


OREGON
TIMBER TRAIL
ALLIANCE

BUSINESS PLAN

2020-2025



VISION

Linking Oregon's communities and backcountry landscapes through profound mountain biking experiences.



OUR MISSION:

*The Oregon
Timber Trail
Alliance is
dedicated to*



STEWARDSHIP,



EDUCATION,



COMMUNITY,

and **QUALITY TRAIL
EXPERIENCES**



*throughout the Oregon
Timber Trail corridor.*



2020 - 2025

1

Provide stewardship of the Oregon Timber Trail by building/maintaining 20 miles of trails annually in partnership with land managers and other trail stewards, and by educating trail users about responsible use and care of the trail.

2

Engage with land managers and other conservation and recreation groups within each tier to preserve and enhance backcountry singletrack access for cyclists along the Oregon Timber Trail corridor.

3

Create economic opportunities for rural communities by bringing visitors to and through the Oregon Timber Trail corridor.

4

Fund a full-time executive director position and associated operational costs to perform programmatic work.

SUMMARY

The Oregon Timber Trail is a 670-mile mountain bike route that traverses some of the state's most iconic landscapes. The Oregon Timber Trail Alliance (OTTA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is dedicated to stewardship, education, community, and quality trail experiences throughout the route's corridor. Formed in 2016, the organization has proven its value through the development of a route guide, integration with rural businesses, and hundreds of volunteer hours annually to keep the trail open across its four tiers: Fremont, Deschutes, Willamette, and Hood.

The OTTA has found success by differentiating itself from other trail advocacy and mountain bike groups because of the aspirational nature of the Oregon Timber Trail as a unifying, statewide concept that also promotes rural tourism. Given this competitive advantage, the OTTA's objectives for 2020-2025 are:



Research by the OTTA's Development Committee indicates that annual operating budgets for statewide trail-based organizations range widely from \$70K - \$900K. With a projected annual budget of \$120K - \$200K, the OTTA will use a blended funding stream of individual donations, grants, and events.



GROWTH STRATEGY

The OTTA's goal is to leverage existing grant funds and private donations to hire an executive director in 2020. This first year of contracted leadership will lead to an increase in revenue, increased diversification of revenue, more capacity to implement programs, promotion of the Oregon Timber Trail, and improved trail connections. 2020 is a pivotal year for OTTA leadership to prove the value added to the cycling, outdoor recreation, and tourism industries, and raise an amount of reserve funding that will ensure ongoing support of the executive director position.

An assessment of similar trails organizations shows that there is no one formula for funding organizational capacity; pursuing multiple funding streams is therefore imperative to long-term growth. The OTTA leadership will monitor and document the time and cash used to generate revenue from various funding streams in order to make informed decisions on how to grow the organization in the future. The three main funding sources available to the OTTA are:

1] Private donations are given to OTTA during end-of-year giving campaigns, giveaways, and as one-time or recurring gifts from donors.

As a 501(c)(3), the OTTA can receive tax-deductible donations. While the number of non-profits soliciting donations in Oregon is exceptionally high, the outdoor recreation and bike packing communities are less saturated. OTTA has excelled at creating a sense of community, which has translated into early success in private donor engagement. Private donor campaigns will scale in 2020 now that the OTTA has its 501(c)(3) status and is investing in a customer relationship management (CRM) software.



2] Events, such as races and festivals, are used successfully by other trail-based non-profits. Beginning with the 2022 fundraising season, the OTTA will include events as part of the revenue strategy. The organization envisions two types of bike events, each with slightly different intended participants and audiences.

The first would be a less-competitive, rendezvous-style weekend meet-up that would be geared toward friend groups and families who want to camp out, ride multiple days, and compete at a variety of skill levels. This event would be focused on creating camaraderie around the trail and awareness of our organization. In addition to being a revenue source for the OTTA through registration fees, it would allow the organization to highlight its gateway towns and further the mission of creating economic opportunities for rural communities.

For the second event, the OTTA would organize an epic single-day, point-to-point race that would attract more competitive riders. This type of race has a much greater opportunity to generate revenue through sponsorships, with organizations such as the Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship using their "Coyote Classic" as their primary revenue source each year. A competitive race helps further the Oregon Timber Trail's reputation as a premier mountain bike trail for the dedicated enthusiast.

3] Grants from private foundations and public agencies align well with the OTTA's work and the organization is well-positioned to receive them. In addition to crossing four tourism/geographic regions and connecting a network of existing trails from the Washington to California borders, it has built an organizational structure and human resources to effectively pursue and implement grants.

Several grant programs that focus on outdoor recreation, trails, and tourism exist in Oregon, and the OTTA can pursue rural economic development and tourism funds, as well as Challenge Cost Share Agreements with the US Forest Service. As compared to most other trails organizations, the OTTA can demonstrate how its work contributes to a statewide and regional approach to economic development and recreation.

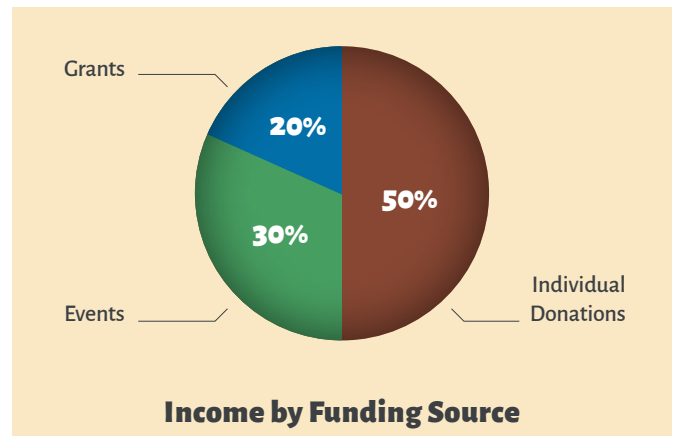
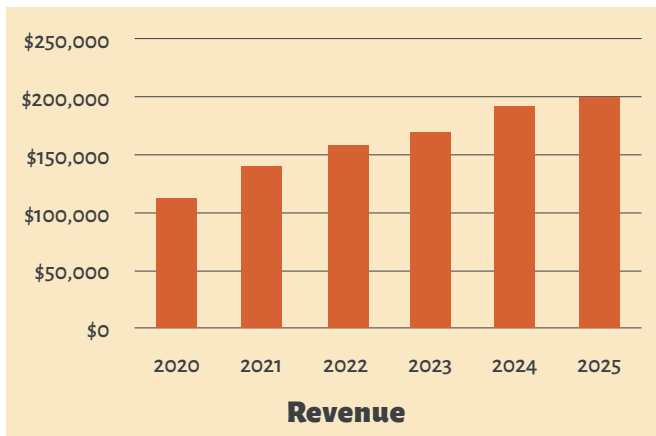


BUDGET AND FUNDING

To properly execute on the identified programmatic and administrative objectives in support of its mission, the OTTA’s budget is projected to grow modestly but positively in the near future.

Historic financial information is available in Appendix C.

The OTTA intends to have a balanced, blended funding stream in order to create financial stability, grow its ability to enhance and promote the Oregon Timber Trail, and avoid over-reliance on one or two sources of revenue. The projected percentage of revenue by funding source is illustrated below.



IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS

To execute the identified growth strategies, the OTTA will focus on building organizational capacity and prioritizing programming that is mission-aligned and builds relationships with potential funders. This includes:

- 1] Contracting an executive director** and recruiting new board members.
- 2] Creating additional organizational infrastructure**, such as a business plan, operations plan, timelines, work plans, and organizational guidance materials. This also includes an increased engagement of board members to deliver priority projects through the creation of two committees to support the Executive Committee. The committees will be led by board members and the executive director, and supported by a growing base of volunteers (Appendix B).
- 3] Implementing a CRM system** to support our donation strategy by enhancing donation pipeline management and increasing the success of fundraising efforts with individual donors.
- 4] Contracting** in order to deliver on projects and fill capacity in a way that allows the executive director and board members to act in their most effective capacities.
- 5] Monitoring and evaluation** of resources required to obtain and implement funding from each stream in order to understand the return on investment of each type. Specifically, the organization will assess how different revenue sources help the OTTA deliver on its mission and sustain the organization's ability to contract an executive director and consultants.
- 6] Leverage newly acquired 501(c)(3) status** to grow fundraising. This includes streamlined grant applications and simpler, more effective and regularly occurring donor campaigns. It also includes the creation of a major donor cultivation campaign.
- 7] Maintain access to unrestricted cash** in order hold a reserve that can be used for contracting the executive director and providing cash match to grant applications. A common guideline is to have a reserve equal to three months of operating expenses.



APPENDIX A

HISTORY AND MISSION OF THE OREGON TIMBER TRAIL ALLIANCE

The Oregon Timber Trail Alliance (OTTA) was formed in 2016 by mountain biking enthusiasts from across the state. The organization is dedicated to stewardship, education, community, and quality trail experiences throughout the Oregon Timber Trail corridor.

In 2020, the organization was given 501(c)(3) non-profit status by the IRS, retroactive through 2019.

STEWARDSHIP

Fostering respect and a stewardship ethos for Oregon's diverse history, public lands, and natural and cultural landscapes is a key component of our mission. The OTTA is committed to maintaining a quality trail experience along the OTT corridor by collaborating to host trail work events, identifying need areas, and developing action plans to create better trail experiences for all trail users.

EDUCATION

The OTTA is committed to creating a growing community of invested forest users by providing skills classes, wilderness medical training, and courses in trail building and maintenance. The OTTA is dedicated to educating our user base around the world as well as engaging the local communities the OTT corridor passes through. With outreach and education the OTTA can create responsible trail users for generations to come.

COMMUNITY

The communities that the OTT travels through are key to its transformational experiences. The OTTA strives to engage local communities across the state and invest in their health and future as public land stewards and recreationalists.

EXPERIENCE

The OTTA is focused on preserving and creating backcountry singletrack trail experiences along the OTT corridor. The backcountry cyclist is not only looking for a well-designed and well-maintained trail, but an un-molested landscape to travel through while experiencing diverse ecosystems and rich cultural history. Access, trail connectivity, conservation, and public land preservation are paramount to the sought experience of the OTT rider.

APPENDIX B

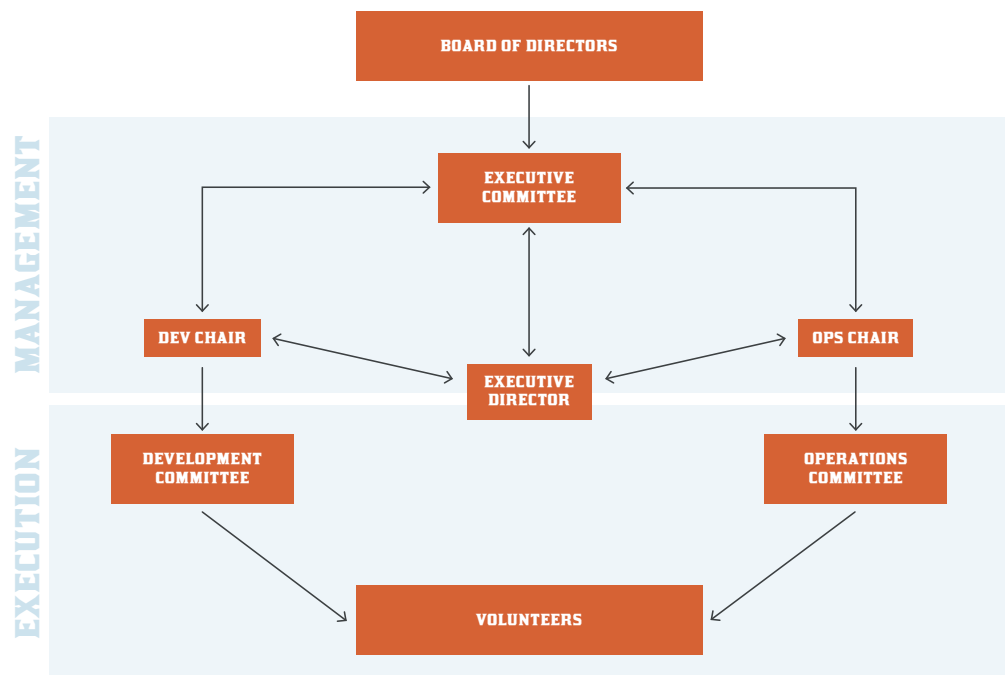
ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The OTTA is organized within the United States as a 501(c)(3) corporation. The board of directors is composed of advocates who geographically represent the four tiers of the Oregon Timber Trail, provide a range of relevant expertise, and are inclusive of the communities that use the Oregon Timber Trail. The OTTA seeks to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion through future board member recruitment.

The executive director (ED) reports to the board of directors. Previously a volunteer position, in 2020 the ED was made a paid, professional position. The ED and board members work with volunteer teams and contractors to carry out operations and programming.

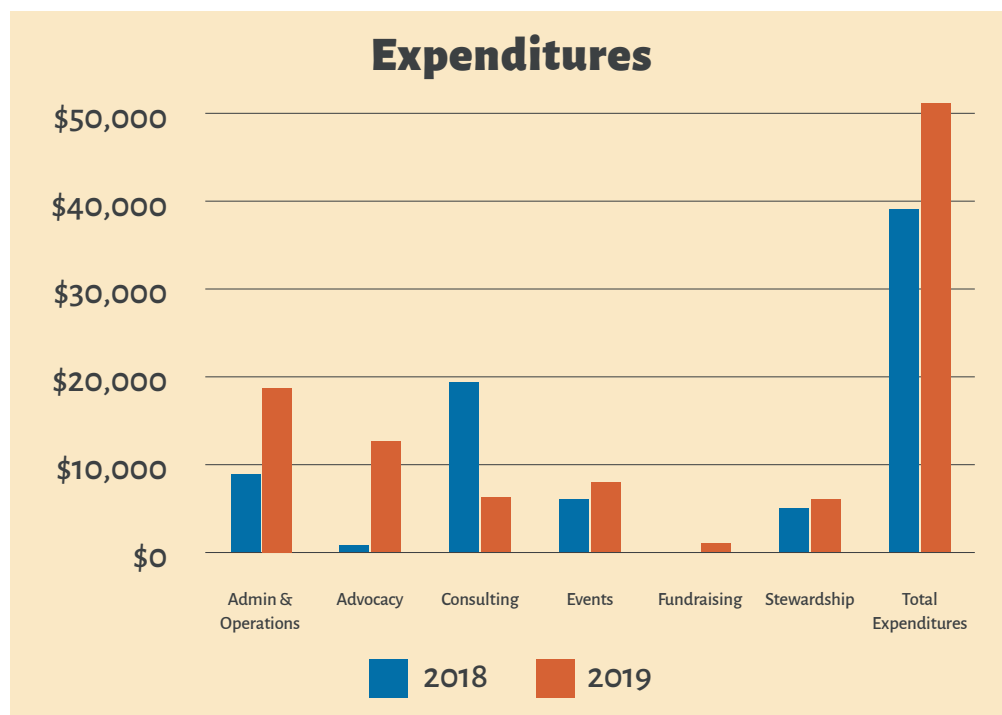
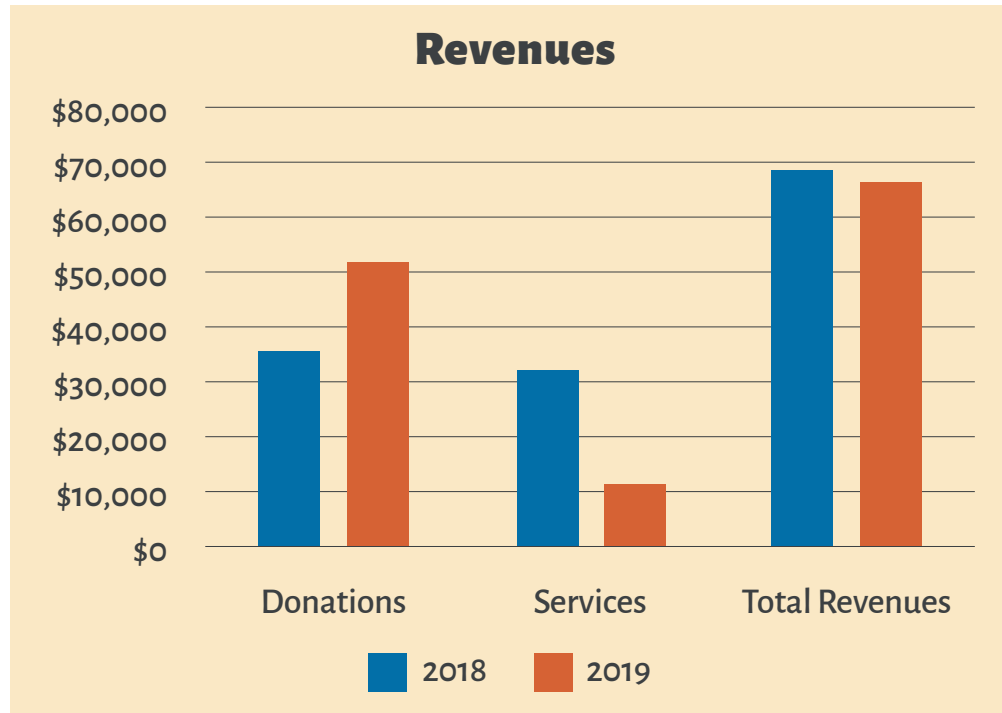
Within the organization, board members lead the committees with the support of the ED. Committee teams are directed by the ED and board members who volunteer for project teams. Project teams may include volunteer staffing in addition to board members.

The OTTA plans to continue staffing the ED position in the near-term, and staff project teams in the mid/long-term. In addition, contractors and subconsultants may perform work to support the organization in alignment with its strategic plan.



APPENDIX C

HISTORICAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION



APPENDIX D

OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS, COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

OPPORTUNITIES

The Oregon Timber Trail Alliance has the ability to pursue the following opportunities:

- *A potential Challenge Cost Share with the US Forest Service to perform trail maintenance and related enhancements along the Oregon Timber Trail corridor.*
- *Multiple and blended funded streams, including tourism development funding that is not available to other non-profits that focus extensively on trail work.*
- *The continued growth in the use of public lands incentivizes public land managers to work with the non-profits such as the OTTA to assist with trail maintenance and user management.*
- *The OTTA speaks at a statewide level to protect mountain bike singletrack as opposed local trail groups, opening up opportunities for trail advocacy across Oregon.*
- *There is a growing understanding by tourism promoters of the value of trail-based tourism to rural communities.*
- *The OTTA has a large and passionate support base that could be converted to financial support.*

THREATS

The following are threats to the OTTA's mission and work:

- *Stagnant public lands funding decreases trail maintenance and development, as well as exacerbates the likelihood of devastating wildfires.*
- *Territorialism from local trail organizations threatens cohesive action in support of the Oregon Timber Trail.*
- *Climate change narrows the window of use trail use and promotes extreme weather events such as wildfires that damage trails.*
- *Decreasing amount of tourism funding at the state and local level compared to recent years.*
- *Potential top-out of bikepacking market as something else becomes the "next big thing".*
- *Another advocacy organization attempting to claim ownership of all or parts of the Oregon Timber Trail in an attempt to erode the legitimacy of the OTTA.*
- *Pandemic shutdown and subsequent world recession.*

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Given the above opportunities and threats, the OTTA's competitive advantage can be found in the following areas:

- *The OTTA is the first and currently only statewide steward of the Oregon Timber Trail, and provides:*
 - 1) *Statewide representation to manage the trail in a coordinated manner;*
 - 2) *A board, executive director, and network of supporters that has experience in tourism development, land management, a range of cycling interests, and creative skills in marketing and branding;*
 - 3) *A strong online presence.*
- *The resources that the OTTA provides are of a high-quality and lead the industry, including strong brand recognition.*
- *The OTTA projects a professional image that helps with fundraising, grant procurement, and relationships with land managers.*