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## Dedication planned for park near airport

Officials of the Port of Seattle, the Federal Aviation Administration and King County Formal will greet May Day by dedicating the new North Sea-Tac Park.

The 250-acre recreational complex is being developed in the clear zone off the north end of Seattle-Tacoma Airport.

Roy Moore, public-information director for the Greater Highline Community Parks Board which is leasing the site from the Port of Seattle, said the ceremonies will begin at 10 a.m. May 1 in front of the Sunset Activity Center, formerly the Sunset Junior High School, weather permitting. If not, the dedication will be inside the gym.

Demonstrations and exhibits on May 1 and 2 by organizations renting some of the facilities, will include a motocross and equestrian groups, cross-country racers, aerobic and other dance groups and a drum-and-bugle corps.

The activity-center cafeteria will be serving lunch and dinner on both days.

Moore said it is unique that a citizens group such as the parks board has developed a park the size of North Sea-Tac without a lot of public money.

The park actually is a regional project, Moore said.

**The 250 acres** make it bigger than Marymoor Park near Redmond. But Marymoor is a county park.

North Sea-Tac Park doesn't have a paved bicycle racetrack like Marymoor, but it has a motocross bicycle course. The outdoor facilities also include an equestrian area and a cross-country track used for high-school and college competitions and which is popular with joggers.

The park's prime booster, Bill Bowlin, president of the parks board, says it's "One of the region's best-kept secrets."

Moore intends to change that with an aggressive program of speakers to provide information about the park to civic groups to solicit wide support. A slide-show presentation is being worked up with the help of students from Highline Community College.

But one of the major problems faced by the parks board is financing. Groups will pay for using the activities center. The smaller of two gyms rents for \$15 to \$25 per night, depending on the hours; rental of the larger gym goes up to \$40.

**Primary users** now are square-dance and aerobics groups, a church congregation and basketball organizations. The Imperial Drum and Bugle Corps also makes its headquarters there.

Among possible future renters are a German Shepherd dog club and gymnastics and volleyball organizations. Several proposals have been made by individuals seeking to develop soccer fields near the activities center.

According to Bowlin, the activity center is now operating at 50 percent of capacity, with income at \$880 per month. With an assumed occupancy of 85 percent the income could be \$1,500 monthly.

"Our anticipated expenditures are \$4,800 per month for normal operations," Bowlin said, and \$2,600 per month with minimum operations and minimum maintenance."

Bowlin cited these figures in making a pitch to establish a bingo operation to pay for development of both the park and the activities center. He at first had made the request to Oris Dunham, director of aviation, but had been turned down because of a clause in the lease prohibiting gambling.

Ed Parks, information officer for the airport, said it's unlikely the gambling ban will be revised.

**Another change** being sought by the parks board is one loosening the density guidelines.

The guidelines specify that there be no more than 40 persons per acre using some areas around the activity center at any one time.

Parks said the Port and F.A.A. have agreed to allow exceptions on an event-by-event basis. For example, a flea market, ballroom and square dance planned as a fund-raiser Saturday will be permitted, though they undoubtedly will draw more than the guidelines would permit at one time.

Moore said the guidelines are prohibiting developing the park to its full potential, that the guidelines essentially say "we won't let you have enough people there to make it practical."

Moore said the activity center will reach its full potential in about five years "if we can get the money just to operate and keep it in repair."