

## Klamath County Traditional Tourism Grant Klamath Trails Alliance Grant Application

Name of Project:	Spence Mountain Trail Project
Funds Requested:	\$25,000
Use of Funds:	Professionally Build Trails
Target Market:	Destination Mountain Bikers



Hooligan Trail

### PROJECT

- 1. Describe the project for which funding is requested (details should include the primary goals and objectives of your project). If your grant project is approved, this description will be used to highlight your grant, so be as specific as possible when describing the elements of your grant project.**

A 50-mile trail network is being developed on 7,400 acres of private timberland only 15 miles from Klamath Falls. Incredible views of Mt. Shasta, Upper Klamath Lake and Mt. McLoughlin offer an amazing backdrop to one of the newest professionally built mountain biking venues in Oregon.

Grant funds will aid in a 10-mile expansion of our trail network from 18 miles to 28 miles. The emphasis for 2018's build season is to grow our "easy" or green trail network to appeal to a wider audience. This includes beginner mountain bikers, families and active baby boomers. Klamath County's Tourism grant application for \$25,000 will provide funding for 2 miles of trail construction.

Another goal is to build awareness that Klamath is a great place to mountain bike. With the recent addition of Spence Mountain to Travel Oregon's website listing, *Don't Miss Mountain Biking Trails*, our marketing reach should significantly increase. Also,

October 30, 2017

Bermstyle featured Spence Mountain in their online mountain biking blog. Here is what they had to say... *“Klamath Falls is making big moves towards becoming a trail destination of its own with the ongoing Spence Mountain Project. In late 2016... an additional loop was added to the growing trail system that cemented its status as a trail destination.”*

The project budget for our 2018 build season is estimated at \$143,000 to include trail design, trail construction, trail signs and miscellaneous trailhead expenses. For purposes of this grant we are only including 5 miles of trail construction costs or \$62,500.

**2. Describe the need for your project.**

Oregon is well-known for its mountain biking. There is a steady stream of cars driving past Klamath Falls on Highway 97 in route to Central Oregon and beyond. Much of this traffic is from Northern California and drive times can be in excess of 10 hours from the Bay area to Central Oregon. Why not stop in Klamath to break up the drive and sample our great mountain biking? Developing more trail infrastructure will enhance Oregon's mountain bike experience and hopefully grow cycling tourism.

**3. What is your long-term plan for your project?**

The Master Plan calls for 53 miles of professionally built mountain biking trails at Spence Mountain.

**4. How will you measure the success of your project, in the short-term and in the long-term? Be as specific as possible.**

The ultimate measure of success is to draw destination mountain bikers (and other trail users) to Klamath. Our short-term goal is to grow overnight lodging numbers by 20% in 2018.

A registration box was installed at the Spence trailhead Kiosk in order to gather information from trail users in 2016. Data provided by a voluntary sign-in sheet shows growth in overnight stays and out of area visitors. Data reported from January through September 2017 shows 202 overnight stays with 44% of respondents from out of the area. This compares to 91 overnight stays in 2016. Keep in mind that this data is only recorded if trail users stop and fill out the registration log at our kiosk so this information shows trends more than anything. It is also heavily slanted to new users. Even with this limited amount of data it is very encouraging!

Our second success measure is an increase in positive media listing (print articles, web listings, trail mapping websites/apps and Instagram posts).

Long-term we expect to grow overnight stays by 20% per year.

## PROJECT PREFERENCE QUESTIONS

### 1. Describe how this project complements and is consistent with your community and/or region's current local objectives.

Growing trail infrastructure provides more access to healthy activities for our local community. This is in alignment with our Healthy Klamath Initiative and Blue Zone project both encouraging folks to be more active.

Our economic development group, KCEDA, also promotes Klamath's outdoor assets to attract employers. Development of trails enhances these assets and improves the potential recruitment of employers valuing a better quality of life for their employees.

Regionally, SOVA's strategic plan calls for Destination Development and Product Development in an effort to align with Travel Oregon's strategies. Growing trails on Spence Mountain will definitely help in the product development category.

Finally, we align well with Discover Klamath's strategic plan that has several objectives directed towards growing cycling tourism in Klamath County.

### 2. Demonstrate how the project has the support and involvement of the community.

Community support has been nothing short of amazing! Enclosed are some of the highlights:

- JWTR, landowner of Spence Mountain, enthusiastically supports the project.
- Oregon Department of Forestry granted access to their land for our trailhead.
- 30 volunteers worked an entire day to hand-build the first ¼ mile of trail.
- Volunteer maintenance hours grew by 67% last year to 1,396 hrs.
- Community donations have exceeded \$40,000 from over 70 individuals and businesses.
- Sky Lakes Medical Center contributed \$25,500 over and above the community donations.
- 13 businesses have generously offered gift-in-kind services for the project.

### 3. List partners, sponsors, volunteers and their contributions and/or activities.

**Financial Sponsors** – EcoSolar & Electric, Linkville Lopers, Great Basin Insurance, Windermere Realty, Isler of Klamath Falls, Hutch's Bicycles, Tucker, Tucker & Gailis Dental Group, Asana Yoga & Sole, Muffler King, Chancellor Drilling, Jeld-Wen Foundation, Klamath County Tourism Grant, Private Foundation Grant, Sky Lakes Medical Foundation and Sky Lakes Medical Center.

**Gift-in-Kind Sponsors** – Smith Bates Printing, Rhine-Cross Engineering, Adkin's Consulting Engineering, Oregon Department of Forestry, Nesting Well, Abbey's Pizza, Running Y Ranch Resort, Base Camp Brewing, Rodeo's Pizza, Dirt Mechanics, Gaucho Collective, Rocky Mountain Construction and Mountain Pacific Construction.

**Partners** – JWTR (landowner), Dirt Mechanics (professional trail builder), Discover Klamath (marketing), IMBA (education and training) and Oregon Department of Forestry.

**4. In what ways does this project address a need in the tourism industry and show potential to generate significant regional and/or local impact?**

The Spence Mountain trail project directly complements Travel Oregon's key initiative to "develop destination based products that are in concert with Oregon's natural environment".

The business case to build more trails includes the following - more than 1 in 5 Americans, 16 and over, mountain bike (over 50 million people total); there are 1.5 times more mountain bikers than golfers in America; the Dean Runyan Study, commissioned by Travel Oregon in 2012, identified \$400 million spent for bike related travel in Oregon, and Southern Oregon accounted for \$38.5 million; the average length of stay for destination mountain bike travel is 3.4 nights. Ultimately this project will be attracting a new segment of tourism to our area.

**5. In what ways does this project strive to promote diversity and inclusion (accessibility, minority populations or underserved visitor segments)?**

Investments in trail networks provide "free" recreational opportunities to all.

**6. Describe how this project showcases a public/private partnership with Oregon-based small businesses.**

Several of our business sponsors are small businesses. To name a few Rodeos, Zach's Bikes, Gaucho Collective and Asana Yoga & Sole all see the value in growing the Spence trail network to their businesses.

**7. Is the project/event in shoulder season?**

Trail use at Spence Mountain occurs year around but prime months for mountain biking runs from April through October. This covers four months of the shoulder season.

**8. Does the project/event occur outside urban growth boundaries?**

Yes, Spence Mountain is located 15 miles west of Klamath on Hwy 140 and outside of the urban growth boundary.