

[http://www.oregonlive.com/metrosouth/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/metro\\_south\\_news/1110970574110990.xml](http://www.oregonlive.com/metrosouth/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/metro_south_news/1110970574110990.xml)

More From The Oregonian | [Subscribe To The Oregonian](#)

## **County could reopen rock-climbing area**

**Clackamas commissioners ask for a study on the best use of land including a once-popular climbing wall near Carver**

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

### **SARAH HUNSBERGER**

After years of posting no-trespassing signs at a once-popular climbing wall, Clackamas County commissioners decided Tuesday to consider reopening the area, possibly as a county park.

Advertisement

The forested 45-acre site near Carver is known as the Madrone Wall because of its stand of Pacific madrone trees and its 100-foot-high rock cliff.

Commissioners will ask the county parks advisory board to meet with potential users, study options and make a recommendation by fall.

Possibilities include mining or logging the site, selling it to a private party for recreational use, designating it as a county park, allowing groups to use it for recreation if they provide upkeep and insurance, or keeping it off-limits to the public.

Commissioners said Tuesday that preserving the county-owned property as a park or open space could be the best option.

Many climbers consider the wall to be one of the best rock-climbing sites in the Portland area.

The property, just off Oregon 224, was closed to climbers in the 1990s by a county risk management committee.

Keith Daellenbach of Portland, a climber who directs the nonprofit Madrone Wall Preservation Committee, said liability shouldn't be a concern.

He pointed out that state laws say public landowners aren't liable for injuries or deaths that arise out of recreational use of the land.

Part of the property has been mined, and the site also has been called the Hardscrabble Quarry. The wall is a natural feature.

The county studied the possibility of further mining the site in the late 1990s to obtain gravel for county road projects, but officials decided to buy rock instead.

Commissioner Larry Sowa suggested last year that the board take another look at allowing public access to the property, at least until the county might need it for mining.

The county has received letters and calls in recent months from residents wishing to protect the site or reopen it to the public, said Dan Zinzer, the county's transportation engineering and parks manager. Zinzer also has gotten several recent inquiries from miners looking for sources of rock.

An area that includes the wall also is being discussed as a possible conservation or park area as part of the planning process for the Damascus area. The wall is outside the new city.

Commissioner Martha Schrader said Tuesday that she thinks open space or a park would be the best use of the property and that she is unlikely to consider other options.

Commissioner Bill Kennemer also said Tuesday that the land "probably ought to be a park."

But he warned that "giving it away and not taking a careful fiduciary look" was a bad idea.

The county doesn't have an updated property value estimate. The county bought the property for \$2,000 in 1937.

Because interested users come from across the region, Kennemer also suggested that Metro or a group of regional partners could own or manage the site.

"I for one am certainly not interested in having a rock-climbing park that we're running," Kennemer said.

Sarah Hunsberger: 503-294-5922 [shunsberger@news.oregonian.com](mailto:shunsberger@news.oregonian.com)