



Current

Ada County Parks & Waterways

Winter 2014

Current

Current *adjective* \kúrrənt\
: happening or existing now; most recent; of the immediate present; in progress

Current *noun*

: the swiftest part of a stream; a steady, smooth onward movement

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DIRECTOR'S CUT

As most of us already know Ada County is an outstanding place to live with an active population that values parks, open space,



trails, waterways, and recreation. Actually, to say that our residents “value” these amenities is a huge understatement. Many of us are *rabidly passionate* about such things. Why shouldn't we be? We're proud (and maybe a bit protective) of all the outdoor options we have so close to home. Where we live opportunities abound... but there's always room for improvement.

With that in mind we'd like to welcome you to the first edition of Current, the new quarterly publication from Ada County Parks & Waterways. Our hope is that Current will help inform our public, partners, and park users about the activities and recreational opportunities offered by Ada County. You might be surprised by what you learn in these pages.

We also anticipate this newsletter may open a forum for our readers to suggest how we can improve, enhance, and expand our current community offerings for recreation, education, and cultural preservation (more on that later). We welcome your input.

Our goal moving forward is to efficiently use available resources, partnerships, and funding to help fulfill the recreational needs and requests of the public and citizens of Ada County. We aim to be responsive to our community.

So with a tip of the cap to the Canyon County Crossroads team we're proud to launch a new era of outreach in Ada County. It's been said that, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery." If that's the case we imagine Tom, Kathy, and the crew out west are feeling sincerely flattered right now!

And finally a Seussian attempt at poetry for which I'll apologize in advance:



*Boaters, floaters, riders, rollers,
Walkers, runners, "Let's have some fun"ners,
(and let's not forget our crucial grant funders!),
Anglers, equestrians, birders,
Bikers, hikers, and herders (you heard me),
Explorers, and lovers of "the great outdoors"ers,
Partners, public, friends,
Current is for you.*

Now let's get on with it.

-Scott Koberg, Director

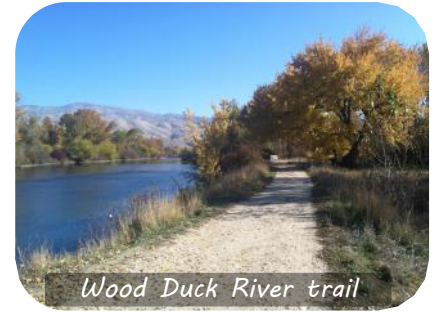
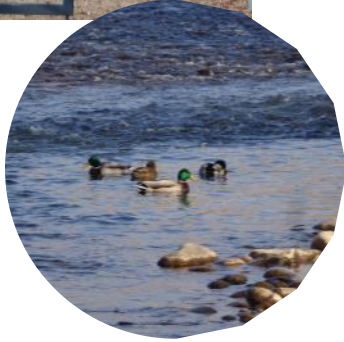
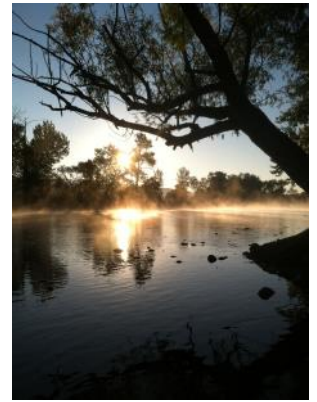
A Walk in the Park

For a lot of people **Barber Park** is known simply as the put-in for hot summer floaters as they embark on the notorious Boise River float trip right through the heart of our capital city. What many folks *don't* know is that in addition to the sandy beach, rental facility, raft ramps, tube steps, snack shack, air stations, and picnic tables conveniently located in the launch area, this Ada County park includes **nearly 70 acres(!)** that buzz with activity year round.

Miles of trails (paved and primitive), huge cottonwood forests, wonderful wildlife viewing, grassy expanses, BBQ grills, a playground area, a picnic shelter, a basketball court, a fishing pier... **Barber Park** has a lot to offer! Not to mention our fantastic Education and Event Center, available to rent for all occasions, right in the heart of the park. Heck even our LEED certified Parks & Waterways Department office, home to our entire staff, is located in **Barber Park**.

So instead of waiting for the festive float season to begin, come visit **Barber Park** anytime!





Barber Shots



Don't fence me in!



It's probably safe to say that most Ada County residents aren't even aware that **Hubbard Reservoir** exists. Many of those who *have* actually heard of it would likely have difficulty finding it on a map or explaining just, "*What is Hubbard Reservoir?*" Despite it's name, **Hubbard Reservoir** doesn't hold much water but with **377 acres of open space** it sure does provide some outstanding wildlife and



waterfowl habitat in addition to unique recreational opportunities. With a parking facility and trailhead (along with a variety of trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding) users are welcome to explore this **wonderful oasis provided by Ada County Parks & Waterways** through a lease agreement with the State of Idaho. Recently — with input from the Ada County Parks,



Directions: From I-84 take Eagle Rd. exit south to Hubbard Rd.; turn left onto Hubbard Rd. and then take first right onto Stewart Rd.; follow Stewart Rd. 3/4 miles to trailhead parking area on right.

Open Space and Trails Advisory Board and Friends of Hubbard Reservoir (FOHR) and under the leadership of an ambitious young Eagle Scout candidate — we've made some improvements at Hubbard. By removing over a mile of unused barbed wire fencing, Jerod Stolp and his crew (along with his proud parents Greg and Trina) helped eliminate a safety hazard and create a designated off-leash dog park area. While we provided guidance, staff support, and much of the equipment, Jerod handled the rest. We think his letter to us provides a nice summary of the project:

Just wanted to report that the barbed wire and t-posts were removed on Saturday, October 26, 2013 at Hubbard Reservoir. I had 67 people there to help me. That was about 270 volunteer hours. The final hour count with preparation, planning, gathering tools and recruiting volunteers was 290 hours.

I want to let you know how much I appreciate all the hard work from Ada County Parks and Waterways. Chris Osborn (Ada County Parks & Waterways Maintenance Mechanic) did an awesome job getting some of the tools and safety equipment, recycle bin, a porta potty and a backhoe to help with this project. Chris did such an awesome job marking the fences for my volunteers. That made it so easy for them to know what fences needed to come down. It was a great experience working with him and I appreciate all his hard work and communication he had with me.

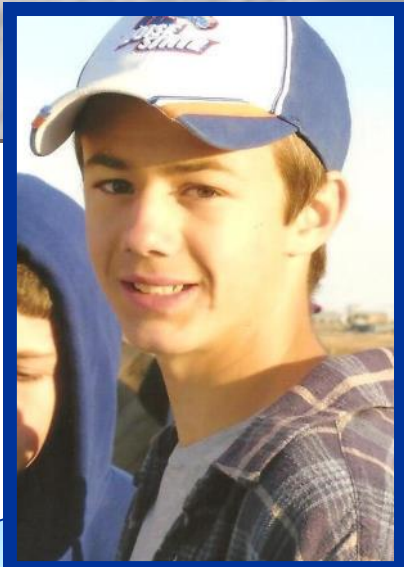
There was some feedback yesterday of some of the people who use the park. A woman on horseback and two trucks with horse trailers had stopped to see what was going on and they were all excited to see the barbed wire gone and they were going to tell some of their friends who ride horses of the changes. Some of my volunteers even commented on how much nicer and more usable the park is now.

Thank you all again for such a great experience. I learned so much about project planning, preparation, and about being a leader. Here are a few pictures from Saturday.

I will let you know when my Eagle Court of Honor is and would love it if you all could attend.

Sincerely,

Jerod Stolp



Barber Park

Education & Event Center

Plan your next company event with us!

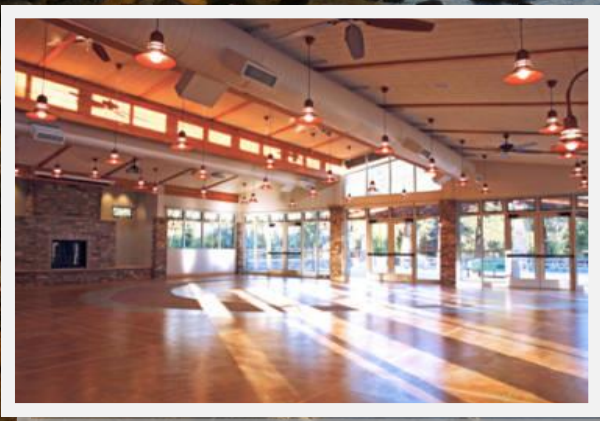
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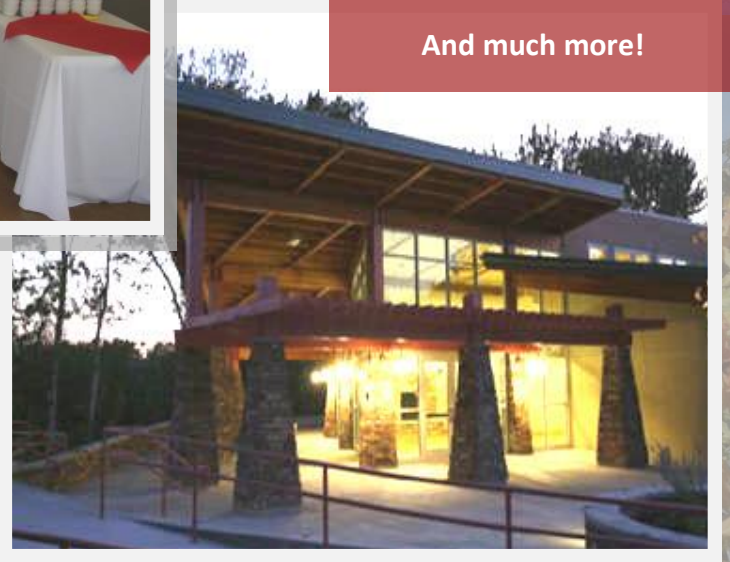
"I had no idea this was even here!"

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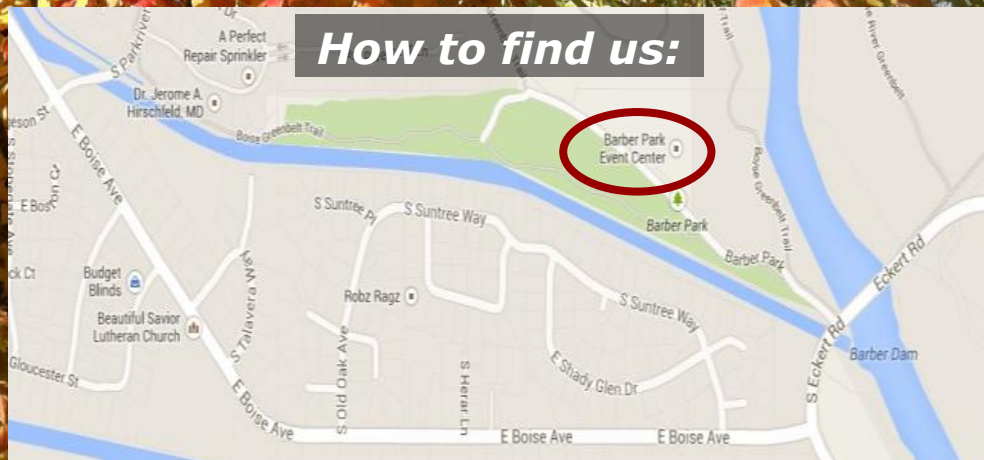
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Visit us on Facebook



How to find us:



We're nestled right next to the Boise River in Barber Park
with ample parking just 5 miles east of downtown Boise!

Happy Trails



We all have our favorites. Those links and loops that beckon us to unplug and connect simultaneously. So many types— flat, rugged, rocky, smooth, meandering, straight, primitive, paved, tree-lined, wide-open, uphill, downhill, scenic, relaxing, inspiring— there’s a style for everyone. Some use them to reflect, refresh, escape or explore while others simply hit the trails to commute to work, to get a little fresh air, to exercise, or to play. Regardless of the reason or the season, **when it comes to recreational trails in Ada County we have a tremendously diverse network that continues to progress and expand with population growth.**

This amazing variety of easily accessible trails is often cited as one of the primary reasons the Treasure Valley continues to attract and retain new businesses and residents. As a proud partner and provider of several pieces that make up our network of recreational trails, Ada County Parks & Waterways would like to highlight some of our most significant contributions:

Boise River Greenbelt



In naming our capital city one of the Best River Towns in America, Outside Magazine declared, “In Boise it’s all about the Greenbelt.” Likewise, the Greenbelt was featured in Bicycling Magazine when it selected Boise as one of America’s Top 50 Bike-Friendly Cities. The City of Boise has earned those accolades (among others) with over 50 years of planning, acquisition and development that helped define the vision of the Greenbelt and create many of the park and trail amenities that exist today within the Boise River corridor. But the Boise River Greenbelt is bigger than Boise.

Ada County has long been an owner, advocate, and ambassador of several portions and many miles of the Boise River Greenbelt. All told we either own or maintain about 12 total miles of Greenbelt between Discovery Park (near Lucky Peak Lake) and Eagle Road. We also partner consistently with Boise City , private landowners, and other jurisdictions to identify new connections and plan improvements.

Most recently, in recognition of the much needed repairs for public safety and enjoyment on the portion of Greenbelt between Diversion Dam and Shakespeare Way, we have submitted grant proposals in an effort to secure federal funding to help rebuild, widen, and stabilize this

1.8 mile section of trail. This is an extremely important segment that provides a critical connection from the Barber Valley to the federal recreational facilities at Lucky Peak. Our goal is to leverage Ada County funding and resources with other funding sources to maximize the benefit for our community and create a safer, more user-friendly trail. We hope to share news of successful grant awards for Greenbelt projects such as this in future editions of Current.

Ridge to Rivers

Spearheaded and staffed by Boise City and collectively recognized as Ridge to Rivers, this unique partnership also includes Ada County, Boise National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, and Idaho Fish & Game. Providing over 130 miles of trail for public recreation, Ridge to Rivers partners share expertise and funding to maximize public benefit and achieve community goals. For our part, **in addition to funding we also contribute easements and lands to the trail system**, most notably at Seaman Gulch (pictured), Hidden Springs, and the Ada County Landfill buffer.



Oregon Trail



Long before all of our recreational trails there was the well-worn and wagon-rutted Oregon Trail. Beginning in 1840 over 50,000 westward emigrants traveled this trail seeking fortune and new life. Many, upon discovering the Boise River valley, settled here in present day Ada County and laid the groundwork for those that live here today.

Now, in a collaborative effort to help preserve cultural and historic amenities while also providing unique public recreation opportunities, Ada County is partnering with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Boise City, and others to initiate a comprehensive planning effort for the Oregon Trail. This effort will focus primarily on the portions of the trail between Bonneville Point and the Ada County Oregon Trailhead Recreation Area (pictured) off of Highway 21. The planning process is intended to define the community vision for future access and preservation.

In the meantime, **Ada County Parks & Waterways will continue providing public recreational access to over 4 miles of non-motorized trails** from our Oregon Trailhead facility with ample RV parking and several educational kiosks detailing the history of the Oregon Trail.

Snake River Water Trail



Winding its way from Yellowstone National Park in western Wyoming to its confluence with the Columbia River in eastern Washington, the mighty Snake River makes quite a journey through Idaho. **For Ada County residents, although it forms much of our southern boundary, the Snake River is often overlooked as a recreational resource.** However, with Idaho Power's big plans for improvements at Swan Falls in southern Ada County along with the broader efforts of a recently formed river coalition, the Snake River is gaining some additions to its recreational résumé.

Let's start with Idaho Power. At the end of 2012 Idaho Power was granted a 30 year license by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to continue to operate the state's oldest hydroelectric facility at Swan Falls Dam (built in 1901). As part of it's new license they will be making several improvements to current recreational facilities while minimizing impacts to plants and wildlife. Plans include a new dock, picnic tables and shelter, a vault toilet,



better parking, boat ramp and launch area repairs, informational signage, and improvements to six individual recreation sites downstream from Swan Falls Dam. Already a wonderful destination for boating, bird watching, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, and picnicking, **the Swan Falls area of the Snake River will soon offer a much more enjoyable experience for visitors.**

As is often the case with a huge resource such as the Snake River, there is also a bigger picture to consider. Thankfully, an active and dynamic group with the willingness to take the reins and coordinate the bigger picture already exists.

Formed in 2009 and comprised of individuals from over 50 different entities and interests, the **Idaho Oregon Snake River Water Trail Coalition** is **developing a 206 mile water trail along the Snake River** in southwest Idaho and eastern Oregon for people to explore, respect, and enjoy. A water trail is a water route that provides recreational and educational opportunities for motorized and non-motorized boaters as well as commercial opportunities for river communities. This particular trail begins at Three Island Crossing State Park in Glens Ferry, Idaho and ends at Farewell Bend State Park in Oregon.

While our neighbors at Canyon County Parks, Recreation and Waterways were recently awarded a National Park Service grant as leaders of this coalition to help plan the water trail, we at **Ada County Parks & Waterways** will be **increasing our involvement and partnership in this effort**. Along with many of the other participating counties, cities, towns, agencies, and organizations involved we hope to increase awareness regarding the public recreation opportunities that exist on the Snake River while also identifying potential recreation projects.

Learn more at: <http://snakeriverwatertrail.org>



“Ehhh, what’s up dock?”

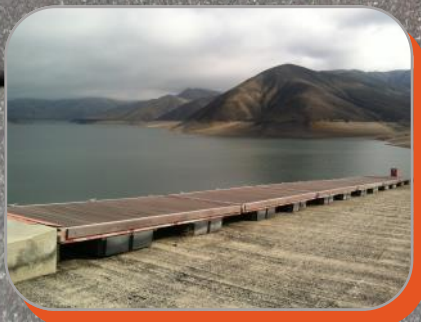


By far one of the most common responses to telling folks we work for Ada County Parks & Waterways is, “I get the ‘Parks’ part but what’s the ‘Waterways’ all about?” So we thought we’d take a moment to clear this up.

Perhaps you’ve heard of **Lucky Peak Lake**? Chances are you have. After all Lucky Peak State Park (including Spring Shores, Sandy Point, and Discovery) is the *most visited state park in Idaho*. The Idaho State Parks & Recreation Department does a tremendous job providing public recreational opportunities and access at their three Lucky Peak facilities.

And as far as the lake itself (including the dam, 306,000 acre feet of storage capacity, and the thousands of acres of public land surrounding it), the US Army Corps of Engineers provides management of these federally owned facilities for flood control, fish & wildlife habitat, irrigation, and public recreation. This is no small task.

So where does Ada County fit into the Lucky Peak Lake partnership puzzle?



Let's take a look at the purple serpent (we'll call him Barclay) on the opposite page. Now look a bit closer beyond Barclay to the boat ramp and docks in the background. You might be surprised to learn that these docks at the Barclay Bay boat ramp just across Lucky Peak dam are installed and maintained by Ada County Parks & Waterways.

You might also be surprised to learn that our involvement at the lake extends well beyond just Barclay Bay. In fact ***Ada County Parks & Waterways installed and continues to maintain and enhance the vast majority of the dock strings throughout Lucky Peak Lake.*** This amounts to 100 total dock strings(!) at 16 recreation sites (seven of those in Boise and Elmore counties) including Birch Creek, Browns Gulch, Charcoal Flat, Chimney Rock, Dead Dog Creek, Deer Flat, Gooseneck Bay, Macks Creek, Pipeline Gulch, Placer Point, Robie Creek Park, Sheep Creek, South Robie Creek, Turnaround Point, and Turner Gulch. Yes, we have a boat. Two actually.

There's a great chance that if you've ever visited **Lucky Peak Lake** and tied up a watercraft — or stretched out to sunbathe, or executed the perfect backflip — you've done so using one of the docks provided by Ada County. Stay tuned to future editions of Current for Lucky Peak boater maps and news on dock improvements we'll be making in 2014, but for now...





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