot. This 0.25-mile hike leads down to the John Day River. Trail exhibits feature the current natural and cultural surroundings.

The Sheep Rock Overlook Trail begins and ends at the front gate of the James Cant Ranch house. This 0.25 hike leads to an overlook with a great view of the valley.

- Thomas Condon Visitor Center Area:

The Thomas Condon Overlook Trail begins at the Thomas Condon Visitor Center. The trail begins and ends at the south end of the visitor center parking lot. The 0.25 mile hike leads to an overlook with a great view of the valley. This trail also serves to prevent visitors from crossing the fields and highway and making use of the prominent Sheep Rock Overlook, accessible from the ranch.

- Along Highway 26, in and near Picture Gorge:

The Mascall Formation Overlook is located one mile south of Picture Gorge off of Route 26. This site provides grand views of the John Day Valley and Picture Gorge. Exhibits along a short trail feature both paleontology and geology.

There are dozens of American Indian pictographs within Picture Gorge. Currently the pictographs sites within the gorge are not promoted by the park. There are safety concerns regarding visitors parking in the gorge. Also, the safety of the historic pictographs is a concern as vandalism has occurred. In 1994, visiting tribal leaders from the surrounding area ask park staff not to point out the pictographs in Picture Gorge



The Thomas Condon Paleontology Center and Visitor Center.

for fear of vandalism. In a verbal agreement made then, the park staff has since respected their request. An interpretive handout is available on pictographs at the TCPC visitor center.

The John Day River flows almost two miles through Picture Gorge and provides recreational opportunities such as fishing, swimming, and rafting. Safety concerns are paramount when referring visitors to stop and explore the river in the gorge.

### Analysis of Needs for Trails and Overlooks

While the LRIP planning team did not spend a significant time discussing needs for this aspect of park facilities, it was noted that the park staff worked hard to maintain trails and related facilities – trail head parking lots and information areas and exhibits.

- When future facility improvements are made, the park should make trails and trailhead facilities at parking areas as universally accessible as possible and reasonable, and not diminish the current level of accessibility.
- As some trail waysides include reproduction and real fossil specimens, they are sometimes targets of vandalism and theft. More effective display methods and techniques are needed to discourage theft and vandalism.
- With the development of a future, parkwide wayside plan, the interpretive purpose and objectives of each trail should be evaluated for possible changes,

as warranted by other changes occurring in the park and in the park story. As one example, the interpretive focus of the Foree Area, Flood of Fire Trail could be changed to address more obvious resources in view.

- A few new trails are being planned for within the park in the new GMP. Planning teams should ensure that interpretive staff are involved with the development of new trails in regards to interpretation and accessibility.

### Current Interpretive and Visitor Services (I&VS) at the Sheep Rock Unit

Three permanent interpretive rangers whose primary responsibilities are interpretation, education, outreach and visitor services are assigned to the Sheep Rock Unit. These positions include:

- A permanent GS 11, Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services
- Two permanent year-round GS 9 ranger/interpreters.

Seasonal staff FTE for the I&VS operations has varied the last few years, depending on budget, with a big change from 0.8 FTE for FY-07 to 1.4 FTE in FY-08. This was due to additional Centennial Funds provided to increase the number visitor service staff at national park sites. These additional funds may continue through 2016.

The two subject-to-furlough park rangers located at the Painted Hills Unit and Clarno Unit make use of an interpretive account for salary, though they are not part of the I&VS division. Refer to Appendix B for a

breakdown of programs presented at each unit.

Together these staff members provide a full range of interpretive, education and visitor services at the Sheep Rock Unit. Their offices are in the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center and at park headquarters in the Cant Ranch. Work Unit responsibilities include:

- Operating the TCPC Visitor Center. Interpreters cover the visitor center desk where they provide orientation, interpretation, sales assistance for the cooperating association bookstore and conduct roving interpretation within the museum.
- Developing and delivering education programs for school-aged children at TCPC and at local schools near the Unit.
- Sending fossil kits and films to area schools.
- Providing outreach programs (by reservation) for groups in the John Day Region.
- Leading programs, such as evening talks, interpretive driving tours, ranger hikes and workshops in the monument during the summer months.
- Maintaining and updating the park website, informational signs, maps, site bulletin publications, bulletin boards, and wayside exhibits monument-wide.
- Providing media assistance to the Clarno and Painted Hills Unit Rangers (website and publications).

These staff members are supplemented by volunteers and a few temporary employees (funding dependent) during the summer months.

### **Analysis of Needs for the I&VS Staff and Services**

- Specific seasonal program offerings need to consider the arrival times of qualified seasonal interpreters. In the last decade there has been a high turnover in the seasonal work force. Feedback from seasonal staff indicates that the lack of nearby affordable housing deters most from returning the next season. The complexity of the park story, and personal learning interests, may be another factor.
- The park story is very diverse and complex, so careful consideration needs to be given to types of programs offered and the staff assignments to carry them out, considering the capability, subject knowledge, and experience of employees.
- In allocating I&VS resources, the menu of conducted interpretive programs needs to be balanced closely with the ratio of 66% paleontology, geology, and climate change stories, and 33% natural and cultural resource, and special focus stories. This seems an appropriate ratio between primary and secondary interpretive themes in the park, and has worked well in the last two decades in appropriately diversifying the visitor experience.

- The park needs to adjust science and history curriculum-based program goals and objectives to adapt to changing State curriculum goals and objectives. These Oregon Department of Education (ODE) changes have been occurred regularly during the 1990s and 2000s. New State standards may be finalized by 2010. Until 2008, State science curriculum standards were similar to the national science standards established by the National Science Teachers Associations.
- Increase electronic connections to students in their classrooms and offsite. The staff also agrees that considering the state-of-the-art capability built into TCPC, we have a tremendous opportunity to connect with local students electronically. Facilitating long-distance educational opportunities for K through 12th grade, college, and beyond is desired.
- The interpretive staff needs in depth training time with the park paleontologists, access to the research used to develop the exhibits, and time to research new material to incorporate into informal interpretation, interpretive programs and media. The TCPC museum facility was developed by the paleontology staff resulting in a science rich, state-of-the-art facility.
- The interpretive staff needs to increase its commitment to meet Servicewide Interpretive Development Program (IDP) training and certification standards, allowing park staff to become certified in many interpretive disciplines through the IDP.

Please see Appendix B for a summary of the annual interpretive program during the last seven years and Appendix C for further analysis by program type at each unit.



A woman on horseback next to the James Cant ranch house, before 1950.

## The Clarno Unit

The 1,969 acre Clarno Unit is located 18 miles southwest of the town of Fossil, Oregon on State Highway 218. The towering 150 foot Clarno Palisade cliffs are the most prominent natural feature. The cliffs were formed from a series of prehistoric volcanic mud flows approximately 44 million years ago and contain hundreds of visible plant fossils from jungle-like forests that blanketed the region about 44 million years ago. Several significant fossil sites including the Mammal Quarry, the Hancock Tree, and the Clarno Nut Beds are located in this unit.

The park's General Management Plan (GMP) designates most of this unit as "back-country".

### Existing Buildings & Facilities:

The Clarno Unit picnic area has one restroom facility, a small picnic area with six picnic tables, interpretive signs, three trails, three drinking fountains. The restrooms, water fountain, a couple picnic tables, and primary wayside exhibits are accessible to those in wheelchairs. There is one brochure box and two display cases which are changed seasonally. The park staff operates a very small and modest Visitor Contact Station/Office in a former utility work station.

Clarno Unit Interpretive Trails: (trails are not considered accessible to those in wheelchairs)

**The Palisades trailhead** is located ¼ mile west of the picnic area along Highway 218. The three trails listed below begin or end at the trailhead parking area. Stops along the trails

have interpretive signs explaining the landscape and unseen aspects of the resource. These three trails do not have limits on the number of visitors that may use them, as do other trails that may be established in other parts of the unit, per the GMP.

### **Trail of the Fossils** [1/4-mile hike]

This is the only trail in the park where one can readily see fossils in the rocks, and many are pointed out by interpretive signage.

### **Clarno Arch Trail** [1/4-mile hike]

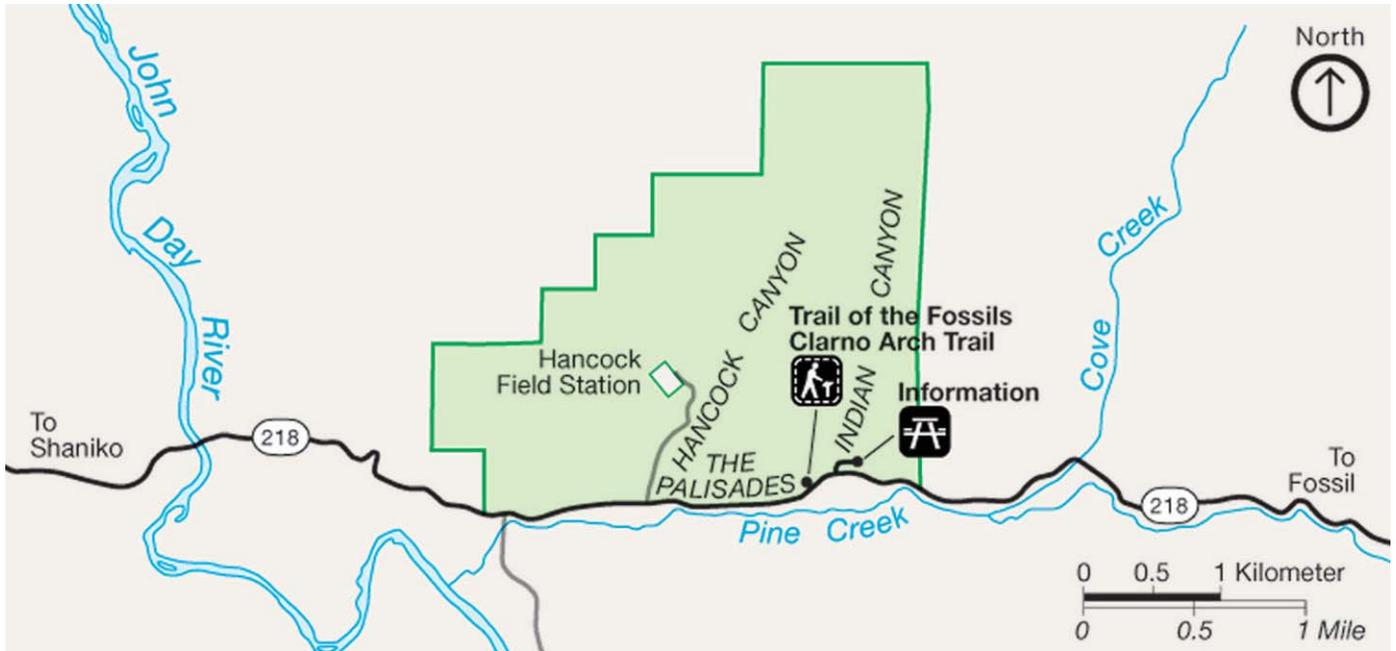
A moderate climb will bring hikers to the base of the Palisades cliff directly under a natural arch cut into the cliff by erosion. Petrified logs are visible in the cliff face.

### **Geologic Time Trail** [1/4-mile one way]

This trail connects the picnic area and trailhead area, leading hikers below the Palisades cliff. This trail symbolizes a timeline. Signs along the way note pre-historic events of the last 50 million years. Each foot of trail represents 37,000 years. The trail may be started from either end, going backward or forward in time.

### The "Hancock Field Station":

The "Hancock Field Station" is a private 10-acre tract located within the Clarno Unit. The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) has owned this property since 1951, before the national park was established. OMSI lands and facilities are used for research and educational purposes. Their buildings include overnight accommodations for groups. During a nine-month period (mid-March through mid-December) OMSI will host 14,000 – 18,000 students, mostly in groups.



The Clarno Unit

The park has a general agreement with OMSI, (renewable every 5 years) to provide access to the Hancock Field Station across monument lands and potable water. The agreement also limits backcountry and trail group use to 17 people per day in the backcountry and/or 17 people at any one time on an established trail. Non-established trails are considered backcountry. The purpose of limiting group numbers is to manage impact on the environment and to limit interaction and interference of groups and individuals in the backcountry areas. These limits are also imposed upon public programs conducted by park staff, partners, and other groups. The annual review of the agreement provides the park an opportunity to discuss shared concerns, interpretive messaging, and consider potential future collaborative programs.

#### Future Park Facilities Proposed in the General Management Plan (GMP)

Future improvements include access to key fossil sites including the Mammal Quarry, Clarno Nut Beds and Hancock Tree, and formalizing some social trails to expand hiking and educational opportunities. Wayside exhibits will be placed along trails. Future front country facilities, trail heads, and early portions of some trails will be universally accessible. When park trails are formalized, this will enable the park to eliminate spur social trails that have evolved over the years. The following excerpt from the GMP outline future facility improvements:

### **Mammal Quarry**

What follows, is a reasonable synopsis of what could happen at the Mammal Quarry site. Working with interested partners, monument managers could open the mammal quarry for research and interpretation. Testing would be conducted with the intent of excavating portions of the mammal quarry that show significant fossil deposits. Analyses would be conducted to ascertain the abundance, distribution, and orientation of the fossiliferous sediments proximal to the quarry and to perform excavations to test paleoecological hypotheses, taphonomic explanations, and paleoclimatic models. A small awning would be constructed to protect paleontological resources and allow public visitation, and secure perimeter fencing would be installed. The focus would be on a seasonal operation that provides opportunities to advance research goals alongside public viewing and interpretation.

### **Geo-Loop Trail**

A new gravel parking area, accommodating approximately eight cars and two RVs, and a trailhead would be constructed immediately east of the Hancock Field Station. Existing human created unofficial trails would be formalized in order to provide a loop trail, approximately 4 miles in length. This trail would access the Hancock Tree, the Clarno Nut Beds, and the mammal quarry. If possible, that portion of the trail that goes from the new trailhead parking area to the Hancock Tree (approximately 1.2 miles one way) would be made accessible for people with disabilities, constructed of

a combination of asphalt and a boardwalk. Because this trail would be designed to receive higher levels of use, it would be included in a pedestrian management zone.

### **Mimulus Trail**

This existing, human created unofficial trail, approximately 2 miles long, would be formalized. The official trail would extend southwest of the Hancock Field Station, run across the top of the palisades to the ridge between Indian and Hancock canyons, and then connect with a trail between the ridges. Although most of the trail is already present, approximately 0.5 mile of new trail would need to be constructed. The Mimulus Trail would be designed for low to moderate use levels, which would be consistent in character with the surrounding backcountry zone.

### **Stegamonsster Trail**

This existing human created unofficial trail would be formalized. This trail is about 2 miles long, and runs from just south of the Hancock Field Station to the east and up to the ridge between Indian and Hancock canyons. The Stegamonsster Trail would be designed for low to moderate use levels, which would be consistent in character with the surrounding backcountry zone.

### **Indian Canyon**

No changes would occur regarding the management of Indian Canyon. Visitors would continue to be allowed to hike in the area so long as they were not on exposed paleosols. The current, informal name of this canyon may prove offensive to some, and general use of the name

is cautioned. Tribal consultation in naming the trail is recommended.

### **Ranger Office**

Rangers would continue to operate out of the existing facility located adjacent to State Highway 218. It also serves as a visitor contact point, though not signed as such.

### **Future & Social Trails**

What is important to note at this writing, is that the “future” trails listed in this section are not currently advertized as visitor experience options for the general public. However, these social trails are used for educational purposes by the OMSI/Hancock Field Station, the Oregon Paleo Lands Institute and by park staff conducting research or routine trail patrol. In addition, the superintendent has noted that due to funding issues, it is possible that these facilities may not be upgraded or available to the general public within the life of this LRIP.

### Interpretation and Visitor Services

A GS-9 generalist ranger (permanent/subject-to-furlough) works mid-March through mid-December paralleling the operation of the Hancock Field Station. This position is not part of the I&VS division, and there is no I&VS staff currently assigned to the Clarno Unit.

The GS-9 generalist Ranger keeps all park facilities clean and operational, conducts trail maintenance provides orientation and interpretation to individuals and groups, assists the paleontological staff when needed, and requests assistance from the maintenance division when major

facility repair is necessary. The park Superintendent directly supervises the part-time permanent GS 9 generalist ranger duty stationed at the Clarno Unit. Five days weekly from mid-March through mid-December the Unit Ranger provides:

- Formal, prepared talks when requested at Hancock Field Station for OMSI.
- Informal/roving contacts are provided for individuals, groups, and for OMSI student groups encountered on the trails – (especially Monday through Wednesday for OMSI students).
- Occasionally the Oregon Paleo Lands Institute (OPLI) has requested scheduled programs to be given by the unit ranger for visiting OPLI groups.

- OPLI provides independent programming for their audiences, many of which tour the park units.

When the GS-9 Unit ranger is furloughed mid-December through mid-March:

1. Usually no special interpretive programming for schools or the general public occurs.
2. The park maintenance staff checks the unit weekly to insure facilities are clean and operational, as the picnic area facilities are kept open year-around.

#### Analysis of Need at the Clarno Unit

- The nearby State highway directional signs are in need



The “Mammal Quarry Assemblage” mural helps visitors to visualize the Clarno Unit’s ancient past.

of improvement. They lack adequate information to assist visitors in way-finding in the region around the Clarno Unit. The highway 97 sign in Fossil is misleading. Many visitors think that the Clarno Unit has a major visitor center; visitors become angry when misdirected. Area signs need to clearly state the unit resources and facilities. Similar sign needs to be placed at the junction of highways 218 and 19. Park staff need to initiate contact and discussion with ODOT as a first step.

- I&VS needs to address the poaching concern using interpretive methods. As an example, the bulletin boards/display cases contain no hunting information.
- Using interpretive methods, I&VS needs to address how best to protect critical cultural sites such as the pictograph locality in Indian Canyon, the quarries, and Hancock Canyon.
- The Clarno Unit needs to have more I&VS staff present during medium and high visitation periods to present educational and interpretive programs. This will increase the programming for the general public during peak visitor seasons that is now lacking.
- I&VS staff need to increase outreach efforts and provide education programs for students attending public schools near to the Clarno Unit.
- Trails: the unit ranger believes there are several issues that interpretation may help solve:

- a) There is a need to reduce litter and invasive/exotic weeds transported by users.
- b) Many trails are difficult to traverse and have wildlife contact concerns so safety messages are needed warning trail users. It will be important to evaluate and address: in addition to trail heads, where are the best locations for placement of critical safety messages?
- c) More roving patrols of the unit are needed. Roving patrols provide several management functions including interpretation, basic trail maintenance, monitoring of visitor use and evaluation of resource impacts. The roving ranger plays a crucial role as the parks “first responder”. During the General Management Planning process, trail monitoring criteria was established to assess and address resource impacts on Clarno’s backcountry trails.
- d) The possible adverse and positive impacts between visitor use of trails and OMSI student use of trails needs to be assessed.

## The Painted Hills Unit

The 3,129 acre Painted Hills Unit is located 9 miles northwest of the town of Mitchell, Oregon. The most prominent natural feature is a series of multi-colored hills and ridges derived from exposed paleosols. The park is also noted for a colorful, spring wildflower display which draws both amateur and commercial photographers. Depending on conditions, the annual display can be poor at times.

Most of the unit is comprised of parklands designated as “backcountry” or “primitive”. A park road provides access to primary points of interest and visitor facilities.

### Existing Visitor Facilities

Park facilities include trails, wayside exhibits, a scenic overlook, a picnic area and a small kiosk that serves as a visitor contact station and ranger office. Interpretive exhibits at the contact station are displayed within NPS-style bulletin boards on the exterior of the building. The kiosk is located next to the picnic area.

Near the picnic area is a living interpretive exhibit, an arboretum. The arboretum trees are evolutionary descendents of the same tree genera living in the Painted Hills area 33 million years ago.

Unit Trails include:

**Carroll Rim Trail** ascends a few hundred feet in elevation to rimrock that overlooks the entire area, offering a bird’s-eye view of the Painted Hills. A bench to relax and

enjoy the view is at the end of the trail. Total hike round trip is 1.5 miles.

**Painted Hills Overlook Trail** provides glimpses of the colorful Painted Hills from several angles. Benches are along the trail. (a 0.5-mile hike.)

**Painted Cove Trail** - A third of this 0.25-mile trail is a boardwalk, accessible to those in wheelchairs. Here, one can actually walk among the red and gold claystone hills. Interpretive signs illuminate the geologic story.

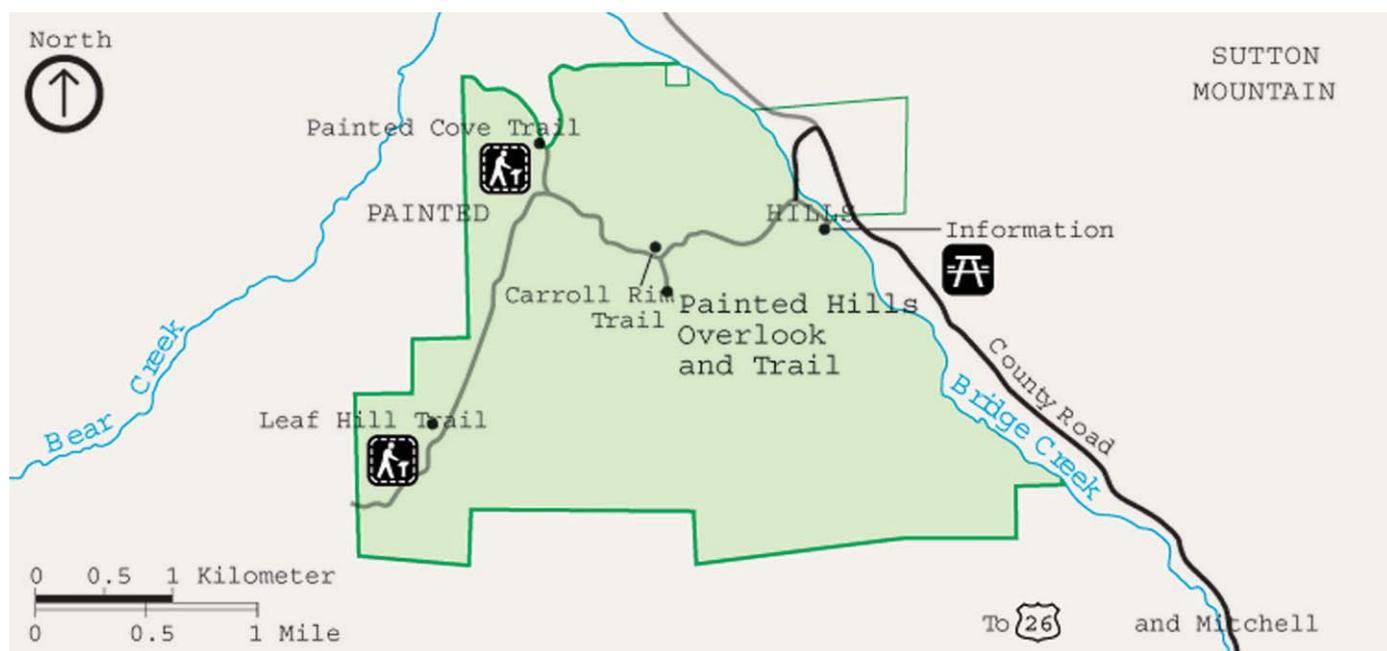
**Leaf Hill Trail** - One half of this 0.25-mile trail is accessible to those in wheelchairs along a hard-packed surface. This hill was the scene of important scientific studies in the 1920’s and 1990’s. Thousands of leaf fossils discovered here offer a glimpse of an ancient ecosystem 33 million years in age. A few fossils are on exhibit.

### Future Park Facilities Proposed

The following excerpt from the General Management Plan outlines future planned facilities:

**Painted Hills Overlook:** would be redesigned to improve visitor access and overall aesthetics. It would accommodate parking for the Carroll Rim Trail and a new shade structure would be added for visitor comfort.

**Painted Hills Picnic Area:** would be maintained in its present condition, which includes a maintained turf grass area along with a small arboretum. New shade structures would be added for visitor comfort.



The Painted Hills Unit

**Leaf Hill Trail:** would be maintained in its present condition. Bridge Creek restoration efforts would continue on NPS lands to remove invasive plants and to plant native trees to restore the riparian area to a more “natural” landscape. In addition, NPS managers would seek a cooperative agreement to partner with the adjacent landowner on a collaborative creek restoration effort. If an agreement were obtained, NPS managers would work with the landowner to remove invasive plants and to plant native trees on their side of the creek.

**Road to Painted Cove:** the National Park Service would work with Wheeler County to seek funding to pave the county-owned and county-maintained road to Painted Cove. If funds were obtained, the NPS managers would work with the county to incorporate a design that would ensure that the rural character of the area is retained. NPS managers would encourage the county to adopt NPS road standards and use alternative surfacing treatments.



*Chaenactis douglasii* on the Painted Hills.

## Personal Services

A GS-9 generalist ranger (permanent/subject-to-furlough) works mid-March through mid-December which is the period the park receives the most visitation. This position is not part of the I&VS division, and there is no I&VS staff currently assigned to the Clarno Unit.

The GS-9 generalist ranger keeps all park facilities clean and operational, conducts trail maintenance provides orientation and interpretation to individuals and groups, assists the paleontological staff when needed, requests assistance from the maintenance division when major facility repair is necessary, and coordinates all permits for special use photography. The park Superintendent directly supervises the part-time permanent GS 9 generalist ranger duty stationed at the Painted Hills Unit.

- Five days weekly from mid-March through mid-December the unit ranger provides informal/roving contacts for individuals and groups.
- When the employee is furloughed mid-December through mid-March: The park maintenance staff checks the unit weekly to insure facilities are clean and operational. No unit personal services are scheduled during this period.

### Analysis of Need at the Painted Hills Unit:

- Visitors need to be encouraged to visit the visitor information kiosk at the picnic and restroom area. They often bypass it and drive directly to the overlooks. They may leave the park without having any direct contact with the ranger or displays at the kiosk. The ranger office is located in the kiosk facility. The unit ranger estimates on average he is able to contact one in every four to five vehicles, while stationed in his office or on patrol.
- The Painted Hills Unit needs to have more I&VS staff present during medium and high visitation periods to present educational and interpretive programs. This will increase the programming for the general public during peak visitor seasons.
- Brochures and flyers available to visitors in the unit may need to be replaced by exhibits and waysides, as visitors seem to respond positively to outdoor exhibits. This will continue our park effort to reduce paper use, which has been implemented over the last few years. Frequently brochures are found littering the park or in trash receptacles.
- Using interpretive methods, I&VS may be able to help with the need to reduce human waste in the Painted Hills Unit at a few specific sites.
- There is a need to address the security of the visitor donations box, as it has been broken into in the past.
- Recently a vehicle turn-around has been constructed at Red Scar Knoll by the park. I&VS needs to address the possibilities for programming and interpretive services at this location, including a backcountry trailhead.
- Using interpretive methods, I&VS needs to address the continued problem of the removal of fossils by visitors along the Leaf Hill Trail.

## Partnerships for Interpretation, Education, and Visitor Services

### Discover Your Northwest (DYNW)

Bookstore sales through Discover Your Northwest promotes the discovery of Northwest public lands, enriches the experience of visitors, and builds community stewardship of these special places today and for generations to come. Discover Your Northwest is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit social enterprise based in Seattle, Washington and also licensed to operate in Oregon, Idaho, California, and Montana. Since 1974, DYNW has provided on-site resources that help visitors have a great experience when visiting Northwest public lands and inspire them to become stewards of these places.

Formally the Northwest Interpretive Association (NWIA) until 2008, DYNW has been an active and important partner at the monument for over 20 years. Acting under a cooperative association agreement

with the NPS, the DYNW sales area is very popular and vital to the monument's interpretive message presented to the public. Over the last five years, since the sales area moved into the new TCPC in 2004, sales have steadily increased yearly. Gross sales in 2008 total almost \$46,900.00. From these sales the monument receives a percentage, a small budget that the park interpretive operations uses to purchase needed items for projects and events.

DYNW provides about 600 hours of staff time annually in operating the sales area, through a sales clerk position. Approximately 2,000 hours of each year the sales area is staffed and managed by park I&VS staff.

### Federal Agencies

Over several decades, the monument has partnered with nearby Federal agencies in regards to various interpretive and visitor services, particularly with the staff of United States Forest Service (USFS) office in John Day, OR, and the USFS-BLM (Bureau of Land Management) office in Prineville, OR. The plan calls for expanding the number of joint projects undertaken with these partners. One of the current projects involves shared staffing of visitor centers at NPS and USFS-BLM sites.

### Grant County Chamber of Commerce (GRCC)

In 2008, monument and chamber staff began a project allowing NPS uniformed rangers to staff the chamber office located in John Day, OR, on a weekly basis. This project should continue; and, expand to include shared staffing and training, based upon available staffing.



The Discover Your Northwest sales area in the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center.

## **Oregon Department of Education (ODE) & Universities**

The state schools have made extensive use of the monument resources over the years, especially through the monument's education program opportunities. Contacts with educators have been vital to the success of our education programs and these contacts have and will prove very important in developing future programs that benefit our youth through education. This plan calls for renewed effort in developing a more effective education program growing to the full potential of the monument resources.

The monument has direct ties to professorships at both the Oregon State University and the University of Oregon, and these ties have proven an important benefit to the improvement of interpretive programs offered at the monument. These partnerships will prove very beneficial in some of the action items recommended in this plan. Other schools of higher learning near the monument have shown interest in partnerships, which need to be nurtured to mutual benefit.

## **Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI)**

For the past 15 years, since 1993, OMSI has partnered with the NPS via their field camp, the Hancock Field Station (HFS), located within the Clarno Unit. The HFS draws visitation of between 14,000 - 17,000 students each year, mostly in groups. These students make significant use of the Clarno Unit resources, and regularly, resources at the other two units.

In 2001, the park I&VS and Portland OMSI staffs developed an exhibit on the John Day Fossil Beds which is currently on display at the main OMSI center located in Portland, OR. The paleontology lab at this Portland center features many fossils from the John Day Fossil Beds. Generally communications and planning between the monument and OMSI has occurred on an "as needed basis". Future discussions might address how this park/partner relationship could grow to improve the protection and interpretation of significant park and area resources.

## **Oregon Paleo Lands Institute (OPLI)**

OPLI offers interpretive programs and introductory tours by reservation to group members and the general public throughout the John Day region. OPLI brings interested groups to various sites throughout the park. Under agreement, generally they tour the monument units independently; their use of interpretive ranger services has been limited to date. Joint projects and services may be expanded in the near future, as per recommendations made in this plan.

## **Pine Creek Confederated Tribes**

Adjacent to the Clarno Unit is the Pine Creek Conservation Area managed by the Warm Springs Confederated Tribes. The Superintendent and Clarno unit ranger communicates with these neighbors as projects and issues develop.

## State Agencies

The monument partnership with Oregon State agencies regarding interpretive and visitor services began in the mid-1990s. Monument staff has been actively involved at nearby Clyde Holliday State Park presenting evening “campfire” programs at their campground amphitheater, and fabricating exhibits at the state park on the monument. NPS staff has also worked with Oregon State staff in the research and program planning for the Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site, located in John Day, OR.

## Other Partnerships with Future Interpretive Impacts/Opportunities

The park maintains strong partnerships with Wheeler County, the state of Oregon, the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The park shares a law enforcement position with BLM and JODA also provides technical assistance to BLM with paleontological resources. The BLM, in turn, provides JODA with direct assistance regarding park archaeological resources. Another organization that has potential as a partner in I&VS programming may be the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA).



A volunteer participant in the Artist-In-the-Park Program, and her rendition of Cathedral Rock.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Parkwide Recommendations

For ease of reading and clarity, the document has been organized in the following order: Parkwide Recommendations (this section); and Unit Specific Recommendations (in the following sections).

### Overview

During the development of this Long-Range Interpretive Plan the interpretive staff worked with monument staff and partners to develop a vision to guide the delivery of the interpretive program.

*The Interpretation and Visitor Services staff seeks to engage monument visitors to form enduring connections to support the preservation of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument and the mission of the National Park Service. The monument will be recognized as a leader in resource-based educational programming, fostering life-long learning and stewardship. Utilizing the park's diverse resources, facilities and partners, the interpretive program will provide a range of informal and formal programming and interpretive media to meet the needs of park visitors -- from the first-time visitor to the student learner and the scholar alike.*

#### **- Park Vision Statement for Interpretation and Visitor Services**

The vision statement is founded upon these specific points developed during the workshop:

All visitors will have the opportunity to safely and comfortably ...

- have the adventure of discovering paleontology
- see the scientific process applied and in action
- connect to and learn from the long history of life and its implications for us
- be inspired, such that their experience here affects them beyond park boundaries
- practice stewardship, as a result of their understanding and appreciation of site resources
- recognize the uniqueness of John Day Fossil Beds N.M.

LRIP planning team discussions reflected a need to incorporate the concept of sustainability and a culture of evaluation in all future I&VS recommendations for personal services, interpretive media and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program.

### **Interpretive Program Management Goals**

In recognition that the development and delivery of the interpretive program must correspond to available staff time and funding, future I&VS program emphasis will strive to achieve the following balance:

- 66% (two-thirds) of the work (staff, interpretive media and partnership efforts) will tie directly to topics related to the park’s paleontological, geological, and climate change stories;
- 33% of the work will relate to the interpretation of other park stories and topics related to cultural history, natural history, other Servicewide special emphasis topics (such as night sky, weed control, and natural sound topics, etc.).
- Integrate a culture of evaluation; and
- Respect visitor independence – their right to select from an array of park planned visitor experiences, how to enjoy the park.

**Common to All Interpretation**

The following principles will apply to all interpretation at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument:

The breakdown of the percentages above was recommended by the 2006 Park Business Plan, and based upon the full staffing levels. This Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) adds significantly to the list of recommended work projects and ideas mentioned in the business plan. Depending on staff levels these additions will, at times, affect the percentages targeted above as work focus will shift year-to-year.

In order to foster excellence in interpretation, from program/ project conceptualization through implementation, the Interpretation and Visitor Services (I&VS) program staff will:

- Utilize the most current research;
- Reflect professional standards in interpretation, natural and cultural resources and park management;
- Incorporate new technologies;
- Encourage partner collaboration and participation;
- As an interpretive vision for the park, all visitors at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument will safely and comfortably:
  - Have the adventure of discovering paleontology;
  - See the scientific process applied and in action;
  - Connect to and learn from the long history of life, and through this knowledge understand implications for 21st century inhabitants;
  - Be inspired, such that their experience here affects them beyond park boundaries;
  - Practice stewardship, as a result of their understanding and appreciation of National Park Service resources; and,
  - Recognize the uniqueness of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

- All interpretation will address physical and programmatic accessibility.
- Interpretation will use monument specific fossils and other original objects such as artifacts or oral histories to help bring the park alive for visitors to facilitate understanding of resource values.
- Interpretation will include examples and perspectives from diverse scientific and historical points of view.
- The park will partner with scientists, universities, nearby land management agencies, and neighboring institutions to develop programs, media, share research, etc.
- The park will implement National Park Service UniGuide Sign Standards as signs and interpretive media are upgraded.
- Where possible, “virtual visitors” will have opportunities to view key park vistas and to access new research, studies, management plans, and historical information.

The following recommendations describe programs and media designed to realize the interpretive vision, themes, and visitor experience goals previously described for John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Recommendations will guide the development of personal services, media design and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program. Realization of this vision will be achieved only if the appropriate level of funding occurs.

## Interpretive Media

### Audiovisual

#### Short-term:

- Explore the installation of webcams and outdoor monitors and speakers parkwide in order to connect the three units physically via technology. Podcasts and videocasts have great potential at the park. The staff has expressed a desire to improve visitor understanding regarding the resources preserved at each unit; a facilitated media experience may encourage visitors to travel to the other units; or, at least make an intellectual connection to the resources preserved in these areas.

If this recommendation is unrealistic due to extreme weather and high sun glare, or potential vandalism/theft concerns, at a minimum, provide rangers at the Clarno and Painted Hills units a portable mp3, or similar device, that plays video and stores photographs. The mp3 player would be used as an interpretive tool by the unit rangers, when conversing with visitors about the site’s significance and most interesting features. While most portable players don’t have external speakers, a portable external speaker could be connected. Note: this suggestion would be most beneficial if additional staff were stationed at these units, at least during targeted times when visitation is highest, so that there would be enough time and support to interact more with visitors.

- Expand the parkwide interpretive education and outreach program to new audiences by using available webcasting technology at the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center. Collaborate with the paleontology and natural/cultural resource staff in these endeavors.

Long-term:

- Develop an audio tour program that corresponds to the future park publication described below in the parkwide “publications” recommendations.

**Publications**

Short-term:

- Work with the HFC publications staff to update the park’s primary interpretive handout, the Unigridd brochure. Currently the Cant Ranch is not included in the brochure; this should be rectified. Emphasize that bicycles are prohibited on trails.

Long-term:

- Develop a sales publication such as a park hand book, for a general audience. The park staff has expressed a need to entice visitors to move beyond the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center to visit trails and features within the Sheep Rock Unit and travel to the Painted Hills and Clarno Units. Because the drive time between units is not really conducive to an auto tour, a handbook with a companion audio program is recommended as a way to invite visitors to explore the park and become immersed in its story

1. The proposed publication should focus on all three units and could be used as a guide to discover what park features and activities each unit has to offer. During project development ensure that the rights for all images and quotes will be available to use in future interpretive projects -- including electronic applications for audiovisual materials or the park website.
2. Develop a companion audio program for the proposed handbook. Tracks could be divided into subjects, such as an overall introduction to the park’s story, an overall introduction to each of the park’s units, and interpretation of what can be found at each unit and how it relates to both the paleontology and geology within the park. Like the handbook, this item should be developed for a general audience. The audio program could be developed at the same time as the handbook; or, at a later time, depending on funding availability.

**Research/Interpretive Program Assets**

- Review the park’s oral history collection to organize common storylines and key figures that would be available for future audio and video programs, incorporated into future exhibits; or made accessible to future researchers through the park website. Note: oral histories were conducted by park staff

in the early years of the park's establishment.

Ongoing development of the park's oral history program should include oral history interviews with paleontologists and other park professionals who have or continue to work at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Documenting their experiences adds to the park's rich history. In addition, soundbites from these oral histories may be used for the recommended audio tour in the TCPC museum, at the Cant Ranch (see Sheep Rock Unit recommendations) and in future virtual tours or podcasts. Oral history standards such as these should be in use:

- Develop interview questions as a foundation for consistency.
- Release forms allowing the use of these interviews in future media projects should also be signed at the time of the interview. The National Park Service's Media Design Center (HFC) has developed a release form that could work in this instance.
- When conducting future interviews use professional, broadcast quality equipment for the recording; and, provide training for the staff on how to use this equipment.

Appropriate equipment, a trained staff, and use of release forms are essential steps to get the best and most usable recordings for the ongoing preservation of park

history and future interpretive access.

- Contact the National Park Service's Leave No Trace (LNT) coordinator to discuss educational opportunities as the park begins facility planning to develop more trails and backcountry experiences. HFC produced a video outlining the principles of leave no trace. The video could be shown at the visitor center now and in the future as a tool for getting people to think about these issues, which seems especially important to JODA when considering all of the social trails that now mar some of the fragile landscapes in the park. LNT principles may also be added to the park website to further its promotion (see <http://www.nps.gov/acad/supportyourpark/leavenotrace.htm> and <http://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/leavenotrace.htm> as examples).
- Encourage the incorporation of geological interpretation wherever possible, especially in the development of new media - including multimedia programs, waysides and publications. These landscapes are big, colorful, dramatic, and fascinating. It seems impossible to not wonder how the formations within the units came to be. For example at Sheep Rock, some of the waysides show what fossils were found at a specific place along the trail. However, the formations themselves were not explained in depth and this is a visually stunning part of the walk. While bringing the paleontology to the fore is important, the geology is

extremely evident and it might be another avenue to help visitors imagine the deep time they are being asked to consider when they see a fossil or interpretation about these fossils.

- Utilize the abundant number of natural and cultural resource studies to enhance personal services, interpretive media, and shared partner projects. A list of program ideas and resources has been compiled by the park's resource manager in Appendix D.

## Signs

### Short-term:

- Use new Servicewide Sign Standards when replacing lost or damaged signs.

### Long-term:

- Seek funding to create a signage and wayfinding master plan for the park. Each unit requires a well-planned arrival experience. The experience starts with strategically located NPS signs that follow Servicewide identity and messaging standards. The wayfinding master plan would document all the signs in use and make recommendations for updating the signs to conform to the National Park Service UniGuide Sign Standards. The new master plan would introduce new sign designs that cover a broader range of identity and visitor information than could be accommodated in the old NPS-SSS specifications. The new standards cover Park and Facility Identity, Road Guide and Trailblazer Signs, new Visitor

Information Signs, and Regulatory Signs. It should be noted that many of the signs that need to be replaced are along state and city road corridors which require coordination between park and local officials. The master plan will define individual sign standards and enable park staff to develop sound cost estimates for replacement from HFC contractor. Following the development of the master plan, prioritize replacement needs and develop PMIS funding requests to initiate implementation.

## Waysides and Bulletin Boards

### Short-term:

- Replace bulletin board exhibits at the Clarno and Painted Hills Units and continue to replace damaged or vandalized waysides parkwide.
- Incorporate graphic images in low profile waysides used parkwide. Where possible and if space permits, use new artwork from the TCPC Museum.

### Long-term:

- Seek a one-time major funding allotment for wayside planning, design, fabrication and installation. This would bring all outdoor exhibits up to current standards and incorporate new research and artwork produced for TCPC.
- Significant messages must be out in the park where people are recreating. New waysides should provide site specific interpretation and context so

visitors can connect what is viewed at a specific location into the broader story of 40+ million years of earth history preserved within the monument. The messages should try and connect the current natural landscapes to previous landscapes of the fossil and geologic record, conveying the changes that have occurred, the loss of previous landscapes, the evolution of past landscapes into what visitors see today, etc.

## Park Website

### Short-term:

- Keep website current; update as required and maintain webpage links.
- Create a web page specifically dedicated to accessibility to inform people regarding what services and programs are available. Information should include descriptions about accessible trails, the open-captioned video, and that sign language interpretation can be provided with two-week advance notification.

### Long-term:

- At this writing, the park's website features a virtual tour. This tour is nicely produced with regards to its visual presentation and could be used as a basis for the refinement and development of this already produced content and/or additional content. If this program continues to be used, have the text narrated (by a professional narrator). Relocate and display the text at the bottom of the screen as the narrator

speaks -- to be used as subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing. Options to turn the captions and/or narration on and off can also be added to the interface as well as other clearly identifiable usability features, such as navigation.

- Add additional virtual tours of all three units, their associated trails, the TCPC museum, and the Cant Ranch to the park website. Or, simple slide shows featuring a handful of images of the other units could be quickly compiled for rangers to share with visitors inquiring about the other units and what they have to offer. Note: part of the agreement for special photography hikes that are coordinated with the park might include permission to use selected images for these purposes.
- In the future, the narrations and film developed for these virtual tours could be used as the basis for podcasts/audiocasts and/or videocasts that visitors could download and use while at each unit or while taking a hike on a particular trail.
- Remember in the development of any park produced new audiovisual program, to obtain the rights for future park use so the materials are available for repurposing in other interpretive media or programs. This should be included in any contracts drawn for such projects.

- Within the past ten years, several natural resource related inventories, studies, and projects have occurred at the monument resulting in journal articles, reports, and restoration activities. The park website should be updated to include current natural resource issues/concerns, corresponding research and information, and restoration/mitigation activities. Since much of the research is being directed by the Upper Columbia Basin Network’s inventory and monitoring program, a link to their website should be provided. (See Appendix D.)
- Use the museum collection database as another tool to be incorporated into visitor activities.
  - Many fields within the natural history section were often left blank, such as the collection date. Enter “unknown” in the field instead of leaving this information blank. There is locality information and personal information about donors to the museum in the collection database, which should be cleared first before being made available to the public, if at all. Refer to park policy on such clearances.
  - Activities which allow the visitor to find a fossil in the collection database can be developed and may bring a greater appreciation to collections management as well as to the fossils themselves.
  - Additional website activities might also include putting the pieces of a virtual fossil together to create the species. Badlands National Park has a multimedia program that features three virtual species, and may be contacted as to its effect.
  - While multimedia programs hold a certain appeal, this same concept might be considered with fossil replicas that visitors piece together.

### Universal Accessibility

#### Short-term:

- Provide van accessibility through “SPOTS” a regional transportation provider.
- Provide training to all staff members regarding the concept of “universal access” and pertinent legal requirements that affect interpretation and visitor services. Training goals: (1) acquaint staff with accessible park programs and facilities; (2) improve visitor service skills; and (3) integrate new information in future program and facility planning and development.
- Create a link on the park’s website specifically for accessibility to let people know what services and programs are available for people with special needs. Information could include descriptions about accessible trails, the open-captioned video, and that sign language interpretation may

be provided (dependent upon availability of signers) with three-week advance notification.

- Add touchable reproduction fossils and appropriate natural and cultural items to interpretive programs and operations.
- Tape and video the most popular ranger conducted programs and provide universal access via the park's website. Consider posting the certified program submittals created by the interpretive staff for the Servicewide Interpretive Development Program.
- Seek funding to update foreign language brochure translations to coincide with the production of the revised Unigrd brochure. Translations are needed for Spanish, Japanese, German and French language groups.
- Provide taped narration of brochures; have these materials available at park visitor contact areas and on the park website.
- Obtain a cost-estimate and seek funding to provide an accessible automatic front door entrance at the primary visitor contact station -- the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center.
- Explore the possibility of developing an accessibility team from regional community resources available. Team members could assist with future training needs and the evaluation of programs and facilities.

#### Long-term:

- Implement General Management Planning recommendations to plan for universal access at all parking lots, restrooms, drinking fountains, trailheads and along sections of trails connected to parking lots -- where the terrain permits.
- If successful in recruiting a regional accessibility team, use the team to assist the park in updating the park's accessibility plan. Seek funding to include the addition of a media specialist to help the park evaluate how technology could help. Following the identification of parkwide needs, establish priorities and seek project funding.
- Design future education programs and programs for the general public to accommodate all learning styles. Where appropriate include tactile elements.
- Include the Chief of Interpretation on all parkwide planning teams where future public access and facilities are addressed. This will help to insure that planning needs for basic orientation, information, interpretation, and program and facility accessibility are considered at the onset as project scoping and cost estimates are developed.

## Personal Services

### Staffing

#### Short-term:

- Utilize Sheep Rock Unit staff to support 7-day week coverage at the Clarno and Painted Hills Units during the park's busy visitor season and special events. In turn, the unit rangers will be available to assist the Sheep Rock Unit staff with their expertise on park projects, and occasional coverage needs for TCPC or at special events.
- Seek partners, friend, and volunteers with the expertise to conduct programs at the park on a regular basis, adding to the opportunities provided to our visitors. Offer similar services outside the park to our partners.

#### Long-term:

- Seek NPS "Office Formulation System" program monies to fund interpretive positions now vacant due to insufficient funds. The 2006 Business Plan documents the need for a 30% increase in staff. Add to the program request other personnel related costs such as computers, vehicles, radios, uniforms etc.

### Planning

- Conduct yearly, on-site, unit specific planning with key staff members. This meeting would address short-term facility, visitor services, staffing and interpretive media improvements needed. Discussions should include action items and target dates for

completion. Use meeting as a forum to train, update and build consensus regarding the direction of interpretation, education and visitor services based on parkwide goals. Set a time and date for this meeting that works well for all participants.

### Programming

- Develop a secondary park theme to reflect park Centennial program objectives to emphasize global warming change in future interpretive efforts.
- Expand collaborative efforts with the park paleontological staff to enhance visitor understanding of fossil resources and the paleontology profession. Work collaboratively with Chief Paleontologist to determine shared program goals and training needs to improve the park visitor experience. Establish and prioritize a list of shared outcomes. See Appendix F for ideas discussed during workshop.
- Capture in writing, successful inter-divisional work practices and lessons learned to guide future I&VS programs that interface with the Paleontology Division and/or interpret their work activities.
- Create collaborative efforts with the natural/cultural resource staff to enhance visitor understanding of the natural/cultural resource program. Work collaboratively with the Resource Manager to determine shared program goals and training needs to improve visitor experience.

- Experiment with videocasting on the Internet when new programs or projects are funded. For example: the park has received funding to work with the State of Oregon to develop a travelling exhibit; explore the possibility of adding a video/tel component to broaden program outreach and connect to new audiences.
- Continue to experiment with new programming parkwide and work with partners in ongoing program development
- Continue to incorporate informal and formal evaluation as a standard interpretive business practice for personal services and interpretive media. Specifically:
  - Integrate an assessment of needs at the onset of new interpretive programs and interpretive media projects.
  - Incorporate evaluation results or “lessons learned” in to future programs and media.
  - At the onset of significant projects use front-end, formative, and summative evaluations. Include the need for evaluation in the project cost estimate. Assess: what key messages are needed to promote/protect resource values while visitors are recreating in park areas; was the intended message/ experience received by the targeted group; and was the choice of delivery method (personal services or media) appropriate and effective.

## Education Program

- Continue the work of the Long-Range Interpretive Plan through the development of a JODA Education Plan. A future parkwide education plan should outline a specific strategy of what to do for the next 5 years, targeted audiences in the region, grade levels, potential partners, etc. This plan must be developed in light of staff levels and other program commitments. Start small, think big. An effective plan should: align desired long-term educational programming changes with parkwide interpretive program commitments and parkwide strategic goals. Request the Pacific West Region’s Education Specialist to assist with plan development; and, continue to work with and consult with LRIP education specialists that assisted with the development of this plan. Include teachers every step of the way.
  1. Start with evaluating the existing 9th grade curriculum-based “Horse Kit”. Request local teachers to help with program evaluation; and, seek ideas to meet new curriculum standards. Implement recommendations; continue to re-evaluate progress as part of the Annual Interpretive Program review.
  2. Convert successful pre-school through high school education programs to curriculum based education programs.

3. Seek funding and partners to create new programs based on park and audience needs.
4. Seek a “Parks as Classroom” grant to provide funds for teacher honoraria to serve on a program development teams.
5. Interview and collaborate with the Paleontology staff regarding their educational internship program for college and graduate students; this program should be marketed as part of the future parkwide education – even though it is administered out of another park work group. Look at this program and determine if an I&VS college level/or graduate intern program could be patterned after the paleontology model; and, perhaps use their university contacts to seek future applicants to get a similar program/positions established.



An interpreter conducting paleontology fieldwork.

### Media Ideas for Future Education Programming Outreach:

Incorporate webcams into lesson plans. Take advantage of the TCPC videocasting technology. Develop a schedule of events, such as presentations by paleontologists and natural resource scientists for either pre-visit or post-visit experiences. Have “hands-on items” for use in the classroom, while park staff is conducting a learning activity via videocasting.

When the expanded curriculum based education program is launched and recognized by park staff and educators as successful, consider producing a movie that could be included with other pre-visit educational materials and lesson plans. The movie can help to orient school groups to the site and be used in conjunction with lesson plans. Recommended movie length: no longer than 7 – 10 minutes. The future planning team should include the interpretation staff, educators and paleontologists. See Appendix G for other education program ideas.

### **Training/Professional Development**

- Continue to participate in the Servicewide Interpretive Development Program. Staff will seek certification for training modules; and, model, teach and share lessons learned with all JODA staff, volunteers and seasonal that have contact with the general public.
- Develop a strategy to provide parkwide subject matter training for the interpretive staff and unit rangers, during the slower season. If necessary, seek

funding to support any required guest instructors. Consult with partners; there may be parallel training needs; and/or the ability to share costs.

Work with permanent staff at all units to discuss and document park specific subject matter training needs in support of the development and delivery of the parkwide interpretive program. Discuss staff training needs in the broadest perspective: in light of natural and cultural resources, interpretive themes, visitor experience goals, the park paleontological story, the interpretive development program, natural resource issues, local geology related to prominent land features, and individual development needs related to current job performance. Determine:

- what are the common parkwide training needs;
- what priority projects are coming up that require resource specific expertise; and
- what resources are available to the park?

## Partnerships

### Future Local Partner Projects, first steps:

During the LRIP planning process, local park partners gathered twice to discuss shared interagency concerns. The section below outlines shared priorities and projects the interpretive staff at JODA will pursue with park partners.

- Develop a shared group list serve to improve inter-group communications; determine who will maintain the behind the scenes technology to support the list serve
- Develop an internal group process for identifying who needs to be involved, who needs to approve, project review schedules and due dates, etc. for joint products. Determine if an interagency agreement or project agreement is necessary and/or appropriate.
- Meet annually to keep the team energized and committed to successful joint endeavors
- Develop and produce an interagency publication with shared land use protection messages.
  1. Determine if agencies can carve funds out of existing budgets to print.
  2. If necessary, seek new project money to produce the brochure. Or, seek a partner to fund the printing.
- Work with Eastern National to develop “passport stamps” for each unit to raise the visibility of the Clarno and Painted Hills Units.
- Work with Discover Your Northwest Association -- the park cooperating association to:
  1. Offer and develop more park specific interpretive sales materials on a variety

of topics. Example: local wildflower related items due to the profusion of wild flowers at the Painted Hills Unit.

2. Expand future products available to include items of interest and priced to appeal to school children.
  3. Link the park website to the Association’s website; Internet visitors would be able to purchase park interpretive items.
  4. Market park specific sales items on the Association’s internet sales website. This service will help Painted Hills and Clarno Units visitors that don’t have the time to travel to the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center sales area. A notice on the unit’s park bulletin board could promote this service.
- Work with partners and agencies to seek solutions to improve seasonal housing options. A reduced commuting time to units from area would make working at the park more attractive and encourage seasonal to return season after season; and, reduce the continual training mode the park is now experiencing during the busy season.

Second steps:

- Maintain “List-serve” and good partner communication exchanges
- Meet annually to develop new project goals
- Develop a Regional Interagency signature event for local folks
- Meet with school representatives and identify the interagency educational program need the partner group would like to tackle and establish what grade level the program will address and why. (Elementary school, Middle School, High School) seek special funding if required

Third steps/long term:

- Maintain “List-serve” and good communication exchange
- Meet annually develop new project goals
- Develop pilot interagency curriculum based program
- Support delivery of the interagency curriculum-based education program
- Continue to work with partners to plan for the development of a campground facility near the Painted Hills Unit. If there was a place near the unit to stay overnight, this would encourage increased visitor use and provide an opportunity for increased interpretive programming for the general visitor and student groups.

## Sheep Rock Unit Recommendations

### Interpretive Media

#### Short-term:

- Seek funding to add audio descriptions and assistive listening for the park’s existing orientation film to meet current accessibility requirements. The park film is open-captioned. It should also be audio described and assistive listening systems should be provided to people who are hard of hearing.
- Request HFC technical assistance for the evaluation of the quality of the display of the current video to verify that the playback master and projection are providing the optimal resolution.
- Develop a “Most Asked Questions” training guide specific to the new museum exhibit. The goal of this guide would be to assist interpreters in helping first time visitors and/or visitors who do not have an in depth understanding of paleontology or geology. Topics might include how the fossils displayed relate to what visitors can see and experience in the park while pursuing recreational activities such as hiking, photography or site-seeing at the various units. Collaborate with the paleontology staff on the development of the “scientifically” correct and easily understood visitor directed responses. This training guide will also be a useful tool to help put together the future TCPC museum audio tour and

handbook discussed below in the Sheep Rock Unit “long-term media recommendations”.

- Install an audio device for the window looking into the paleontology lab in the TCPC lobby. A one-way communication system with the lab staff will give interested visitors the opportunity to see and hear about what the scientists are working on. A two-way system will provide visitors the opportunity to interact with the paleontologists as part of scheduled programs.
- Conduct a formal, review of the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center’s new visitor center facility and museum exhibits. Include accessibility specialists/consultants from outside the park, with park staff, in this assessment. This evaluation should consider the plaza area outside the structure, the entryway, lobby area and associated exhibits within this space, and the museum exhibits. The evaluation should assess the interpretation and presentation methods, and the effectiveness of how the new facility and exhibits meet accessibility standards. Based on the evaluation findings develop a



The James Cant ranch house before NPS renovation, circa 1977.

plan to prioritize and implement recommended improvements.

- Conduct a formal, summative evaluation of the James Cant Ranch and museum exhibits. Include accessibility specialists/consultants from outside the park in this assessment. This evaluation should consider the first floor of the Cant ranch house and associated exhibits, the trail to the barn/sheep shearing shed and associated exhibits, ranch trails, and access to the remainder of the outbuildings. The evaluation should assess the interpretation and presentation methods, and the effectiveness of how the ranch and exhibits meet accessibility standards. Based on the evaluation findings develop a plan to prioritize and implement recommended improvements.

Long-term:

- Develop at Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC):
  1. Museum exhibit audio program,
  2. Audio description tour for visitors who are blind or have low vision. Note: The audio description tour includes orientation and visual descriptions of the exhibits, including the fossils and murals. The audio description tour should point its listeners in the direction of any tactile objects existing or being created as a part of the exhibit revisions.

3. Companion TCPC museum guide publication.

These three media projects should be developed at the same time. These products would enhance visitor understanding of the relationship between the TCPC museum and the natural features and fossil resources within the three units.

Additional Guidance:

Work with the senior Chief Park Paleontologist to complete the planning and production of the TCPC Museum guide. This publication will enhance visitor understanding of the relationship between the TCPC Museum and the natural features and fossil resources within the three units. Explore funding opportunities with the park's cooperating association and/or park partners to produce the guide.

Produce a TCPC museum audio tour to provide additional orientation of the museum exhibits for first-time visitors and visitors' lacking a strong background in paleontology and geology. The future audio tour should orient visitors to the color coded system used throughout the exhibit which indicates a particular period of deep time. The audio tour should direct people's attention to particular fossils and make connections with those artifacts to the depictions on the murals of what some of those fossils were thought to look like. The audio tour can also include sound bites from paleontologists, geologists, and other subject matter experts regarding the subject matter itself. In addition, there may also be some soundbites related to a particular discovery of a fossil that should be

included in the audio tour. These types of soundbites might give insight into the science of paleontology and those who engage in the discipline; and through this human lens help visitors understand and make personal connections to this complicated park story. The audio tour might also help visitors make connections to the three park units, where the fossil record has revealed the information now conveyed in the new museum exhibits.

Include in the audio tour estimate, an additional cost estimate to design and produce an exhibit audio description tour for visitors who are blind or have low vision. The audio description tour would be based on the audio tour, but include orientation and visual descriptions of the exhibits, including the fossils and murals, that would not be appropriate for the interpretive audio tour. In addition, the audio description tour could point its listeners in the direction of any tactile objects existing or being created as a part of the exhibit revisions.

Wait to select the specific type of delivery system to be used for the audio tour -- until the park staff is ready to move forward with project development. Audio tour companies can lease, rent, or sell their handheld devices to the park. These units can be expensive and should be researched before seeking funding to ensure that the project has enough money for this important element. Because the technology of handheld and other mobile devices is quickly developing and changing, until this specific project is initiated, remain open on the selection of the audio tour delivery system. When the park

is ready to proceed, HFC can assist with technical recommendations.

Consider other methods of delivery, such as site specific transmitters and headsets (i.e. Sennheiser's guidePORT system), cell phone tours (should cell phone service come available), and audiocasts, which visitors can either download onto their own device at home and/or the park can provide mp3 players with the tour already downloaded onto the player for rent or for sale. Regardless of the equipment delivery system, it is recommended that the park select a flexible of a system(s) and delivery of content as possible to maximize the number of potential visitors. For example, even if a handheld device purchased from an audio company is used, the audio files could be converted to a podcast downloadable from iTunes or as an audiocast downloadable from the park's website, or both.

- Use webcams to help visitors connect to the park's ongoing natural and cultural research program. Webcam access could be provided at the visitor center desk computer and on the web. Coordinate with the paleontology and resource management staff to set up a schedule of events that would be appropriate for visitor engagement. The future schedule might include interpretive access to research sites and/or park ranger facilitated discussions between visitors and scientists/resource managers working in the field or in the paleontology lab. For example, if the staff knows they will be working on a specific fossil preparation, designate an hour of that time to implement 2-way communications between the

person in the lab and the visitors watching from the visitor center.

- Work with the Resource Manager to develop interpretive media on the monument’s natural resources. Please see Appendix D for possible ideas, such as placing weed warning signs and boot cleaning stations at all trailheads for resource protection efforts.
- Seek funding to produce a new 15 – 20 minute park video. The current video while accurate is now dated. The video was produced before the construction of the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC) and its fossil museum-gallery. The focus of the audiovisual production should be on what the JODA fossil record reveals about earth history and evolution over the past 40 million years, along with a focus on the science of paleontology at JODA. Using the new TCPC artwork, this production should help the viewer envision what this place may have looked like millions of years ago, incorporate soundbites from explorers and paleontologists of the past, as well as soundbites from present-day subject matter experts and paleontologists. The current film title “A Place of Discovery” works well and conceptually this idea should be carried through to the next production.
- While the new TCPC facility is impressive, any focus on this facility in the future audiovisual production should be limited to how TCPC relates to the resource itself – for example: the park’s fossil collection, preparation and

preservation of fossil remains as well as what can be learned from these activities. While the only specific point in the legislative history of the park is to name this facility after paleontologist Thomas Condon, it is strongly recommended that the future AV script stay away from a history of this facility.

The funding request should include:

1. The production of audio description and captioning and clearances for sales and broadcast (including the web).
2. The proposed production budget should be developed to include higher production elements. While the artwork itself will work well and can be used as the basis for animation, animation will help to bring the story to life even more. Animation created specifically for the production can bring visual consistency to the program.
3. Because the geology itself is so dramatic and visitors cannot access some of the resource, the HFC media specialist highly



An interpreter conducting fossil laboratory work.

recommends incorporating an aerial shoot in addition to shooting done on the ground.

These production elements will add additional expenses to the project budget and should be considered when the park submits its funding request. In order to submit future project budgets that are as accurate as possible contact HFC's Cost Estimating Specialist.

### **Cant Ranch Exhibits**

- Use the Cant Ranch as a way to help visitors make the connection to the deep past by presenting these recent inhabitants on the long continuum of the park's resource and history.
- Evaluate the exhibits at the Cant Ranch for further development or revision. The Cant Ranch is not just about the ranching activities pursued, but the people themselves.
- Create companion videos and audio programs. An effective way to tell stories about people is to hear these stories from the Cant family and ranch employees themselves. In addition to the artifacts and text used in the current exhibit, add a more interactive component by using motion control on still images in combination with an interpretive narrative that includes soundbites from primary sources and a compelling music track. These techniques can further the dramatic effect and bring the story to life even more. Seek HFC assistance for a cost estimate to pursue this recommendation.

For example: there is a small exhibit in the hallway of the Cant Ranch on famous paleontologists that came to the region and visited the Cant family. While space is limited, evaluate this exhibit for further development or revision. Like the human history of the Cant Ranch itself, the history of the paleontologists who came to John Day may help those visitors make a personal connection that furthers their interest and understanding of the subject of paleontology via learning about the paleontologists connected to this place and what has inspired them to do the work that they do. Further development of this exhibit and associated oral histories should be approached collaboratively between the interpretation and paleontology staff. The end result will not only add to the park's collections and interpretation, but the process itself will help the staff learn from each other about the resource and their role in ongoing discovery, protection, and presentation of this resource to the public.

### **Personal Services**

- Work with paleontology staff to provide more scheduled fossil preparation demonstrations and ranger hikes, where part of the hike includes an opportunity to see the paleontologists working and interact with them about what they are discovering.

Note: see additional recommendations in the parkwide recommendations for "personal services".

## Clarno Unit Recommendations

It will be critical to coordinate any improvements made to facilities and/or expanded public access with a well thought out operational plan to protect park resources and provide effective wayfinding, orientation and information services.

### Short-term:

- Work with Sheep Rock Staff to maintain website accuracy to be sure that all information is current and important site information provided.
- Check in with the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) during the month of February when they are planning their programs and offer to help:
  - a. Assistance could be provided with formal education programming introducing students to NPS stewardship values, and/or scheduling informal interpretive mini-program opportunities while OMSI groups are on backcountry hikes -- a ranger could be scheduled to meet groups at a specific spot while out on back county patrol.
  - b. Inform OMSI that the park staff is available to provide interpretation for any group that wants a program.
  - c. Discuss advanced notification requirements/permits needed for backcountry hikes.
- Work with the Chief of Interpretation to provide year-round interpretation, trail patrol and visitor assistance at Clarno until new funds are received to provide a re-occurring unit specific seasonal position. This position requires an individual skilled/or willing to learn and perform a combination of interpretation and maintenance skills such as helping with roving backcountry trails, litter clean-up and basic site maintenance. This staff member would represent the interpretive division of the NPS at OMSI, use temporary housing at Hancock Field Station and rove backcountry trails, especially the Mammal Quarry trail and the Hancock Tree trail when opened to the public. This position could be filled in a variety of ways by:
  - Expanding the job function of a permanent interpretive staff member; this change would also enable this Sheep Rock staff member to have a broader park specific knowledge.
  - Rotating seasonals from the Sheep Rock Unit – where they could be stationed out at Hancock Field Station for a week at a time.
  - Adding another staff member at the Clarno Unit in a 6 month seasonal position over the next three years.

If this position is shared between units, it is highly recommended that the unit ranger participate in the recruitment, selection, and performance evaluation process with the Chief of Interpretation.

- Develop an interpretive “bag of tricks” – a backpack that contains “hands-on” interpretive materials for informal interpretive contacts. This pack will be especially helpful when rangers are available to come down to help from the Sheep Rock Unit – the interpretive tool is readily available for them and prepared by the site expert.
- Develop an inventory of what should be in the pack – reproduction fossils, photographs of features -- in some instances images across the seasons, historic photos (famous scientist in park or during the period of State of Oregon operation), binoculars, hand lenses, maps, handouts for visitors, etc. An inventory will guide easy replacement of “give- aways”. Keep all materials looking fresh to project a professional NPS image.
- Conduct yearly unit specific planning endeavors to address short-term facility, visitor services and interpretive media improvements. Discussions should include the following action items and target dates for completion:
  - Wayfinding to and within the Unit.
  - Placement of weed warning signs and boot cleaning stations at all trailheads.
  - Address improvements needed for waysides and bulletin boards including information, orientation, posting of regulations – no fossil collection, hunting, and other resource and visitor needs or interpretive issues that develop.
  - Determine where “no hunting signs” should be posted in addition to the regulations posted on bulletin boards.
  - Address visitor safety needs on the park website and in on-site interpretive media developed. (For example: appropriate footwear, the need to carry food, water and insect repellent, level of trail difficulty, etc.) And, determine what safety messages need to be posted on trails and at what specific locations.
  - Conduct roving ranger patrols to monitor current trail use by park partner OMSI and future trails use when the Clarno trail



The Clarno Unit's Hancock Field Station hosts 18,000 students annually.

facilities are improved and advertised as a park visitor use experience. Work with Superintendent, Chief Paleontologist and Park Resource Manager to further define trail/resource monitoring standards established during the park’s General Management Planning process. Establish a uniform standard to record, collect and report data.

Note: when the park approaches opening the Clarno trails to the general public, discussions should consider:

1. Should all visitors including school groups/ OPLI/ college groups, etc. meet at trail heads with a ranger where the minimum impact trail talk could be given to the group.
2. Should the park provide an on-site check in spot where groups can pre-register for hiking; and, post registration requirements on the park website.

The opening of the Clarno trails to the general public may not occur during the life of this plan due to additional funding needs to improve trail facilities.

Long term, 4 – 10 years:

### **Personal Services**

- Seek funding to provide year-round interpretation, trail patrol and visitor assistance at Clarno. In light of the desired level of subject matter knowledge required and the investment of training, consider recruiting for a term/subject to furlough position.
- Develop evening programs through partnerships. For example, Rose City Astronomers come to area 3-4 times a year and OMSI runs an astronomy camp. Explore partnership opportunities. If OMSI is already conducting this type of program, they may be willing to partner with the park on occasion and provide an astronomy program for the general public.
- Team up with Sheep Rock staff to provide parkwide curriculum based education programs. Future curriculum would define geology/paleo and botany/ ecology/natural history topics for specific grade levels. All permanent interpretive staff members would be trained to deliver this program; and, at the Clarno Unit, the ranger would meet groups at a trail head and lead hikes that emphasized the pre-determined curriculum requirements developed in partnership with the local school system.

## Interpretive Media/Visitor Facilities

- Develop an interpretation display case at the any future visitor contact station developed in the future with realistic replicas and information that is professionally complementary to the visitor center at the Sheep Rock Unit. The current ranger office may be converted to such a station.
- Before new trails are formalized discuss the naming of each trail facility. Do proposed names have an important history attached to the resource? Trail names can be interpretive paralleling the visitor experience provided. For example: why is a trail named the Geo Loop Trail when it actually connects the park's most significant paleontological resources?
- Utilize artwork and graphics created for the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center in all new interpretive media. This will help to improve visitor understanding regarding the exhibit dioramas depicting fossil assemblages at Clarno and their on-site Clarno experience; and, if Clarno is their first contact with the park, the images may prompt a future visit to the Sheep Rock Unit.
- Develop new trail map designs which include trail distances, degree of difficulty and trail names.
- Develop new waysides for current and future interpretive trails. A wayside exhibit project could be accomplished as a unit specific project in conjunction with formalizing existing trails;

or, as part of the recommended parkwide wayside replacement project.

- Participate in all future facility planning discussions to address visitor service and interpretive, and accessibility needs.
- Work with park management to review and update trail standards to monitor visitor impact.

## Partnerships

- Work with cooperating association to develop some unit specific interpretive souvenir and educational items – for differing interests and budgets (school children). Market availability on site through internet purchase through cooperating association and request association to market product to other local retailers.



Scientists at work: view of the Fossil Laboratory from the visitor center.

## Painted Hills Unit Recommendations

### Short-term:

#### Pre-visit and Arrival Experience

- Work with Sheep Rock Staff to maintain website accuracy to be sure that all information is current and important site information provided.
- Add to website commercial photography permit requirements and need for advanced notification at the Painted Hills Unit.
- Overlook Parking Area:
  1. Establish a new bulletin board at the Overlook Parking Area since this is the first park point of contact for many visitors. Provide unit orientation with a map showing park trails, picnic area, restrooms, etc. and include a description of visitor experience



A controlled burn at the Painted Hills Unit.

opportunities available.

Provide resource protection and visitor safety messages and include interpretive information about the two hiking experiences available from this location – the Carroll Rim Trail and the Overlook Trail.

2. Rent a universally accessible porta-jon and place strategically -- easily viewable so frequent park visitors on their way to either the Painted Cove Trail or the Leaf Hill Trail are aware of a nearby facility. Placement of the porta-jon should be sensitive to the viewshed. The addition of this much needed facility will address the problem of human waste at the overlook. Sign location of the picnic area and overlook porta-jon at the Painted Cove and Leaf Hill Trailheads.

#### Publications

- Implement paper color selection coding for each individual brochure produced in-house – to assist with internal need for ease of recognition and replacement.
- Emphasize in new Unigridd park brochure that bicycles are prohibited on trails.
- Eliminate brochures such as Painted Hills Overlook, Painted Hills View North from Carroll Rim, Painted Hills View south from Carroll Rim, Leaf Hill Studies – “The Present is a Key to the Past”. Replace publications with new waysides at appropriate locations.

## Staffing and Programs

- Expand staffing to provide 7-day coverage for interpretation, trail patrol, visitor assistance and special events, during the busy season. The Unit Ranger and the Chief of Interpretation need to collaborate how best to utilize existing interpretive positions at the Sheep Rock Unit to assist with operational needs at Painted Hills, until new funds are received to provide a re-occurring unit specific seasonal position.

This position is very similar to the Clarno Unit. It requires an individual skilled/or willing to learn and perform a combination of interpretation and maintenance skills such as helping with roving backcountry trails, litter clean-up and basic site maintenance. This position could be filled in a variety of ways by:

- Expanding the job function of a permanent interpretive staff member; this change would also enable this Sheep Rock staff member to have a broader park specific knowledge.
- Rotating seasonals from the Sheep Rock Unit – where they could be scheduled weekly to travel to the Painted Hills and assist. Or,
- Adding another staff member at the Painted Hills Unit in a 6 month seasonal position over the next three years.

If this position is shared between units, it is highly recommended that the unit ranger participate in

the recruitment, selection, and performance evaluation process with the Chief of Interpretation.

- Develop an interpretive “bag of tricks” – a backpack that contains “hands-on” interpretive materials for informal interpretive contacts. The pack will be especially helpful when rangers are available to come down to help from the Sheep Rock Unit – the interpretive tool is readily available for them and prepared by the site expert. Develop an inventory of what should be in the pack – reproduction fossils, photographs of features -- in some instances images across the seasons, historic photos (famous scientist in park or during the period of State of Oregon operation), binoculars, hand lenses, maps, handouts for visitors, etc. An inventory will guide easy replacement of “give- aways”. Keep all materials looking fresh to project a professional NPS image.

When the ranger is working in the kiosk and can greet visitors – if the materials are pulled together in a pack, then they are easily available – the staff members can just grab the pack and go.

- Establish a special event promoting a “photo-shoot day for wildflowers”. Have additional staff on hand to provide interpretation and accompany photographers into sensitive areas. Brainstorm what other activities might make this kind of event attractive for a diverse number of visitors and how partners might assist with this undertaking. And,

- Determine if there are other topics across the seasons that might be utilized to serve as the focus for other special programs or events at the unit. Offer new events at times when the Painted Hills Unit can draw on the strengths of the parkwide staff (rangers, scientists and maintenance) and park partners. Build these events into a parkwide activity calendar for the general public. An example could be the riparian restoration project along Bridge Creek. Active work on this project occurs at various times throughout the year, especially during the spring when tree cuttings are planted.

### Annual Planning

- Conduct yearly, an on-site, unit specific planning endeavor with the Chief of Interpretation and other key staff members. This meeting would address short-term facility, visitor services, staffing and interpretive media improvements needed. Discussions should include action items and target dates for completion. Use staff planning meeting to train, update and build consensus regarding the direction of interpretation, education and visitor services based on parkwide goals. Set a time and date for this meeting that works well for all participants. Conducting unit meetings to discuss interpretation and visitor services might be a useful step to prepare for the park's annual strategic planning meetings. Here are some topics to guide the process:
  1. Begin with assessing wayfinding and visitor assistance needs outside and within the unit.
  2. Discuss materials, media or facilities that need to be replaced due to damage or wear
  3. Address:
    - New information – studies completed and how to integrate into existing programs and media.
    - Identify “new” resource issues/problems, visitor needs, etc.
    - Upcoming projects. Depending on the year, topics could be facility driven through the receipt of project money; or, might be programmatically driven through partner opportunities or an in-house agreement to move forward with the development of a new interpretive program or event.
    - Annual interpretive program and special events, etc
    - Staffing needs
    - Security of donations box
    - Ongoing accessibility needs/upcoming improvements
    - Other

Long-term recommendations:

- Seek funding to provide year-round interpretation, trail patrol and visitor assistance at Painted Hills. In light of the desired level of subject matter knowledge required and the investment of training, consider recruiting for a term/subject to furlough position.
  - Team up with Sheep Rock and Clarno staff to define and establish a parkwide curriculum based education program. Future curriculum would define geology/paleo and botany/ecology/natural history topics for specific grade levels. All permanent interpretive staff members would be trained to deliver this program; and, at the Painted Hills Unit, the ranger would meet groups at a trail head and lead hikes that emphasized the pre-determined curriculum requirements developed in partnership with the local school system.
  - Develop a prioritized list of Painted Hills Unit media development and/or replacement projects by fiscal year.
  - Develop an interpretation display case at the visitor contact station with realistic replicas and information that is professionally complementary to the visitor center at the Sheep Rock Unit.
  - Develop some unit specific interpretive souvenir and educational items – for differing interests and budgets (school children). Market availability on site through internet purchase through cooperating association and request association to market product to other local retailers.
  - Work with park resource manager, superintendent and chief of interpretation on a trail development plan. There is a new vehicle turn-around at Red Hill. This is an ideal area for another trail-head and/or overlook for photography. As it is, this area has no development, but lots of potential. A proposed loop trail would help the visitors understand the ash/paleosol layers that are in this area. It is also an area that has potential throughout the seasons for interpretation and photography.
- There is also an old 2.5 mile trail that should be evaluated for future visitor use and development. (This facility is available only by reservation to groups accompanied by a ranger; a policy decision due to potential resource impairment if visitors go off route.)
- Work with partners to plan and develop a camping area to serve Painted Hills Unit visitors.
  - Place weed warning signs and boot cleaning stations at all trailheads to help protect resources.
  - Develop interpretive media such as wayside signs explaining the multi-agency riparian restoration project along Bridge Creek.

# APPENDICES

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## Appendix A: Enabling Legislation

**Legislation** (text sections not referring to JODA have been culled out of the Act)

P.L. 93-486, October 26, 1974

P.L. 95-625, November 10, 1978

**Public Law 93-486**

93rd Congress, H. R. 13157

October 26, 1974

### An Act

To provide for the establishment of the Clara Barton National Historic Site, Maryland ; **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Oregon** ; Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site, North Dakota ; Springfield Armory National Historic Site, Massachusetts ; Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Alabama ; Martin Van Buren National Historic Site, New York ; and Sewall-Belmont House National Historic Site, Washington, District of Columbia ; and for other purposes.

88 STAT. 1461

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### TITLE I

Historic sites  
and national  
monument.  
Establishment.

Sec. 101. (a) Unless otherwise provided hereafter, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is authorized to acquire by purchase with donated or appropriated funds, donation, exchange, or by transfer from another Federal agency such lands and interests in lands as hereafter provided for establishment as units of the national park system as follows:

Land  
acquisition.

... (2) for establishment as the **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**, Oregon, those lands depicted on the map entitled “Boundary Map, **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**”, numbered NM-JDFB-20,014-A and dated June 1971: *Provided*, That the national monument shall not be established unless and until the State of Oregon donates or agrees to donate the Thomas Condon-John Day Fossil Beds, Clarno, and Painted Hills State Parks : *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall not acquire a fee title interest to more than one thousand acres of privately owned lands except by donation or exchange : *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall designate the principal visitor center as the “Thomas Condon Visitor Center”;

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Oregon. 16 USC 431 note. Thomas Condon Visitor Center, designation.

... Sec. 104. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, not to exceed, however, the following:

(b) **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**, \$400,000 for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands and \$4,435,200 for development ;

... TITLE II  
 ... *Excerpted from*  
**Public Law 95-625**  
**November 10, 1978**

88 STAT. 1463

(11) **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**, Oregon : To add approximately one thousand four hundred and eleven acres, and to delete approximately one thousand six hundred and twenty acres as generally depicted on the map entitled “Boundary Map, **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**, Oregon”, numbered 177-30,000-B, and dated May 1978: \$3,500,000. The Act of October 26, 1974 (88 Stat. 1461), which designates the **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument** is amended by deleting the second proviso of section 101(a) (2). Furthermore, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the Secretary may, if he determines that to do so will not have a substantial adverse effect on the preservation of the fossil and other resources within the remainder of the monument, convey approximately sixty acres acquired by the United States for purposes of the monument in exchange for non-Federal lands within the boundaries of the monument, and, effective upon such conveyance, the boundaries of the monument are hereby revised to exclude the lands conveyed.

## Appendix B: John Day Fossil Beds National Monument - Annual Servicewide Interpretive Report

	FY- 2002	FY-2003	FY-2004	FY-2005	FY-2006	FY-2007	FY-2008
James Cant Ranch VC & Museum Visitation	24,009	18,786	Museum 4,123	4,657	New Formula 7,670	6,880	6,577
TCPC – Thomas Condon Visitor Center Visitation	N/A	N/A	Open Dec 18,090	25,205	25,404	26,995	25,238
TCPC & House Coverage FTE		N/A	1.68	2.30	2.80	2.62	2.90
Painted Hills Unit Visitation	32,990	30,365	29,977	28,532	26,123	30,435	23,212
Clarno Unit Visitation (not OMSI)	13,385	17,057	13,213	17,518	14,565	15,115	14,182
Education Programs Conducted	72	60	70	82	54	75	55
Education Program Contacts	1,578	1,452	1,786	2,044	1,670	2,141	1,306
Education Program FTE	.08	.06	.05	.08	.04	.05	.03
Education Kit/Film Loans	67	50	69	63	69	46	48
Education Kit/Film Contacts	3,388	2,036	4,482	3,798	4,359	3,854	3,371
Education Kit/Film Loan FTE	.02	.02	.01	.01	.02	.02	.02
Formal Interpretation Programs	126	101	65	55	76	97	96
Formal Interpretation Contacts	1,466	1,042	655	563	882	1,130	1,264
Formal Interpretation FTE	.06	.06	.05	.06	.05	.05	.05
Informal Talks Given	2,373	1,871	2,926	3,016	2,851	2,747	3,230
Informal Interpretation Contacts	6,802	5,297	8,736	7,857	8,281	12,213	12,111
Informal Interpretation FTE	.21	.19	.30	.14	.23	.26	.28
Demonstrations Offered	14	6	0	0	1	0	0
Demonstration Contacts	273	90	0	0	30	0	0
Demonstration FTE	.02	.01	0	0	.00	0	0
Special Events	4	6	0	1	0	0	0
Special Events Contacts	4,200	8,200	0	900	0	0	0
Special Events FTE	.03	.04	0	.13	0	0	0
New Junior Park Rangers, etc.	70	99	48	65	87	167	184
Community Programs Done	44	42	56	51	31	23	51
Community Program Contacts	1,183	1,801	2,132	2,603	544	810	906
Community Program FTE	.06	.05	.06	.05	.03	.02	.04
Park Website FTE	.02	.04	.07	.20	.20	.15	.01
Park AV Contacts (films, etc.)	9,155	6,805	8,865	10,724	10,875	10,834	12,184
Park AV FTE	.08	.06	.07	.09	.06	.06	.08

	FY- 2002	FY-2003	FY-2004	FY-2005	FY-2006	FY-2007	FY-2008
<b>Park Publications Contacts</b>	55,885	48,400	36,000	48,150	41,600	47,325	45,900
<b>Park Publications FTE</b>	.04	.04	.01	.04	.05	.06	.08
<b>Total Interpretive FTE</b>	3.18	3.98	4.17	3.80	3.45	3.59	3.90
<b>Interpretive Budget (ONPS only)</b>	\$141,000	\$218,000	\$218,000	\$226,000	\$223,416	\$231,000	\$241,000 +\$ 39,000 Centennial
<b>Interpretive Fee Funds Spent</b>	\$1,000	0	0	4,000 ECM	10,200 ECM	0	1,200 ECM
<b>Total ONPS Interp. Staff Cost</b>	\$69,131	\$67,712	\$92,966	\$127,924	\$147,073	\$132,507	\$128,213
<b>Total Other Staff Cost</b>		\$13,847	\$9,447	\$36,172	\$53,426	\$38,754	\$36,551

Note: The first required Servicewide Interpretive Report form (SIR) was submitted FY-1999, NPS-wide.

Note: New program development and research, including review and updates of old programs, are generally not included in FTE above. Supervision and management is not included in the FTE above. FTE includes staff other than interpretive division staff.

## Appendix C: I&VS Program Breakdown by Park Unit Staff - FY 2005 through 2008

(data taken from the Government Performance Results Act, JODA visitor data sheets)

Number of Programs Given - Broken out by Fiscal Years 2005 - 2008:

Program Type	Sheep Rock Staff*	Clarno Staff**	Painted Hills Staff**
<b>Formal (scheduled – in the park)</b>	43 (2005) 75 (2006) 97 (2007) 96 (2008)	3 (2005) 1 (2006) 0 (2007) 1 (2008)	9 (2005) 0 (2006) 0 (2007) 0 (2008)
<b>Informal (impromptu – in the park)</b>	2,912 (2005) 2,720 (2006) 2,506 (2007) 2,965 (2008)	103 131 171 188	1 0 70 77
<b>Education (on and off site)</b>	53 (2005) 46 (2006) 51 (2007) 41 (2008)	29 8 21 14	0 0 3 0
<b>Community (offsite)</b>	47 (2005) 28 (2006) 23 (2007) 46 (2008)	2 2 0 5	2 0 0 0

\* Data is not kept on the programs given by the paleontology staff.

\*\* Generally staff in these two units were on duty March through October, these four years. These staff members were not part of the I&VS division.

### JODA Visitation Statistics:

FY-2005 Visitation = 125,326 (Painted Hills = 28,532 / Clarno = 34,863 \*\*\*)  
 FY-2006 Visitation = 119,509 (PHU = 26,123 / CU = 28,119)  
 FY-2007 Visitation = 126,664 (PHU = 30,435 / CU = 27,456)  
 FY-2008 Visitation = 113,180 (PHU = 23,212 / CU = 26,219)

\*\*\* includes the OMSI-Hancock Field Station camp data in the Clarno Unit stats

## Appendix D: Natural and Cultural Resource Projects, Studies and Ideas for Potential Interpretive Projects

Please note: in addition to paleontology resources, the park's 14,000 acres include abundant natural and cultural resources. The park Resource Manager attended the August 2008 Long-Range Interpretive Planning Workshop; however, due to the limited time available, the staff was unable to scope out or define in detail how interpretation might help to get out resource information beyond paleontology.

The park interpretive staff, when at optimum levels, will strive to use 33% of its resources to focus on park topics not related to the park paleontology story, such as natural resources and cultural resources. This appendix summarizes the most important aspects of natural and cultural resource program, and lists the most recent projects and research conducted. The final section of the appendix includes a few brainstorming ideas of potential ways the interpretive staff could share park specific information with the general public.

The Upper Columbia Basin Inventory and Monitoring Network is a primary source for these resource studies on the park. The Resource Manager can help in acquiring these documents,

### Natural Resources

#### Species Inventories

- A vertebrate inventory was completed in 2003.
- A plant inventory was completed in 1977.
- Christmas bird count data has been collected since 2000.
- A butterfly and moth inventory was completed in 2004.
- A rare and non-native plant inventory at Painted Hills was completed in 2008.
- A wetlands inventory will be completed in 2009.

#### Monitoring Programs

The Upper Columbia Basin Inventory and Monitoring Network has begun monitoring park ecosystems to better understand their dynamic nature and condition and to provide reference points for comparisons with other, altered environments. The UCBN recognizes the need to raise overall awareness about their program and share results. Effective communication and outreach to all audiences is detailed in their Science Communication Plan, including:

- Bat monitoring data has been collected over the past 3-4 years.
- Sagebrush/steppe monitoring began in 2008.
- Future monitoring efforts will focus on non-native plants, water quality, land cover and use, and riparian vegetation/stream morphology.

#### Previous Natural Resource Report/Studies

- Fire Effects on Vegetation
- Coyotes and Mule Deer
- Raptors

- Vegetation Management
- Ozone Impacts on Vegetation
- Water Quality
- Rare Plants

### Resource Management Projects

- Noxious Weed Control

The control of noxious weeds has occurred within the park for several years. Park staff uses an integrated pest management approach to control noxious weeds by using a combination of herbicides, manual removal, and biological control agents. The project period is April through early September, annually.

- Riparian Restoration

The John Day River and tributaries provide habitat for threatened steelhead trout. In order to increase steelhead populations, native trees have been planted along the John Day River. At the Painted Hills Unit, a multi-agency riparian restoration project began in 2008 to restore riparian (river) habitat and stream dynamics within the Bridge Creek watershed. This is a long-term project that will expand out of the park and into Bureau of Land Management and private land.

- Former Agricultural Fields Restoration

For the past few years, park staff has worked to restore former agricultural fields by converting them from nearly 100% weeds to native plant species.

## **Cultural Resources**

### Archeological Surveys

In the mid 1990s as well as 2005-06, archeological surveys were conducted in all three units by staff from Mt. Rainier and Fort Vancouver. One product of these surveys is a report titled, "Environment, Prehistory and Archaeology of John Day Fossil Beds NM." A few artifacts were collected and incorporated into the park's museum collection.

### Cant Ranch Landscape Inventory and Report

- The Cant Ranch Cultural Landscape Report was completed in 1996.
- The Cant Ranch Cultural Landscape Inventory will be completed in 2009.

## **Potential Future Interpretive Projects**

### Exhibits/displays

- Either of the restoration projects or noxious weed control could be interpreted in the temporary display cases or on a flat wall panel in the lobby of the visitor center.
- The archeological survey could be interpreted in a display case in the Cant Ranch house.

### Brochures:

- The Upper Columbia Basin Inventory and Monitoring Network has prepared one-page fact sheets on each of their monitoring programs. The fact sheets were written for public dissemination.
- Create species checklists/handouts on park wildlife. Work with Resource Manager to develop; and, determine where distribution within the park and in the local area might work best. Post information on park website too.
- Since noxious weeds are such a problem, the Resource Manager could work with the interpretive staff to develop a brochure identifying the most problematic weeds, their impact on the environment, and a “What You Can Do” list of suggestions would be helpful to local residents; and, possibly of interest to other park visitors. There are many examples of weed brochures available from other federal, state, and county agencies. Grant County had one, but it's out of print at this time.

Note: any publication developed can also be posted on the park website.

### Waysides Topics and Locations

- A wayside on the riparian restoration project at Painted Hills could be placed in the Painted Hills picnic area.
- A wayside for the riparian restoration along the John Day River could be placed along the River Trail behind the Cant Ranch house.

### Small signs

- Place weed warning signs and boot cleaning stations at all trailheads.
- Create plant identification signs along the sidewalk leading to the visitor center from the parking lot.

### Posters

Utilize Posters in the Visitor Center and on bulletin boards at all units to raise resource issues with park visitors. The Network monitoring program has the capability of producing posters. The Network’s poster production capability presents a good opportunity for the interpretive staff and the resource manager to collaborate on future projects. Topics might include: Christmas bird count program, the Network’s monitoring program, riparian restoration projects, and the noxious weed control program.

### Park Website

Update park website to include current resource management research and project information. Provide a link to the Upper Columbia Basin Network’s website.

### Other Ideas

- Create a “Touch Table” in the visitor center - containing antlers, feathers, bird nests and other wildlife indicators, as appropriate, documented, and allowed by law. Develop a companion training/information guide to insure the staff and volunteers convey the desired information the park would like to share with visitors.

- Develop an interactive computer web activity on park species identification for use in the visitor center or by Internet visitors. Future web activities might include
  - species identification,
  - the bat study to include voice prints and audible recordings,
  - a tie in to our weather station
- Education room: there are a lot of possibilities here on any environmental awareness subject. Use coloring sheets, puzzles, animal track ink stamps (kind of messy though), etc.
- Use the park web cameras to give visitors a close-up look at species that are sometimes hard to see. For example: there is one raptor nest located in a tree just down the highway from the visitor center or there are swallow nests at the maintenance facility and the visitor center.
- Joint projects: during the development of future resource management research or field projects collaborate with the Chief of Interpretation to create (as part of the funding request) end products that are part of the contract deliverable. For example: request that at the end of the project the researcher delivers a presentation(s); this program might be developed as an internal training session for interpreters; and/or a program for the general public.
- Another idea would be to pick a topic yearly to interpret; focus staff efforts and create multiple products. For example since noxious weeds are a high priority problem. The park might consider focusing on this topic for a year – developing a poster, creating a “how to help” brochure, post information on the web and develop a program with the resource manager during the season where the problem is easily observed – or have the Resource Manager be a featured speaker at one of the summer weekly campfire programs. Then the next year move onto another topic and approach from multiple interpretive angles (personal services, media and partners).

## Appendix E: Maximizing Visitor Experience to Facilitate Visitor Understanding and Appreciation for Fossil Resources and the Park Paleontology Research Program

An important tenet of interpretive excellence deals with scholarship -- whether or not the information conveyed in interpretive programs and media is based on the most current research. This principle is frequently extended to include:

1. Whether or not interested visitors have access to park staff members that are the subject matter specialists;
2. Visitor/scholar access to park research and/or the actual focus of the study (a specimen or artifact); and
3. The role and relationship between the park science/research/resource management program and interpretation – the operation that serves as the park’s primary communications and education branch with the general public.

During the August 2008 workshop, the staff at JODA discussed: in what ways can the park interpretive staff and the park paleontology staff work together to improve the visitor experience, visitor understanding and visitor support for fossil resources and the park paleontology research program.

### Concepts and brainstorming ideas to remember for future inter-divisional program planning:

- I. **Interpreters require in depth resource information and training in order to effectively fill the role as the park’s primary communications branch.** Training is a critical park investment that reaps long term rewards. For park management, personal services/the interpretive staff is the most flexible and immediate means to address park issues requiring public understanding and support; and, in the instance when a park’s orientation film, exhibit or publication is not easily understood – for whatever reason – the interpretive staff serves as the first responder to a visitor’s question or confusion. They provide an appropriate response that ideally facilitates visitor understanding and support. The following areas are suggestions made by workshop participants to expand and improve training opportunities:
  - Establish cross-training opportunities at Thomas Condon Paleontology Center (TCPC): (1) arranged with the paleontology staff, schedule interpreters to have “tours of duty” in lab/collections. Arrange to have the paleo staff to work at the VC desk to see what visitors are interested in, and what kinds of questions they are asking. (2) Conduct formal joint training sessions. For example: invite the paleontology staff to participate in park conducted Interpretive Program Development training modules. This might help to foster an understanding of NPS interpretive approaches used in interpretive media and ranger conducted programs. (3) In some instances inviting partners to join these training opportunities might be very helpful too.
  - Assign the interpretive staff to shadow the paleo staff when they are out in the field conducting surveys and field work. This opportunity will provide the interpretive staff with greater understanding and insights. The interpretive staff can better engage the public with their own resource experiences and they can share these experiences in future interpretive programs and informal interpretive conversations with park visitors.

- Work with the Chief Paleontologist to select an interpretive staff member, demonstrating skills and interest, to be trained in fossil preparation skills. A trained interpreter might facilitate programs between the visitor center lobby and paleontologist working in the lab – or even staff the lab for the viewing public during a period they were scheduled to create fossil replicas for interpretive programs and exhibits. (This concept of training an interpreter to assist a subject matter specialist/professional, and then conduct a related interpretive program could also be carried over to other projects and park professions such as field resource management projects.)
- Work with the Chief Paleontologist to select an interpretive staff member, demonstrating skills and interest, to be trained to help with collections management. Insights and experiences gained could be incorporated into future interpretive programs and informal interpretive conversations with park visitors.
- Conduct monthly paleontology/interpretation training brown-bag lunches where the interpretive and paleontology staff gathers together to learn and share informally.
- Train/work with the interpretive staff to develop programs “in the field”, so the interpretive staff can bring groups to where the paleo staff is working at a fossil site as part of a program hike.

**II. While interpretation communicates with the public most frequently; other staff also participate in the communications role.** In some parks the subject matter expert is also an interpretive park ranger. However, this is become increasingly rare with ongoing park/occupational work series specialization. Most often the subject matter expert (SME) works behind the scenes. In the latter example, the SME is brought into the interpretive program through scheduling as a featured speaker; or, as a trainer working with staff and volunteers. The following areas are suggestions made by workshop participants to bring the experts into the interpretive program and/or give visitors the opportunity to meet park paleontologists:

- Set up an advertised program schedule: look at the paleontology program schedule for the calendar year and determine where and how the interpretive staff might facilitate public access to meet the paleontologist to learn about park fossil resources. Future programs might include: bringing groups out to a field site; or scheduling a meet/watch/and talk with the paleontologist preparing a specimen at TCPC.
- Interpretation and paleontology staff can create joint programs. For example: the paleo staff can invite visiting scientists to present a program to the public, while the interpretive staff takes the lead in the promotion and production of the event.
- Explore the possibility of conducting paleo staff led museum tours.
- Create an interp-paleo bulletin and news articles for visitors. Have interpretive staff write and consult with a paleo staff member for the science review. And visa versa – pursue a cooperative team approach. Have joint peer reviews of all new materials intended for the visitor so there is internal dialogue first to enhance visitor understanding and connections.

### III. Other opportunities/program needs

- Request the Chief of Interpretation to participate in paleontology operational management document planning sessions when the stated objectives directly relate or affect the visitor experience. For example: how best to make the park's fossil collection available to the public in educational and interpretive ways, so that the (publicly owned) collection is not completely closed, yet the specimens are properly safeguarded.
- Address the education collection – many labels are missing or unreadable (worn out).
- Develop a touch cart.
- Develop a “fossil of the month,” or “featured fossil” exhibit, perhaps media releases.

## Appendix F: The Park Implementation Plan

### First Steps: Recommended Action Items (years 1 – 3)

- Have the James Cant Ranch trails, including barn trail, open seven days a week during peak visitation seasons.
- Develop a joint agency rackcard of basic regulations available to the public. Develop an area map, rules, and regulations of regional agencies. Promote the “Leave No Trace” program for our region.
- Begin developing ideas for a new park movie to be produced before the NPS centennial (start production process to garner funding).
- Improve training for interpretive staff, for seasonal staff training, and for interdisciplinary staff training; with a summative evaluation.
- Focus on improving exhibits where needed, develop an audio tour of the exhibit area, and re-evaluate the 1st impressions made when people enter the patio, foyer, and lobby of the TCPC.
- Accessibility of exhibits, displays, and programs need to be improved to meet standards set by law; considering such methods as an assistive listening system, large print, audio description, accessibility equipment, auto-door, etc.
- Improve the in-park and local signage directing people to the park, especially in the Clarno Unit area.
- Enhance and develop new Educational Programs for our students. Set up an exploratory group for possible video conferencing for the local Education Service District (ESD).
- Develop a guidebook, a primary document, focusing on JODA (at least) its primary story.
- Conducted by all park staff, have group meetings, brown bagging it, perhaps twice per month. I&VS staff should meet monthly, or more, as a group with supervisors and managers.
- Develop a creative housing solution, so seasonal staff and volunteers have some place to reside in the community when working at JODA. Housing is very scarce locally.
- Provide more visitor service staff at the Painted Hills and Clarno Units, perhaps through hiring, volunteers, partners, and creative scheduling.
- Improve outreach public relations and education program outreach (via news releases, website, webquest, networking, partnerships, etc.).
- Emphasize the natural resources, natural history, story more in our over-all interpretation.

### 2nd Steps: Recommended Action Items (years 4-7)

- The actual production of new park movie would be completed before 2016, the NPS centennial, and publically debuted.
- Implement video conferencing for broadcasting education programs
- As new areas in the Clarno Unit are being developed for study and public education, we should develop staffing (i.e. partners volunteers, etc) for protection and interpretation of such sites as the Clarno Unit mammal quarry, the Hancock Tree, and other resources. These sites should be made as accessible as possible, in regards to ADAAG standards.
- After a developmental period, institute some new education programs, perhaps 3-4 new, age-specific programs (two science, 1 cultural, 1 natural), and curriculum-based.
- Develop an audio tour, even virtual-audio tour, throughout park resources.
- Work to establish a college credit course, or courses, on our park story, and develop an internship programs with area schools of various levels.
- Interpretation and paleontology: produce an exhibit on early paleontologists and their activities, to be displayed at the Cant Ranch, even go on tour.
- Review wayside exhibit needs parkwide. Develop a short-term rehabilitation strategy. Create a PMIS project submittal for planning and replacement of waysides and bulletin boards parkwide.
- Create more virtual paleontology on web, especially on our website, for the public who visits us from afar.

### 3rd Steps: Recommended Action Items (years 7-10)

- With visitor facilities being developed on newly acquired lands at the Clarno Unit, the Hancock Tree should be made more accessible to the public, meeting ADAAG standards were possible, and adequate interpretation provided at these new sites.

## Appendix G: Future Education Program Ideas for John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

This appendix includes program ideas discussed during the August 2008 workshop that could be useful in future planning endeavors.

**In what ways can JODA get regional schools and colleges to use park and partner resources more often and more effectively, whether through on-site visits or outreach?**

- The park has potential future educational/interpretive partners due to established working relationships on other projects. The paleontology staff frequently hosts scientists, university field trips
- An Oregon State University field camp is located just east of Mitchell.
- There may be a future partner opportunity between USFS through Title III funds to develop programs with partners to use resources and teach about area.
- Work with county school system to develop an honors science class – and use OPLI and OMSI as an education partner in this endeavor.
- Student Employment ( college students)
- STEP program
- Develop a Paleo Lab certification course for future staff/volunteers
- Consider creating a different type of internship where course is paid for by student to gain training – similar to what colleges do
- Expand the successful Jr. Ranger program
- Develop a ranger guided tour for student groups timed with a time the Paleo team is typically out in the field. Kids could meet the scientists, see the work area; however, most of the time spent by kids would be with the ranger out in the park. This approach may be more cost-effective, and would need to consider site security.
- Partner with OMSI school groups, integrate a 1 hr ranger led program @ Hancock
- Consider assigning a seasonal ranger to spend the night at Hancock and work with student groups for a longer time period.
- Send interpretive staff to schools for outreach programs in Pendleton and Monument
- “School to Work Programs” are not just for college kids
- JODA received money to create a traveling school exhibit on the fossil rush & gold rush. We will need to develop a good marketing plan. (Consider developing a Vtel companion program that teachers could sign up for – since this is a project already underway. This would provide the park with an opportunity to market test your technology.)
- Develop a park or region specific weekend course
- Eastern Oregon – work with road log and US central Oregon; Central Oregon—(no comments recorded); Western Oregon- Link up with Hancock
- Place fossil kits at every ESD office with one teacher that is trained to take around to other schools
- Work with regional educators to provide an “advanced placement” high school/college bound course related to the park’s features. The course would have to meet local curriculum standards but does not have to focus exclusively on paleontology -- that way you could draw from the entire professional JODA staff

## Interpretive Opportunities and Challenges

### **A. How best should the park expand programming, if at all?**

- If the park is considering expanding the current program, it is important to connect this region to the broader national perspective – many people come from cities and it’s hard to relate to this region.
- As resources and funds are not unlimited, an analysis of cost and educational effectiveness on current programs would help determine what programs may need to be dropped in order to allow new programs.

### **B. The park needs to seek more educational program presentation funds.**

- Possibilities here include charging for certain programs given, allowed in some cases, and seeking specific grants for one time programs.

### **C. Bringing people here is a PROBLEM. Why?**

- ! No place for large groups to stay! – Gyms
- Costs = motels/food

*Potential solution:* keep students at school and put rangers/scientists on VTEL

### **D. If we chose to interpret via the Internet and webcasting, how would an interpreter maintain student interest without an actual person in the classroom?**

*Potential solutions:*

- a. Develop teaching modules on a topic that are one hour in length and broken into four- 15 minute teaching segments when using VTEL
- b. Teach the teachers and let teachers teach at the schools
- c. Create kits of fossils that we can replicate and sell
- d. Use fossil kits an education component with VTEL (with permission from the Smithsonian) encourage students to handle objects during VTEL session
- e. Prepare interactive game that goes into kit or could be sold/loaned as a product. The on-line game could include measuring fossil “on line,” drawing fossil (interactive-)

### **E. What are the challenges working with colleges/universities that we need to consider, if we expand our program to reach this student level?**

- Some colleges come with own program and do not need ranger/or Paleo professional to talk with them
- Other colleges/groups not aware of what we have to offer
- Sometimes we need to work to reach out an bridge the academic cultural mindset that : “we do our own thing”

### **F. What about other age appropriate educational opportunities?**

- High School Students = internships, many school districts have community service requirements now

- Oregon Episcopal school has students who would like to work with the park staff
- Consider job shadowing for one day
- For the past 16 years – several local counties have school to work programs

#### G. What about using more interns in the Paleo –lab?

- What it takes: more resources
- Time to teach in lab [TRAINING] can be an issue – you have to look at costs/benefits; how much time will interns give? And, this is actually true for all park disciplines looking at the cost/benefit ratio
- The Paleontology Program has an active internship program; participants are interviewed and selected on a case by case basis
- An intern must be 18 to work in the Field Museum in Chicago. *(The park’s Chief Paleontologist indicated that for the JODA lab this is a good standard to maintain.)*

#### H. What are the biggest local disconnects?

- Local resources overlooked
- Teachers burned out on existing material
- Train teachers differently
- Include Field techniques
- Teachers feel threatened by overwhelming resources and science

#### I. How do we explore the value and effectiveness of curriculum based education programs and general ranger-led educational programs for students?

Interpretive challenge: the park staff has a problem with teachers not meeting park program requirements. For example: some teachers do not complete the program evaluation; or worse, they do not use the park provided pre-visit materials with students before arriving in the park.

- Park staff needs to define what’s essential for the teacher to know/do before they come. This information should be conveyed in the cover letter to the teacher.
- Consider sending a ranger/staff to classroom before the group comes to the park to build interest and cooperation
- Evaluations: if you have not received a teacher evaluation, send the evaluation with the program application during registration for the next school year. Don’t register the school group again before you receive the evaluation.
- Provide fun and rewarding workshops for teachers. Show them how to do the activity.
- Send tour evaluation with application for next year program. Reward for good behavior – give a small token of appreciation after evaluation is received.
- In the end it’s the teacher that has to adapt to the lesson plan. Ask teachers for ideas to improve program when things aren’t working.
- Identify your audience (schools/counties) needs and requirements and work to develop new NPS programs with teachers
- Lesson learned: improve “hands-on” items used in the program; and, interpret using the “student inquiry approach”: by having students answer their own questions (what do you know, want to know and have learned).
- Teachers look to NPS for expertise – remember this is a long-term relationship you’re developing.

- You have to teach the teacher. Teachers are learning too. It may take them several years to master the pre/post visit teaching program elements.
- If the program is an “add-on” for the teacher – it wouldn’t be used. The NPS program needs to be integrated into the classroom and respond to specific classroom/teacher curriculum needs.
- As an example, at Golden Gate National Recreational Area they:
- Teach the teachers...
- Promote the park through providing teacher training – including teachers in training (for college credit in education)
- Connecting kids/students to land
- Always remember – the teacher may be a poor role model – you’re doing the program for the students. So don’t take any personal frustrations out on the kids. Assess student knowledge needs quickly and change level of program accordingly.

#### J. What are other resources to consider?

- Operation Outreach: a literacy program for kids on the environment, great reading program focused on pre-school through 6th graders.
- Leave No Trace training - NPS connections with Pacific West Region and lots of free stuff, ties directly with leaving things in place with all the principles
- Project Archaeology training - easily translated to park paleontology themes. Includes an educators trunk too
- Project WILD, Project WET, Project WILD Aquatic, Project WILD Flying and a host of others training
- Partner with Oregon Small Schools Institute offered in the summer
- Partner with OPLI regarding DVD – geological/Paleo history of Oregon.
- Ongoing consultation with Servicewide NPS staff involved with developing park education programs.
- Continue to work with education specialists from Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Whitman Mission National Historic Site who assisted with the development of this LRIP.

## Appendix H: The Early Years of JODA Interpretation (1970s-1980s)

Date: 09/18/2001  
Sender: Kim Sikoryak (former JODA Interpretive Specialist)  
Subject: My recollections of the early years of JODA interpretive programs

During the first few years, interpretive services centered on the visitor center and at trailheads and “Camp Hancock,” with the occasional presentation off site at schools. Contacts were very informal at first. Eventually, the returning seasonal interpreters (myself included), became familiar enough with the actual resources at JODA and the state of knowledge regarding tertiary vertebrate paleontology that informal contact essentially became unscheduled, spontaneous thematic talks. Attempts were made several years in a row to schedule regular short interpretive talks on the back or side lawn of the Cant Ranch, but visitor flow was so irregular that such a formalized schedule was not an efficient way to reach visitors. Interpreters began to stash small fragmentary remains behind the information counter, in vehicles, even in their pockets, so that there were always some tangible resources to display when chance provided the opportunity for a true interpretive event, rather than just a “howdy” informational contact with the visiting public.

When staffing allowed, we would “rove” the VC lawn, up to Sheep Rock Overlook via a connecting trail from the south lawn, and the bunkhouse when that was outfitted as a display room. Dale Schmidt, when he was stationed at Fossil, presented many short programs to the Camp Hancock campers, including evening programs. Some of these were very general in nature, and many focused on the National Park System and Service rather than on JODA specifically.

The Fossil-based staff and Sheep Rock-based staff usually got out to Painted Hills once a week or so, to look around and contact any visitors that chance put in their way. This situation changed significantly when the first seasonal quarters trailer went in at Painted Hills. Then, visitor contact became much more frequent there, though that too was almost always unscheduled, informal contacts.

During the earliest years, we contended with school groups that were in the habit of coming out to the fossil deposits and “digging fossils” as a part-science/part-recreational activity. These forays were primarily led by teachers who had a personal interest in fossil collecting. Though collecting was illegal even during the years that JODA lands were state parks, it was a true challenge to change this behavior. Eventually, this situation eased by repeated contact with teachers and principals, and the retirement of some of the most recalcitrant teachers. Offering guided walks as interpretive activities helped turn this tide. Most teachers without a personal passion for collecting were happy for the services of an interpreter who could provide context to the activity of walking into the beds. These walks averaged about an hour. As time went by, interpreters became more familiar with float remains, and often noted such material when seen as a way to explain the necessity for leaving original material in place.

Off-site visits to schools in Fossil and Grant County (John Day, Canyon City, Monument) were infrequent. Presentations lasted about an hour and included the passing around of fragmentary remains (usually confiscated materials from intercepted unauthorized collecting that could not be associated with locale).

Around 1980, as I recall, we built an actual trail into Blue Basin and subsequently put the first wayside exhibits and replicas along the route. Many spontaneous public walks and scheduled school walks were built around the graphics, text, and replicas of the trail waysides.

At about the same time, we updated the first set of roadside waysides in the park. A number of them contained errors of scientific naming or terminology--as well as some less factually erroneous, but equally unfortunate misleading statements (implying that oreodonts disappeared mysteriously in the middle of the night, etc.--similar to some of the unfortunate statements characteristic of coeval NPS signing regarding ancestral Puebloans, etc.). These corrections made the waysides more helpful as stand-alone media, as well as serving as aids when interpreters contacted visitors on roves.

Also around 1980, I began a couple of seasons of first-person living history presentations on the south lawn of the VC. These were the idea of Pat Milliren, our chief interpreter at the time (and the first chief of interpretation as a separate division). This was a mixed success. Even from the little I knew of this technique, it seemed unwise to impersonate an actual historic person (Loye Miller of UC). Many of the makeshift props available were far from perfect, but the audiences were forgiving and seemed to enjoy the activity. This program really only worked well when there was a uniformed interpreter available on the lawn to clue visitors in to the first person nature of the event. Nonetheless, the service got good press and travelled to several schools as an off-site activity.

It was during this time that the park staff undertook to add to the initial set of exhibit materials developed at the time of the park's establishment. Those first media were the large photos, initial set of four "paleobiome" art renderings, Toms Bones Nut Beds materials, and UO vertebrate fossil replicas. Alton Albin, Cynthia Tait, and I developed the "Time Spiral" and the idealized stratigraphic column that came to be placed on the west wall of the living room in the Cant House (visitor center). We found these "home-made" exhibits to be quite helpful during interpretive presentations. Additional display materials were also produced in-house for the Princeton expedition display in the bunkhouse.

After the first several years of operation, enough recognizable remains were discovered and recovered to give us plenty to talk about in terms of current activities, specimens, and plans for the future. We had received some special funding to stabilize the log cabin that had been moved from the far side of the river to the back lawn of the VC early on. Following this work, the cabin was set up as a proto-lab for showing fossil preparation work. This was really an interpretive, rather than curatorial activity, at first. We simply used hand tools, an air scribe, and an abrasive blaster to better uncover bone fragments in specimens recovered from poachers. Nevertheless, there was intense visitor interest in this activity--and in the idea that something real and present-day was actually going on at the park. Of course, this became much more powerful and authentic when Ted Fremd (paleontologist) arrived. He quickly professionalized the activities in the lab. This immediately raised the question of whether this was an interpretive activity or a curatorial activity. In fact, it was both. We spent quite a bit of time working to accommodate both of these mandates in one very tiny facility--without driving the staff crazy trying to do essentially two things at the same time. At first, the work counter was open. Conversation with visitors was easy. Then we felt it necessary to erect a plexiglass barrier to protect visitors from flying debris and blaster abrasives. This made communication much more difficult (especially if the preparator was wearing a respirator!). On occasion, a spare interpreter could be found to station in the visitor area of the lab to explain the

activity to visitors. This sort of turned the preparator into a living display (some said “zoo animal”) but was very effective. Unfortunately, the small space and small staff size rendered this approach infrequent and not very cost effective.

In a few years, relations with schools interested in recurring visits became much more normalized. Information sheets on group visits became standardized and allowed us to better get to know these groups, including any special considerations regarding educational objectives, quirks of teachers or schools, etc.

When Jim Mack was chief (*mid 1980s*), we also began to record spontaneous interpretive talks given at the VC or in the field to spontaneously assembled groups. This was an interesting endeavor. Since logistics made scheduled presentations so ineffective, we were naturally driven in this direction. But we definitely moved beyond just informal contacts to spontaneously delivered, semi-formal presentations. Jim wanted the interpretive staff to get credit for that work without claiming a level of formality of presentation that clearly we were not attaining. Log sheets were developed for this activity, and the format was essentially an outgrowth of the sheets used to log roving contacts.

During the time that I was chief (*interpretation*), I would say that the main focus was to emphasize that the park was a going scientific collection and research operation. Specimen mapping was well established by that time and Ted Fremd had instituted a regular schedule for surface collection (primarily by him and me, and any visiting researchers willing to do so). Air photos, curated specimens, and other primary materials and records were increasingly used in interpretive media and presentations to emphasize the active, on-going nature of activities--and the value of the park as a working site rather than a museum of past investigation. Already by the mid-1980s, there was strong consensus among staff that the park’s greatest value would be as an active center of scientific discovery and study. Plans for interpretive development (both personal services and media) were definitely centered on the twin foci of what the resources tell us about the past, and how we know what we think we know about what the resources tell us about the past. I think that is still valid, and seems to be the continuing justification for the center that I understand is now funded. I certainly hope that comes to pass! It has been in the front of our minds for many years--and I feel no less passionate about it now than I did when I worked there.

That’s a quick sketch of what I remember.

## Appendix I: Bibliography

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## Appendix J: Park Planning Team

### John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Staff

Elena Albright, 2008 Visitor Services Seasonal  
 Matt Becker, 2008 Visitor Services Seasonal  
 Karen Beppler-Dorn, Acting Park Superintendent  
 Randy Bilbeisi, Chief of Maintenance  
 Tom Buce, Maintenance Employee  
 Jennifer Cavin, Paleontology Museum Technician  
 Julie Collins, 2008 Paleontology Seasonal  
 Regan Dunn, NPS-JODA, Paleobotanist (former, transferred)  
 John Fiedor, Chief of Interpretation (retired)  
 Ted Fremd, Chief of Paleontology  
 Jim Hammett, Park Superintendent  
 Sarah Herve, Interpretive Ranger (former, transferred)  
 Shirley Hoh, Chief of Natural Resources  
 Elizabeth Inscore, 2008 Visitor Services Seasonal  
 John Laing, Clarno Unit Ranger  
 Charles Lindberg, 2008 Seasonal Interpretive Ranger  
 Lindsay Mackenzie, 2008 Paleontology Seasonal  
 Audrey Jo Mills, 2008 Seasonal Interpretive Ranger  
 Paul Ollig, Chief of Interpretation  
 Michelle Ordway, Interpretive Ranger  
 Amy Poff, Interpretive Ranger  
 Alicia Ritner, Chief of Administration  
 Scott Ritner, Painted Hills Unit Ranger  
 Dave Sandersfeld, 2008 Seasonal Interpretive Ranger  
 Chris Schierup, Paleontology Collections Manager  
 Matt Smith, Paleontologist (former, transferred)  
 Gwen Valade, Maintenance Employee  
 Lia Vella, Interpretive Ranger (former, transferred)

### Partners:

Jim Adams, Director, DYNW- Discover Your Northwest (formally NWIA)  
 Ellen Bishop, OPLI-Oregon Public Lands Institute, Program Director  
 Eloise Boron, Grant County Chamber of Commerce, Representative  
 Will Boettner, OPLI-Oregon Paleo Lands Institute, Executive Director  
 Virginia Gibbons, Ochoco National Forest-USFS and Prineville BLM, Public Affairs Specialist  
 Natascha Guluk, OMSI-Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Hancock Field Station Director  
 Pattie Hammett, USFS-Malheur National Forest, Public Affairs Specialist  
 Robert Lillie, Oregon State University, Professor of Geology  
 Sharon Mogg, Grant County Chamber of Commerce, Director  
 Paul Patton, Oregon State Parks, Regional Program Coordinator  
 Robert Waltenburg, Oregon Department of Education, Grant County Education Service District  
 Lisa Yonker, Discover Your Northwest Association, 2007-2008 Sales Clerk  
 John Zancenella, Bureau of Land Management -Prineville District, Ranger

### National Park Service (NPS) Staff and Other Consultants:

Karen Beppler-Dorn, Superintendent, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park

Nancy Caplan, NPS-Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Education Program Ranger  
Mike Dedman, NPS-Whitman Mission National Historic Site, Education Program Ranger  
Michelle Hartley, NPS-Harpers Ferry Center, Audio-Visual Producer  
Jason Kenworthy, Oregon State University, student - former seasonal park interpreter  
Mary Mallen, NPS-Harpers Ferry Center, Park Ranger-Lead Planner for this project  
Steve Mark, NPS-Crater Lake National Park, Historian

Plan designed by Ecos Environmental Design, Inc. for Harpers Ferry Center.



**John Day Fossil Beds National Monument**  
32651 Highway 19  
Kimberly, OR 97848-9701

Park Headquarters  
541-987-2333

[www.nps.gov/joda](http://www.nps.gov/joda)