



THE KLAMATH TRIBES

KLAMATH-MODOC-YAHOOSKIN

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Klamath County Commissioners Approve Hagelstein Park Transition to Day Use

CHILOQUIN, Ore. – The Klamath County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, Aug. 15, unanimously approved a motion to transition Hagelstein Park to day use only. Currently, the park allows overnight camping, which has also led to the degradation of park grounds and water contamination in the spring-fed pond at the park, which is a habitat for a resident population of the endangered c’waam and koptu suckers. Fecal coliform, E. coli, was in two water quality samples taken this year.

The decision followed a public hearing held last week when the members of the public and many Klamath Tribal members expressed their support for changing the park to day use and eliminating overnight camping.

Commissioner Dave Henslee spoke prior to the vote, stating, “I think it's really important that as we continue to make decisions, we do the work of the community, and we make decisions in the betterment of the greater good. So, I was really happy that we decided to take that route. And based upon those hearings, everything seemed positive in that it goes to a day use facility only, and we exclude camping from that location. So, I have been supportive of moving forward in that direction.”

Commissioner Kelley Minty followed Hensley, expressing her support to exclude camping at the park, but added that she doesn’t like the idea of restricting camping to visitors. “There are certain places where it may be more beneficial to restrict camping based on different factors,” she said, “and certainly the feelings of our friends, the Klamath Tribes is a huge piece of that.”

Minty added that she would like the opportunity to revisit the decision to exclude camping at the park if there is a “huge public outcry.”

Then Commissioner Derrick DeGroot weighed in on the discussion. “I think that we heard from the community,” he said. “I think that the neighbors, the community at large, are all in support of this being day use. I think that we will see less abuse to the park. And it is up to this body to determine time, place, and manner and highest and best use of the parks and the facilities that we own. I think that it's clear that turning this to day use is step one of making sure we're utilizing this property to the biggest benefit of the community at large.”

Finally, prior to a vote on the motion, Klamath Tribes Chairman Clayton Dumont made a brief statement. “Just let me say that I'm very grateful that the County has so graciously listened to the concerns of the

Klamath tribes,” he said. “Hearing us out about the cultural, ecological importance of that site for us is heartwarming. And I know that we don't always agree, but when we do agree about things, we can really show that we can be a force for the good of the community at large. And, so, I think going forward here that we're all going to see that place become much healthier, and it will be a place that we can all be proud of.”

Minty will oversee the park's transition to day use only, working with Klamath County Parks Manager Tom Crist.



Klamath County Board of Commissioners Kelley Minty, Derrick DeGroot (center), and Dave Henslee voted unanimously Tuesday, Aug. 15, to exclude camping at Hagelstein Park and allow day use only. (Photo by Ken Smith/Klamath Tribes. *Image available for media use.*)

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