Creating a Sustainable Recreation Economy: For the Willamette National Forest and Lane County Communities
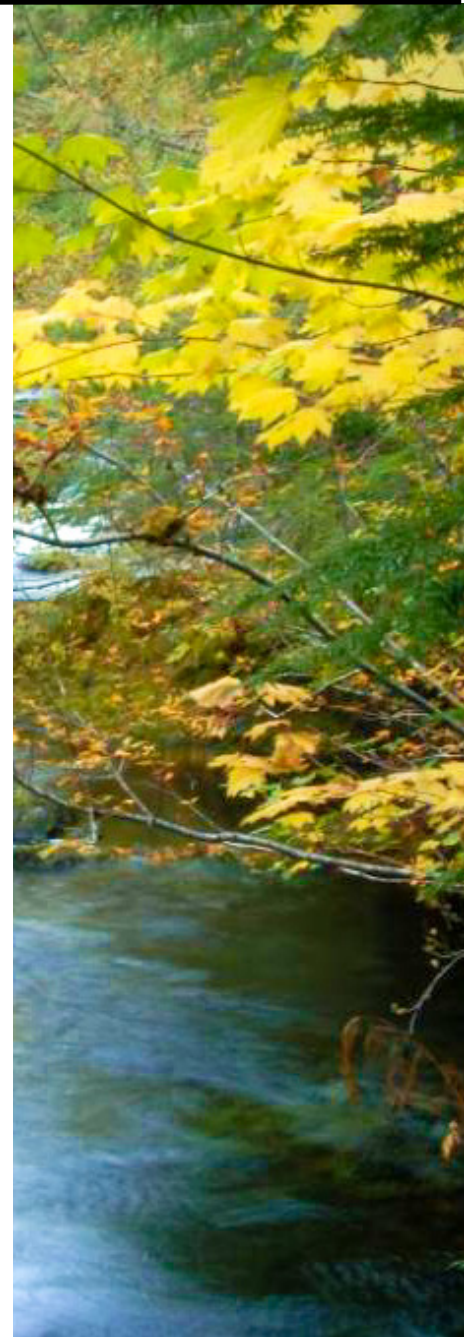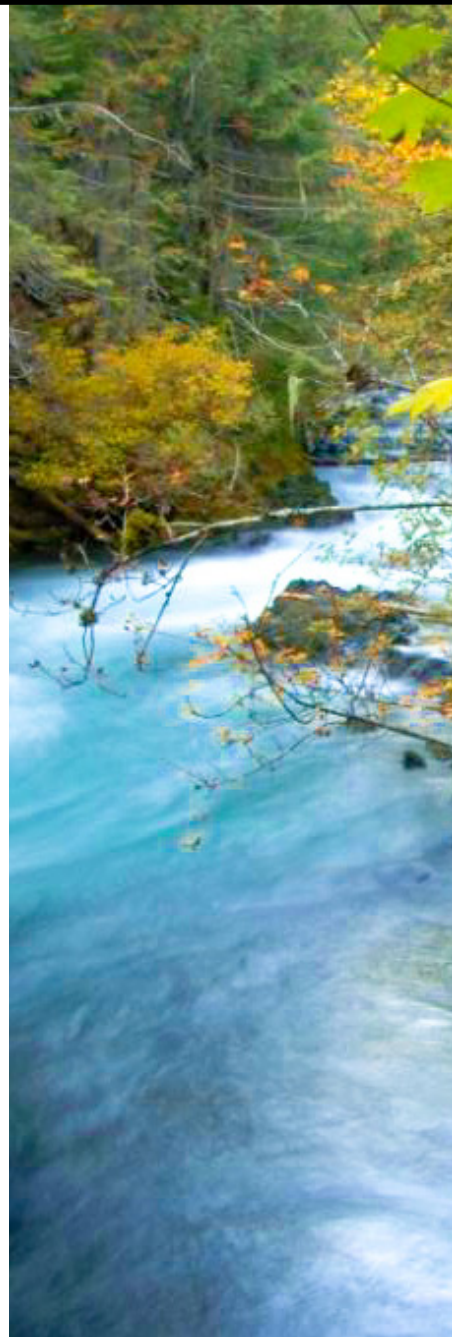
June 2020

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON | School of Planning, Public Policy and Management | Institute for Policy Research and Engagement

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge our partners:

About the Institute for Policy Research & Engagement

The Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE) is a research center affiliated with the School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management at the University of Oregon. It is an interdisciplinary organization that assists Oregon communities by providing planning and technical assistance to help solve local issues and improve the quality of life for Oregon residents. The role of IPRE is to link the skills, expertise, and innovation of higher education with the transportation, economic development, and environmental needs of communities and regions in the State of Oregon, thereby providing service to Oregon and learning opportunities to the students involved.

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Introduction

Since the decline of the timber industry in the Willamette National Forest, communities in the Middle Fork and McKenzie River Ranger Districts have attempted to maintain a stable economy. Fortunately, outdoor recreation in the United States continues to grow and these areas have the opportunity to transform themselves into outdoor recreation destinations with a sustainable economy. Although there has been an abundance of planning projects in the two districts, there is a lack of a coordinated planning. In this project, the Willamette National Forest Service and Lane County Community and Economic Development were looking for input on how they can support collaboration and assist these communties in reaching their recreation and economic development goals.

Purpose of the Project

Through partnership with the University of Oregon, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement, Lane County Community and Economic Development, and the Forest Service, this project highlights the nexus of recreation, economic development, and collaboration. It serves as a preliminary step to foster future collaborative planning efforts enhancing recreation and economic development. Specifically, the purpose of the project was to:

- Synthesize prior recreation and economic development planning efforts.
- Engage with stakeholders to assess their vision for their communities and prioritize improvements for recreation and business services.
- Establish connections between public agencies, stakeholders, land managers, business owners, and community members.
- Assess the potential for creating structures to foster sustained collaboration.
- Provide ideas for funding opportunities.

The information will be used by the Forest Service, Lane County, and other community stakeholders to inform future recreation and economic development planning. Additionally, this report can inform the creation of coordinated collaboration efforts in the two districts. Through collaboration, the two districts can help foster community resiliency, improve recreation opportunities, involve local stakeholders in recreation management and planning efforts, and strategically focus their limited resources.

Project Team

Four student consultants from the University of Oregon Institute for Policy, Research, and Engagement (IPRE) completed this work between January – June 2020. A project management team, consisting of members from the University of Oregon IPRE, the Willamette National Forest, Lane County Community and Economic Development, Travel Lane County, and the Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative, provided guidance throughout the project.
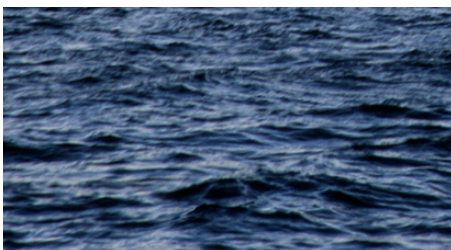
Methods

While some similar methods were used in the two districts, each community posed unique public engagement opportunities and challenges. The communities within the McKenzie River District lack a centralized government and are known as the "50 mile downtown." This makes it difficult to centralize efforts. The Middle Fork District includes many small communities with Oakridge being the largest community and hub of many services. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic created an additional set of challenges in engaging the public. Additional workshops were planned in both communities, but were cancelled due to the crisis. We spent January through early March focusing on the Middle Fork District and had planned to focus on the McKenzie area from March - June. Thus, the information for McKenzie River is less robust than the Middle Fork.

Middle Fork

The Middle Fork Ranger District contains several towns such as Lowell, Westfir, and Oakridge. While ultimately the project addresses challenges across the district, much of the research and outreach comes from the City of Oakridge, the district's largest municipality. To understand the constraints and opportunities in the Middle Fork Ranger District, the team used the following methods:

- Reviewed 12 planning documents around recreation and economic development,
- Interviewed 15 local stakeholders and Forest Service staff,
- Hosted 2 public workshops in the City of Oakridge,
- Workshop 1: 16 attendees.
- Workshop 2: 19 attendees.
- Maintained updated website in partnership with the Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative, and
- Presented project findings to project partners.

McKenzie River

To understand the constraints and opportunities in the McKenzie River Ranger District, the team used the following methods:

- Reviewed 9 planning documents around recreation and economic development,
- Interviewed 12 local stakeholders and Forest Service staff, and
- Presented project findings to project partners.

Key Terms

We recognize that agencies and organizations use different definitions of the following terms. Here is how this report defines them:

Facilities – physical recreation structures such as trail condition/maintenance, restrooms, boat ramps, picnic tables, etc.

Amenities – items that enhance facilities, which include wayfinding, educational signage, interpretation, maps, etc.

Business Services/Organization – services/organizations/collaborations that support the recreation economy, such as hotels, outfitters, marketing, websites, etc.
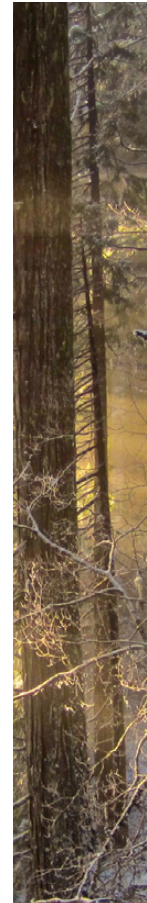
Financial Impacts of Recreation

Outdoor recreation is important personally, culturally and economically. People create deep connections and identities involving the areas where they recreate. For the communities where recreation sites are located, they contain personal and community identities as well as livelihood.

To measure the economic impact and potential of outdoor recreation as it relates to the McKenzie and Oakridge areas, we have looked at a number of indicators. One type of analysis focuses on the expenditures and revenues of production associated with recreation activities, as well as employment sectors. These statistics Outdoor recreation is important personally, culturally and economically. People create deep connections and identities involving the areas where they recreate. For the communities where recreation sites are located, they contain personal and community identities as well as livelihood.

Another measure evaluates the dollar worth of recreation opportunities, according to survey results. These measures indicate that the majority of Oregonians participate in outdoor recreation activities, and that they place a high value on those opportunities. The value of specific activities shows that there are opportunities to focus investment in communities.

Statistics from the National Visitor Use Monitoring Program show that larger trends are borne out on a local scale. Visitorship on the Willamette National Forest is increasing, as is visitor spending in surrounding communities.

The Numbers

Nationwide

In 2018 the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) undertook a study of outdoor recreation as a satellite industry, measuring its impact for the first time. According to the BEA, the outdoor recreation economy accounted for $427.2 billion, or 2.2% of the national GDP. As seen in Figure 1, this number grew at a rate 1.5% higher than the National GDP growth rate from 2016 to 2017 (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019).

According to the Outdoor Industry Association, the outdoor recreation economy accounted for more consumer spending than pharmaceuticals and motor vehicles. It also created more jobs than construction or the insurance industry in 2010 (Outdoor Industry Association, 2012, pp. 3-8).

The outdoor recreation industry is not only indispensable, it is resilient. People often chose lower cost, nearby alternatives for family vacations when finances are tight. During the Recession from 2005 to 2011, the outdoor recreation industry grew by 5% annually (Outdoor Industry Association, 2012, p. 10).

Figure 1. National Economic Growth for Recreation 2016-2017
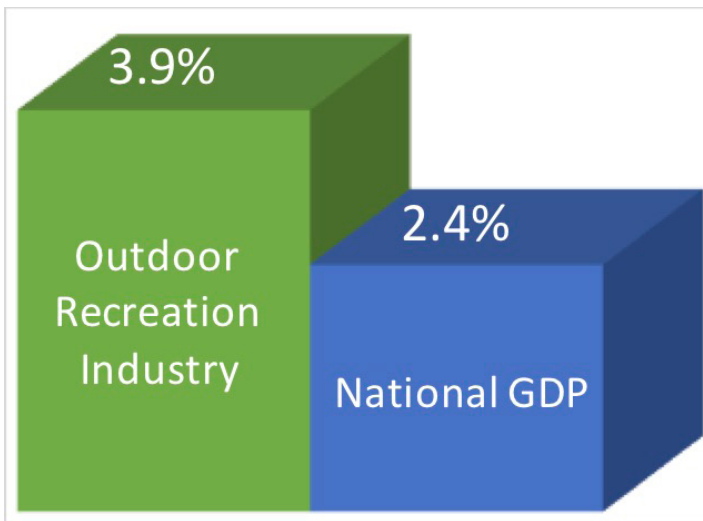
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis. "Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and Prototype for States, 2017." September 20, 2019.

In Oregon

In 2017, the outdoor recreation industry accounted for $6.5 million in value added to the Oregon economy, or 2.9% of Oregon's GDP. The industry employs almost 87,000 people, which is 4.4% of all Oregon workers.

Within the industry, boating and fishing are the largest activities, which holds true for Oregon with $2.5 million value added. Snow activities contribute $1.3 million to Oregon's economy.

Of the total $6.5 million in the outdoor recreation industry, $6.1 million are private businesses. The remaining $400,000 are the government sector. Within the private sector, accommodations and food service account for $1.2 million, and retail accounts for $1.5 million. Figure 2 shows the size of the food service/accommodation sector, and the retail sector, in relation to the rest of private industry in the Outdoor Recreation economy. Accommodations, foodservice and retail account for almost 1/3 of the industry spending and revenue, and ½ of its employees (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019).

Figure 2. Sectors of Oregon's Outdoor Recreation Industry
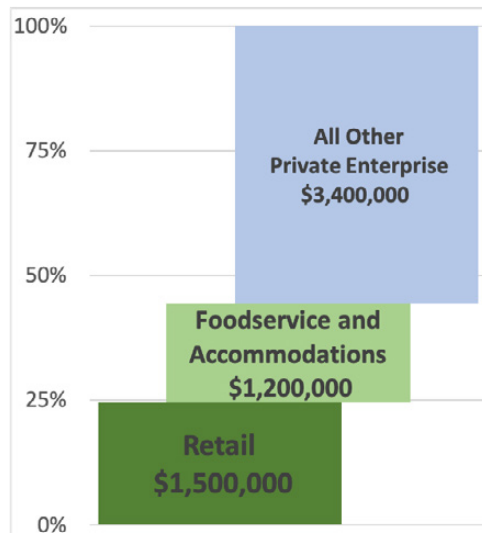
Source: National Visitor Use Monitoring Program. Visitor Use Report, Willamette National Forest 2017. August 20, 2019

Figure 3. Visitors' Distance from Home to Willamette National Forest, 2017
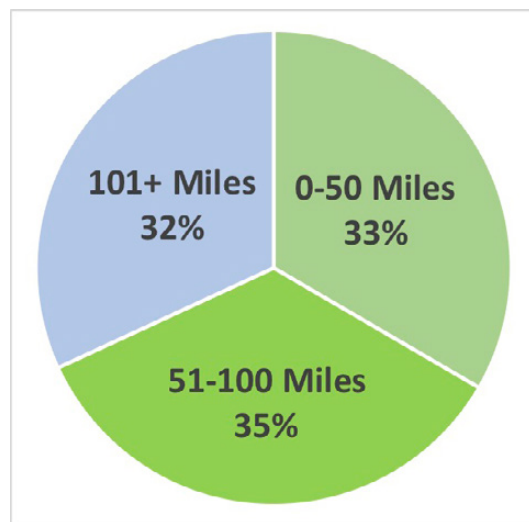
Source: National Visitor Use Monitoring Program. Visitor Use Report, Willamette National Forest 2017. August 20, 2019

Willamette National Forest

Willamette National Forest had over 1.07 million visits in 2017. This increased from 970,000 in 2007, an average annual increase of 10,400 visits (National Visitor Use Monitoring Program, 2019, p. 9). Average spending for parties in 2017 was $344 per visit, up from $223 per party per trip in 2007 (National Visitor Use Monitoring Program, 2019, p. 26).

As seen in Figure 3, 33% of these visitors came from less than 50 miles away, with another 35% from between 50 and 100 miles (National Visitor Use Monitoring Program, 2019, p. 16). Figure 4 shows that 25% of these visitors identified 'walking/hiking' as their primary purpose for visiting, with the next most popular activity being 'Viewing Natural Features' (National Visitor Use Monitoring Program, 2019, p. 21).

Figure 4. Willamette National Forest Visitor Main Activity by Percent, 2017

All Others 14%
Bicycling 3%
Hunting 5%
Other Non-motorized 5%
Driving for Pleasure 5%
Fishing 6%
Camping 7%
Skiing 7%
Relaxing 7%
Viewing Natural Features 15%
Hiking / Walking 25%

0%   5%   10%   15%   20%   25%

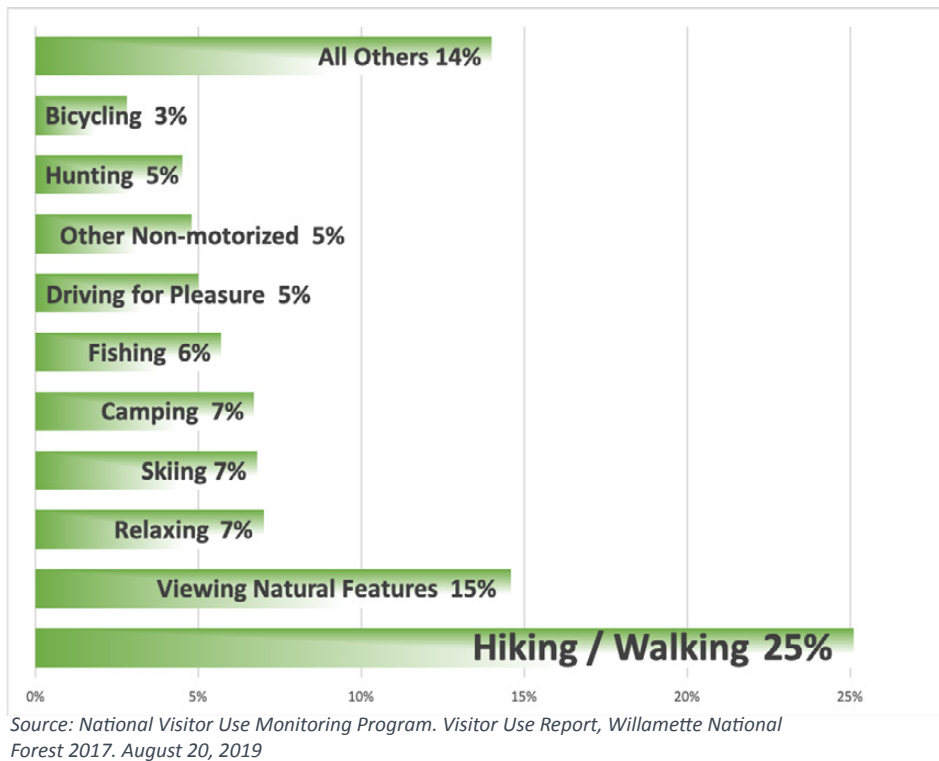*Source: National Visitor Use Monitoring Program. Visitor Use Report, Willamette National Forest 2017. August 20, 2019*

Economic Value

According to Oregon's State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan from 2019, recreation activities can be compared using a net economic value that measures the worth of an activity to residents. The 'Total Net Economic Value' study set 'walking/day hiking on non-local trails and paths' at a value of $3.9 billion for Oregonians (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 2019, p. 125). Significantly for Willamette National Forest, 'biking on unpaved trails' was valued at $1.5 billion, and 'non-motorized snow activities,' including downhill and cross-country skiing had a value of $900,000,000. 'Hunting and fishing activities' had a value of $3.5 billion. This is the dollar value of the activity, or the availability of the activity to residents, according to survey responses and a methodology incorporating frequency and expenses (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 2019, p. 126).

While these numbers are projections made by assigning values to different activities, they can be used in comparison of assets and cost-benefits analysis of investing in certain recreational activities.
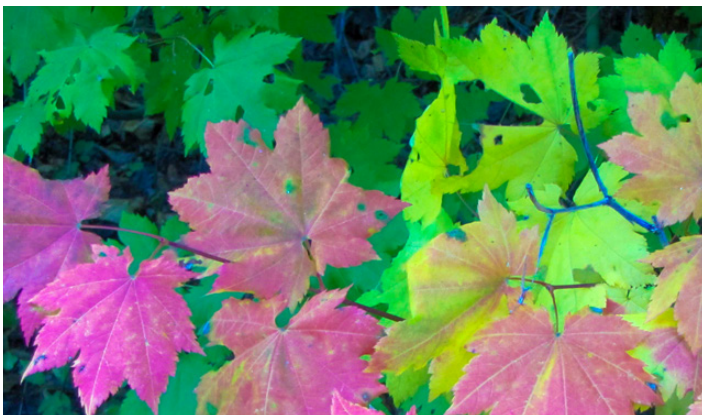
The SCORP also identified two key changes in who will be participating in outdoor recreation in the future: the aging population, and an increasingly diverse population. Consideration should be taken for these population groups and their preferences when making investment decisions. Both physical access and financial accessibility will be increasingly important issues.

Conclusion

An array of statistics support evidence that the outdoor recreation industry is growing heartily. The numbers and charts above can be summarized in a few main points:

- Outdoor recreation is a huge and growing industry with significant impacts on the economy.
- Opportunities for recreation are highly valuable to Oregonians.
- Visitors are increasing, and most visitors are coming from within 100 miles of Willamette National Forest.
- The demographics of outdoor recreators might be different in the future, including diverse and aging populations.
- Visitors spend most of their money on food, accommodations, and retail items.

There is an opportunity to capture the value of recreational activities on the National Forest by promoting food,accommodations, and retail in the surrounding communities. We can expect visitors and participation in outdoor recreation to continue to increase, but how well communities can capture the value of those visits will depend on anticipating visitor preferences and creating access.
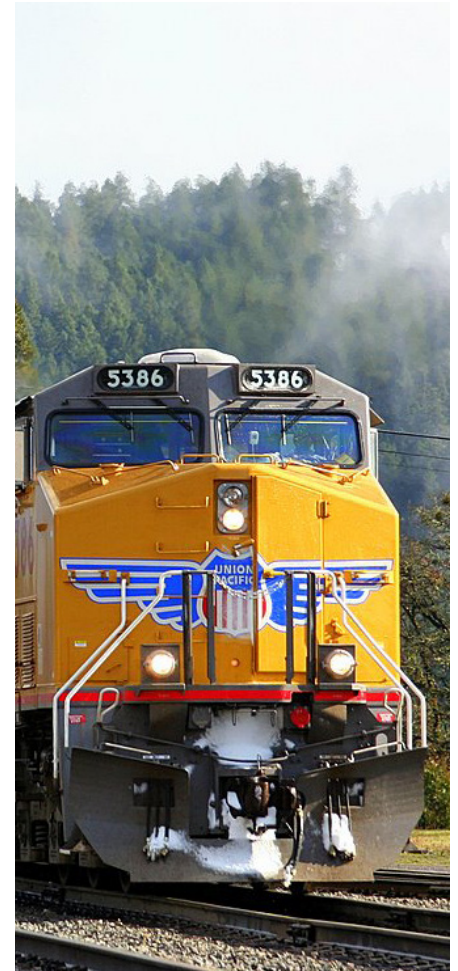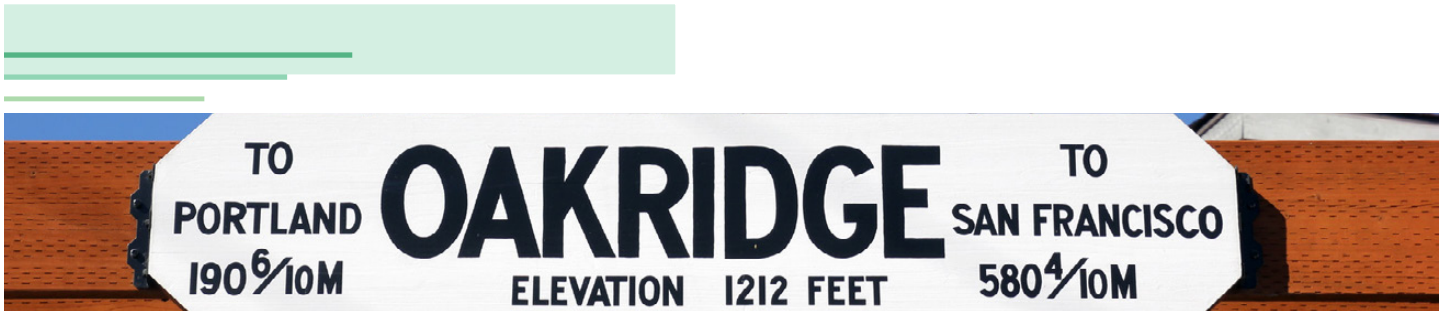
Oakridge Findings

Overview

To become more familiar with Oakridge's past planning and current work, our team completed a thorough plan review, conducted a series of stakeholder interviews, and facilitated two public workshops in the community. This section of the report details Oakridge's overarching recreation and economic development needs in addition to the solutions identified in the plan review and interviews. Additionally, it covers more specific community priorities that emerged during the second public workshop facilitated during February 25, 2020.

Again, we recognize that different agencies and organizations use different definitions of the following terms. Here is how this report defines them:

Facilities – physical recreation structures such as trail condition/maintenance, restrooms, boat ramps, picnic tables, etc.

Amenities – items that enhance facilities, which include Wayfinding, educational signage, interpretation, maps, etc.

Business Services/Organization – services/organizations/collaborations that support the recreation economy, such as hotels, outfitters, marketing, websites, etc.

The plan review and interviews discussed similar challenges and opportunities, revealing the following as cross cutting themes to support recreation and economic development:

- Build consensus for recreation focus and brand.
- Expand the volunteer base and improve community engagement.
- Increase funding for project implementation and maximize local resources.
- Improve facilities and recreation access.
- Diversify amenities and business services.
- Increase marketing for public events and recreational activities.

Notably, because mountain bike trails are well established in Oakridge, a number of facilities and amenities recommendations from plans and interviews focused on promoting mountain biking, bicycle tourism, and greater trail connectivity. For the sake of clarity and organization, those findings are discussed later in the 'Bicycle Tourism Suggestions' section of this report.

Plan Review

Oakridge benefits from an abundance of planning work from the past decade, containing community participation, quantitative research, and informed recommendations. As a baseline for our understanding of work that has already been completed, our team reviewed 12 planning documents focused on recreation and economic development.

Table 1: Oakridge Plan Review

Plans List	Year
Outdoor Recreation Destination Economic Opportunities Analysis for the City of Oakridge. (ECONorthwest, 2007)	2007
Oakridge-Westfir Community Trails Plan (Oakridge-Westfir Community Trails Committee, 2007)	2007
Visitor Readiness Report: Oakridge, Oregon (Total Destination Management, 2009a)	2009
The Economic Significance of Bicycle-Related Travel in Oregon (Dean Runyan Associates, 2013)	2013
Adapting to The New Economy: The Impacts of Mountain Bike Tourism in Oakridge, Oregon (Meltzer, 2014)	2014
Oakridge Area Wayfinding Plan (Travel Oregon, 2014)	2014
Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns (Kramer, 2016)	2016
East Lane County Bicycle Tourism Strategy (Travel Oregon, 2017)	2017
Lane County Parks: Sea to Summit: Creating The Future Of Lane County Parks: Parks And Open Space Master Plan (Lane County, 2018)	2018
Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative Middle Fork Ranger District Recreation Committee Workshop (SWFC, 2019)	2019
Oakridge Mill Park Concept Plan (City of Oakridge, 2019a)	2019
Oakridge Transportation Systems Plan 2000/Update (City of Oakridge, 2000; City of Oakridge, 2019b)	2019

Facilities

According to these plans, the majority of community involvement has happened around facilities. The plans are detailed and incorporate input from an informed group of residents. Ongoing collaboration efforts should build on momentum created during the following recent planning activities:

- Oakridge Mill Park Concept Plan (City of Oakridge, 2019a),
- Middle Fork Recreation District Trails Plan Update, Winter 2019-2020 (unpublished),
- City of Oakridge Transportation System Plan Update (City of Oakridge, 2019b), and
- South Willamette Forest Collaborative MFRD Recreation Workshop (SWFC, 2019).

Overall, recommendations from plans focus on a variety of recreational activities, with the main emphasis on trails. Many proposals call for diversifying user groups on trails by increasing trail variety and dispersed use. The goal is to help attract different user groups, and also mitigate environmental impacts and user conflicts. These proposals overlap with bike-specific recommendations and are discussed in the 'Bicycle Tourism Suggestions' section of this report.

The plans included the following water and snow-related facilities improvements:
Other infrastructure recommendations included installing low-barrier facilities (i.e., disc golf and nature parks), and opening a multi-purpose community center that could serve as a conference center and large gathering space for the community.

Table 2: Recommended Facility Improvements

Water-based Activities	Purpose
North Fork River Put-Ins: Create bump outs at put-ins and take-outs	Limited parking off the road
Hampton Boat Ramp: Establish a longer boat ramp	Short for reservoir levels
Lower North Fork: Place port-a-potties at key put-ins and takeouts	No sanitation services
Seasonal placement of port-a-potties or vault toilet	Sanitation issues at locations
Gold Lake boat launch: Expand parking for boaters	Restricted parking

Snow (Winter)	Purpose
Gold Lake and other Snow Park Shelter Maintenance Funding	In deteriorating condition (i.e. shutters, concrete, caulking)
Willamette Pass: - Rebuild mountain bike trails - Funding to thin trees, clear runs, and build West Peak Lift	Low snow years lead to not enough snow for Willamette Pass to open in summer

Amenities

There is limited local data available that provides context as to which amenities should be prioritized to enhance the existing facilities, such as improvements in educational signage and wayfinding. Instead, planning suggestions for improving recreation opportunities were based on economic and behavioral information from county, state, or nationwide findings and case studies. Importantly, these findings also highlighted an overarching tension between creating the amenities needed to capture revenue versus creating the activities that bring in visitor money. One's dependent upon the other, and there is currently uncertainty over which to prioritize. Recommendations below include creating alternatives to mountain biking to serve a variety of people and to serve mountain bikers when they are not on their bikes:

- Create cohesive wayfinding throughout town and district, including signage representing Oakridge brand,
- Create a retail focal point on Hwy 58, i.e. multiple businesses that can be reached on foot,
- Improve appearance of Hwy 58:
  - Retrofit storefronts and abandoned buildings,
  - Improve signage along the business corridor,
  - Install pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as greenery and traffic calming devices.

The above recommendations present a potential framework of what to create. Promoting mountain biking while developing alternative activities ultimately provides greater incentive for people to spend money in Oakridge. This effort coincides with the broader goal of promoting Oakridge as a destination through placemaking. This can be achieved by developing cohesive wayfinding (including electronic and physical information hubs), and promoting stewardship and place identity through interpretive signs and hikes.

Business Services

As noted in the Financial Impacts of Recreation section, we found in our economic analyses that visitors spend most of their money on food and accommodations, and therefore these are the businesses that should be promoted. Overall, Oakridge would benefit from promoting overnight stays. Below is a list of the current services in Oakridge as of March 2020.

- 13 restaurants,
- 84 beds to stay overnight,
- 4 motels,
- 2 RV campsites,
- 2 Bed and Breakfasts,
- Approximately 200+ Air BnBs,
- 10 local recreation outfitters and services,
- 5+ additional out-of-town recreation outfitters.

Many visitors return to Eugene for a better variety of accommodations and eating opportunities. Enticing visitors to stay in Oakridge with more activities, events, lodging, and restaurants would serve to capture more revenue for the community. The plan review also emphasized branding, including suggestions of niche marketing. While the emphasis is to promote mountain biking specifically, recommendations below would serve to increase all types of visitors.

Here are the ideas from the various plans that we reviewed:
- Coordinate business hours,
- Hold annual events targeting specific user groups,
- Focus on future business owners who want to live in Oakridge, not businesses that should locate in Oakridge,
- Encourage industrial development as well as recreational development,
- Document the economic impact of tourism in Oakridge and share with business owners,
- Create a new strategic economic development plan,
- Streamline permitting process for desirable business and desirable locations,
- City and Public Land Manager personnel make regular visits to businesses (relationship building),
- Provide social media assistance and workshops for businesses hosted by the City,
- Promote public/private partnerships in development projects, and
- Create a range of lodging focused on those that pay the transient lodging tax (not federal campgrounds).

Interview Findings

Our team completed 15 interviews, conducted from January to May 2020. Participants represented a wide range of backgrounds, including Oakridge government staff, Forest Service staff, regional planners, local recreation outfitters, community members, and nonprofit organizations working in tourism and natural resource protection.

The interview process revealed a number of reappearing themes related to strengthening recreation and the local economy:

- Build consensus for recreaiton focus and brand,
- Expand the volunteer base and improve community engagement,
- Increase funding for project implementation and maximize local resources,
- Improve facilities and recreation access,
- Diversity amentities and business services,
- Increase marketing for public events and recrational activies.

Interview findings regarding Forest Service interactions are more specific and detailed later this section. For a more detailed report, see both the "Oakridge Interviews Summary" and "Forest Service Interviews Summary" in the Supplemental Materials.

Build Community Consensus for Recreation Focus and Brand

Due to different values and goals across user groups, the community is currently navigating how to establish a cohesive recreation brand for the town and identify what recreation opportunities they want to emphasize and market. Committing to a recreation brand is a necessary part of promoting a sustainable recreation economy. This process calls on the community and City of Oakridge to engage in greater conversations to help create consensus regarding the recreation opportunities and town image they want to emphasize.

Expand Volunteer Base and Improve Community Engagement

A significant amount of work is consistently undertaken by a small group of committed community members and businesses–all of which have limited time and resources. Many projects also rely heavily on local volunteers due to lack of funding. As a result, it has been hard to keep momentum going for recreation planning.

To help address both needs, a common suggestion was to create an open, inclusive forum for community engagement to help find common ground and bring more people to the table. This is where a community recreation collaborative can play a crucial role by facilitating dialogues across different user groups and working to create consensus among community members for the town's vision.

Planning documents and interview responses indicated a number of suggestions to help bring the community together and better promote a positive image of Oakridge based on common interests. Suggestions include:

Outreach Strategies
- Workshops and recruitment via social media were viewed as a strong forum model.
- Social events sponsored by the Oakridge Chamber of Commerce were reported as popular and another way to facilitate useful conversations.
- RAIN was cited as a good outreach model. Their community events in Oakridge are well attended, with outreach occurring via emails, notifications, Facebook events, and posting on all of the local community groups. They also rotate public events through different local businesses.

Engagement Frameworks
- Conversations should be structured to facilitate communicating across the different perceptions of Oakridge (i.e., "ghost town" and "up-and-coming" viewpoints).
- Encourage discussions which reframe growth into positives, such as highlighting new services offered to community members.
- Coming up with a plan: Set attainable goals and coordinate with everybody who wants to be involved. Then, bring people into categories or projects that reflect their interests. This will set collaborative efforts up for success by helping brainstorm tasks that can be delegated and completed.
- For high school students, educate them about the wide range of community involvement options to help broaden the ways in which they participate.
- Use inclusive language in recreation planning materials that represents all user groups and political affiliations.

Increase Funding for Project Implementation and Maximize Local Resources

Implementation for recreation planning projects is consistently underfunded. However, finding ways to increase funding for project implementation requires hiring dedicated staff who can coordinate planning efforts and outline strategies for successful completion. This represents funding issues on both sides–funding staff and securing grants to increase overall funding for recreation planning and project implementation.

To meet the financial needs to adequately coordinate recreation planning efforts, identify implementation strategies, and minimize burnout, the following solutions were suggested:
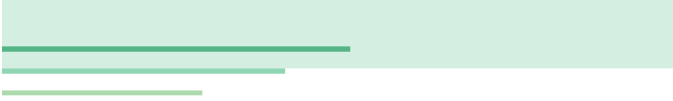
- Hire dedicated staff focused on grant writing to obtain funding and secure partnerships supporing initiatives related to creating a recreation economy. This staff member could be hired by the City of Oakridge or a committed community organization.
- Consider public/private partnerships. Creative funding strategies are necessary to mobilize projects.
  - One participant mentioned that private philanthropy options may be more of a hook than public funding grants. This involves making a case to a small group of committed donors to support community improvements. Stakeholders were encouraged to reach out to nonprofit consultants as resources tohelp the community identify private philanthropy opportunities.
- Promote volunteerism: Identify ways to increase visitor stewardship and support of community resources.

Improve Facilities and Recreation Access

Oakridge lacks visitor infrastructure, such as appropriate signage and connectivity to help visitors get to and from recreation areas. Additionally, there are a lot of existing facilities that are underutilized and poorly maintained (i.e., day-use sites, campgrounds, and trails). To help inform facilities maintenance priorities and improve recreation access for visitors, plans and interview findings indicated the following areas as important:
- Engage in community dialogue to assess forest facilities and identify the degree to which facilities are utilized. This will help determine what to shut down, what to keep going, and what to improve.
- Enhance transportation connectivity between communities (i.e., Oakridge to Eugene and Springfield) and forest recreation opportunities. An important way to address this is to implement Oakridge's Wayfinding Plan, which is currently stuck at the funding stage (Travel Oregon, 2014).

Note: More bike-specific facilities suggestions are discussed under "Bike Facilities" in the Bicycle Tourism Suggestions section of this report.

Diversify Amenities and Business Services

Interviewees observed that Oakridge has limited attractive amenities that encourage visitors to stop and stay. This creates challenges for visitors seeking recreation opportunities as well as convenient, accessible places to stay and eat. To promote a visitor recreation economy and establish itself as a thriving recreation hub, Oakridge needs to improve visitor interactions with the community. Specific suggestions to address this included:

- Improve access to recreation equipment, lodging, boutiques, and restaurants by opening more locations for visitors to choose from.
- Create amenities for through-mountain bikers. Oakridge is a gateway community for this sport and can better attract people with showers, internet, laundry, etc. More bike-specific amenities suggestions are discussed under "Bike-Related Business Services" in the Bicycle Tourism Suggestions section of this report.
- Consider developing a store that is more like the Mercantile in McKenzie Bridge (i.e., a small store with organic foods and boutique-y ambience).
- Prioritize enhancing city services. Suggestions to do this included creating jobs, housing, increasing enrollment in schools, and general public services.
- Look to Hood River, Oregon as a model for building a recreation economy in Oakridge.

Increase Marketing for Events & Recreation Activities to Capture New Visitors

Marketing is a big opportunity and could bring significant economic gains for the number of public events and recreational options in Oakridge. Making tourism more year-round involves getting information to people about places that they might not know about. To improve marketing and recruitment, the following suggestions were made:

- Capitalize on major regional and local events to draw in new visitors and encourage them to come back (i.e., Track World Championship, Oakridge Truffle Festival, and Harvest Festival).
  - Work to provide the "whole package experience" to help generate revenue. Suggestions to do this include:
  - Establish a good equipment rental resources so that people know they can easily access needs to engage in outdoor activities.
  - Pair different assets together that draw people to visit (i.e., wine, craft beer, and food with recreational assets).
  - Create and curate outdoor adventure experiences and shuttles services for forest visitors.
- Revive the Rural Tourism Studio "We Speak" initiative to educate front-facing members of the community (i.e., gas station attendants, cafes, retail, etc.) about community events and activities. This prepares them to answer questions to visitors in a positive way and suggest opportunities.

Community Feedback Regarding Forest Service Interactions

Throughout our interviews with community stakeholders, many respondents reported having positive, accessible interactions with Forest Service staff. They recounted having experiences wherein staff were generally willing to hear out ideas and assess the feasibility of proposed projects.

However, some reported having variable interactions with Forest Service staff, stating that successful dialogues generally depended on specific personnel for each district. Another recounted experiencing significant lag time in connecting with recreation managers, citing the bureaucratic process and understaffing at the Forest Service as limitations to receiving support for requests.

Additional areas where respondents reported a need for improvement include:
- Improving the permit system process to address capacity needs.
- Increasing parking lot capacity at the Salt Creek Snow Park.
- Improving information sharing to visitors about trail conditions and alternatives. Doing so enhances the overall visitation experience, helping visitors plan ahead in the event of trail closures or lack of parking.

Oakridge Workshops

The project management team chose to facilitate public engagement workshops in Oakridge to foster greater community involvement and gather additional public input for the project. A series of five public workshops were tentatively scheduled throughout February and May, each with a unique meeting topic. Workshop topics included:

- **Workshop #1**: Kick-off meeting introducing the project and brainstorming ideas for the topics and focus of future meetings
- **Workshop #2**: Investigating the community's needs and priorities for recreation (specifically for facilities and trail projects)
- **Workshop #3**: Exploring the local vision for creating a recreation economy (i.e., amenities and business services)
- **Workshop #4**: Enhancing local efforts to support the community's vision (i.e., marketing, jobs, and funding strategies)
- **Workshop #5**: Closing meeting summarizing the project's findings. Also included giving a presentation on creating community recreation collaboratives and identifying community stakeholders interested in staying engaged with the work.

Unfortunately, only Workshops 1 and 2 were successfully held prior to the emergence of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. During mid-March a national emergency was declared and by March 23rd Oregon's governor, Kate Brown, issued statewide stay-home orders. As a result, the remaining workshops were cancelled. Consequently, the results from Workshops 1 and 2 reflect preliminary findings for the project.

This section provides an overview of the workshop methods and discusses the specific community priorities that emerged during the second public workshop facilitated during February 25, 2020. We hope that documenting what was achieved from the team's initial efforts can provide some use for future efforts focused on strengthening a sustainable recreation economy for the area.

Workshop Methods

<u>Workshop 1</u>

- This first workshop was held on January 30, 2020 in the Oakridge High School cafeteria and had a total of 16 attendees, including community members, business owners, and government officials. The workshop served as a kick-off meeting for the team's project, providing an overview of the project goals and exploration of the community's broader vision for economic development and recreation for the area. Importantly, the majority of the Workshop 1 findings overlap with the overarching needs identified in the plan review and interviews, and are therefore not discussed further here. See the report's Supplemental Materials to read the original Oakridge Workshop 1 Summary.

<u>Workshop 2</u>

- The second workshop on February 25, 2020 also in the Oakridge High School cafeteria and had a total of 19 attendees. The meeting focused on investigating the community's needs and priorities for recreation, specifically for facilities and trail projects. To begin, participants engaged in small group discussions, sharing their perspectives for what they saw as the most beneficial facility to build that would significantly support recreation in the community. Key ideas for facilities included:
  - Community Center: multi-purpose, conference, large gathering space,
  - Facilities that are sustainable across the seasons,
  - Amtrak station, and
  - Family and group opportunities (i.e., swimming areas, playgrounds, and disc golf).

Participants then engaged in an in-depth project review of proposed facilities and trail projects. The proposed projects were compiled as a result of the team's 700-page plan review, and organized into a five-page handout for participant evaluation (see Appendix A for the full handout). Projects were categorized into one of three categories in the handout:

- Category 1: In-town Facilities and Trails
- Category 2: Out-of-town Facilities and Trails
- Category 3: Water and Snow

Groups discussed whether or not the proposed projects for each category were still relevant, what other projects were missing in each category and what projects felt the most important and why. Community members were then asked to rank each project on their sheets on a scale of High importance (H), Medium Importance (M), and Low Importance (L).

In addition to capturing the individual H, M, L rankings on handouts, each community member was given three stickers at the end of the meeting to vote on their top three proposals. In this exercise, members could also vote for any of the additional suggestions that came up during the meeting. Less emphasis was put on a scale of importance since members could only vote on three of the proposals from the entire list. This was another way to gather data and give the group a chance to see where their priorities lie as a community.

Workshop 2: Key Findings

A total of 19 ranking sheets were submitted to the team for consideration. In evaluating participant rankings for the handouts, projects identified as significant were determined by those receiving at least 9 'High Importance' votes or greater. This number represents projects that received at least half of the total meeting attendees indication of significant support. Sticker votes for projects were also evaluated by identifying projects which received 4 or more sticker votes. Importantly, projects ranked as high in the individual handouts also showed up with the highest sticker votes.

Table 3 below summarizes the project proposals ranked by participants as important on the handout and via sticker voting. Overall, the group indicated these project proposals as the top priorities based on a project's capacity to support the community, improve the lifestyle of residents, and promote tourism in Oakridge. For a complete list of project and workshop participant ranking scores and sticker votes, see the report's Supplemental Materials to read the original Oakridge Workshop 2 Summary.

Table 3: Summary of Participant Project Proposal Rankings

Trails and Facilities Project Priorities
In-town Facilities and Trails
- Salmon Creek Levee multi-use paths and bridge
- Salmon Creek Trail: bridge feasibility study
- Bike lanes: Highway 58*
- Community Center: multi-purpose, large gathering space*
- Amtrak Station stop*
Out-of-town Facilities and Trails
- Improve trail infrastructure and complete deferred maintenance
- Improve connectivity between the Districts/ forests/ communities
- Connect all of the North Fork Trail
- Larrison Trail Expansion*
- Family and group opportunities: disc golf*
Water and Snow Facilities and Trails
- North Fork River Put-ins: Create bump outs at put ins and take outs
- Family and group opportunities: swimming areas*

*Project received majority sticker votes

Forest Service: Preliminary Input for Workshop 2 Findings

The team requested preliminary feedback from Forest Service recreation staff to gather input for some of the project priorities identified by the community. Importantly, the team had intended to host several more workshops to engage the community in further discussions. Because the workshops were cancelled, the initial feedback only covers a few of the initial findings and is only intended to offer additional considerations for future engagement.

Regarding the proposed project to 'Improve trail infrastructure and complete deferred maintenance,' staff commented that doing so requires more funded crew time. Volunteers help cut logs for maintenance tasks, but a small USFS crew completes the rest of the work.

For the North Fork Trail improvements, staff reported that the Alpine Trail Crew Association has that project on their long range plan. It currently needs to be designed by a professional trail designer because it is very complicated ground.

The Middle Fork Ranger District currently does not have the bandwidth to do the work.
For the Larrison Trail expansion, 12 miles of trail were laid out in 2017. The expansion is still in progress, but also on the back-burner as of May 2020.

Overall, recreation staff indicated that many proposed projects simply needed more discussion and details provided so that the Forest Service can successfully incorporate public input for project priorities.
Future recreation project discussions should prioritize allocating sufficient time between community members and Forest Service staff to explore the additional context for projects (i.e., clarifying project details, policy restrictions, staff capacity, or identifying alternative options).

Oakridge Summary

Oakridge has been involved in decades of previous planning efforts surrounding recreation and economic development. By completing a plan review, conducting interviews, and facilitating public meetings, our goal was to build upon these efforts and report our findings back to the community.

Throughout our experience facilitating public meetings in Oakridge, the community was consistently very engaged and informed. In the public meetings we were able to facilitate, the information we provided and synthesized captured the community in engaging discussions. The themes for Workshops 3 through 5 are still relevant and should be revisited in any future community planning efforts. Likewise, there is an existing framework for public meetings that future collaborative efforts can draw upon. Recommendations for building a future collaborative in Oakridge will follow in the "Suggestions for the Oakridge-Westfir Collaborative" section of this report. We suggest that any future collaborative begin by identifying community priorities concerning where to invest resources given the current climate.

McKenzie Findings
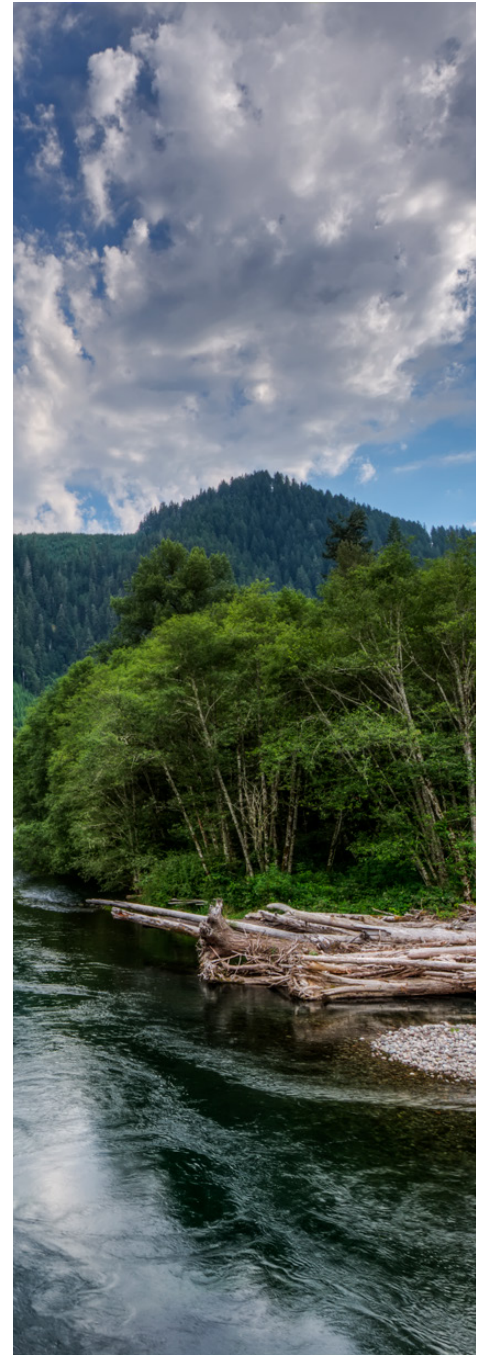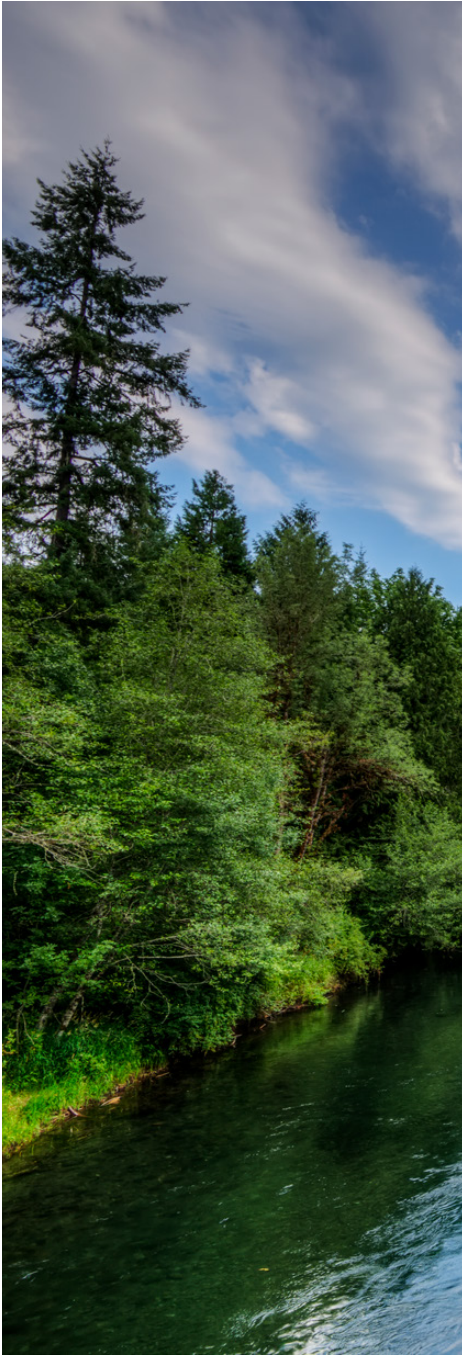
Overview

The communities within the Mckenzie River Ranger District provide a unique set of challenges and opportunities to the development of a sustainable recreation economy. Due to it being unincorporated and spread out, collaboration can be difficult. In addition, many residents and stakeholders are suffering from meeting fatigue, which further complicates any additional collaboration efforts. This section outlines the findings from a plan review and 12 interviews with stakeholders. This section is less robust than Middle Fork due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An in-person workshop was tentatively scheduled for April, however, had to be cancelled.

Plan Review

This section summarizes nine previous recreation planning documents in the McKenzie River District. Below are the plans reviewed:

Table 4: McKenzie Plan Review

Plans List	Year
Visitor Readiness Report: Mckenzie River, Oregon (Total Destination Management, 2009b)	2009
Mckenzie River Valley: Rural Tourism Studio Workshop #1 (Rural Tourism Studio, 2011)	2011
Mckenzie River and Trail Visitor Survey: Final Report (Kooistra, Hall, Lindberg, 2014)	2014
Preliminary Market Analysis and Feasibility Assessment for the Fish Lake Historic Site (Parker, Self, & Dobrowolski, 2015)	2015
McKenzie Year Round Tourism Action Plan (Dobrinich & Drlik-Muehleck, 2016)	2016
Chamber Board Recommendations From Year-round Tourism Action Plan: Executive Summary (Adelman, Dobrinich, & Tourism Committee, 2016a)	2016
Mckenzie River Year Round Tourism Action Plan: Summary of Goals (Adelman, Dobrinich, & Tourism Committee, 2016ab)	2016
Mckenzie River Area Business Retention and Expansion Program: Summary Draft Report (McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce, et al., 2018)	2018
East Lane County Tourism Strategy Report (Travel Oregon, 2017)	2017

There were several themes that were present across the plans. These include:

- **Wayfinding**. Have consistent and updated Wayfinding, educational signage, and information sharing across the McKenzie River Valley.
- **Information Kiosks**. Create and maintain easily accessible information hubs across the valley.
- **Collaboration**. Increase collaboration between local Chamber of Commerce, businesses, Lane County Parks Department, Travel Lane County/Oregon, and other key stakeholders for a unified effort across the valley.
- **Marketing**. Create a unified marketing strategy that promotes uniqueness of recreation opportunities in the valley, which include the river and trails.
- **Trails Maintenance**. Maintain a pristine appearance of trails, river, and access points.
- **Ecosystem Health**. Manage visitor impacts to preserve the health of ecosystems along the river.
- **Maintain Facilities**. Provide clean and accessible facilities for visitors, such as restrooms and parking lots.

Findings from each plan will be presented in three categories: facilities, amenities, and business services. Any bicycle tourism related findings are located in the Bicycle Tourism Suggestions.

Facilities

Below is a curated list of facility themes and suggestions based on the plans reviewed. These recommendations were selected because they directly impact recreation and economic development in the McKenzie River Area and often were mentioned in several plans.

- Create a comprehensive list of indoor facilities for off season use.
- Continue to review funding options for Fish Lake Historic Site.
- Install information kiosk in Eugene.
- Diversify accommodations – Glamping and rustic, hut to hut, outdoor theme.
- Create recreation hubs for different user groups; for example, refill stations, food and beverage, restrooms, and cleaning services for different recreation equipment (paddles, bikes, clothes, etc.).
- Add visitor gateways, interpretive bays, viewpoints, and public art along Highway 126.
- Localize permitting process to McKenzie River Ranger Station.
- Add "Ranger Station and Visitors Center" to McKenzie River Ranger Station's name to convey its visitor information role more clearly.
- Manage the McKenzie River National Recreation Trail as a product in its own right. Develop its awareness as a destination brand that has "must do" national status for hikers.
  - Ways to do this:
    » Create a distinctive logo for trail, included in all signage and promotional material;
    » Install more 'Enter MRNR Trail here' signs, which should be erected at all key roadside bays and safe traffic points along the highway. Include sub-signage with appropriate symbols for the activity types visitors can undertake (hiking, biking, kayaking, etc);
    » Identify key wildlife areas along the trail, highway entry points, and trail maps; and
    » Add prominent directional signage to Trail at the Belknap Hot Springs entry point.
- Add short riverside walking trails at selected county parks.

Amenities

Below is a curated list of amenity themes and suggestions based off the plans reviewed:

- Create a single map that can be used across all marketing platforms.
- Form wayfinding team to:
  - Standardize signage to improve its consistency and look, with greater ease of visibility and stronger design qualities;
  - Ensure that internationally and nationally recognized color standards are followed; and
  - Ensure that all signs have adequate illumination or reflectivity for nighttime use.
- Continue to survey visitors about experience and needs.
- Integrate history and link businesses through storytelling to educate visitors on the region's history, including indigenous, geological, and ecological.
- Create art installations that promote the region's unique ecosystems, history, and geography.
- Install official tourism attraction highway signs for each bridge.

Business Services

Below is a curated list of business service themes and suggestions based off the plans reviewed:

- Create theme-based travel itineraries / create package deals across different businesses/experiences.
  - Offer new tours such as:
  - Foraging trips for mushrooms;
  - Lucky Boy mine;
  - McKenzie bike trails;
  - Waterfall tours;
  - Hiking to geologically unique areas (Wolf Rock, He He Mt.); and
  - Old growth tours.
- Create and increase frequency of large year-round events such as McKenzie River Festival or fall colors to increase visitation.
- Increase bus transit to the area.
  - Create shuttle service to Oakridge; and
  - Provide shuttle service to local events.
- Create a range of lodging-focusing on those that pay the transient lodging tax (not federal campgrounds).
- Provide overnight/after hours laundry.
- Integrate lodge and shuttle services.
- Create hotel outdoor chill zones, which include food and beverage, lounging, pool (summer), hot tub (winter), and other amenities.
- Develop healthy food offerings and simple and quick menus.
- Promote the creation of food carts.
- Encourage community gardening.
- Develop educational clinics for fee-based guide services.
- Provide scholarships for businesses seeking to improve bike-friendliness.
- Develop lift access riding at Willamette Pass.
- Meet quarterly with regional operators to collaborate and address priority issues.
- Support the McKenzie River Community Charter School by linking school programs with projects.
- Work to improve broadband access.
- Promote and ease the booking of river-based and other adventure activities.
  - Ways to address this:
    » Ensure that soft adventure operators are given prominence in the Chamber's destination marketing and not treated as "just another member;"
    » Work with local/regional lodging to encourage promotion of operators to guests;
    » Ensure that local operator services are easy to book via phone and internet;
    » Investigate the need for and feasibility of a regional reservations system;
    » Ensure that all McKenzie River soft adventure opportunities are included in CVALCO's adventure tourism brochures and online marketing; and
    » Identify and activate appropriate cross selling techniques and participate in cooperative marketing directed toward their target audiences.

Interview Findings

Between February and May 2020, our team conducted twelve interviews of stakeholders identified by the project management team. This group included business owners, outfitters, representatives of the McKenzie River Guides, EWEB, LCOG, RARE, Travel Lane County, and the Ford Foundation.

The interviews provided community members' perspective on recreation issues for locals and visitors. A review of the twelve interviews yielded recurring challenges and themes related to addressing these challenges. Most prominent were challenges related to the McKenzie River District decentralized, unincorporated nature. This intrinsic characteristic is at the root of many barriers to infrastructure improvements, funding for economic development, community involvement, and safety.

Related to this was coordination between a decentralized community and multiple public land managers including Willamette National Forest, Lane County, EWEB, ODOT, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Numerous jurisdictions and community initiatives have created a lack of cohesion in planning. Additionally stakeholders identified the seasonal nature of recreation tourism as an intrinsic problem. Although efforts to extend the season or promote off-season activities continue, the nature of periodic revenue streams contributes to other issues such as housing availability and job security.

Almost all interviews discussed one major positive in planning for recreation tourism:
- Recognition of community efforts to create business.

Additionally, a majority of the interviews discussed two concerns:
- Concern of Visitor Impacts; and
- Lack of Funding.

Actionable Items from Interviews
Below are actionable items suggested by McKenzie River Area recreation tourism stakeholders.

- Increase support for concessionaires and visitors through communication and funding.
  - Interviewees desired more communication from the Forest Service. One mentioned that many business owners thought of the Forest Service as 'The Enemy.' One mentioned difficulty in obtaining permits and funding for businesses.
- Increase outfitter access to Three Sisters Wilderness.
  - Interviewees recognized that many commercial trips into Three Sisters originate in Bend, rather than McKenzie. There is an opportunity to capture revenue locally since McKenzie is closer to Eugene and Portland.
- Enhance law enforcement presence.
  - Crime contributes to a negative image of the area, and there is limited personnel from the county and highway on patrol. A lack of enforcement at recreation sites also leads to environmental impacts and revenue loss.
- Maintain quality trails.
  - Interviewees identified trails as a point source for environmental impacts and user conflicts. There is an opportunity to mitigate both with enhanced trail work.

- Mitigate impacts of increased visitor volumes with education and infrastructure improvements.
  - The most common topic in interviews was concern over environmental impacts of visitors. Dangerous parking and consequential pedestrian traffic, litter, and human waste were all included. For the people we interviewed, planning for increasing visitors as Eugene continues to grow and outdoor recreation becomes more accessible was critical to maintaining the beauty and health of the area.

In addition to the stakeholder interviews, two Forest Service employees were asked about recreation challenges and the benefits of collaboration for the Forest Service. Both agreed that a collaborative effort with public and stakeholder input is needed for improvements to Blue Pool, Sahalie Falls, and other major destinations in the McKenzie and that visitor impacts are one of the biggest concerns. From these interviews, some potential meeting topics for a collaborative group were outlined:

- Education and outreach,
- Trails maintenance,
- Community appetite for fees, and
- Easements for public land access.

McKenzie Summary

Overall, the plan review and interviews discussed similar challenges and opportunities. The main cross cutting themes are:

- Trails maintenance and sustainability,
- Wayfinding and educational signage,
- Cohesive marketing strategy,
- Concerns of visitor impacts, and
- Importance of collaboration/working together.

Recommendations for collaboration in the McKenzie can be found in the Suggestions for McKenzie Collaborative section.

Bicycle Tourism Suggestions

Both the Oakridge and McKenzie River Areas have well established and well known mountain biking trails, with devoted user groups. Mountain biking, and cycling in general, have been touted as an attraction to visitor dollars, bringing individuals and annual events. Economic research supports this strategy, which has led to a number of planning documents that address bicycle tourism, cycling infrastructure, and marketing. Plans and community members acknowledge that bicycle tourism is a vehicle for bringing visitors, but it cannot stand alone as an attraction or a revenue generator. Cycling attractions and other recreation opportunities or diversions enhance and compound one another, making a stronger recreation economy. Bicycle specific plans we reviewed are included in Table 5.

Table 5: Bicycle Specific Plans Reviewed

Plans List	Year
Oakridge-Westfir Community Trails Plan (Oakridge-Westfir Community Trails Committee, 2007)	2007
Outdoor Recreation Destination Economic Opportunities Analysis for the City of Oakridge (ECONorthwest, 2007)	2007
The Economic Significance of Bicycle-Related Travel in Oregon (Dean Runyan Associates, 2013)	2013
Adapting to The New Economy: The Impacts of Mountain Bike Tourism in Oakridge, Oregon (Meltzer, 2014)	2014
East Lane County Bicycle Tourism Strategy (Travel Oregon, 2017)	2017
Oakridge Transportation Systems Plan 2000/Update (City of Oakridge, 2000; City of Oakridge, 2019b)	2019

In addition to these plans, recommendations also came out of our two workshops in Oakridge and stakeholder interviews. We found a long standing and dedicated mountain biking community that has been working to enhance recreation in this sector for many years.

This report includes individual feedback and planning recommendations without ranking by merit or feasibility. It is notable that the top recommendations from the Oakridge workshop pertained to bicycle recreation even though participants were ranking all recreation facilities projects. Recommendations from older documents that have been completed or are in process were excluded. Amenities and business services sections apply to both McKenzie and Oakridge Areas. Facilities recommendations are summarized to reflect priorities useful to both areas, and a list with specific recommendations for Oakridge and McKenzie is included.
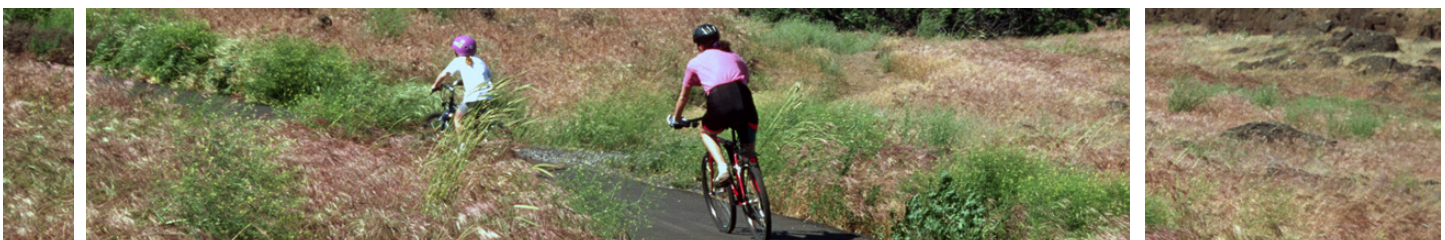
Bicycle Facilities

Infrastructure recommendations focus around connectivity, safety and access. Bike lanes and improved shoulders are needed on many streets, as well as in town connectors to decrease barriers to bike travel. Notably, in our February 25th workshop, 'Bike Lanes on Hwy 58' received the most votes when participants were asked to choose their top 3 facilities projects.

For out of town trails, plans and individuals recommended completing or expanding existing trail networks to serve a range of skills, disperse impacts and reduce user conflicts. We have gathered a list of specific recommendations to improve bicycle travel, categorized by Forest trail systems, Oakridge in-town connectivity, and McKenzie Area. Rankings from the February 25th Oakridge workshop are included for Forest Trail and In-Town sections.

Table 6: Recommended Improvements Forest Trail Systems

Impact	Purpose
Create on-street bike lanes for all arterials and major collectors	Safety/Access
Goodman Creek: Better drainage; evaluate usage (e.g. bikes only in summer)	Wear from winter use
Better maintenance and signage of upper Willamette trails	Need maintenance
Re-route and rebuild to modern trail designs and best practices, i.e. eliminate blind corners and designate speeds	Not all trails designed well (i.e. Goodman creek)
Improve trail infrastructure and complete deferred maintenance	Current infrastructure isn't up to specifications (i.e. bridges, etc.)
Develop lift access riding at Willamette Pass	Diversify attractions
Develop Larrison Rock trail network	Potential for beginner and advanced trails
Connect all of the North Fork Trail	North Fork trail has bits & pieces
Build 2 mile section of Bunchgrass trail connection	Complete trail

Participants in the February 25th workshop were asked to rank suggestions from plans as high, medium, or low priority, and to add their own suggestions. Figure 5 displays the four projects that received the most 'high' rankings. The number indicated for each suggestion is out of 19 total participants. For example, 12 out of 19 people ranked 'Improve connectivity between the districts/forests/communities' as a high priority.

Figure 5. 2/25 Workshop Highest Priorities, Forest Trails
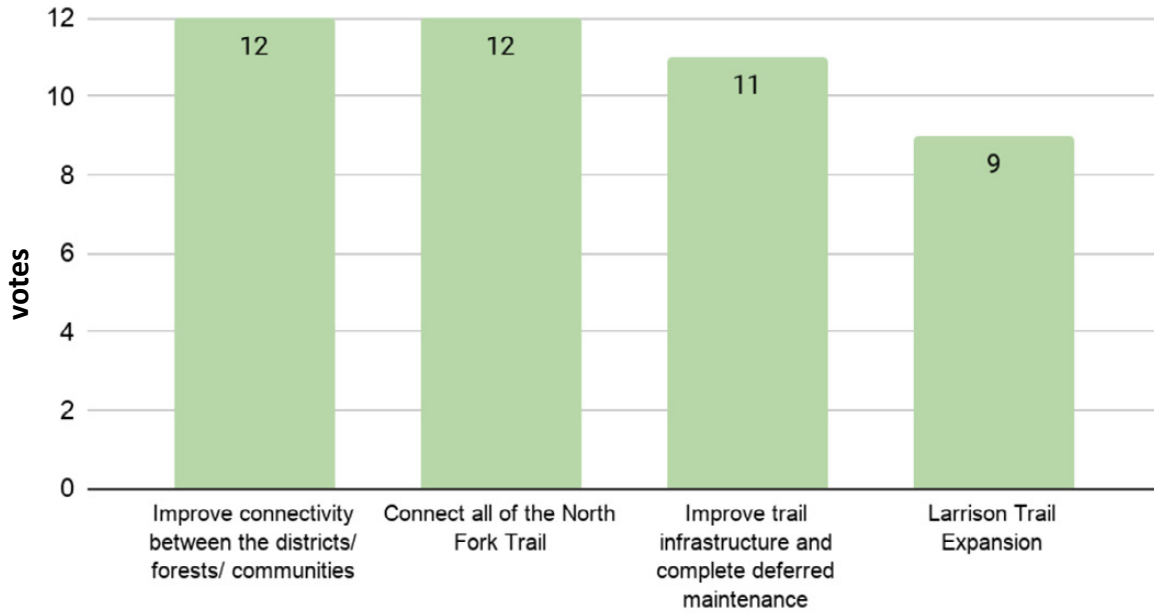
Table 7: Recommended Improvements Oakridge In-Town Connectivity

Impact	Purpose
On-street bike lanes for all arterials and major collectors	Increase Multi-Modal Transport
Conduct bridge feasibility study of Salmon Creek Trail	
Build multi-use path on Salmon Creek Levee	
Build Fish Hatchery Road Bikeway	
Build Garden Rd, Fairyglen Dr, Rainbow St multi-use path	
Build bike lanes: Highway 58	
Build bike lanes: W. 2nd, E. 1st, Hill St	
Build bike lanes: Commercial St.	
Build bike lanes: Schools Street, River Road	

Figure 6. 2/25 Workshop Highest Priorities, In-Town Connectivity
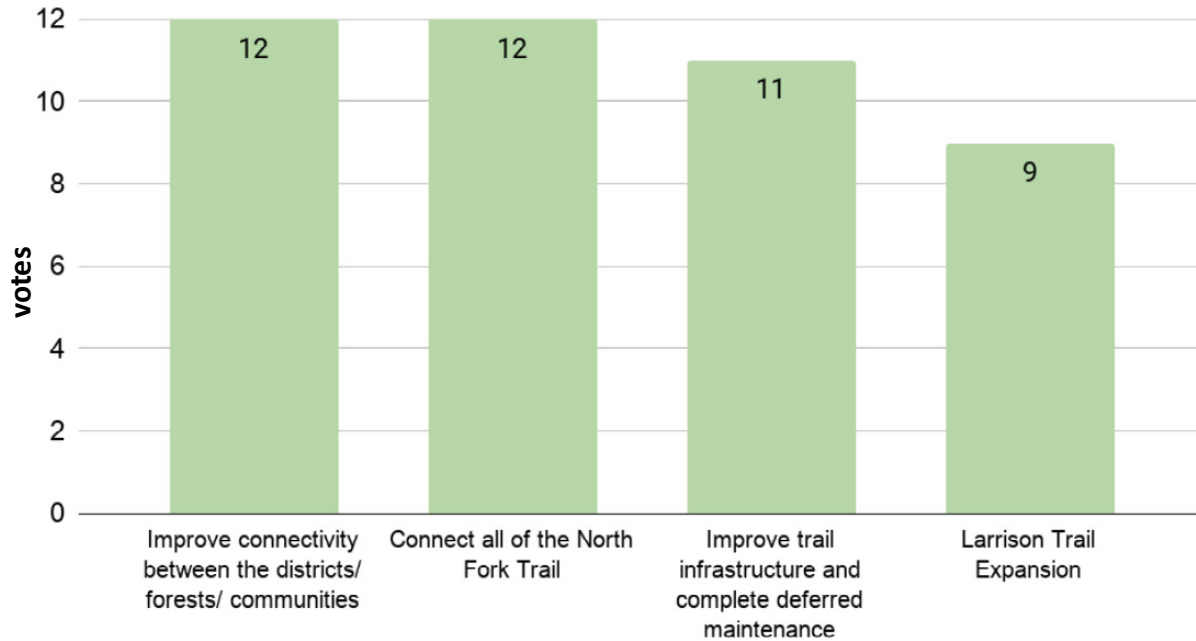
Table 8: Recommended Improvements McKenzie Area

Impact	Purpose
Add a leg of Oregon Timber Trail connecting McKenzie and Oakridge	Increase exposure
Improve shoulder and wayfinding from McKenzie River Trailhead to McKenzie Bridge	Increase safety/access
Improve shoulder and wayfinding from Kings Castle and Olallie trailheads to McKenzie Bridge	Increase safety/access
Foster relationships with public land managers to maintain facilities	Prioritize use of resources

Bicycle Amenities

We have defined bicycle amenities as installations or services that enhance trails or support trail use. Discussion in this topic centered around the idea of a bicycle hub or ride center. In both communities we heard about the need for information hubs and a recreation event center. On February 25th, Oakridge workshop participants ranked the need for a large group event center tied for third of 26 project ideas. A bicycle hub would partially fulfill this purpose by providing information and a meeting place, but be focused on supporting cyclists. There is an option to combine a general rec/event center with a bicycle hub by including the amenities listed here in the plans for a larger facility. Another option is to make a bicycle specific hub without resources or attractions for other users, and to have multiple linked hubs across the region. Bicycle hubs should be easy to find and serve as meeting places for rides, situated at logical starts or finishes. Table 8 outlines features of a bicycle hub that would attract cyclists. These recommendations are taken from the 'East Lane County Bicycle Tourism Strategy, 2017.'

Table 9: Bicylce Hub Features

Bicycle Support Hubs Should include:	
Parking,	Wayfinding/Maps
Shuttle drop off/pick up	Benches/tables
Public transport link	Water
Food and drink for purchase	Restrooms/changing rooms
Basic gear for purchase	Shade/shelter
Bike wash station	Iconic artwork for selfies
Maps and info	Pump track or skills area
Bike racks	

The following two amenities suggestions are necessary to support bicycle recreation in addition to a bicycle hub or in its absence.
- Create a central point of information online, and
- Hotel outdoor chill zones with bike wash and workstand.

Bike-Related Business Services

The bicycle hub concept is meant to attract cyclists to the area, making the experience easier and more inviting. In order to make the hub serve the recreation economy, business services must be ready to capture visitor dollars. The following suggestions present methods to establish and increase revenue capture through services that cyclists need and desirable commodities:

- Create shuttle services to trails and lodging, and from metro areas. Improve transit links,
- Provide scholarships for businesses seeking to improve bike-friendliness,
- Coordinate motels and restaurants to offer combo discounts,
- Offer overnight/after-hours laundry,
- Provide shuttle services to lodges, trails and nearby towns,
- Develop healthy food offerings with simple and quick menus,
- Develop fee based guide services and skills clinics,
- Create bike rental fleets with current model, well maintained, many sizes,
- Offer secure bicycle storage and cleaning facilities,
- Create pre-packaged experiences, including lodging, transport, guide services, and equipment, and
- Promote races and events that showcase facilities.

Common Themes and Opportunites

Through a review of planning documents, interviews, and workshops during the winter and spring of 2020, our team compiled knowledge on past accomplishments and opportunities for each community. This report addresses the conditions and needs of each separately, but also wishes to acknowledge common issues that can be resolved through future strategic actions.

The list below includes items that support both recreation and economic development, with the holistic objective of a sustainable recreation economy. Project related needs and abstract challenges are combined, recognizing that both are equally important and dependent on each other to create sustainability.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- Secure Funding for Projects
- Expand Volunteer Base
- Create Visitor Information Centers
- Capture Visitor Revenue with Local Businesses
- Add and Improve Trails for All User Groups
- Anticipate Economic Downturn
- Manage Environmental Impacts
- Promote Connection with Placemaking
- Cultivate Community Dialogue

Secure Funding for Projects

A major commonality is a lack of funding for implementing plans. Both communities have realized huge efforts in collaboration and planning, creating an abundance of information and strategies for action. In many cases, the process has stalled here due to a lack of financing to build facilities or create amenities, or a lack of personnel to organize follow-through. Funding for implementation needs to be created through grants, fees, or other fundraising tools.

Create Visitor Information Centers

Both communities continue to express the need for wayfinding, central information hubs and a vehicle for information dissemination. Visitors need a place to ask questions, get trail updates, learn about etiquette and stewardship. Wayfinding is needed to make sites more inviting and easier to find. A central point of information online with accurate conditions updates could help avoid extreme congestion and safety issues, as well as educate visitors about best practices and alternative activities.

Add and Improve Trails for All User Groups

Trails are the main draw for recreators in both districts and a majority of planning has been done around this. Trails planning has been focused on increasing the number of trails for mountain bikers, but also expanding trail opportunities for other user groups. It has also focused on reducing environmental impacts and user conflicts through restoration, engineering, and education. A main focus was connectivity on bike lanes and pathways in-town, to Forest destinations, and linking communities with through trails.

Manage Environmental Impacts

A big concern was reducing environmental impacts from recreation activities. Data points to growing participation in outdoor recreation, and by inviting more business these communities will be inviting environmental degradation. Plans sought to manage this with improved garbage and restroom facilities, trail and road maintenance and educational outreach. Other concerns we heard were forest fire impacts, water quality, and traffic. Both areas are at continued risk of forest fire, which can have devastating and lasting effects on natural attractions as well as capital investments. Similarly, water quality in rivers can suffer with increased development, and must be protected to maintain the attractiveness of these resources. Traffic causes safety concerns, noise and air pollution which can have an adverse effect on visits to nature. Communities have varying levels of control over these three items, but should recognize that they have a direct effect on the recreation economy.

Expand Volunteer Base

Oakridge and McKenzie both have robust volunteer participation in community collaboration planning efforts and physical work groups. These communities have committed huge amounts of hours to building trails, chairing committees, and writing grants. The group of committed citizens is disproportionate to the amount of work necessary, and many people repeatedly step into fulfilling this role. In some cases, there is a need to pass these leadership roles onto the next generation of business owners and public officials. In some cases, more hands are needed to get the work done. Both communities have a need to expand involvement in planning and work projects to bolster the recreation economy.

Capture Visitor Revenue with Local Businesses

Outdoor recreation contributes millions to our national and state economy. Oregonians place a high value on these opportunities, seeking authentic outdoor experiences more and more. Trail usage, which is a main facility in both McKenzie and Oakridge, is often free and self-guided. Visitors are able to take advantage of recreation opportunities without contributing to associated costs or engaging in the local economy. Economic research tells us that communities situated at the gateway to trail opportunities need to find ways to retain visitors' dollars through food, accommodations, or other services.

Anticipate Economic Downturn

In addition to the challenges created by seasonality, the tourism industry is susceptible to many other disruptions, including economic downturn, natural disasters, and public health emergencies. Oakridge and McKenzie are more vulnerable if they repeat the pattern of relying on a single economic driver, as we saw with the collapse of the timber industry. Developing diverse economic generators will contribute to communities' ability to thrive in variable conditions. Examples include biomass harvesting or light industrial business. Opportunities to diversify the economy could require developing reliable communications infrastructure or recruiting business with incentives.

Seasonality

Seasonality continues to be a challenge for Oakridge, McKenzie and all communities linked to recreation tourism. Strategies have been attempted to extend the summer season, or to draw visitors for winter activities, however, a lack of revenue during the winter months inhibits business development. Summer revenue needs to be sufficient to sustain businesses through the winter months, or alternative sources of revenue and employment need to be developed.

# Promote Connection with Placemaking

Consistent wayfinding, unified outgoing messaging, and information hubs all fit under the idea of placemaking. Both communities have recognized the need for wayfinding, but it should be expanded to include branding, online presence, interpretive info, and stewardship outreach. Greater personal connections can be made to a defined place, increasing return visitation, stewardship and organic promotion. Brand and marketing are present in every planning recommendation we read, and many individual responses. To create a coherent sense of place, communities need to create consensus on their assets and identity.

Cultivate Community Dialogue

Community cohesion has become one of the biggest challenges for both communities to move forward with planning processes. A lack of consensus has hindered branding and placemaking efforts in Oakridge as some people have pushed back against the Mountain Biking motif. In the McKenzie area, a decentralized geography has resulted in many uncoordinated groups working towards similar goals. We have also seen and heard about the need for better communication across public land managers and stakeholder groups.

A planning process has the potential to create a space for groups to come together and draw out individuals who have not engaged previously. By creating a consensus with high engagement, communities will be able to direct resources towards priorities that reflect their values. In all the plans, workshops and interviews we heard about a dedicated and productive community, involved business owners and committed volunteers. This is reflected in the planning documents and in the positive changes the two communities have already achieved. This is one of the greatest assets both communities have, but there is opportunity to improve consensus and communication to create a recreation economy that brings increasing benefits.

Supporting Collaborative Efforts
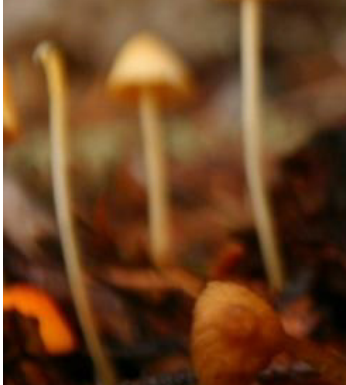
Recreation and economic development cross many sectors, requiring collaborative efforts amongst a wide variety of stakeholders. Throughout our research we frequently heard requests to increase collective efforts between active individuals, agencies, and community groups who are working to enhance the overall recreation planning and economic growth in their communities.

Making an endeavor to better incorporate public input is a win-win for these individuals, public agencies, nonprofit organizations and the communities they serve. It offers stakeholders the opportunity to express their needs and priorities for recreation and economic development while also informing the broader planning efforts of the county, local government, community organizations, and public land management agencies. Public input also helps inform where these groups can best allocate funds and resources to support community goals, further giving agencies, individuals, and community groups the chance to provide stability and sustainability to the communities they work in. This reflects the benefits of collaboration, wherein the ultimate goal is to establish a long term interest for people to remain involved in recreation planning and economic development with active agencies, groups, and the community at large.

The Oakridge and McKenzie areas represent two distinct communities. Our process in both Oakridge and McKenzie involved strengthening the relationships between the Forest Service and the community. However, throughout our process we found that although our approach was similar in both areas, our recommendations needed to be specifically tailored. In Oakridge, we were able to leverage the existing working relationship between the Forest Service and the Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative to build and sustain an ongoing recreation collaborative; specific recommendations for how to do so follow in the next section. For the McKenzie communities, we recommend developing a coalition which can serve as a foundation to support the relationship between the Forest Service and help build alliances within the community.

Coalitions vs. Collaboratives

For our purposes, we are differentiating a coalition from a collaborative. A coalition is a developmental stage in the eventual or potential creation of a collaborative. Forming a coalition entails building a network of engaged partners with similar missions and project priorities in any given area. This effort is worthwhile to better understand what work is already being done and what collaboration between groups might naturally form. A coalition may meet a few times a year, maintain contact infrequently, and serve as a symbolic representation of collaborative efforts; whereas, a collaborative is an ongoing directive with specific project outcomes, hired leadership and committed participation. Although we started out with the goal of helping to build a collaborative in the McKenzie area, we found that this is not the best recommendation for this community at this time.

Consequently, for the McKenzie Area, we recommend that the impetus to form a collaborative be redirected into coalition building: establishing a network of working groups in the area, deciding how to maintain communication, and identifying leadership with the capacity to sustain any agreed upon actions.

Creating a collaborative and coalition specific to each area addresses the importance of careful member selection (Shindler & Neburka, 1995). Collaboratives are best approached by identifying people with relevant knowledge and a readiness to commit. Developing collaboratives respective to their unique geographical region is an important step to help narrow the selection criteria for new members interested in participating. Doing so also improves group stability and more efficient use of people's time.

Suggestions for the Oakridge-Westfir Collaborative

Building a Collaborative

In thinking about building a collaborative in Oakridge, the majority of initial work has already been done. In 2018, The Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative adopted a charter for their Recreation Committee; in it they state the mission of the committee which is to, "cooperatively promote recreation activities and management solutions that sustain ecological resiliency and socioeconomic health of the southern Willamette forest area and nearby communities." The charter is a solid foundation for collaborative work to continue and outlines the committee's goals, objectives, membership, decision making processes, and operations.

First, as mentioned above, commitment and purpose are key attributes to a collaboration's success. A clear purpose for a recreation committee and a blue-print for how the group should engage already exists. This is a strategic foundation and now is a crucial moment to leverage these structures that are already in place for both the Forest Service and community members to collaborate. That said, one element is lacking: sufficient funding to compensate leadership. Within rural areas, the communities are tightly knit and collaborative efforts rely heavily on trust and existing relationships. What we have found through our work and research in the Oakridge area is that the community is closely connected and community members are often very active and informed. In order to carry this work forward there needs to be a leader who has the capacity, connections, and compensation to do so.

In conversations with Sarah Altemus-Pope, the coordinator of the Southern Willamette Forest Collective, our team has developed a series of suggestions for how to achieve a collaborative and long standing Recreation Committee in Oakridge. The SWFC has already identified a leader who is familiar with the community and these efforts. Not only should the facilitator have existing relationships in the community, but also possess outreach skills and facilitation experience. Through the University of Oregon Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) program, this participant will be funded to continue working directly through the SWFC and as part of their job description, twenty-percent of their time will be dedicated to facilitating the Recreation Committee. This averages out to about 30 hours a month which is plenty of time to continue existing efforts collaborating with the Forest Service, outreaching to the community and hosting monthly public meetings. Additionally, this is both advantageous and strategic as the RARE participant will continue to foster relationships through the collaborative and facilitate their own committee to facility. Through RARE, the student will be guaranteed to hold the position for one year and as their contract expires will either identify other funding to stay in the position or appoint and train someone new. Thus, funding is another major component of the success of this collaborative.

Funding a Collaborative

In order to think of a strategic funding strategy for a sustainable recreation collaborative, we are suggesting a two-year funding timeline. The first year (2020-2021) is already largely funded thanks to the RARE position. However, for the RARE student to plan accordingly for year two (2021 - 2022), other funding sources will need to be secured. Both the SWFC Coordinator and RARE participant will have to pursue funding opportunities during year one. Planning for this now and beginning to identify available funding early on will ensure that after the RARE contract expires there is enough funding available. Overall, we estimate that to maintain the Committee and a facilitator who works on collaborative efforts 30 hours a month for a year the full contract would cost approximately $15,000.

To meet this need, diversified funding sources should be identified and secured. Diversified funding streams ensure that the mission of the Recreation Committee can remain open and flexible to a myriad of the communities recreation needs. Securing funding from only one agency threatens the collaborative nature of the committee and has the potential to create a situation in which the goals and objectives cater unanimously toward one agency and one agenda. Therefore, and in order to avoid this, beginning to identify a wide variety of funding sources is crucial; including but not limited to: foundations, agency partners and the county. A comprehensive list is included in Appendix B of specific organizations that have grant funding available for a variety of efforts including, capacity building, project development and restoration. More details on the specific grants and eligibility requirements can be found in the Supplemental Materials.

If the Forest Service is able to contribute seed money toward this effort it will help ensure the future success of the Recreation Committee and encourage the SWFC and RARE student to begin looking for matching grants over the course of the next year. The existing Cascade Pacific agreement would provide the ideal opportunity for the Forest Service to fund this effort and allow for enough flexibility in how the SWFC can allocate the funding. We suggest an initial amount of $5,000 to $7,000 to ensure the future and continued success of the Recreation Collaborative.

In order to successfully raise the remainder of the $15,000 the Recreation Committee facilitator and SWFC coordinator will need to use some of their capacity toward fund raising. To support this process, we have provided a comprehensive list of potential grants in Appendix B. Additionally, fundraising efforts could pursue county dollars through Transient Room Tax and Recreational Trails Program, tourism taxes and the rural tourism program. Establishing the Recreation Committee now with the RARE participant as its facilitator and demonstrating the success of the collaborative will help the committee to receive funding of this kind in the future.

Next Steps

In conclusion, it is important for the community of Oakridge to leverage the resources that already exist. The SWFC has contributed outstanding effort toward laying the necessary groundwork for a Recreation Committee collaborative to exist. However, without a leader who has the capacity, compensation and sufficient diversified funding to ensure authentic collaboration, sustaining a Recreation Committee in Oakridge will fail. Therefore, we suggest moving forward by following this sequence of actions.

2020

1. Starting point: SWFC Recreation Committee Charter.

2. Assign facilitator, building on existing SWFC capacity.

3. Use RARE capacity to apply for grant funding opportunities.

4. The Forest Service allocates $5,000-$7,000 through existing partnership agreements.

2021

5. Provide information on other funding sources.

6. Ensure diversified funding exists for the 2021-2022 facilitator.

2021-2022

7. Train future facilitator to maximize information retention.

8. Leverage resources to implement priority projects.

Suggestions for the Mckenzie Area

Because we had little engagement with residents in the McKenzie area, we were not able to assess their desire for participating in a collaborative group focused on recreation and economic development. (Please note, our recommendation has not been fully vetted with all involved parties.)

To help alleviate meeting fatigue, we recommend asking the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee if recreation and economic development could be talked about at four of their monthly meetings. We suggest inviting key stakeholders that are not currently part of the Tourism Committee to participate in the meetings. We also suggest hiring a facilitator to plan the agendas and complete meeting follow-up activities. This key group of stakeholders should plan a yearly community meeting focused on recreation and community development.

Potential Facilitator

We recommend contacting the McKenzie Watershed Stewardship Group to pursue conversations about becoming a facilitator. This group makes sense for several reasons. First, the Forest Service already has a cost share agreement with the group. It also already has a consortium of people and many are willing to talk about recreation and economic development and might want to participate in the quarterly meetings. Finally, the group's status within the watershed is about convening people with a variety of interests, which is the crux of the collaborative effort needed in the McKenzie. (We have had an initial conversation with this organization and they are interested in more conversations with the Forest Service about this role.)

Other potential facilitators could come from the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) or Travel Lane County. Both of these agencies, to our knowledge, do not have existing cost share agreements with the Forest Service but have a strong interest in the well-being of the McKenzie Area.

Per our preliminary research, we expect that it will cost $7000 annually for approximately 15 hours of work a month to maintain the momentum of this effort. If people are not able to physically gather, the facilitator will be responsible for developing virtual methods for these conversations.

Quarterly Meetings

Purpose:
- Participants provide updates on recreation and economic development projects
- Discuss grant opportunities
- Plan agenda for yearly community meeting
- Look for ways to support each other in project work
- Align vision of agencies and community working in this realm

Potential Participants:
- McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce – Tourism Committee (consisting of some business owners)
- McKenzie River Community Development Corporation
- Travel Lane County
- Lane County Community and Economic Development
- Willamette National Forest
- LCOG
- Linn County Parks
- Lane County Parks

- EWEB
- McKenzie River Discovery Center
- McKenzie Watershed Stewardship Group (select participants)
- We are sure that there are a few other key stakeholders that are not on this list.

Schedule
Held during four of the monthly McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce – Tourism Committee meetings.

Yearly Community Meeting
Purpose
- Bring community members and business owners together with public land management agencies to discuss vision for recreation in the area as well as specific "hot topics"
- Discuss proposed recreation projects identified by the Forest Service and community members
- Help develop the Forest Service's, and potentially other agencies, program of work

Specific topics could include:
- Trails – gather community input about trail use to help the Forest Service identify which trails can be decommissioned
- Fees – explore the community's appetite for charging fees as a source of revenue
- Easements – help identify opportunities for private property easements along the McKenzie Trail to allow travel to public lands
- Outreach – brainstorm how to increase community interest in becoming involved in recreation and economic development planning

Potential Participants:
- Participants in the Quarterly Meetings:
  - McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce – Tourism Committee (consisting of some business owners)
  - McKenzie River Community Development Corporation
  - Travel Lane County
  - Lane County Community and Economic Development
  - Willamette National Forest
  - LCOG
  - Linn County Parks
  - Lane County Parks
  - EWEB
  - McKenzie River Discovery Center
  - McKenzie Watershed Stewardship Group (select participants)
- Public land managers (Army Corp, BLM)
- Willamette Valley Visitors Association
- Outfitters
- Small business owners
- Community residents

Conclusion

The communities within the Middle Fork and the McKenzie River Ranger Districts have an opportunity to capitalize on their natural resources to create sustainable recreation economies. Through collaborative and unified planning efforts, the districts can build stable economies that benefit residents, a diversity of user groups, and the environment. The Forest Service recreation staff interviewed through this project expressed a strong willingness and interest in engaging with community members. Staff stated an interest in continuing to interact with members frequently, attend meetings, take field trips, and provide relevant information such as maps. Community members involved in our interviews and meetings also expressed a desire to have a deeper relationship with the Forest Service around recreation and are excited to work together to implement many of the ideas that have been captured in previous planning work. It is our hope that the information presented in this report provides public land management agencies, community organizations, businesses, and community members with consolidated information from which to continue the conversation around economic development and recreation.

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Appendix A

Handout Instructions: This handout highlights proposals for recreation facilities from previous planning efforts. Please take some time now to rank them as High, Medium, or Low Importance based on the project's capacity to support the community, improve the lifestyle of residents, and promote tourism in Oakridge.

H = High Importance   **M** = Medium Importance   **L** = Low Importance

Sticker Vote Instructions: Please take some time now to **choose your top project improvements** based on the project's capacity to support the community, improve the lifestyle of residents, and promote tourism in Oakridge.

Summary of Past Planning Efforts: Water

Activity	Work that was proposed	High	Medium	Low	Stickers
Water Canoe Kayak SUP Motorboat Fishing	North Fork River Put-Ins: Create bump outs at put-ins and take-outs Comment: Middle Fork too	9	7	2	
	Hampton Boat Ramp: Establish a longer boat ramp Comments: - Is it too far from Oakridge? - Manage boat ramps Oakridge has rather new ramps	7	6	6	
	Lower North Fork: Place port-a-potties at key put-ins and takeouts Comments: Westfir take out	5	6	7	2
	Seasonal placement of port-a-potties or vault toilet Comments: - Fees? - Portable toilet up on the Eugene-to-Crest Trail junction where the 5826 to Rob's cut-in and Chad's cut-in area - Other sanitation facilities at Salmon Creek - Porta Potties get trashed/burned–hard to maintain; vault toilets get vandalized	8	6	5	
	Gold Lake boat launch: Expand parking for boaters	3	9	6	

Proposals added to our list by the Community that were ranked:					
Kitson Hot Springs - Boy Scouts + Forest Service, Lease? Get back from BOA for public use - retreat center? → increase access and add parking	2				2
Hampton boat ramp (improve to water level)	1				
Middlefork facilities	2				
Designated swimming area with bathrooms (Suggestion: Salmon Creek)	3				4

Additional Participant Suggestions:
- McCredie Hot Spring improvements: parking, dig out/expand pools, designated trails, fee site (3 people indicated this)
- Fishing trail access points improved/signage to lower impact (2 people indicated this)
  - LNT, stewardship signage at fishing point
  - turnouts for fishing area parking, establish 2 put-ins with specific parking, sanitation facilities; appropriately sized facilities for fishing tournaments
- Put in public use area of Middlefork Willamette below Hills Creek Dam

Summary of Past Planning Efforts: Snow

Activity	Work that was proposed	High	Medium	Low	Stickers
Snow Skiing XC skiing Snowboard Snowmobile	Gold lake snow park shelter–Partnerships for maintenance: - Willamette Backcountry ski patrol and High Cascades volunteers are willing to do work, but need funding and Forest Service help	5	11	1	
	Seven snow shelters need maintenance Comments: - Secondary facility on Maiden Peak (shelter is always packed)	6	10	2	

	Willamette Pass:
	General WP Comments:
	   - Private ownership makes improvements hard to support
	   - Not ready for more visitors; business traffic can't justify improvements (we should focus elsewhere).
	   - Overflow parking eliminates sledding & XC ski trail/snow bike trails. PCT Access from here for sledding/XC skiing
	Proposal 1: Rebuild mountain bike trails
	Proposal 1 Comments:
	   - Not viable, concentrate on GOATS trails
	   - Not enough promotion; low use during summer
	Proposal 2: Funding to thin trees, clear runs, and build West Peak Lift
	Proposal 2 Comments:
	   - They're struggling, so this/any other work probably won't happen (owner)> the owner of the business is not in the room/doesn't participate & the ski resort is struggling
	   - WP lease reserves access–West Peak Lift for public use
		8	2	6	

	Proposals added to our list by the Community that were ranked:				

Snow					
Snow Skiing XC skiing Snowboard Snowmobile	Hut-to-Hut System skiing–yurts, maybe a concessionaire	5			3
	Expand Waldo parking for snowmobiles, snow biking		1		

Additional Participant Suggestions:
- Fat biking trails for snow/XC skiing in winter (6 people indicated this)
- Signage & wayfinding: Implement phase #3 (3 people indicated this)
- Fire lookouts rented out for winter lodging
- Snowmobiling, XC ski/backpacking
- Don't want to bring more people to the spots, but tourism is important
- Access to Waldo for fire lookout?

Summary of Past Planning Efforts: Out-of-Town Trails and Facilities

Activity	Work that was proposed	High	Medium	Low	Stickers
Trails Equestrian Hiking Bikes: Mountain Gravel Road Ebike Motorized: Quads Jeeps Motorcycles Side by Side	Goodman Creek: Better drainage; evaluate usage (e.g. bikes only in summer) Comment: Multi-use awareness for equestrians	5	7	4	
	Upper Willamette Trails: Better maintenance and signage of upper Willamette trails Comment: Middlefork trail	8	7	1	1
	Re-route and rebuild to modern trail designs and best practices	6	6	5	
	Improve historic and legacy trails - example: Mill Park historical ramp honors logging history	6	7	4	1
	Improve connectivity between the Districts/ forests/ communities	12	3	2	2
	Improve trail infrastructure and complete deferred maintained	11	5	1	1
	Need for a Ride Center - Avoid some trails due to possible Mountain bike interactions	6	4	3	
	Increased mileage and loop opportunities for trail motorbikes Comment: OHV area	5	4	7	
	Connect all of the North Fork Trail	12	3	2	3
	Re-open closed trails	3	1	9	
	- Designate some trails as fast and slow user trails - Eliminate blind corners on certain trails Comment: Signage and maps	6	5	3	
	Bunchgrass connection: Build a 2 mile section of trail - Note: This project is already underway in FS project pipeline; rankings may not be useful	8	2	–	1

| Trails

Equestrian

Hiking

Bikes:
Mountain
Gravel
Road
Ebike

Motorized:
Quads
Jeeps
Motorcycles
Side by Side | Cowhorn connection: 2 miles of trail
- Note: This project is already underway in FS project pipeline; rankings may not be useful | 6 | 3 | 1 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Proposals added to our list by the Community that were ranked:** | | | | |
| | Huckleberry Class 3 MX Single-track
- Also: Cloverditch single-track | 1 | | | 1 |
| | Increased close in-town campgrounds—i.e. less than 5 miles
- Expanded/Invested in: Salmon Creek, Ivan Oaks, Black Canyon, Farrin Forest
- Restored or repurposed: Packard Creek
- Packard: Reservoir evaluation: What's busy? What's there? Consider the need for boat trailer parking. | 6 | | | |
| | Larrison trail expansion
- Larisson Ridge: community summer area (out-of-town) | 9 | | | 7 |
| | Side x Side routes
- Riding on County roads: Can the FS help tell the story regarding this? Oakridge community is looking for a liaison with the county to accomplish this. | 3 | 3 | 1 | |
| | Designate horse & hiking trails—wider/taller clearance for horses | 1 | | | 1 |
| | Disc golf
- built infrastructure: parking, picnic tables, bathrooms, hot showers, concessions, swimming area, interpretive signs (4 comments)
- Suggestion: Mill Park and/or Little Texas | 2 | | 1 | 8 |

	Additional Participant Suggestions:
	- RTP recreation grant - Army Corps drawing down above the reservoir - More lookouts (i.e., Dead Mountain lookout maintenance) - Deception Butte: restore trail from fire - Timber trail amenities: marking and signage - Overall campground improvement; farm-forest camping (bikeable)

Summary of Past Planning Efforts: In-town Trails and Facilities

Activity	Work that was proposed	High	Medium	Low	Stickers
In-Town Network	On-street bike lanes for all arterials and major collectors	8	5	5	
	Salmon Creek Levee multi-use paths and bridge	13	4	1	1
	Salmon Creek Trail: bridge feasibility study	11	5	2	
	Fish Hatchery Road Bikeway Comment: Family use	7	7	4	
	West Oak Road Multi-use path (+ High Prairie)	6	7	4	1
	Fish Hatchery Road multi-use path Comment: Family use	5	9	4	
	Crestview Street multi-use path	6	5	4	1
	High Prairie multi-use path	5	7	4	
	Garden Road, Fairyglen Drive, Rainbow Street multi-use path	2	3	9	
	West Oakridge Trail: bridge feasibility study	4	7	4	
	Union Street multi-use path	2	7	7	
	Bike lanes: Highway 58 Comment: Road diet (2 comments)	13	4	–	10
	Bike lanes: W. 2nd, E. 1st, Hill St	5	6	7	
	Bike lanes: Commercial St.	5	4	9	
	Bike lanes: Schools Street, River Road	3	7	6	
	Bicycle support hub (rest stop)	8	2	5	
	Proposals added to our list by the Community that were ranked:				
	Amtrak stop - Study has not been completed (need more data). City needs to step up.	2	2	1	4
	Oakridge-Westfir Bike/Ped feasibility study	1			

In-Town Network	Bike trail connecting Westfir to Oakrdige - Cycle Oregon grant to look at feasibility	2	1		1
	Camping at Westside of Greenwaters (city land; Salmon/Middlefork)	1			1
	Trails through Industrial Park to Greenwaters	1			1
	Pedestrian and Bike safety (vision for the community)	1			
	Pedestrian bridge to Greenwaters		1		
	Increase bus frequency from Oakridge to Eugene/Springfield (midday route)				2
	Multi-use path on highway				2
	Railroad: Need a legal railroad crossing at BMX track				1
	Conference/event center for large groups. Suggestion: Little Texas				7
	Additional Participant Suggestions: ● Visitor Center to connect and communicate with local community and visitors (2 people indicated this) ● Lodging ● In-town ride center at Greenwaters ● City/in-town camping ● Connection to Greenwaters Park for community ● Any network improvement that fills gaps in the system ● Paths for multigenerational/abilities use ● Railroad: Eugene-Oakridge connection				

Appendix B

The list below highlights grant opportunites for recreation and community development.
More details on each grant can be found on the SWFC site linked here.
This list was updated June 2020.

Funding Sources
Travel Oregon
Oregon Coast Visitors Association
Willamette Valley Visitors Association
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Oregon Community Foundation
M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust
Autzen Foundation
Network for Landscape Conservation
Ford Family Foundation
Meyer Memorial Trust
PNW Forest Service Assoc.
National Forest Foundation
US EPA
National Park Service
The Conservation Alliance
Outdoor Research
Patagonia
Polaris Foundation
Yamaha ATV

Supplemental Materials