

Sandy River Basin Vision Document



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sandy River Basin Vision Document was created to provide opportunity for recreation-related stakeholders within the Sandy River Basin to explore the issues, needs, and vision for the Basin. This effort stimulated discussion, identified existing needs, and articulated potential opportunities for increased coordination, resource sharing, and partnership amongst stakeholders. The participating agencies worked together to gain a better understanding of the Basin and its stakeholders' needs, concerns, and recommendations in order to provide an enhanced user experience. This vision document is not prescriptive and does not represent any specific agency policy. Rather it is community driven and provides a general summary of issues and opportunities based on public input and stakeholder feedback. Recommendations are merely suggested actions and are not legally binding or commit any entity to the task.

This document is designed to provide a conceptual framework for planners and land managers to identify recreation related opportunities in the Sandy River Basin. It will serve as a tool to complement current and future planning efforts by making information available regarding current plans, conditions and projects throughout the Basin.

The framework of this document is intended to:

- Document and inventory the existing recreation resources and opportunities in the Basin.
- Summarize existing planning documents throughout the basin.
- Identify public issues and needs developed from basin wide open houses and focus groups.
- Make recommendations for future management actions and project development.

This overview is based on public outreach efforts that provided valuable information on existing issues and needs as well as suggested recommendations to address these concerns. The feedback received from open houses, questionnaires, and focus groups was designed to provide general context for future efforts, and supply a solid foundation for future planning and management decisions. The outreach efforts provide a valuable snapshot, but the results are by no means intended to suggest a comprehensive understanding of all stakeholders. More outreach is necessary.

Based on public outreach efforts, several key issues and needs were identified, as well as potential solutions and recommendations. Key issues included the need for increased and better access to and along the river, increased maintenance of existing public areas, and additional educational and safety information for river and trail users.

Sandy River Basin Vision Plan

The following list of individuals, representing various agencies and organization, contributed to the completion of the Sandy River Basin Vision Plan, and played a significant role throughout the public outreach process.

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Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This document is designed to provide a conceptual framework for planners and land managers to identify recreation opportunities in the Sandy River Basin. It will serve as a tool for planning efforts by making information available regarding current plans, conditions and projects throughout the Basin. This overview supplies a solid foundation for future planning and management decisions.

Specifically, this Document will focus on trails-based and river-based recreation within the Sandy River Basin including hiking, equestrian use, mountain biking, fishing, kayaking, canoeing and whitewater rafting. This document identifies the current condition of recreational opportunities within the basin, analyzes issues and needs, and evaluates the identified gaps regarding trail and river-based recreation resources. Recommendations for filling these gaps are identified to address the shortcomings.

The goal of this Vision Document is to better understand issues and needs based on user feedback. The end result is a list of recommendations that serve as a tool for basin wide planning efforts.

The document may be used by agencies to better integrate their planning efforts with public need, and balance protection and enhancement of values related to recreation, wildlife, vegetation, water quality, scenery, fisheries, and ecology in the Sandy River Basin.

1.2 Project Location

The Sandy River Basin is located between the Portland metropolitan area to the west and Mt. Hood, Oregon's highest point, to the east. The Basin includes the entirety of the Sandy River Watershed (See Sandy Basin Map Appendix B). The Sandy River and its main tributaries the Salmon, Zigzag, Bull Run and Little Sandy Rivers drain over 500 square miles of the Cascade mountain range from the eastern slope of Mt. Hood to the Columbia River. Host to majestic conifer forests and steep mountain topography, the region is renowned for its scenic beauty and unique recreational opportunities. Nearly 25 miles of the Sandy River has been Congressionally-designated as Wild and Scenic, along with the entirety of the 20-mile-long Salmon River from its headwaters to confluence with the Sandy.

The area's close proximity to the majority of Oregon's population and abundant beauty cause the Sandy River Basin to receive high levels of use and attention from recreationists and tourists. Additionally, the area has important functional and historical values for Oregon residents. At times, the area has seen high levels of timber production, a primary industry and economic driver in the Pacific Northwest. The sub-watershed of the Bull Run River has been established as a special management unit providing the residents of Portland with drinking water. The region also serves a prominent role in Oregon history; the famed Barlow Road that brought settlers to the Willamette Valley

passes on the south side of Mount Hood, through the Sandy River Basin and on to Oregon City.

1.3 Planning Methodology and Outreach

The Sandy River Basin core visioning team was assembled to provide a representative sample of government and private stakeholders who have a vested interest in managing the Sandy River Basin. To facilitate the development of this document a series of public meetings and focus groups were held to narrow in on specific issues and needs related to recreation in the basin. The first set of public meetings was held in the communities of Welches, Sandy and Troutdale, Oregon during June 2006. Invitations were sent out to stakeholders such as local landowners, agency representatives and recreation groups. The meetings focused on river recreation and access, community and trail connectivity, and river stewardship. Planning maps were used to facilitate discussion among meeting attendees. Opportunities for public access and potential recreational development were identified throughout the planning area. The information gained from these meetings helped to guide direction for the creation of the Sandy River Basin vision document.

In May of 2007 several focus group workshops were held to expand on the baseline information that was gathered during the June 2006 open houses. Two separate meetings were held; one focused on trails-based recreation while the other focused on river based recreation issues and needs. The focus groups allowed the planning team to have direct contact with local recreationists, business operators, landowners and agency representatives. Area planning maps were used to locate ongoing projects as well as identify potential areas for development. The “gaps” between current recreation opportunities and the desired future condition of opportunities in the basin were identified. The end product of the focus groups was the identification and prioritization of recommendations to address the identified recreation “gaps”.

After the public outreach phase, comments were processed and disseminated to visioning team members. With public input as a guide, an inventory was compiled about local recreation opportunities from agency representatives and public documents. Using this combination of public comments and current information, the goals of the vision document were identified.

1.4 Document Organization

Chapter II Provides a general recreation resource inventory for the Sandy River Basin, evaluating the current opportunities that are being provided by local, state, and federal agencies.

Chapter III Summarizes recreation related management plans throughout the Basin.

Chapter IV Outlines River and trail based recreational opportunities and needs throughout the Basin.

Chapter V Provides recommendations to bridge the gap between current river and trail based opportunities and the identified public needs.

Chapter 2.1 Sandy River Basin: Recreation Resource Inventory

The Sandy River Basin has a multitude of recreation opportunities offered by federal, state, and local agencies. Due its close proximity to the Portland metropolitan area, its abundant natural beauty, unique geology and interesting human history, the Sandy River area has long been a haven for outdoor recreation and tourism. The area offers a wide array of outdoor activities; recreationists enjoy everything from picnicking to whitewater rafting to mountaineering.

United States Forest Service (USFS)

The main agency providing outdoor recreation opportunities is the United States Forest Service (USFS). A large portion of the upper Sandy River basin falls within the Mount Hood National Forest. The Zigzag Ranger Station, located on Highway 26, is the office with management responsibilities for the area. Resources located within the portion of the Mount Hood National Forest include two wilderness areas (Mount Hood and Salmon-Huckleberry), two Wild and Scenic Rivers (the Salmon and the Sandy) five snow parks, shared-use trails, campgrounds and day use areas. The combination of undeveloped natural areas and developed recreation facilities allows for high quality year-round opportunities.

The National Visitor Use Monitoring Results (NVUM) released in June 2004 provides estimates of visitor use and activity participation across the National Forest. Since the USFS is the main recreation provider in the region, the information contained in the NVUM provides a general overview of recreation use and demand basin-wide. While the NVUM does not provide a breakdown by district, the Zigzag District (and thus the Sandy River Basin) contains many of the most visited and popular resources. Therefore, information gained from the Forest-wide NVUM will be applied to the planning area. This document estimates the National Forest as a whole receives over 4 million visits annually, with an estimated average of 1.26 site visits per forest visit (making for a total of over 4.9 million site visits). About three quarters of these visitors live within a 150 mile radius of the Forest, with nearly fifty percent coming from Multnomah, Washington, Hood River and Wasco Counties in Oregon and Clark and Klickitat Counties in Washington.

The top five visitor activities identified through an interview and survey process were downhill skiing (24% cite as primary activity), hiking (17% primary activity), relaxing (15% primary activity), other non-motorized activities and driving for pleasure (4% primary activity). High visitation by those 40 to 49 years of age (23% of forest visitors) and 50 to 59 years of age (16%), as well as those 16 years of age and younger (18%) indicates a strong contingent of families visiting Mount Hood NF. Two USFS-managed wilderness areas are found in the Sandy River Basin. Mount Hood Wilderness, which includes the summit and upper reaches of Mt. Hood, contains over 47,000 acres of

beautiful alpine landscape. Timberline Trail is the main recreation feature of the wilderness; the 40-mile trail and its twenty one spurs provide ample hiking and backpacking opportunities. The Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness, at over 44,000 acres, contains a 12-mile stretch of the designated Wild and Scenic Salmon River. Seventy miles of strenuous, primitive trails allow hikers and horseback riders to find solitude and explore Oregon's lush coniferous forests. Overall visitation numbers indicate that Mount Hood Wilderness area receives an average of 38,000 visits annually, with most visits originating from the Ramona Falls, Cloud Cap and Southside Climb trailheads. The entirety of the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness receives 6,500 visits annually. The Zigzag District of the Mount Hood NF also offers 150+ miles of additional trails that range from paved to challenging in nature. Some trails serve as viewpoints of scenic features in developed area, while others trace the path of the Barlow Trail portion of the Oregon Trail. Most of the trails are hiking only, while some trails are open to hikers and mountain bikers or hikers and equestrians. Visitor use data from the USFS indicates a predominance of hikers; visitor surveys report only 1.3% of those surveyed indicated biking was their primary activity and only .4% indicated that horseback riding was the main reason for their visit.

The Mount Hood National Forest contains many campgrounds, twenty of which are within the Zigzag Ranger District. The campgrounds are situated at a variety of elevations, often near a lake, creek, or other prominent feature. Located in close proximity to Highway 26 or other major roads, these campgrounds charge fees ranging from \$14 to \$16 dollars per night. The Basin as a whole contains over 450 individual, designated USFS campground sites as well as a virtually unlimited amount of dispersed roadside and backcountry camping. In addition, there are six day use areas in the District, many of which are found at campgrounds. These day-use areas provide opportunities for fishing, swimming, picnicking and trailhead access. The NVUM estimated the average site visit to a developed day use area lasts 4.7 hours. Especially popular sites include Timothy Lake, Trillium Lake and Lost Lake.

The USFS manages nine snow-parks within the Sandy River Basin. These parks are found between 3,000 and 6,000 feet in elevation and provide winter opportunities for downhill and cross country skiing, sledding, and snowshoeing as well as summer opportunities for mountain biking and other activities. Four of the nine snow-parks are managed by commercial operations. Historic Timberline Lodge is a particularly popular destination. The Mount Hood NF contracts with twenty four guides and outfitters that utilize public lands within the Forest.

The Forest Service provides some limited OHV (Off-Highway Vehicles) opportunities. All Forest Service roads are open to OHV use unless otherwise indicated. Plans are being developed to enhance, designate, and develop OHV trails throughout Mount Hood NF. Off-road opportunities in the Sandy River Basin and the west side of Mount Hood NF are limited due to high visitor concentrations and proximity to residential areas. While the opportunities listed above are all located in the upper Sandy basin, the USFS, administered by the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area, does manage some land in the Sandy River Delta, at the river's confluence with the Columbia. The area is a popular

day use area for bikers, hikers, swimmers and anglers. This area is managed under the Sandy River Delta Management Plan, discussed below.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

After recent acquisitions, the BLM now manages over 9,000 acres in the middle and lower Sandy River Basin. This land was acquired for the dual purposes of recreation and conservation. While visitor data are limited, BLM-managed parcels along the Sandy River as well as the upland portions of the Basin get a fair amount of unauthorized use. Several river sections are accessed informally by anglers and swimmers. Socially-created trails for hiking and mountain biking exist in several upland sections.

Wildwood, a developed day use recreation area is located just east of milepost 39, off U.S. Highway 26. Nearly 600 acres in size, Wildwood is nestled in the forested foothills of the Cascades along the Salmon National Wild and Scenic River. Wildwood offers family and group picnic facilities, ball fields and a play area. The park has a focus on interpretation of unique Oregon river ecosystems; including the fully accessible Cascade Stream watch Interpretive Trail and the Wildwood Wetland Boardwalk Trail. Visitors can also access the Salmon Huckleberry Wilderness from the Boulder Ridge Trailhead located in the park. Large picnic shelters than can accommodate up to 200 people can be reserved. The park offers opportunities for sightseeing, fishing, bicycle riding, hiking, swimming and socializing. The park has a \$5 entrance fee and receives about 75,000 visitors annually.

The other developed BLM managed recreation area in the Basin is Larch Mountain Environmental Education Site, located north of the Bull Run Management Unit and south of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Larch Mountain provides roughly 500 students per year a chance to study wetlands and forest ecology.

City Parks

The City of Sandy Parks and Recreation Department has numerous parks in the area that offer a variety of choices for visitors, residents and recreation enthusiasts. Most of Sandy's parks are small, usually one to ten acres in size with typical community park amenities such as picnic tables, sports fields and open space. Sandy River Park, located at the confluence of the Sandy River and Cedar Creek is a 124 acre undeveloped area offering hiking and forested areas for public use. The city also operates Jonsrud Viewpoint which offers interpretive information about the Oregon Trail.

The city of Gresham manages multiple community parks including Southeast Community Park, an undeveloped 16 acre parcel that contains prime wetlands habitat. Four other community parks offer typical community recreation facilities such as picnic tables and shelters, sports facilities and open space.

Metro

Metro, the regional governing body that serves the Portland metro area, operates Oxbow Regional Park near the city of Gresham. Located on the Sandy River, the 1,200 acre park contains a 67-site campground, picnic facilities and hiking trails. Due to its close

proximity to Portland, Oxbow receives high amounts of use; rough visitor use estimates put the annual figure at 220,000 visitors. The park serves as the setting for environmental education to take place, as well as community events such as the Salmon Festival in the fall.

Oxbow's location on the lower, calmer sections of the Sandy River makes it an attractive site for river recreation activities such as canoeing, kayaking and tubing. Roughly half of park visitors directly use the river. A developed and easily accessible beach/boat ramp provides boaters with an easy "put-in/take-out". Oxbow sees a large amount of winter use from anglers mainly fishing the winter steelhead runs. According to park staff, anywhere between ten and a maximum of fifty boats are launched on weekend days in the winter for the purposes of fishing. July and August sees more casual river usage; it is a popular time for recreationists to float the Sandy from Oxbow downstream to Dabney State Park. Park staff members have expressed concerns regarding the lack of knowledge among visitors about river conditions and distances. These management concerns can be compounded by alcohol consumption and potentially dangerous behavior.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Dabney State Park, located just four miles east of the city of Troutdale, has provided a popular summer getaway for Portland metropolitan area residents for over fifty years. The 136 acre park provides users with day use facilities including picnic shelters and grills. Many of the visitors that the park receives each year head for the Sandy River, where picnicking, swimming, fishing and boating are popular. The most recent visitor data available indicate annual visitation at 330,000. As with Oxbow, the proximity to urban areas and premier river recreation opportunities has been know to cause some management concerns regarding visitor safety.

Portland Water Bureau

At the confluence of the Sandy and Bull Run Rivers, the Portland Water Bureau manages the 14-acre Dodge Park. The park provides day use amenities such as grills, picnic tables and playground equipment. Due to its location near River Mile 22 (RM 22), Dodge Park provides the farthest upstream river access to the navigable portion of the Sandy River though boat launching facilities are not highly developed. Visitor use estimates from previous documents put the annual visitation at 90,000 visitors.

Chapter 2.2 Recreation Plans and Projects in the Sandy River Basin

Public lands within the Sandy River Basin are managed by a several land management agencies, in addition to local, county, and state agencies and municipalities. For any management action or project to be effective in an area such as the Sandy River Basin, an understanding of context is needed. The following summary of plans and projects provide a Basin-wide perspective on current recreation based management plans.

Bureau of Land Management

Sandy River Gorge Management Plan (Bureau of Land Management)

Prior to designation as a National Wild and Scenic River in 1988, a 6.5 mile roadless section of the river between Dodge Park and Oxbow Regional Park was nominated for designation as An Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) by the BLM in 1981. This section, known as the Sandy River Gorge, was proposed for ACEC status because of its outstanding and relatively undisturbed natural conditions. The area is bordered by private lands, as well as those owned by the not-for-profit agency The Nature Conservancy (TNC). A wide variety of flora and fauna are found within the Gorge, including 120 acres of rare low elevation old-growth Douglas fir forest, make this area a focus of researchers and conservationists alike. The unique recreational opportunities of the Sandy Gorge such as wildlife viewing, fishing, swimming, and day hiking were also considered when the designation was made.

The ACEC designation is strictly administrative within the BLM, meant only to guide management actions and priorities. The values that lead to the ACEC designation also lead to the formulation of actions in the management plan that focus on preservation of the area's scenic, botanical and recreational values. The plan includes actions that promote environmentally-friendly public visitation such as the development of a co-operatively managed trails system. Regulations were put in place to prohibit resource extraction and motorized and overnight use. The plan also calls for the development of a public outreach plan to inform recreationists, officials and researchers about the values of the Sandy River Gorge.

Sandy Wild and Scenic River Management Plan Environmental Assessment (BLM, 1992)

The Sandy Wild and Scenic River Management Plan was produced as a result of the Wild and Scenic designation the River received in 1988. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968) allowed Congress to declare selected river sections (or entire rivers) as Wild and Scenic in order to promote their "outstandingly remarkable values". The effect of this designation was to prevent future hydro-electric development that would disrupt the free-flowing characteristics. Subsequently, the 1988 Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act added 40 Oregon Rivers and/or river segments, including a 12.5 mile BLM-managed portion of the lower Sandy River, to the national list of Wild and Scenic Rivers. The River was recognized for its outstandingly remarkable values including fisheries, recreational, scenery, botany, geology and wildlife. Consistent with the provisions of the original Act, the designated portion of the lower Sandy River between Dodge Park and Dabney State Park was further divided into two classifications. The first section, located between Dodge Park and Indian John Island received a *scenic* designation, in recognition of its undisturbed natural setting. The segment from Indian John Island down to Dabney State Park was given a *recreational* classification due to its high level of recreation use and relatively high level of development. The previous ACEC designated area straddles these two classified segments.

Many of the management principles expressed in the Sandy River Gorge ACEC Plan are echoed in the preferred alternative of the Sandy River Wild and Scenic Plan. Both of these documents stress a balance between the unique scenic and natural qualities of the river system, while simultaneously improving low impact recreation. Other concerns addressed in the plan were the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, awareness of cultural resources and the protection of Sandy's water quality and in stream flows. The approach outlined in the preferred alternative stresses conservation objectives such as habitat restoration and visual resource protection.

The Sandy River Wild and Scenic MP proposed a cooperative strategy with local and state governments to promote recreation along the river. Specifically, an increase in overall recreation facility development, including trails, interpretive efforts and management presence was prescribed by the plan. A comprehensive approach including dissemination of information and river patrols was outlined. This strategy was meant to enhance the opportunity for recreational activities such as fishing, hiking, boating and day use. Despite these propositions, they have not been implemented since the release of the plan. There has been no development of any new recreation areas or access points along the Wild and Scenic section of the Sandy River.

United States Forest Service

Upper Sandy National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (USFS, 1994)

The Upper Sandy Management Plan provides the United States Forest Service for management direction for the upper Wild and Scenic section of the Sandy River. This section, extending from the River's headwaters for 12.4 miles to the boundary of the Mount Hood National Forest, was recognized for its outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, botanical, fisheries and geological values. As with the lower section of the river, two classifications were put in place to specify unique river qualities. The first section from the Sandy's headwaters downstream for 4.5 miles was given a *wild* designation. A wild designation identifies river segments that lack unnatural impoundments, are free of pollution and are generally only accessible by trail. The subsequent 7.9 mile segment down to the forest boundary was classified as *recreational*.

The Management Plan outlines a strategy for preserving the free-flowing characteristics and outstandingly remarkable values of the River while allowing for low-impact recreation use. The Plan calls for some road and trailhead closures in the vicinity of the upper wild section of the river and improved facilities and access in the lower, recreation-designated section. An increased focus on interpretation is also discussed to highlight the unique resources of the area. Consistent with the preservation focus of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Plan also provides for habitat restoration while prohibiting regulated timber harvest.

Mt. Hood National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USFS, 1990)

The Mount Hood National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (RMP) provides direction for the 1.1 million acre Mount Hood National Forest located in north Central Oregon. The Plan outlines acceptable uses and management direction in the National

Forest. Due to its abundant natural resources and close proximity to the Portland metropolitan area, the Mount Hood National Forest serves many regionally and nationally important functions. The “urban forest” label given to the Mount Hood NF by the USFS acknowledges this role. The Management Plan addresses twelve major issues: timber management and supply, community stability, old growth forests, recreational management, scenic quality, roadless areas, Native American concerns, fish habitat, water quality, developed recreation opportunities, Wild and Scenic Rivers and wildlife populations.

While the RMP focus primarily on timber harvest and community stability, procedures and priorities for recreation management were established. The RMP recognizes the USFS as the primary, and some cases only, provider of multiple forms of recreation in the area such as skiing, wilderness activities and developed camping. In order to manage these activities, the RMP made recommendations regarding the construction and upkeep of recreation facilities. Due to high levels of deterioration, a broad plan for facility maintenance was recommended. Practical maintenance and funding concerns, combined with a large supply of existing recreation opportunities prevented the RMP from recommending any new large scale construction of recreation facilities. Since the release of the RMP, conditions on the Mount Hood National Forest have gone through several transformations. While the RMP still provides direction to all USFS activity in the Forest, recreation strategy has shifted significantly since its release. A priority that has stayed high within the Forest is the preservation of the unique scenery and visual resources of the Forest. Using the Visual Resource Management rating system, a full one-fourth of the Forest was given the highest designation for scenic beauty.

Sandy River Delta Plan (US Forest Service, 1995) & Sandy River Connections Project

The Sandy River Delta Plan (SRDP) provides management direction for the Sandy River Delta, a 1,500 acre area located at the confluence of the Sandy and Columbia Rivers. The area is located within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA), so the Plan is consistent with management goals of the NSA such as enhancement of recreation opportunities and protection of open space and scenic resources. As part of the Mt. Hood National Forest, the Delta must also comply with forest-wide standards for environmental concerns such as soil productivity, fisheries, and riparian habitat. A key consideration within this area is the preservation of open space and restoration of the damaged ecological diversity due to habitat destruction. The Delta area gets special attention due to its location at the far western end of the Columbia River Gorge and its proximity to Interstate-84. This combination of factors has made it a candidate to be a western “Gateway to the Gorge” for recreationists and tourists. Municipal, state and federal agencies have long seen the area has a link between the Portland metropolitan area, the city of Troutdale and the Columbia River Gorge that could provide an orientation point for travelers to inform themselves before entering the Gorge.

Informal recreational use of the Delta, including hiking, fishing and boating prompted the SRDP to lay out the following recreation-related goals: increased and improved access for public and private use of the Columbia River, diversity of trail opportunities in the

NSA, using the Delta to increase awareness about Columbia River gorge resources, and maximization of customer service through partnerships to design and construct recreation facilities. To achieve these goals, the SRDP's desired conditions proposed the future development of recreation and interpretive facilities to enhance user convenience, a shared-use trail system to provide for scenic appreciation and connectivity, and safe and adequate parking. The Plan, partly contingent on improvement of Interstate 84, set a timetable of ten years to begin this process.

In June 2007, the Sandy River Connections Project preliminary concept plan was completed. Released by a group of partners including USFS, Oregon Department of Transportation as well as local governments, the concept plan is designed to provide a framework for upcoming planning efforts. Many of the plan objectives echo those of the SRDP plan including promotion of a multi-use trails system, improved riverfront access and enhanced parking. Unlike the SRDP, the Connections Project does not include plans for a staffed interpretive center. Instead, the area will utilize signage and other way-finding tools to disseminate information. The Connections Project focuses on transportation improvement and gets into project-level specifics regarding transportation projects such as opportunities for improvement of the historic Troutdale Bridge. A renewed focus has been given to trail connectivity, especially 40-Mile Loop around the Portland metropolitan area. According the concept plan, the Sandy River Delta provides critical connections that missing from the 40-mile loop. Trail development and other project-level work have already begun in the Delta.

Current USFS Projects

The Zigzag Ranger District is currently working on the construction of a 9.6 mile shared use trails system around Government Camp, located in the upper reaches of the Sandy River Basin. The system is designed to provide more multiple-use trail opportunities such as mountain biking, equestrian use and Nordic skiing as well as provide connectivity to local communities and destinations. The trails are part of a larger connectivity effort by the USFS that would extend from Government Camp to Zigzag. A push to build and maintain multiple-use trails that would service the biking and equestrian communities have been challenged by a lack of funding.

Other Current Projects

Facility improvement plans have been proposed for Dodge Park, managed by the Portland Water Bureau. The proposal includes plans for facility and roads improvements, such as enhancement of parking areas and picnic shelters. Plans for new facility construction include 11 recreational vehicle camping sites, along with a camp host site. No camping sites are currently available at the site.

Chapter 3: Sandy River Basin Needs Assessment

This section is based on existing agency information. Chapter 4 will focus on integrating existing information with public needs. In order to provide a more accurate picture of recreational opportunities in the Sandy River Basin, opportunities will be discussed in two separate sections. The first section will outline trail-based recreation opportunities and facilities that enable recreationists to participate in hiking, mountain biking, equestrian and off-highway vehicle activities. The second section will discuss river-based recreation opportunities such as river rafting, kayaking, swimming and fishing. This categorization will facilitate the overall goal of describing the current recreation situation in the basin and identifying gaps that may exist.

3.1 ROS Information

To describe recreational settings, this document will utilize the **Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)**. The ROS is a tool used by the BLM and the USFS to describe, inventory and subsequently manage recreation demands and activities. Based on the recognition that the goal of recreationists is to take part in pleasurable leisure activities in enjoyable environments, the ROS creates a classification system that differentiates between various recreation settings. The classifications are based on three components: setting, activities and experiences. The primary component is environmental setting, which dictates what activities and, therefore, experiences, are likely to take place. Major actions that influence setting and, therefore, ROS classifications include visible vegetation and timber management, road construction and maintenance, and access management. While setting does not entirely dictate activities, which in most cases can take place across the entire spectrum, the ROS provides a framework for recreation planning by associating settings, activities and experiences.

The seven elements used to classify settings are visitor access, remoteness, naturalness, site management, visitor management, social encounters and visitor impacts. These elements combine to provide a basis for analyzing various settings. Their application led to the creation of seven ROS classes:

- *Primitive*: A large-sized area (5,000+ acres) lying at least 3 miles from the nearest vehicle access point; an essentially unmodified natural landscape with little to no evidence of visitor impacts or site management; activities include backpacking, photography and nature study allowing for a high degree of isolation and solitude; very high levels of personal risk and challenge
- *Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized*: Moderately large area (2,500+ acres) at least one half mile from the nearest motor vehicle access; the landscape is predominately natural with infrequent interaction with others; management controls are low allowing for high degrees of interaction with nature in activities such as backpacking, backcountry hunting, climbing and nature viewing; high level of personal risk and challenge
- *Semi-Primitive Motorized*: Moderately large area (2,500+ acres) within one half mile of undeveloped roads and vehicle trails; landscape is mostly natural with some evidence of human use; interaction with others and management controls remain low; activities such as climbing, off-road

vehicle use, mountain biking , hiking and trail riding allow for a moderate level of isolation, personal risk and challenge

- *Roaded Natural*: Areas near improved and maintained roads; areas appear mostly natural but some human modification is evident; moderate level of contact with others and management controls; facilities allow for motorized and non-motorized activities such as fishing, downhill skiing, picnicking, off-highway vehicle riding and vehicle camping; the setting provides a sense of security, yet allows for a low level of personal risk and challenge
- *Roaded Modified*: Areas near highly maintained roads and developed recreation facilities; greater level of human use and management control; opportunities for affiliation with others are readily available; visitors can still have interaction with the environment through interpretive displays, hiking, group activities and sightseeing; personal risk and challenge becoming less important
- *Rural*: Substantially modified natural environment with highly maintained roads, facilities and amenities present; high levels of management control; abundant opportunities for affiliation with others; interaction with environment and personal risk are less important than convenience; area is designed for moderate to use including picnicking, on-road biking and outdoor games
- *Urban*: Areas near paved highways where the natural landscape is dominated by human use and modification; management controls are very high, as are user concentrations; activities are facility-dependant such as concerts, zoos, amusement parks and indoor games; feelings of high personal security

3.2 Trails-based Recreation Analysis

3.2a Description of Trail-Based Opportunities

Trail-based recreation plays a prominent role in the Sandy River Basin. Hiking is an extremely popular outdoor recreation activity nationwide. According to Roper Research, 18% of Americans reported hiking in the last twelve months. This corresponds well to findings in the NVUM, which indicated for 17% of respondents hiking was their primary reason for a visit to Mount Hood National Forest. Other trail-based activities, for example mountain biking, have seen drastic increases in popularity. Roper Research indicates that mountain bikers are among the most likely to take part in their activity several times a month. Downhill and cross-country mountain biking, unknown in mainstream culture just a couple of decades ago, have now become popular activities worldwide. Equestrian use is also another popular recreational activity, particularly in rural areas

The Sandy River Basin's combination of steep topography, impressive vistas and diverse ecology make it a prime location for hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians alike. The area is the primary local trail-based recreation destination for Portland metropolitan area residents. The area also has a regional and national reputation for quality hiking that can

be quickly corroborated by a review of recreation information contained in guidebooks and websites. The two USFS-managed wilderness areas, Mount Hood and Salmon-Huckleberry, offer extensive hiking and equestrian opportunities. The proximity of these two areas to local communities and maintained roads prevents them from falling under the primitive classification of the ROS. Recreation in these areas would be classified as Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SNM). Typical wilderness experiences include enjoying risk-taking adventure, testing your endurance, enjoying easy access to natural landscapes and escaping from crowds. Common benefits reported from wilderness recreation are closer relationships with nature, greater freedom from urban living and improved physical fitness. While popular trails such as Timberline receive high amounts of usage, especially on summer weekends, the two wilderness areas still provide ample opportunities for solitude and isolation. Based on monitoring data, wilderness visits average 6.7 hours, indicating that day use has replaced overnight backpacking as the dominant wilderness activity.

The Mount Hood Wilderness receives a relatively high level of management attention due to its high use levels, relative renown and potential for safety concerns. The 38-mile Timberline Trail and its offshoots, which encircle the entirety of Mount Hood, and Ramona Falls are especially popular destinations. Like many wilderness areas, a self-issued permit is required for all visitors. For summit attempts of Mount Hood the USFS highly encourages use of a trained guide. The combination of deep crevices, unpredictable weather and icy terrain makes climbing Mount Hood an extremely challenging semi-primitive recreation opportunity.

Trail opportunities in the next ROS class, Semi-Primitive Motorized (SM), are mostly confined to the upper reaches of the Sandy River Basin. Trail-based activities in this class include hiking, mountain biking, vehicle trail riding and equestrian use. Resources found in this class are usually multiple use trail systems with vehicle-accessible trailheads that still retain some measure of remoteness. Opportunities for isolation and challenge still exist in this class. Pioneer Bridle (8 miles), Cross-town (3 miles), Flag Mountain (2.1 miles) and Still Creek (1.6 miles) are hiking and biking trails maintained by the Forest Service that provide connectivity for the local communities of Zigzag, Rhododendron and Government Camp and local campgrounds and recreation areas. Other USFS multiple use trails such as the Sandy River Trail and Eureka Peak Trail provide over 10 miles of single track access to points of interest and viewpoints. Hiking-only trails such as the popular Mirror Lake Trail provide 10 additional miles of access to mountain lakes and other destinations.

Trail-based opportunities within the Roded Natural and Roded Modified ROS classes are prevalent in the lower Sandy River Basin. Trail activities in these classes typically include short multiple use trails and interpretive and environmental education areas. These ROS classes typically allows for some level of interaction with environment while providing visitors a sense of security. Oxbow Regional Park offers 15 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails in a Roded Natural setting. These trails provide users with access to the Sandy River as well as interior portions of the park. Due to annual visitation numbers upwards of 200,000, trail users can expect moderate levels of contact

with other people as well as visible management controls. Trails within the BLM's Wildwood Recreation Area also fall within this ROS class. Several miles of trails, including highly improved interpretive trails providing access to the Cascade Stream watch Environmental Education Area, are located in the park. Dabney State Park offers opportunities that fall more within the Roaded Modified class. Instead of a designation trail system, river access points provided in the park allow large numbers of visitors to experience the Sandy River in a highly social and heavily managed manner.

Table 3.2a

ROS Class	Location	Activities
Primitive	None	None
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	Mount Hood, Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness Areas	Hiking/backpacking, horseback riding, mountaineering
Semi-Primitive Motorized	USFS connective and destination trails in Upper Basin (Pioneer Bridle, etc)	Hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, Nordic skiing
Roaded Natural	Oxbow Regional Park, Wildwood Recreation Area	Hiking, river access, biking, horseback riding, environmental education
Roaded Modified	Dabney State Park	River access, socializing

3.2b Trail-Based Issues and Needs

The following trail and river based issues and needs were solicited from a series of public open houses and subsequent trail specific focus groups. This outreach effort started in June of 2006 and targeted the local communities of Welches, Sandy, and Portland, Oregon as well as a range of agency representatives.

In order to gather the most relevant information for planning efforts in the Sandy River Basin, the Core Visioning Team solicited public comments via mail, open houses and focus group meetings. This section will attempt to summarize and clarify the main issues and needs regarding trail-based recreation that arose during this effort.

One of the key issues identified by participants in the public open house and mail-in comment phase is the lack of sufficient multiple-use trail opportunities within the middle portion of the Sandy River Basin. While respondents seem to be satisfied by the resources of the upper and lower portions of the Basin, comments indicate that there is a general lack of trails designed for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking in the Middle Sandy Basin (roughly between the towns of Sandy and Welches). An improvement and overall increase of signage and maps was an important point to many mail-in responders.

A focus group meeting held to look more deeply into these issues was held on May 9th, 2007. Contributors identified this area, especially recent Bureau of Land Management acquisitions, as possible sites for new non-motorized trail developments providing multiple-use connective and loop opportunities that would address local and regional

needs. Participants were concerned that current usage of the trails in the Basin did not match their intended function. The potential for user conflicts on future trail development were highlighted by several participants. Additionally, the issue of maintenance was touched on; contributors to the discussion were interested in an assessment of current trail maintenance efforts and the ability of agency maintenance capacities to keep pace with new trails. In conjunction with this concern, the need for volunteer trail maintenance opportunities was identified. Focus group participants also indicated a need for clear, reliable and accurate trail maps on a local and regional scale that would be available online and in paper form.

The next set of major issues dealt with resource conflicts and conservation. Numerous mail-in comments recognized safety concerns related to private property trespass as a major issue. Specifically, respondents were worried about current trespass problems on private property around the Marmot Dam and Dodge Park areas. Emphasis was also given to providing protection to the Bull Run Management Unit. Trespass concerns were also evident in public meeting discussions regarding trash and dumping problems on public as well as private land. As a result of these problems, increased law enforcement in the area was cited as a need.

3.3 River-Based Recreation Analysis

3.3a Description of River-based Recreation Opportunities

The importance of the Sandy River itself as a recreational resource is well documented. A large number of studies and guidebooks demonstrate the prominent role the Sandy River has played in the local and regional recreation market. The relatively unspoiled scenery of the river system has long been a destination for visitors, especially those from the Portland Metropolitan area. Considering its proximity to Portland, the Sandy River offers a remarkably pristine setting for recreation that few other rivers as close to a major urban area can equal.

Nearly 25 miles of the Sandy River and the entirety of the Salmon River have been including in the National Wild and Scenic River system in recognition of these values. Numerous recreation activities including fishing, boating and swimming have taken place for decades at numerous locations along the River including easily accessible local, regional and state parks. The Sandy also has abundant opportunities for nature study and environmental education, particularly in Wild and Scenic segments managed by the BLM and USFS and parcels acquired by The Nature Conservancy and accessible to the public. Several youth camps located near the river and festivals held in the area each year also attest to the value of its scenery and ecology.

Day use along the Sandy River accounts for the majority of use along the Sandy River. With over 600,000 visits annually, in total. Dabney State Park, Oxbow Regional Park and Dodge Park support a large percentage of use along the Sandy River. Popular activities include swimming, picnicking and socializing. Informal estimates from Oxbow Regional Park indicate roughly half of park's visitors (roughly 220,000 annually) make direct use of the river.

Fishing along and in the Sandy River is an extremely popular and important recreational activity. Eight runs of anadromous fish and ten resident species allow for quality fishing during most of the year. Four ESA (Endangered Species Act) listed “threatened” species are found within the river: Lower Columbia River Steelhead Trout, Lower Columbia River Chinook and Coho Salmon and Columbia River Chum. The Sandy River and its major tributaries (Bull Run, Salmon and Zigzag Rivers) provide above average habitat for these and other species. The Sandy River Hatchery, located north of the town of Sandy at the confluence of the Sandy River and Cedar Creek is the sole hatchery serving the river system.

Within the Basin Steelhead are very popular with anglers, as the Sandy is one of the finest winter and summer Steelhead fisheries in the state. As with other anadromous runs, the river’s relatively solid Steelhead runs are due to its location downstream of the major water projects and impediments on the Columbia River. According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (ODFW) 1997 Sandy River Fish Management Plan, nearly 230,000 winter Steelhead smolts are released annually below Marmot Dam to support popular sport fishing activities in the lower Sandy. The most recent data from the BLM indicate nearly 10,000 adult winter Steelhead returns every year. The popular November through May winter Steelhead season has historically centered on the lower Sandy below the Marmot Dam site. Similarly, summer Steelhead, which were released starting in 1975 and now boast annual adult returns estimated between 4,000 and 6,000, provide a popular April through December angling season. Angling restrictions have been put in place to protect wild runs and allow harvest of hatchery fish. As a result, hatchery harvests exceed wild catches by a three to one ratio. In addition to Steelhead, Chinook (both spring and fall) and early winter Coho have popular sport fisheries on the Sandy.

Angling numbers for the Sandy River Basin indicate that the fishery gets an extensive amount of use. A 1988 ODFW estimate put total angling usage at 75,000 annual angler days for anadromous fish alone, with a possible total of 100,000 annual days when all species are included. Angling-specific boating activity is also prevalent; Park personnel at Oxbow Regional Park have reported an average of 16 boats launched per day during the winter months, with a maximum of 50 boats per day. Non-angling boat launches and river usage was also high. During high-use summer weekends, Oxbow and Dabney park staff have observed over 1,000 persons per day using the River.

Whitewater rafting and kayaking are other popular uses of the Sandy River. From a rafting and kayaking perspective, the Sandy River’s navigable section (which extends from its confluence with the Salmon to its delta at the Columbia) can be divided into three sections:

Section [total length]	Difficulty	Estimated Time /Skill Level
1 Sandy/Salmon Confluence (RM 38) to Marmot Dam site (RM 30) [7 miles]	Class II and III rapids, with difficulty picking up after RM 34 <i>Kayak or Raft</i>	Half Day/ Intermediate or Guided Beginners
2 Marmot Dam Site to Dodge Park (RM 19) [11 miles]	Class II, III and IV with four class IV rapids <i>Kayak or Raft</i>	Long Half Day/ Advanced or Guided
3 Dodge Park to Oxbow Regional Park (RM 12.5) or Dabney (RM 6) [6.5 or 13 miles]	Most flat water, Class I and II <i>Kayak, Raft or Tube</i>	Half or full day depending on take-out Beginner unguided

ROS classifications can roughly be applied to these sections. Generally, conditions on the river become less primitive with increasing proximity to the Columbia River and Portland metropolitan area. The first section, from the confluence of the Salmon and Sandy to the Marmot Dam site, exhibits a mix of semi-primitive motorized, roaded natural, roaded modified and even rural classifications. On many sections of river, contact with others is unlikely; other sections that come in contact with private property or popular informal day use areas present conditions more similar to the roaded natural, roaded modified and even rural classes. The second section below Marmot Dam offers some semi-primitive motorized opportunities in more rugged sections of the river and roaded natural, roaded modified and rural characteristics near Dodge Park and along private property. The last section is the most developed and therefore offers more roaded natural, roaded modified and rural characteristics. However, a section of the river flowing through the Sandy River Gorge (see related BLM plans) falls closer to semi-primitive motorized class.

Current usage is concentrated on the lower sections of the River where access is easiest and conditions require less skill. Dodge, Oxbow and Dabney parks all provide popular put-in and take-out points for kayakers and rafters. However, significant informal use upriver is occurring mostly at bridges where users are accessing the River. Revenue Bridge, near river mile RM 24, is an especially popular (but not designated) put-in and take-out. Several extremely challenging class IV rapids exist between Marmot dam and Revenue Bridge. With the removal of Marmot Dam, unimpeded water travel will now be possible. Previous half day trips can now be combined for a full day. Currently some commercial guiding, including rafting, kayaking and fishing services, has and continues to take place on the river though the full extent of these activities is unknown. Kayaking and drift boating opportunities also exist on the tributaries of the Sandy River, but are less widespread.

The Salmon River in particular offers one of the most challenging opportunities for kayakers in the country. The Salmon offers semi-primitive non-motorized ROS characteristics within the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness, with conditions becoming less primitive as proximity to the Sandy River increases. Angling and fishing also take place along the Sandy's tributaries, especially lower sections of the Salmon.

3.3b River-based Issues and Needs

Input from the public regarding trail-based recreation, input from the public regarding water-based recreation was received via mail, public open house and focus group meeting.

The dominant issue among public outreach participants was river access. Comments regarding the lack of river access, especially to the middle and upper reaches of the Sandy River, were numerous. Many mail-in responses indicated a desire for access to the Sandy River at multiple points including Marmot Dam, Revenue Bridge and others. Public comments suggest any such developments should provide adequate signage and proper visitor facilities such as restrooms. Some responses indicated a desire for access to the Little Sandy River and the Bull Run Management Unit while others advocated preventing such use. Mail-in and public meeting comments relating to the river also expressed concerns over motorized boats, commercial business and the status of fisheries within the Sandy River Basin. A moderate interest in expanding or enhancing kayaking opportunities was articulated.

The ensuing focus group meeting agreed with the identification of these issues and needs. Focus group participants indicated the current lack of developed river access above Dodge Park as a major issue; increased access, which would allow for a departure from current usage of bridge right of-ways, was named as a primary need. Current informal access points lack proper parking and visitor facilities, causing safety and trespass concerns. In addition, landowners have expressed a concern for trespass coming from river users travelling along the river and its beds and banks. A clear understanding of property ownership and boundaries also contributes to this issue.

Chapter 4. Recommendations

4.1 Over the course of a year and a half of meetings amongst the core planning team to analyze and discuss the results of the basin-wide inventory, the series of public open houses throughout the basin and stakeholder focus groups resulted in the identification of the following issues and recommended actions. It should be noted that these issues and recommendations do not necessarily represent the views of any of the entities involved in this effort but reflect a collective view based on public outreach efforts.

4.2 Trail Related Issues and Recommendations

Access & Opportunities

Issue #1

- **Potential Expansion of Mt. Hood Wilderness Boundaries (Mt. Hood Wilderness Bill of 2008) would eliminate many miles of existing trails in and around Mt. Hood that are currently open to mountain bikes.**

Recommendations

- 1) Conduct trail feasibility studies outside of the potential wilderness expansion to explore the creation of trails open to mountain bikers.

Issue #2

- **There is a lack of multiple use non-motorized trail opportunities in the Middle Sandy Basin.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Focus on connection and loop routes that would fulfill local and regional trail needs.
- 2) Work with the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) and local user groups to develop opportunities.
- 3) Utilize decommissioned roads and trails whenever possible.
- 4) Focus on trail development opportunities within BLM lands.
 - a.) Wildcat Mountain has potential for trail development and already has existing unofficial trails.
 - b.) The Marmot Dam site has potential to serve as a trailhead for adjacent lands where trails could be developed.
 - c.) BLM administered lands south of the Little Sandy Watershed boundary should be looked at to provide trail opportunities and connectivity.

Coordination and Planning

Issue #1

- **A need exists for regional trail planning across jurisdictional boundaries.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Conduct an assessment of existing trails within the Basin that evaluates such things as condition, needed maintenance and level of use.
- 2) Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between land management agencies in the basin, to address support for interagency trails planning.
- 3) Explore connecting the city of Sandy to Lolo Pass.
- 4) The historic Barlow trail could provide for a unique long distance trail that could link into Metro's trail network.
- 5) Develop a trail plan for the middle portion of the Sandy River Basin.

Maintenance

Issue #1

- **Trail managers have challenges and constraints in maintaining existing trails.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Volunteer trail maintenance opportunities, such as adopt-a-trail, should be further developed and promoted to assist land managers in maintaining and developing trail opportunities.
- 2) Develop a special events calendar to promote public events (National Trails Day, National Public Lands Day, etc.) throughout the Basin.

4.3 River Related Issues and Recommendations

Access

Issue #1

- **A limited number of River access points exist throughout the Sandy River Basin.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Work collaboratively with various agencies to develop more river access points. The Middle and upper reaches exhibit the best opportunity for creating access points to the river.
- 2) Provide logical river access points that facilitate 1/2 and full day river based trips.
- 3) Access points should include adequate signage and proper visitor facilities (i.e. trailheads, restrooms, trash receptacles, and parking). Lack of amenities could potentially result in private property trespass, dumping and vandalism issues.

Issue #2

- **Access at existing bridges to the Sandy River is problematic.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Access at existing bridges needs to be explored and secured.
- 2) Other access points better suited for put-ins need to be explored to augment existing put-ins.

Coordination & Planning

Issue #1

- **There is a lack of boater information for the Sandy River Basin**

Recommendations:

- 1) Develop a sign plan to educate the public on needed river info, maps and safety including navigable river segments.
- 2) Create uniform signs.
- 3) Potential for developing Sandy as a water trail and coordinating planning/development of access and river based recreation facilities.
- 4) Identify locations for day use, overnight use, and parking facilities.

Patterns of Use

Issue #1

- **The lower portion of the river near the Delta/I 84 corridor receives the heaviest use (day use) by the public and the largest number of complaints from local landowners.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Develop other access points along the river and its tributaries to effectively distribute use.
- 2) Provide informational signs at popular access points that show where other access points along the river corridor are to redirect people to less crowded sites that do not have trespass issues.

Issue #2

- **Marmot to Revenue Bridge is the most commonly paddled river segment.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Provide information at put-ins about the other reaches of the basin that are suitable for paddling.
- 2) Develop other put-ins/take-outs along the river to allow for easier access to other reaches along the river.

Issue #3

- **Accidents/incidents happen too often on the section below Revenue Bridge due to unprepared/inexperienced river floaters.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Develop a formalized water trail including maps and signage.
- 2) Provide information at put-ins about the skill level and time needed to float a particular section of the river and show other reaches suitable for beginning floaters.

4.4 Other Recreation Related Issues

Information Distribution

Issue #1

- **Improvement and overall increase in information such as maps and signs are needed throughout the basin.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Have various agencies and entities managing land along the river work together to share resources and develop unified information such as trail opportunity maps, paddling and river access maps, and camping opportunities within the basin.
- 2) Agencies and entities within the basin need to partner together to create some unified signs and sign information to ensure that key messages are received by the public.
- 3) Proper signage and brochures need to be created to identify public access and limits of public ownership to reduce trespass.

Issue #2

- **There is a lack of coordination between recreation providers and tourism promoters.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Work in partnership to develop a tourism and promotions plan for the Basin that promotes recreation opportunities while protecting sensitive resources.
- 2) Develop a website that provides universal recreation and potentially services information for visitors.

Law Enforcement

Issue #1

- **Many areas that receive recreation use within the basin pose challenges for law enforcement.**

Recommendation:

- 1) Develop a multi-agency reciprocal agreement to allow for enforcement of each others rules and regulations.

Issue #2

- **Dumping, vandalism and trespass are concerns along the river.**

Recommendations:

- 1) Develop educational materials about the navigability and trespass issues related to river recreation on the Sandy.
- 2) Develop a formalized water trail to steer people to legal access points and away from private property.
- 3) Provide for an adequate number of amenities such as trashcans to reduce the likelihood of litter and dumping.

Appendix A: Summary of Public Recommendations

Sandy River Public Comments Summary

This document is a summary of the 102 mailed in responses and open house comments to the Sandy River public outreach effort. Comments and/or questions have been consolidated into six categories: (1) Conservation, (2) River access, (3) Recreation needs, (4) Community issues, (5) Trail connectivity, and (6) Miscellaneous. Each comment has been given a number that corresponds to the total number of comments for that specific category. Black numbers represent comments that were received through the mail, and red numbers represent comments from one of the three Sandy River Planning open houses.

Public comments followed several trends when examining responses to the major issues outlined in Table 1-3:

- Respondents want increased river access identifying the Marmot Dam Site and Little Sandy River specifically.
- The recreation needs identified for the Sandy River were an increase in signage and maps, and the need for concentrated recreation opportunities in the middle section of the river.
- Community based problems identified issues associated with public trespass onto private property, vandalism, and illegal dumping as primary concerns.
- Increasing the opportunities for a multiple use non-motorized trail experience within the planning area was identified.

Table 1-3

Public Comment Summary

Major Issue	Sub-Issue	Total	Type
Conservation	Protection for Bull Run Management Unit	3	
	No public access to BLM managed lands	3	
	Restrict motorized boats on river	2	
	Restore fish populations	1	
	Eliminate invasive species in Sandy area	1	
	No commercial business or signs on river	1	
	Introduce fish further up the Sandy River System	1	Public mtg.
	Preservation of Sandy very important	1	Public mtg.

Major Issue	Sub-Issue	Total	Type
River Access	Provide River Access at Marmot Dam Site	4	
	No public access to the Little Sandy River	1	
	Provide parking area at Little Sandy River site	1	
	Provide River Access to Little Sandy River	3	
	Provide River Access into Bull Run Management Unit	2	

	Provide River Access at Revenue bridge		2	
	Provide River Access at Lolo Pass bridge		1	
	Provide River Access at Wildcat Creek		1	
	Enhance Public access to the Sandy River		9	
	Public access to private lands off of established trail systems		1	Public mtg.

Major Issue	Sub-Issue		Total	Type
Recreation Needs	Concentrate efforts on recreation opportunities in middle section of Sandy River		3	
	Concerned about slalom course on the Bull Run		1	
	Provide future site for kayak slalom course		2	
	Provide minimal site development		1	
	Provide day use area at Marmot Dam site		1	
	Enhance recreational kayak qualities of river		1	
	Provide increased signage/maps		7	
	Provide more developed RV camp opportunities		1	
	Provide amphitheater to the public		1	
	Develop Historical wayside park along Barlow Rd.		1	
	Provide environmental education opportunities		1	
	Provide more primitive recreational opportunities (hunting, fishing)		1	
	Provide trash cans along the River		1	
	Provide public restrooms at beach access areas		2	
	Connect Sandy River Rec. opportunities to Portland		1	Public mtg.
Provide presence at Marmot Dam (host program)		1	Public mtg.	
Promote non-motorized access to Wilderness Areas		1	Public mtg.	

Major Issue	Sub-Issue		Total	Type
Community	Keep Brightwood pond area as a wetland		1	
	Safety concerns involving public access to private lands		5	
	Increased law enforcement in area		1	
	Laterally Park trash/dumping problems		1	Public mtg.
	Dumping 2S,5E Sec 12 rd. above Marmot Dam at milepost 6		1	Public mtg.
	General trash and dumping issues		3	Public mtg.
	Concerns about gun use and safety		1	Public mtg.
	Increased law enforcement in area		3	Public mtg.

	Concerns with trespass from Marmot Dam T2 sec 13 SE corner into private property		1	Public mtg.
	Private landowners concern of trespass into private property from NW sec. of Dodge Park		1	Public mtg.
	Concern with trespass fishermen behavior		1	Public mtg.

Major Issue	Sub-Issue	Total	Type
Trail Connectivity	Provide increased multiple use non-motorized trail development	5	
	Provide increased access to trail system in the Watershed Basin	1	
	Provide trail access off of Rd. 14	1	
	Provide paved access into Huckleberry Wilderness Area	1	
	Do not provide recreational trails along the river	1	
	Trail development at East of Blue Lake Park along the dike on the Alcoa property and into Sandy River in Troutdale	1	
	Do not provide recreational trails along the river	1	Public mtg.
	Trail development needs to include safe river access points	1	Public mtg.

Major Issue	Sub-Issue	Total	Type
Miscellaneous	Do not agree with interpretation of "navigable" waters	1	
	Provide a clear definition of "high water" mark to the public	1	
	Keep domestic animals out of the forest	1	
	Keep dogs out of the river	1	
	Concern about Roslyn Lake and PGE's intentions	1	Public mtg.
	Concerned with commercial guides and the behavior they allow	1	Public mtg.

Total Comments

102

Appendix B: Sandy River Basin Map

