



**Punhbowl Falls
County Park**

**Concept Development and
Management Plan**

March 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Planning Process

- Gathering Input 3
- Developing a Plan 5

Concept Park Plan

- Background 6
- Western Rivers
- Significant Natural Features 7
- Significant Uses 8
- Results of Public Input 10
- Collaborating on a Park Plan 11
- Park Purpose 11

Park Development and Management

- Park Development 12
- Park Elements 13
- Trail System 14
- Accessibility 18
- Park Management 18
- Park Rules 19

Managing the Land

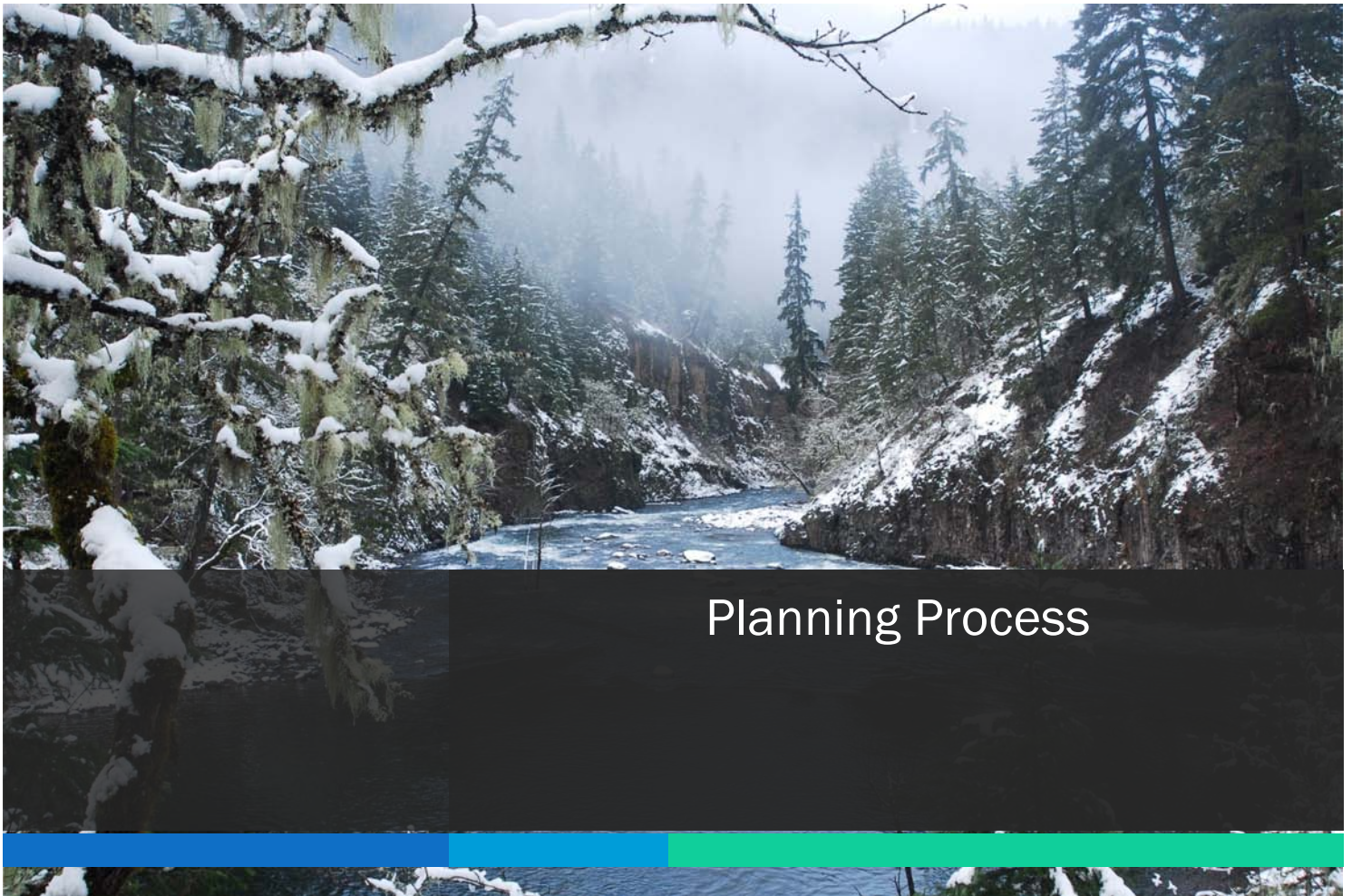
- Forest Management 20

Implementation 21

APPENDICES

- A-1 Park Uses
- A-2 Phased Park Development Plan
- A-3 Proposed Budget
- B-1 Online Survey Results
- B-2 Notes from January 10 Public Meeting
- B-3 Notes from February 13 Public Meeting
- C Forestry Management Assessment

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The Park Advisory Committee thanks the many members of the public who participated in the formation of this plan. Your deep knowledge of the property and willingness to share your expertise helped shape every part of the plan. Peter Marbach’s stunning photographs capture the spirit of the place-his images tell the story better than we can. We are grateful for support and assistance from Hood River County’s great staff and a long list of agencies and non-profits. Thank you!



Planning Process

PLANNING PROCESS

This planning process started with a question: Should Punchbowl Falls become a County Park?

In order to answer that question, we undertook an extensive and well-publicized public input process. Very quickly the public let us know that they enthusiastically support the preservation of Punchbowl Falls for public use as a County Park.

But what kind of park? What amenities and improvements should be provided? What rules should govern its use? How should it be maintained? The planning effort sought to bring the public, County departments, local and state agencies and stakeholders into a collaborative process to draft a concept plan for the development and management of Punchbowl Falls County Park.

The process was designed to be open and inclusive,

and provide a variety of opportunities for participation.

Western Rivers Conservancy, a non-profit dedicated to river conservation and the property's current owner, secured Heather Staten, Executive Director of Hood River Valley Residents' Committee to serve as the project coordinator.

GATHERING INPUT

Online Survey

A 16-question online survey drawing 565 respondents was posted on the County's website from January 5 to February 15, 2015. The survey was publicized in the *Hood River News* and through a wide variety of stakeholder group websites and blogs (American Whitewater, Hood River Valley Residents

Committee, Wy'east Blog, Portland Hiker, Larimer Outfitters, Northwest Rafting Company, Kayak Shed etc.)

Letters to Neighbors

Every property owner within one mile of the Punchbowl Falls site was sent a letter letting them know about the public process, inviting them to a public meeting and encouraging them to send their comments and concerns to the project coordinator.

Stakeholder Interviews

Heather Staten and Polly Wood (President, Hood River Valley Residents Committee) conducted 15-45 minute stakeholder interviews with people who had deep knowledge or a long history with the property:

- Travis Duddles, Gorge Fly Shop
- Jason Wells, Trails Solutions
- Emily Goodwin, Cascade Mountain School
- Todd Anderson, Gorge Kayak School
- Tom Larimer, Larimer Outfitters Fishing Guide
- Thomas O'Keefe, American Whitewater
- Ann Frodel, Waterfront Community Park Association
- Tom Coleman, Adjacent property owner
- Robin Cochran, Winans neighbor
- Matt Moreland, Water Trail planning team, Sandy River
- Laura Haspela, Gorge Discovery School
- Maria Palumbo Eby, Dee resident and frequent user
- Zach Collier, Northwest Rafting Company
- David Winans, Adjacent property owner, east side property
- Jon and Zoe Purnell, Adjacent property owners
- John Hart, Kayak Shed
- Kathy Jubitz, donor
- Kate Mills, donor
- Gloria Krantz, longtime Dee resident
- Dan Peirce, Native Fish Society river steward for Hood River
- Drew Eastman, Gorge Ecology Center

- Chuck Gehling, Hood River Watershed Group
- Andrew Perrault, Gorge Fly Shop
- Patty Fateley, Parkdale resident
- Colleen Coleman, Natural Systems Design river restoration/conservation
- Judy Charbonneau, County Recreational Trails Committee, local resident
- Chris Brun, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
- Rod French, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Mike McCafferty, Parkdale Rural Fire Protection District



Public Meetings

Public meetings were held on January 10, February 13 and March 12, 2015. Over sixty people attended the first meeting. The attendees broke into small facilitated groups to work through a series of open-ended questions about how they use the property currently, what they value about it, what they were concerned about if it was developed into a park and what physical improvements should be made (Appendix B-2). The second meeting on February 10 took up where the first meeting left off but asked the small groups to weigh in more specifically about park management, facilities, etc (Appendix B-3). At the final public meeting, March 12, the Advisory Committee presented their draft park plan for public review and comment.

Site Visits

The project coordinator conducted seven separate site visits attended by over fifty people. Attendees ranged from those who had used the property for decades to those that were very new to the site. They represented a wide variety of users: hikers, fisherman, kayakers, rafters, environmental educators and neighbors from the Winans area. Extensive notes were taken at each site visit and topographical maps annotated with recommendations from attendees.

DEVELOPING A PLAN

After gathering public input, the next task was to analyze the input and use it to shape a concept plan for the development and long-term operation of Punchbowl Falls as a County Park. To accomplish that, a Park Advisory Committee (PAC) was appointed. Public enthusiasm was such that twenty-three people applied for the seven-person committee. When forming the committee, every effort was made to select committee members representing a diverse range of user groups and interests.

Advisory Committee:

- Elizabeth Gaar – NOAA Fisheries/hiker/nature lover
- Abby Capovilla –hiker/nature lover/swimmer
- Dan Peirce –Native Fish Society
- Ron Reynier- Kayaker
- Nikki Guerra-Smith –Winans community resident
- Chuck Gehling – Hood River Watershed Group
- Michael Clough – Oregon State Parks, Columbia Gorge

The project coordinator and Advisory Committee sought direction and feedback from relevant County departments, with especially helpful advice and support from:

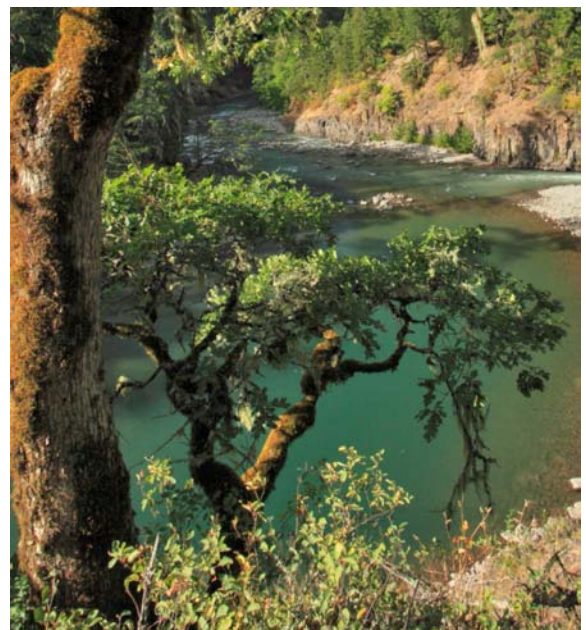
- David Meriwether, County Administrator
- Mikel Diwan, Public Works Director

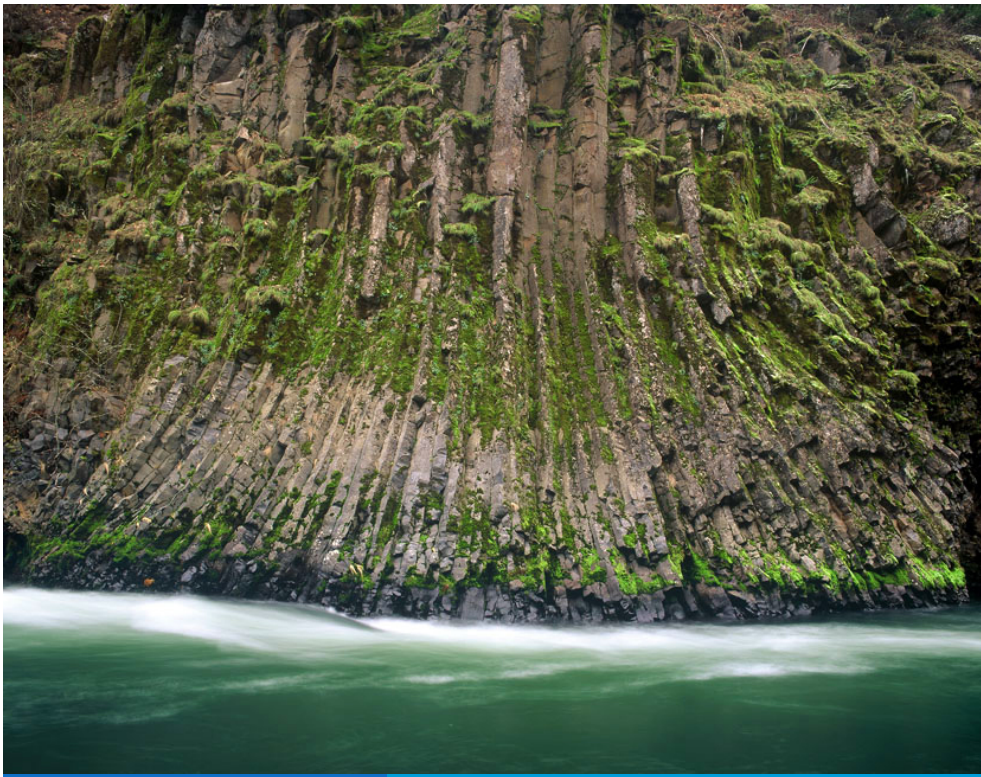
- Doug, Thiesies, County Forester
- Don Wiley, County Engineer
- John Roberts, Community Development Director
- Mike Schrankel, GIS Mapper

The project coordinator attended a site visit with Mikel Diwan, Doug Thiesies, Henry Buckalew, Shane Lossee and Sam Doak to discuss park development and forest management. Committee members and the coordinator also met onsite with Don Wiley regarding parking lot design.

The Advisory Committee relied on the expertise of a number of state agencies, technical experts and non-profits:

- Mike McCafferty, Parkdale Rural Fire Protection District
- Hood River County Sheriff
- Rod French, Fish Biologist –Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Chris Brun, Hatchery Program Manager, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
- Tom Kloster, Trailkeepers of Oregon
- Thomas O’Keefe, American Whitewater
- Ralph Bloemers, CRAG Law
- Jerry Witler, Northwest Forestry Services





Concept Park Plan

BACKGROUND

Protecting Punchbowl Falls as a public park is a century-old idea. As early as 1910, Hood River residents were advocating that this iconic site be made into a public park to forever preserve it for the enjoyment and use of future generations. The area has been a favorite swimming hole and fishing spot for generations of Hood River residents as well as seeing more recent use by rafters, kayakers and outdoor education programs. While locals have a long history of treating the area as if it were a public park, it has always been private property.



To preserve the beautiful scenic attractions of the "Devils Punch Bowl" is the motive of a number of Hood River residents who fear that in time it will be given over to utilitarian uses that will destroy its natural glories. It is suggested that the land around the scenic spot be bought by the county and that it be made into a public park. No spot in the valley . . . has more admirers than this unique combination of whirlpool and waterfall.

-Hood River News, July 28, 1910

WESTERN RIVERS CONSERVANCY

Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) is a non-profit whose mission is to protect outstanding river ecosystems in the western United States. WRC seeks out riverlands with high conservation values, focusing on areas that will benefit permanently and meaningfully through land acquisition. They negotiate with willing sellers—including corporations, families and utilities—to gain control of those lands for the sake of conservation. Using creative funding strategies, WRC transfers those lands to public or private stewards for long-term conservation management.

Starting in 2006, Western Rivers Conservancy began purchasing parcels from Longview Fiber and PacifiCorp, eventually assembling over 100 contiguous acres along one of the most magnificent stretches of the Hood River extending 1.5 miles north from Punchbowl Falls and including the confluence of the East and West forks of the Hood River. They purchased the property to conserve critical salmon habitat and provide permanent public recreational access with the idea that the property would eventually be conveyed to Hood River County as a public park.

Western Rivers Conservancy paid \$1.156 M for the various parcels. WRC will donate half of the land value plus provide \$50,000 to fund future park maintenance to Hood River County. Hood River County must find funding for the remaining half of the appraised value: \$578,000. The County has unsuccessfully applied for acquisition funding through the Local Government Grants Program of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for several years running. One of the failings identified in earlier grant efforts was that the County had not conducted a public process on the development of the site as a County Park. This planning effort sought to rectify that deficiency, but more than that, it began with the notion that an inclusive and collaborative process would yield a park plan that truly represented public priorities for the property.



SIGNIFICANT NATURAL FEATURES

Scenic Vistas/Spectacular Geology

The main attraction here is the massive basalt amphitheater carved by Punchbowl Falls. It is a textbook example of a “punch bowl” waterfall, pouring into a huge, circular bowl carved over millennia by the upwelling action of the plunging waterfall. The walls of the canyon provide some of the best displays of columnar basalt jointing found anywhere in the region. A look downstream from Punchbowl Falls reveals another waterfall cascading into the gorge from the west. This is the falls on Dead Point Creek, which flows from the high slopes of Mt. Defiance into the Hood River. The park holdings include the west wall of the canyon for another mile downstream of the confluence, and about the first half mile of the east wall.

Confluence of the East and West Forks

The confluence is a remarkable place where two powerful rivers collide, creating an enormous gravel bar that makes for a fine lunch spot for taking in the scene. The West Fork enters the confluence at a leisurely pace, emerging from a deep pool between basalt

buttresses. The East Fork makes a more raucous entrance, roaring around a sharp bend in a series of steep rapids as it tumbles toward the West Fork. The West Fork is primarily spring fed while the East Fork is dominated by glacial melt, turning a cloudy white in the heat of summer while the West Fork generally remains clear.

Habitat for Endangered and Protected Fish

The Punchbowl Falls site provides important habitat for a number of endangered and protected fish species in the Hood River Basin. Steelhead, Chinook salmon, Coho salmon, and bull trout, all utilize the area for some part of their life cycle. Significant efforts are underway to restore these fish, and protecting valuable habitat is a key component in this work. The lower portion of the West Fork River is of particular importance as it provides a clear water refuge area for holding adult summer steelhead and spring Chinook salmon. In summer, when the mainstem Hood River and other forks of the river are milky with glacial melt, the West Fork remains clear and cool. Deep holes in the Punchbowl area provide important resting and holding areas for these fish prior to spawning in late summer, or early spring. The relatively intact riparian conditions found in the area further increase its value for juvenile rearing and feeding habitat.

Forest

On the peninsula between the forks of the river, the forest is predominantly Douglas-fir. It's an even-aged stand, about 75 years old, established by natural seeding after logging. The forested upland area has a diversity of flora and deep rich soils with good water retention. On the east side of the river, there is a lovely section of intact Oregon white oak forest at the north end of the trail providing valuable habitat as well as offering a different aesthetic experience than the more common conifer forest.

SIGNIFICANT USES OF THE PROPERTY:

Trails

The existing main trail is an old logging road that leads from the parking area and runs parallel to the West Fork before narrowing to a steeper footpath down to the confluence. But the sound of the falls lures visitors off the trail onto a spider web of improvised "social" trails created over the years. Many of these duplicate each other, are eroding badly or pose safety concerns. An integral part of this concept plan is a more organized and extensive trail system. The park site also has trail access in the Winans community, located on the east side of the East Fork. This trail is much less traveled than those in the Punchbowl Falls area, and is mainly used by residents of the neighborhood and for fishing access to the mainstem Hood River below the confluence.

Whitewater Kayaking/Rafting

Punchbowl Falls Park provides rare access to some of the best whitewater in the Pacific Northwest. Kayakers and rafters consider the West Fork of the Hood River to be the region's premier river, known for its gin clear water, pristine setting and continuous rapids in a steep basalt gorge. Most kayakers climb out of the West Fork canyon from an eddy just above Punchbowl Falls after paddling the seven miles upriver, but some take the plunge over the Punchbowl itself. The park also offers access to the East Fork of the Hood River and the beautiful confluence of the West and East forks. From there, rafters and kayakers descend another twelve miles of classic whitewater all the way to the Columbia River.



Swimming

Many enjoy this serene place to escape for a quick cool dip on a hot summer's day or to wade into the glacial waters of the West Fork. A short way downstream, a wide, shallow eddy subdues the current just before the confluence where East and West Forks meet. Calmer water and an ever-changing gravel bar allow for swimming, basking in the sun or picnicking.

Outdoor/Environmental Education

Educators use Punchbowl Falls to get students from the Hood River County School District, as well as neighboring school districts, outside and exploring ecologic functions. The site's rich biologic, cultural, and geologic features coupled with its accessible location provide an excellent platform for students to have an up-close, hands-on experience with an extraordinary place. Finding local natural areas in the Columbia River Gorge to take students is becoming more difficult due to increased private ownership, unobtainable permits needed in many places, and decreased school budgets that don't allow for much transportation expenses. The confluence of the West Fork and East Fork of the Hood River offers an unparalleled outdoor classroom for student discoveries such as aquatic macro invertebrate identification and water quality sampling as well as the intriguing geologic processes that have formed the gorge within the river corridor. There are opportunities for students to consider ecosystem engineering while drafting and implementing restoration and monitoring plans. Understanding natural functions and ecosystems is an educational requirement for students in the state of Oregon.

Sport Fishing

Hood River fisheries are jointly managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs. Throughout the Hood River Basin angler access can best be described as severely limited. Anglers are thwarted by private property, steep terrain throughout much of the basin, and a general lack of access to

quality angling waters. Following the removal of Powerdale Dam in 2010, regulation changes greatly expanded fishing opportunities by opening areas upstream of the dam. But many of those opportunities are more theoretical than real because much of the river is simply inaccessible for public use. The Punchbowl Falls area provides anglers with a rare opportunity to fish very desirable water. Sport anglers can fish the West Fork starting 200 feet downstream from the falls. Angler use has dramatically increased at the site following dam removal. In 2013, and 2014, ODFW estimated over 300 anglers per month in the peak of fishing in the Punchbowl Falls area. In addition, in the 1980s, ODFW obtained a legal easement allowing angling access on many private lands bordering the mainstem Hood River. This easement generally covers a narrow access corridor along the bank of the river. Getting to the access easement is often difficult, as the easement goes along the bank of the river, and doesn't permit users to cross private lands to reach it. The Punchbowl Falls property on the east side of the Hood River borders property containing the access easement. Having Punchbowl Falls in public ownership will leverage an even greater length of the river for public use.



Tribal Fishing

For centuries Native Americans have fished at the foot of Punchbowl Falls for the spring Chinook, steelhead and Coho salmon that leap the drop to spawn

upstream in the West Fork. The bowl immediately below the falls is a usual and accustomed fishing station for the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs. Additionally, the Tribes have been deeded exclusive rights to fish the falls and 200 feet downstream of the falls. The tribal fishing season is set by decree and normally runs from April through July for its most productive fishery, spring Chinook. Spring Chinook is a highly valued subsistence fishery for tribal members, nutritionally, spiritually, and culturally. Furthermore, the Tribe operates a fish hatchery and fisheries restoration program that is targeted to restore the Chinook fishery at Punchbowl Falls so that Tribal members have sustainable harvestable populations. Historically, the Hood River had a robust spring Chinook run but by the late 1960s it was effectively extirpated due to human activities like dams and environmentally destructive logging practices. Beginning in the 1990s, the tribes and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife began efforts to resurrect the wild run. In 2010, the Powerdale Dam was removed and the Hood became, once again, a free-flowing river. While too early to gage the success of the restoration program, spring Chinook are re-colonizing tributaries throughout the Hood basin.

RESULTS OF PUBLIC INPUT

Online Survey

Five hundred and sixty-five people filled out the online survey, 85% completed every question, even questions that required narrative rather than multiple-choice answers (Appendix B-1). 52% of survey respondents were frequent users of the property, visiting it several times a year at least. The majority of visitors (67%) typically spent less than two hours at the site. Accessing the property from Punchbowl Road was much more popular than from Iowa Drive (88% to 12%). The most popular activity at the property was hiking/walking (69%) followed by kayaking/rafting, swimming, wildlife/plant viewing, picnicking and fishing. We found that the site is a regional destination, not just a Hood River local spot: 27% of respondents

came from an Oregon county other than Hood River and 21% were from out of state.

People were asked their favorite thing about the Punchbowl Falls site as it now exists. This was not a multiple choice question, instead respondents had to provide a narrative answer. Virtually every respondent called out the rugged wild beauty of the site, often poetically describing the unique and stunning combination of basalt columns, fast moving water, and rich flora and fauna. Many loved that you could have a feeling of isolation and solitude in a site that is relatively close to town. People liked that it is not crowded and that there are very few man-made improvements. A great number of people valued its rare and precious river access for fishing, whitewater boating and swimming.

When asked what they would want to protect about the property if it became a County Park, the respondents' answers seemed to flow naturally from the question before: people want to keep it natural, they want minimal development, and they want public access to be preserved.

Respondents were asked to rank features that are common to natural area parks from "Very Important" to "Not Important".

The top ranked elements were:

- Habitat conservation and wild areas (92% ranked as important or very important)
- Trails (78%)
- River access for swimming and fishing (77%)
- River access for kayaking/rafting (67%)

The bottom ranked elements were:

- Drinking Water (just 19% considered this important or very important)
- Picnic Tables (23%)
- ADA accessible trails (27%)
- Hike-in camping (29%)

When asked if they could only make one improvement, respondents had to provide a narrative answer. The largest number of responses were related to trails: recommendations for a larger trail system like a loop trail or a pedestrian bridge over the East Fork linking the west and east sides of the property, ADA accessible trails, a safe, formalized trail with overlooks of the falls, and suggestions to decommission some of the improvised trails in favor of fewer better trails to cut down on environmental impacts like erosion.

Here are the improvements suggested in order of popularity:

- Trail improvements (90 respondents)
- Parking lot (40)
- Trash cans/litter pick up (39)
- Restrooms (31)
- Improved kayak/rafting access (31)
- Make access legal, public and permanent (27)
- Don't change a thing (23)
- Remove fish ladder and dilapidated staircase (21)

When asked if the property should become a county park or remain private property, 94.4% felt it should become a public park. On this question, people had the opportunity to explain their opinion and 159 people choose to. The vast majority of comments were highly supportive of the park: “This “hidden jewel” needs to remain accessible to the nature-loving public” “River access is so limited in the valley, it’s crucial to gain park status” Preservation of Punch Bowl for the public to enjoy is critical!”. But a small number of respondents were concerned about the County’s ability to take care of the property or that it would become overused: “Hood River County already has parks that are not funded and maintained (Routson), do we really need the burden of another one?” “Do not develop it into a zoo of people.”

COLLABORATING ON A PARK PLAN

The Advisory Committee members analyzed the survey results and attended site visits with members of the

public. They also facilitated the small group sessions at the February 10 public meeting.

In analyzing all of that public input, clear trends emerged. The public most values the unique natural and ecological features of the property and its spectacular beauty. They value the rare and important river access it provides for swimmers, anglers, kayakers and rafters. They overwhelmingly support converting the property into a County Park and protecting it for public use in perpetuity. But because the public is so passionate about the property, they are also very protective of it. They are concerned about over-use and abuse by disrespectful park users. The public wants to make sure that park development is done with a very light hand and that the improvements are in keeping with the wild natural character of the site. They want to see thoughtful park management to prevent negative impacts.

With all that in mind, the Committee developed a Purpose Statement for the park. They then used the Purpose Statement to guide every decision they made about park development and operation.

PARK PURPOSE

The purpose of Punchbowl Falls Nature Park is to preserve the unique scenic and ecological features of the property as well as its cultural and historical qualities while providing a diverse range of recreational and educational opportunities for generations to come.





Park Development and Management

PARK DEVELOPMENT

This proposal is for a *passive use* nature park. In the field of park management, “passive recreation” is defined as:

“Passive recreation, also called low intensity recreation, is that which emphasizes the open-space aspect of a park and allows for the preservation of natural habitat. It usually involves a low level of development, such as rustic picnic areas, benches and trails. Passive recreation typically requires little management and can be provided at very low costs.”

There are very few proposed facilities for the park, they are low impact and designed to help the public better appreciate the park’s unique natural qualities. The plan has two development phases. Phase One will be complete in the next one to three years. It puts the basic infrastructure and trail system in place. Along with County funding it relies in large part on community support and volunteer labor for things like trail building and signage. Phase Two carries us through the next 3-10 years and has some bigger ticket items that will likely require additional grant funding to get constructed (Appendix A-2)

The Committee encourages the County to periodically reassess the success of the park features. The concept plan was designed with the idea it would be ground-truthed against how the park functions in practice and changes made to better fulfill the park’s purpose.

PARK ELEMENTS

These are the elements that our committee considered essential:

Parking lot

The current parking is a gravel and earth turnout. It is very lumpy; cars frequently bottom out when leaving or entering the parking area. While Punchbowl Road is a quiet road, it is frequently used by logging trucks and sight lines are poor especially for vehicles exiting the parking lot at the west end. The County Engineer has designed a one-way system, where vehicles enter the parking lot on the west and exit on the east to dramatically increase sightlines for traffic exiting the lot. The lot will continue to be gravel, but graded flat. The berms near the roadway will be maintained at their current grade to prevent cars from parking in those areas and to maintain visibility. The service road into the park (which also sees double duty as a trail) will be maintained for emergency access and the gate will be posted with a “No Parking, Keep Clear for Emergency Access” sign. The ADA accessible parking spot will asphalt.

Entrance

The gate should be improved to make it less of an eyesore. The metal post on the east may need to be removed to allow adequate width for ADA accessibility. The Advisory Committee suggests using a landscape designer familiar with nature parks to coordinate the design of park elements. While there are very few built elements proposed for the park—a kiosk, a bench, some signage, trails—a good designer will ensure that they are appropriate and integrate gracefully into the setting. There are designers willing to work pro bono because it is such a one-of-a-kind setting.

Informational Kiosk

An informational kiosk will be located about 20 yards down the service road into the park. The trailheads will also converge in this area and the restroom will be located nearby. The kiosk will post trail maps, fishing

regulations, and interpretive information on the history, geology and ecosystem of the park. Like all the park features, we propose that the kiosk be rustic and



compatible with the surroundings.

Clustered near the kiosk will be a number of facilities to encourage good behavior:

- Trashcans
- Doggy bag dispenser
- Monofilament receptacle for fishing line
- Boot brush for invasive, non-native plants.

Parks are increasingly uses boot brushes at trailheads to keep hikers from unwittingly transporting weed seeds into the park on their shoes.

Restrooms

A public toilet was a frequently requested amenity in the public polling on park improvements. For Phase 1, we suggest an ADA accessible porta-potty. These are a relatively low cost way to provide the facility and they offer the advantage of being mobile. There are two different schools of thought on toilet location: 1) locate them at edge of the parking lot for the immediate convenience of users and also for maintenance crews 2) site the toilet further down the trail so that it is screened visibility from road but still adjacent to the service road to enable access for cleaning and pumping. Public Works prefers Option 2 because in their

experience visibility from the road makes the toilet more of a target for vandalism and overuse by passing traffic. The advantage of a portable facility in Phase One is that it is simple to experiment with different locations. Phase Two calls for a single CXT toilet once a preferred location is determined and additional funding secured

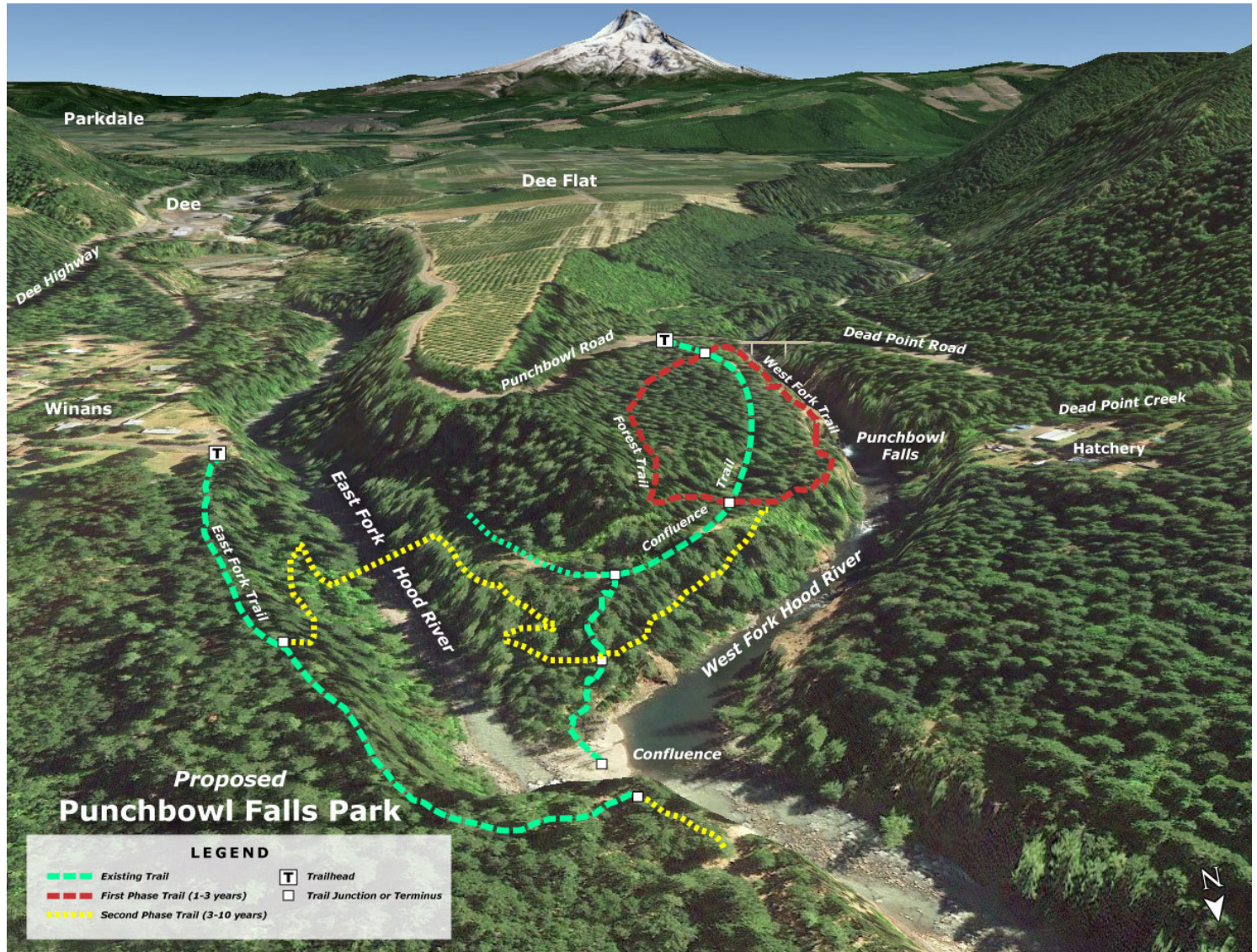
TRAIL SYSTEM

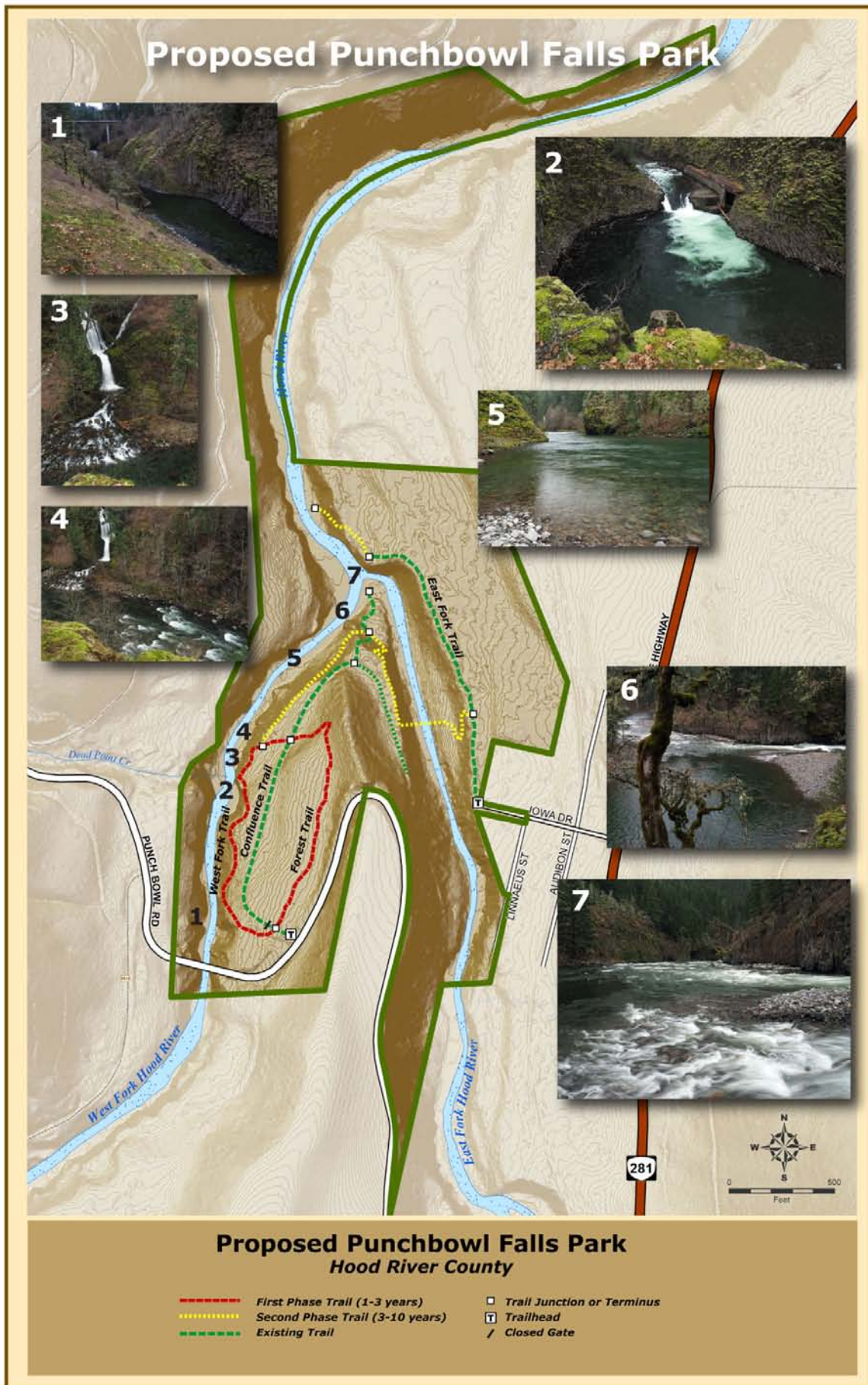
A more organized and extensive trail system is an integral part of the Park Plan. Until now the trail system has consisted of an old logging road and a

spiderweb of social trails that people have created all over the ridge above the West Fork. There are so many of these trails that they are causing environmental damage.

Tom Kloster, president of Trail Keepers of Oregon, visited the site on several occasions and designed the proposed trail system.

The big idea is to build a new trail that takes people where they want to go. Park visitors know about the waterfall, they hear and see the water and are drawn to it so they forge their own trails. A new “West Fork Overlook Trail” will be created. This trail will run





along the top of the ridge above the West Fork and connect all of the prime viewpoints. It will be wider, safer and more environmentally friendly than the existing social trails, many of which will be decommissioned.

The existing service road, which now serves as the main trail to the north of the property will remain. Renamed the “Confluence Trail” it will offer barrier free accessibility accommodating users with a wide range of physical abilities.



There will also be a Forest Loop Trail leading from the trailhead near the parking lot through the woods and joining up with the northern end of the Confluence Trail. This trail largely follows an abandoned logging road, it will take almost no tree removal to create. The Forest Loop will provide a cool shady walk on a hot day and dazzle with glorious color in autumn when the vine maple turns.

The trails are conceived as pedestrian trails, not for mountain bikes or motorized vehicles. The trail length is generally considered too short to be useful for mountain biking: Confluence Trail 1/2 mile, West Fork Overlook ¼ mile, Forest Loop ¼ mile.

The new trails will be built mostly by volunteers with one or two professionals and assistance from the County. The County has built most of its mountain biking trails on the same volunteer model. Trail Keepers of Oregon is a non-profit whose mission is to build, restore and maintain hiking trails across the state. They have offered their help in designing and

constructing the trails. They will provide the tools and the professional expertise but we will need to find local volunteer builders (8-12 person crews) to make it happen. Trailkeepers worked with Friends of the Gorge on the Mosier Plateau Trail. That 3-mile trail was completed in just 4 days.

Existing put-in and take-out trails for kayaking and rafting will be preserved with repairs made and maintenance done as necessary.

So far we have concentrated on the west side of the river, but the Punchbowl Falls property also includes over 30 acres on the east side of the river adjacent to the small community of Winans off Iowa Drive. It’s a lovely property with an existing trail used by locals and fisherman but it is very challenging to provide acceptable public access to that side of the property. Current access is at the end of Iowa Drive. While it is a public right of way, the parking area only provides room for 2-4 cars. The northern section of the property does not have an existing legal public road to access the property. Perfecting a road is complicated and would likely require the purchase of a ROW easement from one or more of the neighbors. Additionally, the railroad runs through the community. It can be very challenging to get a new at-grade crossing or to run a public road alongside the railroad tracks.

For Phase One, the Committee’s recommendation is to leave the Winans side as it is—do not develop it for public access or post signs advertising it as a park. In Phase Two, our solution is more creative: Build a wooden footbridge over the East Fork. This solution would allow pedestrian access to the east side of the property with little impact to the community of Winans. It would extend the trail system substantially, making for longer hikes and showcase a greater diversity of flora, such as the Oregon White Oak forest north of the confluence on the east side of the river. The idea was inspired by a long-time Winans resident who remembered the wooden vehicular bridge that used to connect Iowa Drive to the Punchbowl parcel. The old bridge is much larger than what we propose. A footbridge would be built lower down the riverbank on

natural shelves that protrude on both banks of the river about fifteen feet above normal river elevation. Throughout Oregon there are several across streams of similar size to the East Fork on Forest Service and state park properties. A Phase Two footbridge would likely require additional grant funding.



Typically, concrete footings are poured in place, then a pre-fabricated wooden bridge is installed using a crane or helicopter.



TRAIL DESIGN

It is important to respect the beauty of the setting while still making the trails safe and protecting the area from erosion. Trail improvements will be designed to look very natural and unobtrusive.



In a few places railing may be provided at a viewpoint or stone steps installed for safety.



Trail signs will be similar to the wooden signs used by the Forest Service.



ACCESSIBILITY

Facilities

The built facilities-- the parking lot, kiosk and the toilet—as well as the public access routes between them will meet typical ADA accessibility requirements (5% slope maximum, 2% cross slope etc).

Trails

The trail system should conform with the trail standards for Outdoor Developed Areas developed by the United States Access Board, a federal agency that promotes equality for people with disabilities through leadership in accessible design and the development of accessibility guidelines and standards. The standards it developed are required on federally owned and managed facilities, but offer good guidance for our county park as well--<http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas/final-guidelines-for-outdoor-developed-areas>. We additionally suggest implementing the recommendations of Access Recreation, a Portland non-profit funded by OPRD to develop accessibility guidelines for Oregon trails (http://www.accessrecreation.org/Trail_Guidelines/Insider_title_page.html) Recognizing that the nature of disability is so diverse and the needs of the individual are so personal, Access Recreation guidelines emphasize that the most important thing is to provide good, clear information so people have an accurate idea of what to expect on a given trail, and can make informed decisions about its suitability for them. Trail descriptions will be posted at the trailhead but also online on the County website so that disabled visitors can plan their trip to Punchbowl Falls before reaching the property. The trail descriptions will include, at minimum, the surface material, width, grade, cross slope, obstacles and trail length as well as photos of the trail. Greater detail can be provided with a QR code posted at the kiosk.

The Advisory Committee also recommends that the County make available, by appointment, the use of the service road/Confluence Trail by vehicles to transport

elderly or disabled people closer to the viewpoint areas. Alan Winans, a life-long Hood River County resident and current resident of Down Manor, attended one of the site visits in February. He rejoiced at being on the beautiful property and felt that many of the other residents of Down Manor or Hawks Ridge would feel similarly inspired by a visit to Punchbowl Falls but worried that most of them would not be physically able to do a ¼ mile walk. Allowing their vans to transport visitors into the park would bring an inspiring experience to those who otherwise could not access the site's natural splendor.

PARK MANAGEMENT

Managing People

Through our public input process, many expressed concerns about disrespectful park users and their potential to degrade the property through misuse. Complaints were made about litter, the proliferation of social trails, dogs off leash and overnight camping.

Our plan for managing park users is a combination of well-designed park facilities and a clear set of rules. Well-designed park features are self-enforcing, they make it easy for users to do the right thing. For example, the creation of the West Fork Overlook trail—a formalized route that starts very near the parking lot and connects the best viewpoints allowing a spectacular experience of river vistas—will eliminate the reason so many of the social trails exist. The well-located kiosk with obvious features—trashcan, doggy bags, monofilament receptacle, boot brush—will make it easy for folks to dispose of trash. Even with this convenience, there will be some visitors who continue to litter. We recommend volunteer trash pick up days twice a year—on Earth Day (in mid April) to prepare for the season and in late summer (September) to clean up after the period of heaviest use. The County intends to use Corrections Community Service work crews for much of the regular maintenance.

PARK RULES

The County sets legally enforceable park rules by ordinance. The County's complete ordinance was created primarily for campsites so contains several rules that do not apply here. We suggest eliminating extraneous rules from courtesy signs at the park.

Often, park rules are a laundry list of "thou shall nots" so long that no one reads them at all. Instead, we recommend a simple list of rules posted near the entry gate of the park.

- Enjoy the park and help keep it clean
- Day use only, no overnight camping
- Keep dogs on leash and under control
- Pick up after your pet
- No fires or fireworks
- Observe sensitive habitat closures

We find the pictograms used by Oregon State Parks to be very effective.

County Liability:

Some members of the public have questioned whether the County would be taking on significant legal liability if it took on Punchbowl Falls as a County Park. This is not the case. Just like on the County's other properties, state law provides the county immunity from liability for recreational use of its lands. In summary, ORS 105.682 provides:

- An owner of land is not liable in contract or tort for any personal injury, death or property damage that arises out of the use of the land for recreational purposes
- The immunities provided by ORS 105.682 do not apply if the owner makes any charge for permission to use the land for recreational purposes.

Safety and Crime

The Park is within the Parkdale Rural Fire Protection District. Mike McCafferty, Parkdale Fire Chief, is

familiar with the property as his crews are called out several times a summer, typically for an accident involving a cliff-jumper. He is supportive of the project but wants to minimize the need for his District's services and to make the Fire District's work easier once they arrive. He did not feel that a fence was necessary around the cliff area that people normally jump from, but he did stress that the gate and service road should be kept clear at all times to allow emergency access. Mr. McCafferty noted the importance of banning campfires and fireworks. According to Hood River County Sheriff department, historically there have been very few incidents at the site beyond minor theft from vehicles in the parking lot. The property is not conducive to parties with underage drinking because the parking lot is directly on the road, parties prefer locations where their cars cannot be seen.

Friends of Punchbowl Falls

The community involvement that went into developing the park plan should be harnessed for its long-term operation. We suggest the formation of a "Friends of Punchbowl Falls" group to provide an on-going source of volunteer labor and supplementary financial support for the park. A wildly successful example of that locally is the Waterfront Community Park Association that does fundraising and grant writing as well as providing volunteers for the City of Hood River's Waterfront Park. Several donors have stepped forward with offers to provide seed money for a Punchbowl 501(c)(3) to support the operation of the Punchbowl Falls County Park.

MANAGING THE LAND

The Committee's park management recommendations are crafted to prioritize protecting the natural environment while allowing public recreational use. People value what they use and love. By inviting people into this special place, it is the Committee's hope that they will feel more connected to and responsible for the natural systems there.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

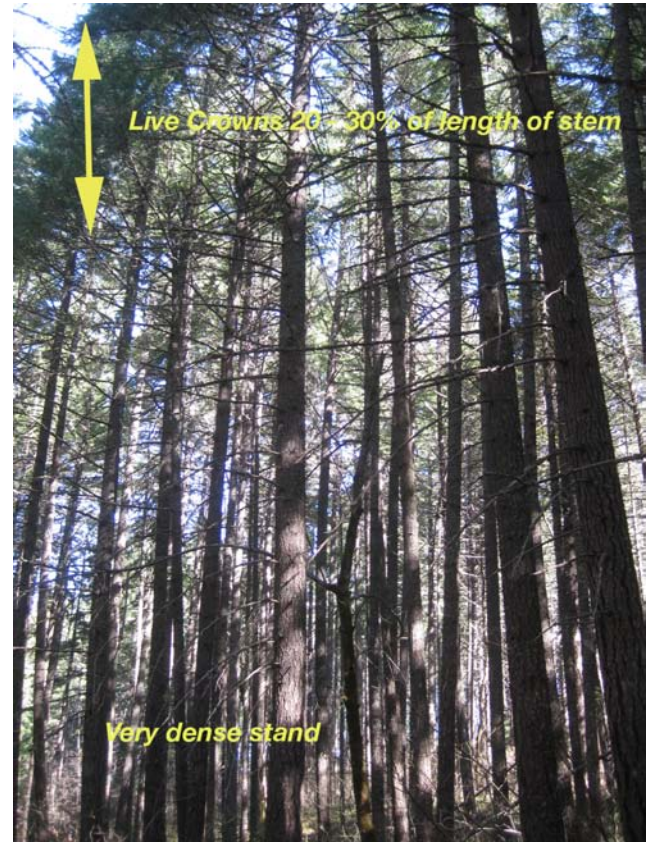
The Advisory Committee recommends a forest management plan that lets natural processes take their course while recognizing that the existing forest is far from an untouched old growth forest. Thoughtful management will be needed to restore it to a healthier state.

West Side

The forest between the forks of the river south of the confluence is an even aged stand of second growth Douglas-fir. The area was logged approximately 75 years ago. On the hillside near the confluence there are a number of dead standing trees. Other areas of the forest suffer from over-crowding resulting in weakened growth for the entire stand (the live crown on most of the trees covers only 20-30% of the stem—crown ratio should be 40% or higher). Doug Thieses visited the site and advised that the dead trees were likely a result of Douglas-fir bark beetle.



At the request of the Advisory Committee, Western Rivers Conservancy contracted Jerry Witler, Northwest Forestry Services to do a forest health assessment and provide recommendations (Appendix C).



Mr. Witler recommended that restorative action be taken sooner than later with the aim to remove the beetle kill trees before the insects hatch April-June. For efficiency, thinning the overcrowded areas would be done at the same time to improve stand vigor, favor larger trees and reduce fire risk. The standing dead trees are still merchantable timber and their sale could likely offset the forestry work on the east side of the river which is very labor intensive but has no revenue potential. The timber harvest will be very controlled. The site is small enough that Mr. Witler will mark individual trees for removal. The Advisory Committee and County are welcome to inspect the site pre-harvest to ensure the proposed work conforms to their expectations. The County Forester, Public Works Director and Advisory Committee concurred with Mr. Witler's recommendations. Western Rivers has

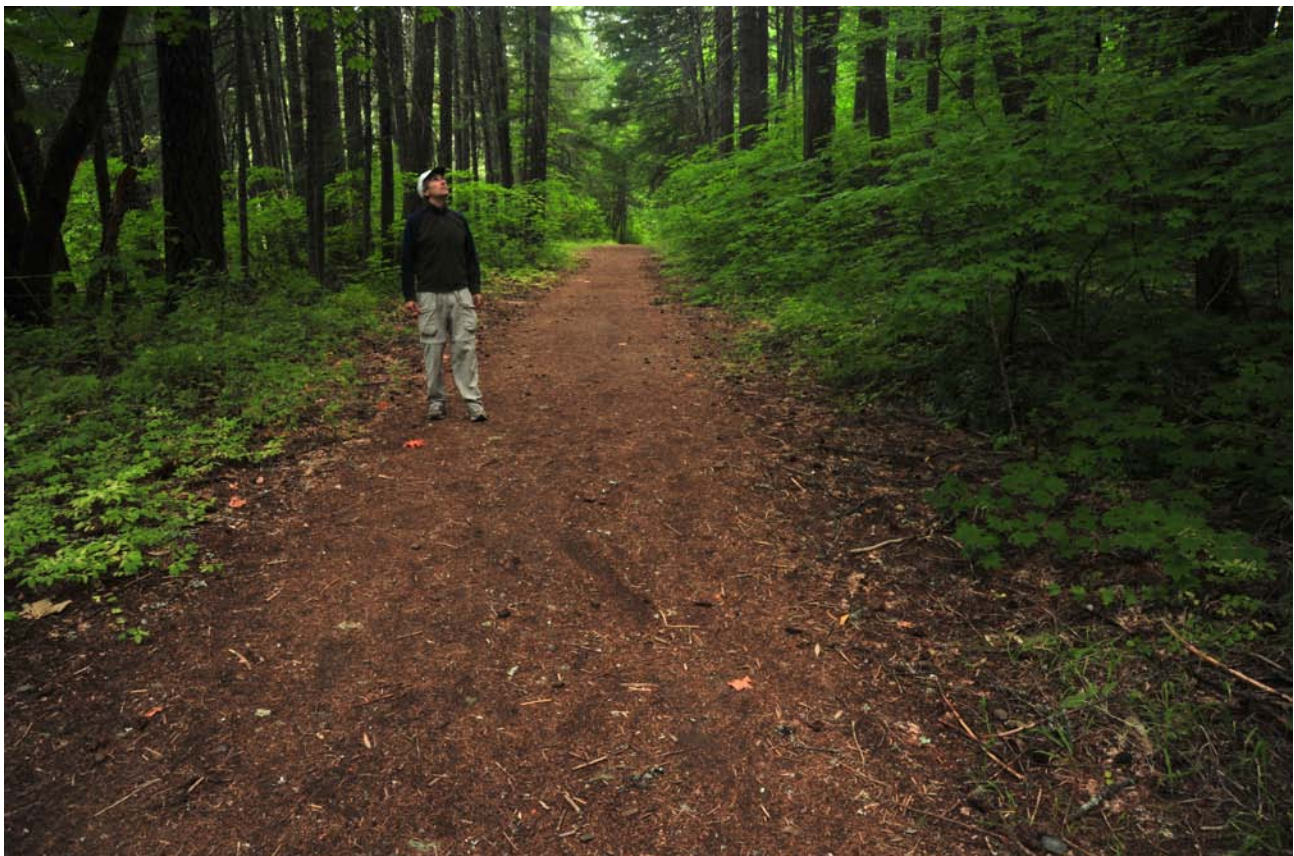
contracted with him to oversee work beginning in the next few months. A wildlife biologist will also be consulted to provide forest management recommendations on wildlife habitat (e.g. leaving some downed trees or snags for habitat). There was broad consensus that time is of the essence and that the restorative forest measures should be initiated this spring prior to transfer to the County.

East Side

On the east side of the river, the forest management issues are somewhat different. In the southern section of the property firs dominate. There does not appear to be fir bark beetle mortality but there are a number of downed or dying trees likely victims of the 2012 ice storm or the very high water table. In this area, some amount of the downed trees will be removed to prevent a beetle outbreak as well as reduce fire hazard. In the northern and eastern sections of the property, the Advisory Committee favors the restoration and retention of the Oregon White Oak habitat that prospers in the lighter soil.

Riparian Management

Both the East and West Forks are high gradient, powerful rivers at high flow. Within the subject property the West Fork is fronted by basalt canyon, the East Fork is bounded by very steep, high banks. There is a large concrete ODFW fish ladder located at the falls, but otherwise the natural river system is intact. The committee does not recommend specific habitat enhancement at this time.





Implementation

NEXT STEPS

This is a once in a generation opportunity to save a magical spot for public use.

The Hood River County will be applying for an acquisition and development grant through the Local Government Grant Program of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department by April 1, 2015.

Grant awards will be announced this summer. The OPRD grant request plus local match would fund

the entire acquisition and Phase One development of the park. See Appendix A-3 for the proposed budget.

Along with applying for the grant, the County is also applying for a land-use permit to use the property as a public park. The property is located on parcels zoned Exclusive Farm Use and Forest and a public park is a conditional use in those zones. While the property has been used for recreation as a de facto public park by generations of Hood River residents, that status has never been formalized.

Punchbowl Falls Property Users by Month

This table shows the uses of the property by month. The most intensive river uses—swimming, fishing and kayaking/rafting occur most at different times of year meaning that there is very little conflict between user groups.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Land Uses:												
Hiking	[Green bar]											
Wildflowers			[Purple bar]									
River Uses:												
Kayaking/Rafting	[Red bar]										[Red bar]	
Swimming							[Orange bar]					
Tribal Fishing				[Green bar]								
Sport Fishing												
Winter Steelhead	[Light Blue bar]											[Light Blue bar]
Summer Steelhead							[Grey bar]					
Coho									[Cyan bar]			
Spring Chinook				[Pink bar]								
Trout					[Orange bar]							
Spawning												
Summer Steelhead			[Teal bar]									
Spring Chinook								[Yellow bar]				

Phased Development Plan for Punchbowl Falls County Park

Improvement	Phase 1 1-2 years	Phase 2 3-10 years
Parking Lot and Road		
Road Signs: 1) Punchbowl/Lost Lake Rd intersection 2) Punchbowl Rd/Green Rd 3) at parking lot	●	
Parking Lot: graded, paved ADA pad	●	
ADA Public accessway between parking lot and restroom	●	
Improvements to front gate	●	
Signage:		
Courtesy Signage at Parking Lot	●	
Kiosk: Interpretive signage, fishing regulations, maps, other notices	●	
Directional Trail Signs	●	
Trashcans and Picnic Tables		
Trashcan, recycling, doggy bag dispenser, mono-filament receptacle, boot brush	●	
Picnic tables		●
Restrooms		
ADA accessible Porta-potty	●	
CXT Pit Toilet		●
Trails:		
West Fork Overlook Trail, railing as needed for safety, bench at Dead Point Creek Falls overlook	●	
Confluence Trail (existing road) -some grading to meet accessibility standards	●	
Forest Loop Trail	●	
Winans Trail - boardwalk over seasonal spring	●	
Footbridge over East Fork and new trail connections between Punchbowl and Winans		●

Punchbowl Falls County Park Budget

Expense	Phase	Cost	Source	Notes
Property Acquisition				
Purchase of property	1	\$1.156 M	1/2 WRC, 1/2 grant	WRC donates 1/2 of value, Acquisition grant from OPRD for \$578,000
Pre-acquisition planning	1	\$4,500	County	Don's Parking lot design, Mike's map making, Conditional Use Permit etc. (4 pp @ 15 hrs/ea.)
Parking Lot and Road				
Road Signs: 1) Punchbowl/Lost Lake Rd intersection 2) Punchbowl Rd/Green Rd 3) at parking lot	1	\$1,500	County	Average cost of typical roadway sign @ \$500 ea including labor.
Parking Lot: graded, paved ADA pad	1	\$21,000	County	Includes: \$18,000 for grading 12,000 s.f. parking lot and placement of 450 C.Y. of rock; \$3,000 for asphalt ADA space during seasonal paving (at County convenience).
ADA Public accessway between parking lot and restroom	1	\$2,500	County	Compacted gravel on 4" min. base material.
Improvements to front gate	1	\$400	County & In-kind	County to do "Keep Clear" sign, any cosmetic improvements would be in-kind or funded by donations
Signage:				
Courtesy Signage at Parking Lot	1	\$800	County	Possible to have custom signage or materials donated or locally designed.
Kiosk: Interpretive signage, fishing regulations, maps, other notices	1	\$2,000	County & In-kind	This can likely be done mostly through donations and volunteer labor but under county supervision.
Directional Trail Signs	1	\$1,500	In-kind	These can be made by volunteers, value of \$250 per sign x 6 signs
Trashcans and Picnic Tables				
Trashcan, recycling, doggy bag dispenser, mono-filament receptacle, boot brush	1	\$500	County	Minimal cost per year (\$200) of maintaining bag quantities and item replacement due to normal wear/breakage.
Picnic tables	2	1,300	County & In-kind	2 tables @ \$650 each --A fairly easy thing to get donated but not expensive to purchase either
Restrooms				

Punchbowl Falls County Park Budget

ADA accessible Porta-potty	1	\$3,000	County	This is purchase price not including service, would County have lease instead? Likely cost effective to purchase but should account for freight, delivery, and installation.
CXT Pit Toilet	2	\$15,000	Grant	
Trails:				
West Fork Overlook Trail, railing as needed for safety, bench at Dead Point Creek Falls overlook	1		County & In-kind	Trails would be built primarily with volunteer labor but some county supervision. This trail will require some split rail fencing at overlooks and one bench.
Confluence Trail (existing road) -some grading to meet accessibility standards	1		County & In-kind	County may need to do some grading near entrance
Forest Loop Trail	1		County & In-kind	Volunteer built with some county supervision
Winans Trail - boardwalk over seasonal spring	1		In-kind	Volunteer built
Footbridge over East Fork and new trail connections between Punchbowl and Winans	2	\$100,000+	Grant	
County Contribution Phase One	1	\$37,700		Phase One Improvements
Forest Management				
West Side forest management	1		WRC	remove beetle kill trees, thinning for vigor and some tree removal for parking lot
East Side forest management	1		WRC	remove some down wood, thin firs in Oak habitat area
Annual O & M				
Trash removal	annual	\$500		Western Rivers is donating \$50,000 for O & M Fund for Park
Toilet servicing	annual	\$1,000		
Trail maintenance	annual	\$1,000		Will use volunteer trail adopters for much maintenance
Total Annual O & M	annual	\$2,500		Budget in previous grants was \$5,000 per year

Survey Results: Punchbowl Falls County Park Community Visioning Project

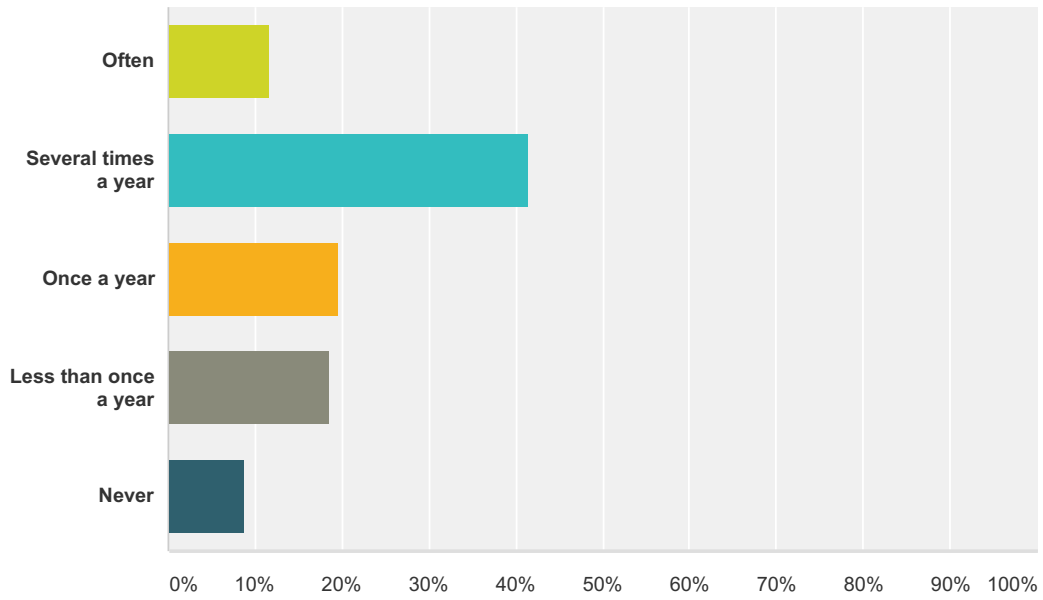
As part of our community input effort, we posted a 16-question survey online from January 5 to February 15, 2015. 562 individuals responded to the survey. 85% of respondents answered all of the questions. Most of the questions were multiple choice but several required a narrative answer where respondents needed to provide a sentence or two.

In summary, survey respondents value the unique natural and ecological features of the property and its spectacular beauty. They value the rare and precious river access it provides for swimmers, tribal and sport anglers, kayakers and rafters. They overwhelmingly support converting the property to a County Park and placing it in public ownership in perpetuity. Because the public is so passionate about the property, they are very protective of it. They want to make sure that park development is done with a very light hand and respects the wild natural character of the site.

Here are the results of the survey.

Q1 How often do you visit the Punch Bowl Falls property?

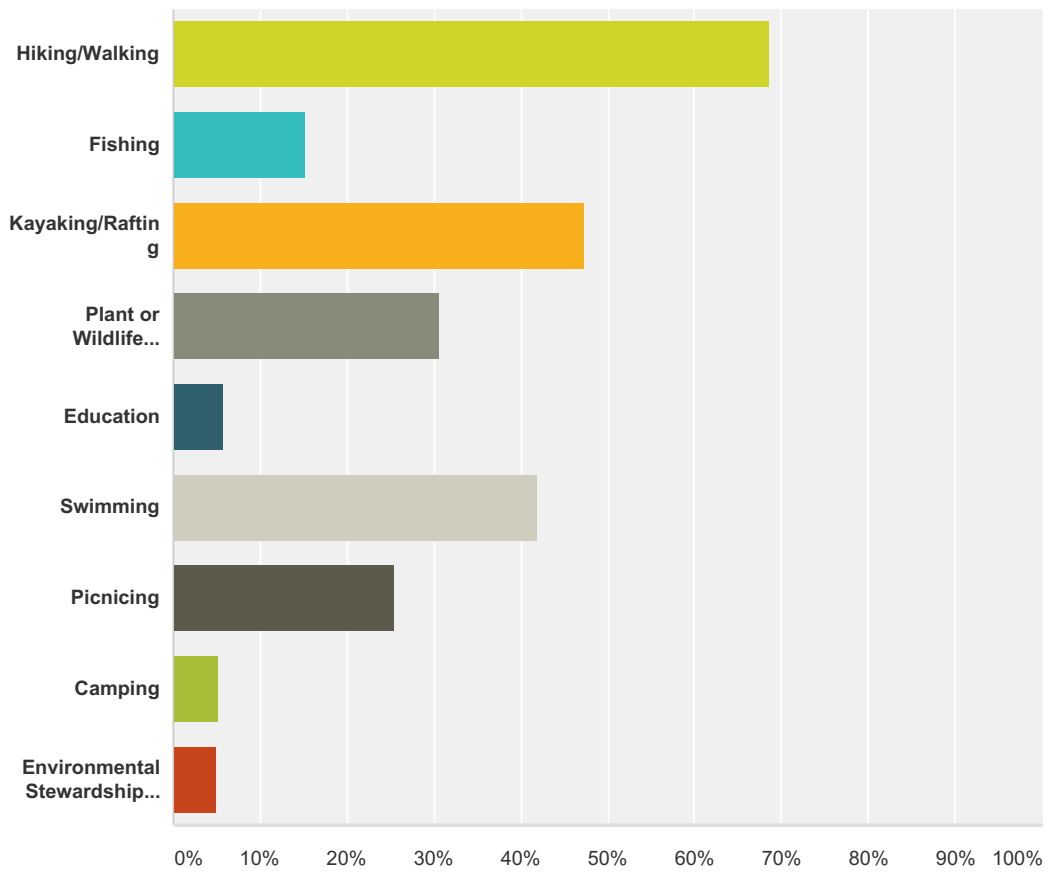
Answered: 562 Skipped: 5



Answer Choices	Responses
Often	11.74% 66
Several times a year	41.46% 233
Once a year	19.57% 110
Less than once a year	18.51% 104
Never	8.72% 49
Total	562

Q2 What activities do you do when visiting Punch Bowl Falls?

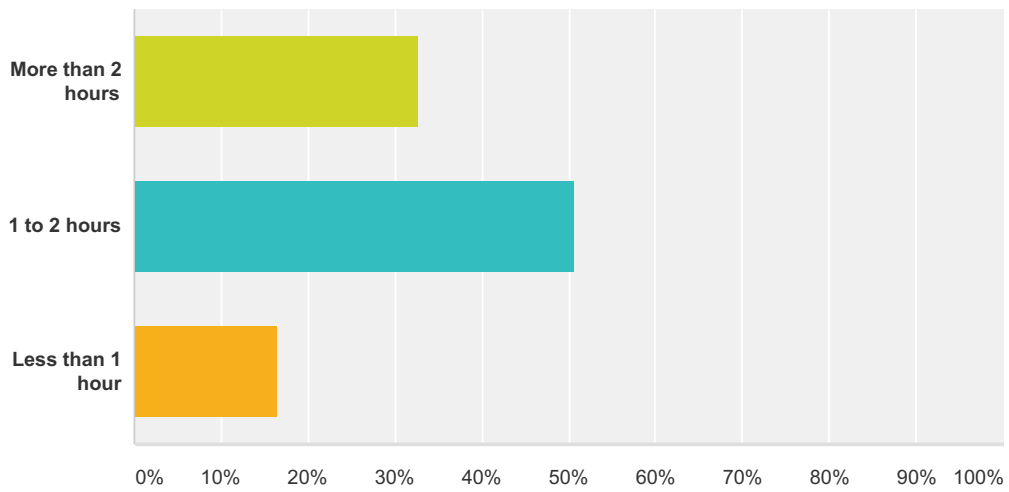
Answered: 505 Skipped: 62



Answer Choices	Responses
Hiking/Walking	68.71% 347
Fishing	15.25% 77
Kayaking/Rafting	47.33% 239
Plant or Wildlife Viewing	30.69% 155
Education	5.74% 29
Swimming	41.98% 212
Picnicing	25.54% 129
Camping	5.15% 26
Environmental Stewardship Activity	4.95% 25
Total Respondents: 505	

Q3 When you visit the Punch Bowl Falls property, how long do you stay?

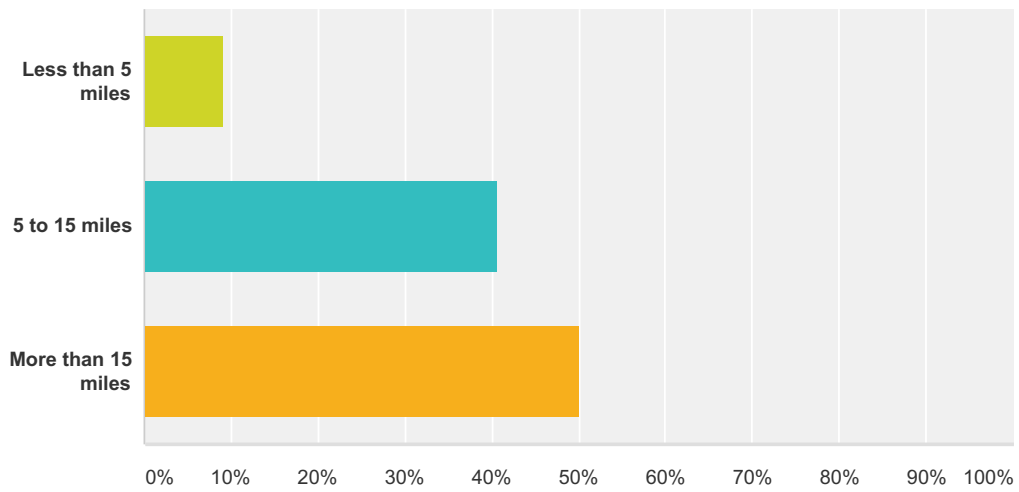
Answered: 505 Skipped: 62



Answer Choices	Responses
More than 2 hours	32.87% 166
1 to 2 hours	50.69% 256
Less than 1 hour	16.44% 83
Total	505

Q4 How far do you travel to get to Punch Bowl Falls?

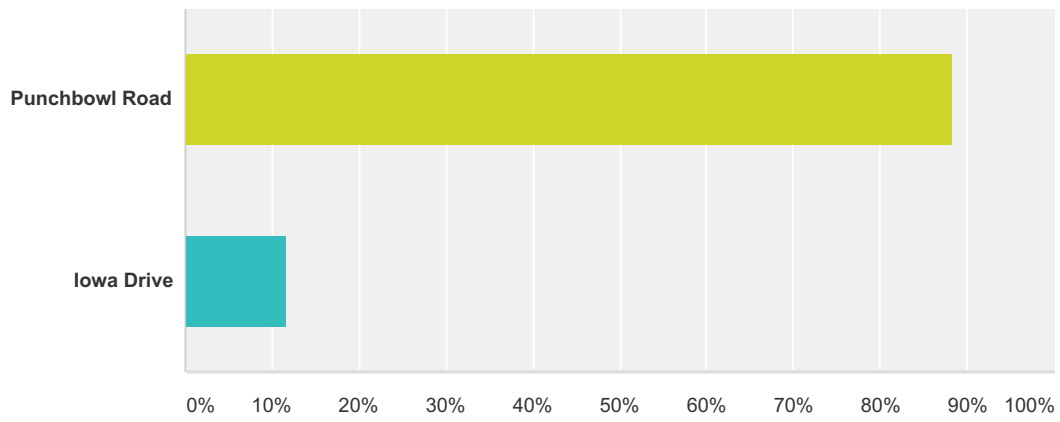
Answered: 503 Skipped: 64



Answer Choices	Responses
Less than 5 miles	9.15% 46
5 to 15 miles	40.76% 205
More than 15 miles	50.10% 252
Total	503

Q5 Which entrance do you use to access the property?

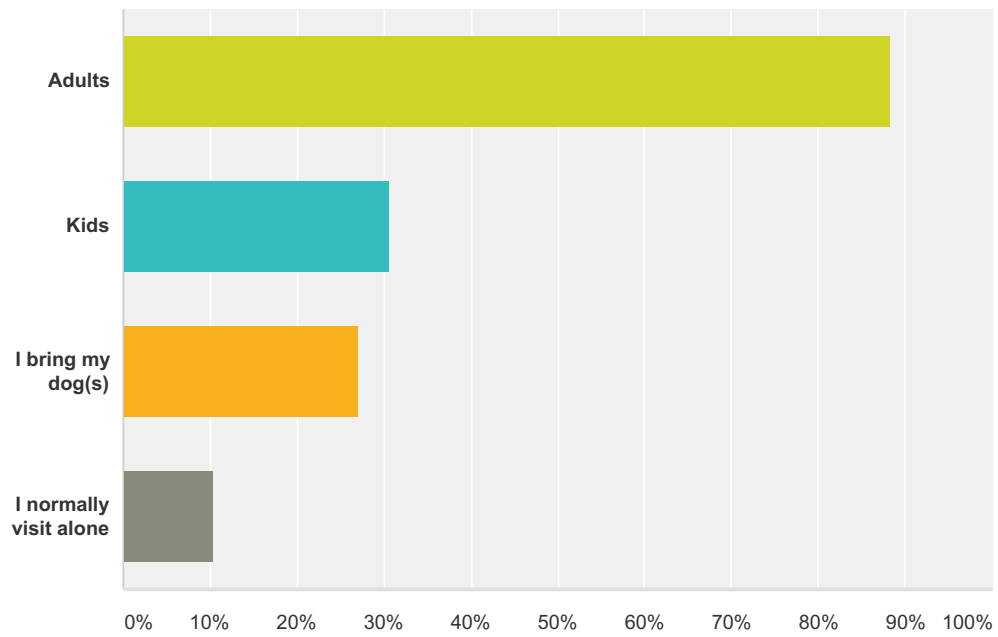
Answered: 460 Skipped: 107



Answer Choices	Responses
Punchbowl Road	88.26% 406
Iowa Drive	11.74% 54
Total	460

Q6 Do you normally visit Punch Bowl Falls with others? (check all that apply)

Answered: 503 Skipped: 64



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Adults	88.27%	444
Kids	30.62%	154
I bring my dog(s)	27.04%	136
I normally visit alone	10.34%	52
Total Respondents: 503		

Q7 What are your favorite things about the Punch Bowl Falls site as it exists now?

Answered: 425 Skipped: 142

Virtually every respondent called out the rugged wild beauty of the site as their favorite feature. They often poetically described the unique and stunning combination of basalt columns, fast moving water, and rich flora and fauna. Many loved that you could have a feeling of isolation and solitude on a site that is fairly close to town. People liked that its not crowded and that there are very few manmade improvements. Many people valued the site for its rare and precious river access.

Here is a sampling of responses:

The rare beauty and terrain of the area gives my wife and kids and I a chance to see and feel a fantastic piece of Oregon together.

Natural beauty, close to home.

Just the undeveloped natural beauty; the roar of the falls; essentially free of trash, decay; feeling the strength of nature's spirit

Wild, powerful setting

The spring wildflowers; the relative isolation; the magnificent basalt columns above the river that has been my constant companion for over 25 years as a resident of Dee.

It's gorgeous and amazing. We love to look, walk, watch birds and look for fish, and sometimes take a lunch along. Watch people fishing.

Its relatively wild forest and watching it change over 30 years. The lack of crowds. The chance to see kayakers

Quiet, peaceful, remote feeling, no man-made intrusions.

Easy access and boating

Peaceful, beautiful, easy access, limited, but nice trails

Good access for fishing

Wildness, feeling of being far from civilization, natural beauty, few other people, roar of the waters, feeling of timelessness.

The history attached to the site, the rock formations, and the the astounding beauty are to be admired. The close proximity to Portland is also appealing for tourist visiting.

mix of rugged beauty, peaceful and wild river, fish jumping, views, trees, easy hike to fork in river, special feel

I love water and waterfalls. It's a beautiful place to visit and just enjoy.

Being along a river with fast running water, waterfalls and pools; the beauty of the canyon; a cool respite when it is very hot; communing with nature in a natural environment; experiencing it all enriches our lives, grounds us and gives us a sense of place.

Q8 What is special about the Punch Bowl Falls site? What would you want to protect about the site as it is now?

Answered: 426 Skipped: 141

The answers to this question seemed to flow naturally from the question before- people want to keep it natural, they want minimal development and public access to be preserved.

Here is a sampling of responses:

The rock in the punchbowl is very pretty and unique. Protect Access.

I think it's the combination of diverse terrain and spectacular sights. I would want to protect the tree stands, the river, falls and basins and the variety of life that you may not see immediately, but is out there

Solitude

Again, sheer beauty and one of the only accesses we have to the Hood River. I'd like to see it preserved much as it is w/ better access for all ages.

Lots of variety in the area with many things to share with people. Leave it as natural as possible.

Relatively easy public access for salmon and steelhead angling. Site is so special it deserves to be in public ownership with open unrestricted access to all users.

Maintain paddler access to the river. Ensure no more development along the water. Maintain water quality. Protect natural plants.

Keep development minimal. The terrain, the water, etc should be as free and wild as possible. I would prefer to see very few amenities and to let the natural beauty of the site speak for itself.

Natural beauty, great scenery and excellent whitewater kayaking

I'd like to protect the river habitat and surrounding area.

Fish habitat protection and human access

Everything, I would not want it turned into a camping area. too many people and too much trash.

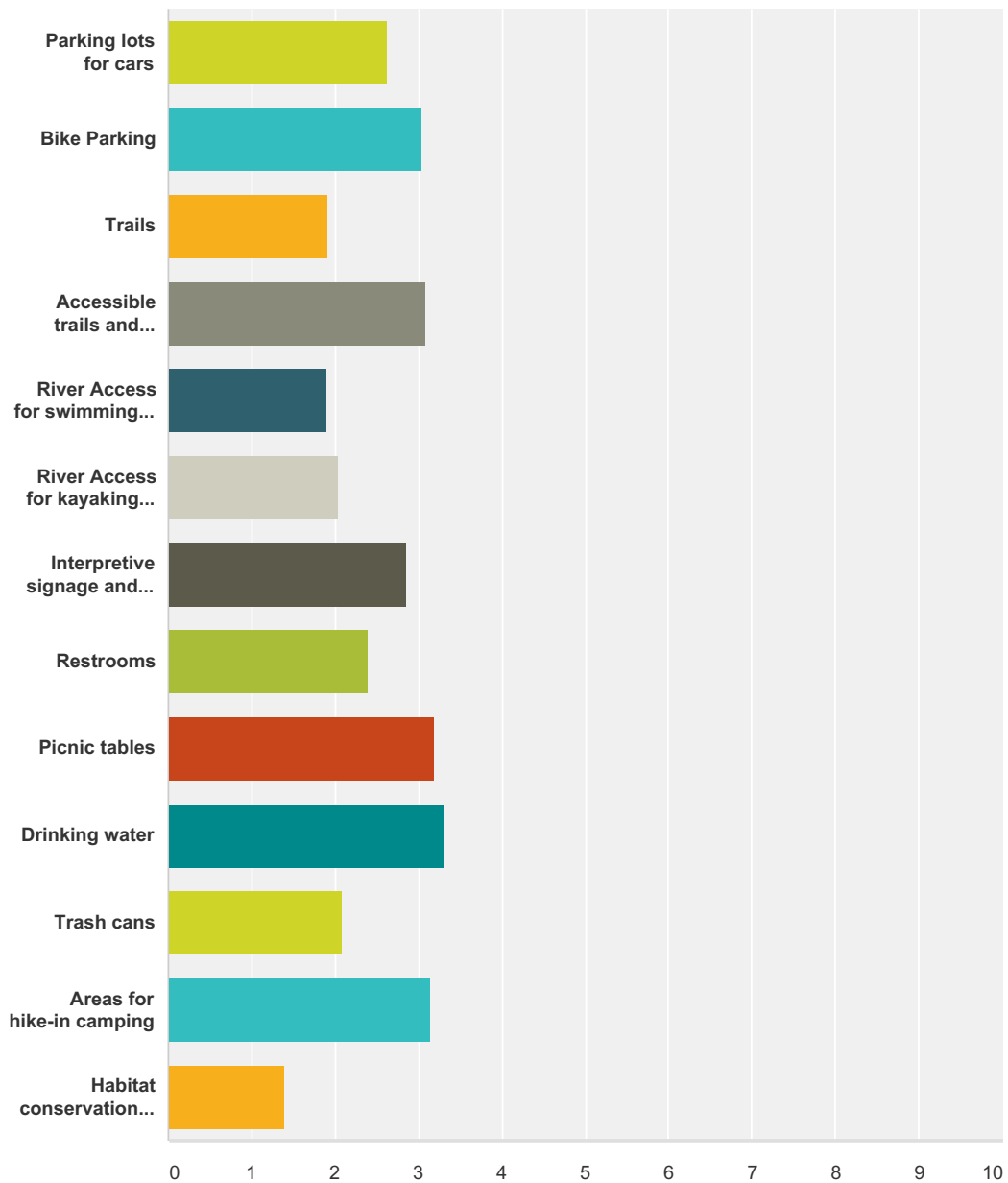
The geological features that create the falls. Protect solitude

Need to manage the potential impact of more people visiting, one of the problems I see now is garbage

It's unique as a geologic feature - there's really no other falls in Oregon on a major river with an amphitheater of this scale. I would want to keep it in a natural state, but with safer canyon rim trails and viewpoints. Long term, I'd like to see the concrete surface of the fish ladder covered in some way to make it less of an eyesore in an otherwise natural landscape

Q9 Punch Bowl Falls is a largely unimproved site. Current plans call for the park to retain its wild, natural character. The following is a list of features you normally see in natural area parks. Please rate how important they are to you to be included when developing Punchbowl Falls as a County Park.

Answered: 499 Skipped: 68



	Very important	Important	Slightly Important	Not important	No opinion	Total	Weighted Average
--	----------------	-----------	--------------------	---------------	------------	-------	------------------

Parking lots for cars	16.70% 82	28.72% 141	30.55% 150	23.22% 114	0.81% 4	491	2.63
Bike Parking	10.37% 50	19.29% 93	31.12% 150	33.82% 163	5.39% 26	482	3.05
Trails	37.04% 180	40.33% 196	15.02% 73	7.41% 36	0.21% 1	486	1.93
Accessible trails and facilities for the disabled, elderly and strollers	7.28% 35	21.00% 101	32.85% 158	33.06% 159	5.82% 28	481	3.09
River Access for swimming and fishing	44.74% 217	31.13% 151	15.05% 73	7.63% 37	1.44% 7	485	1.90
River Access for kayaking and rafting	47.01% 228	20.21% 98	15.67% 76	14.85% 72	2.27% 11	485	2.05
Interpretive signage and maps with information about the park	13.15% 63	23.38% 112	32.15% 154	28.39% 136	2.92% 14	479	2.85
Restrooms	21.63% 106	34.49% 169	25.71% 126	17.14% 84	1.02% 5	490	2.41
Picnic tables	6.69% 32	16.32% 78	30.54% 146	44.35% 212	2.09% 10	478	3.19
Drinking water	6.65% 32	12.06% 58	25.78% 124	53.43% 257	2.08% 10	481	3.32
Trash cans	35.46% 172	34.23% 166	17.94% 87	11.96% 58	0.41% 2	485	2.08
Areas for hike-in camping	8.40% 40	20.17% 96	22.48% 107	46.01% 219	2.94% 14	476	3.15
Habitat conservation and wild areas	72.56% 357	18.70% 92	5.28% 26	2.85% 14	0.61% 3	492	1.40

Q10 If you could only make one improvement at Punch Bowl Falls, what would it be?

Answered: 385 Skipped: 182

The largest number of responses were related to the trails—asking for a larger trail system like a loop trail or a pedestrian bridge over the east fork linking the west and east sides of the property, ADA accessible trails, a safe, formalized trail and overlook of the falls, and suggestions to decommission some of the improvised trails in favor of fewer better trails to cut down on environmental impacts like erosion.

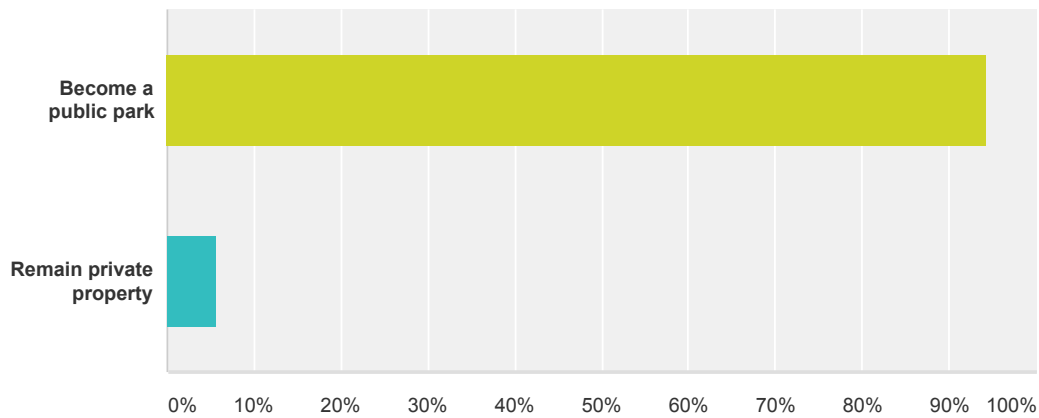
People also asked for improvements to the parking lot, the addition of trash cans and restrooms and improvements to river access for boaters.

Here are the most suggested improvements (number in parentheses refers to how many people named out that specific improvement):

- Trail improvements (90)
- Parking lot (40)
- Trash cans/litter pick up (39)
- Restrooms (31)
- Improved kayak/rafting access (31)
- Make access legal, public and permanent (27)
- Don't change a thing (23)
- Remove fish ladder and staircase (21)

Q11 While locals have a long history of treating the area as if it were a public park, it is, in fact private property. If Hood River County is unable to acquire the property, Western Rivers Conservancy may be forced to sell it on the private market. A private sale would come with a conservation easement to protect the habitat values of the Hood River corridor but it is likely that public access to the site would be eliminated by future owners. Do you think the Punch Bowl Falls property should become a public park or remain private property?

Answered: 484 Skipped: 83



Answer Choices	Responses
Become a public park	94.42% 457
Remain private property	5.58% 27
Total	484

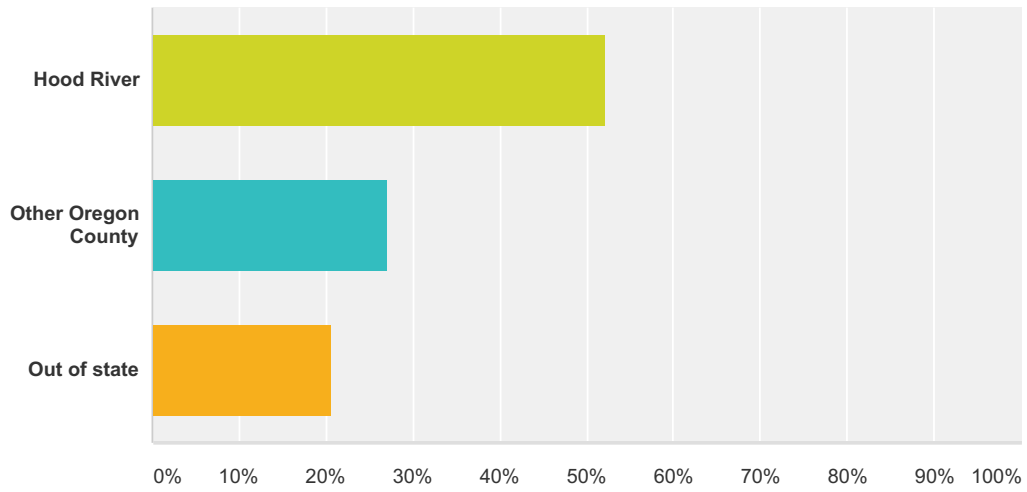
484 people answered this question--94.4% thought the property should become a County Park. 159 people choose to post a comment to explain their opinion.

The vast majority of comments were supportive of the park and along the lines of these: "This "hidden jewel" needs to remain accessible to the nature-loving public" "River access is so limited in the valley, it's crucial to gain Park status" "Preservation of Punch Bowl for the public to enjoy is critical!"

But some were concerned with the County’s ability to take care of the property or that it would become overused: "Hood river county already has parks that are not funded and maintained(Routson), do we really need the burden of another one ? especially one with so many natural hazards?" "DO NOT develop it into a zoo of people"

Q12 What county do you live in?

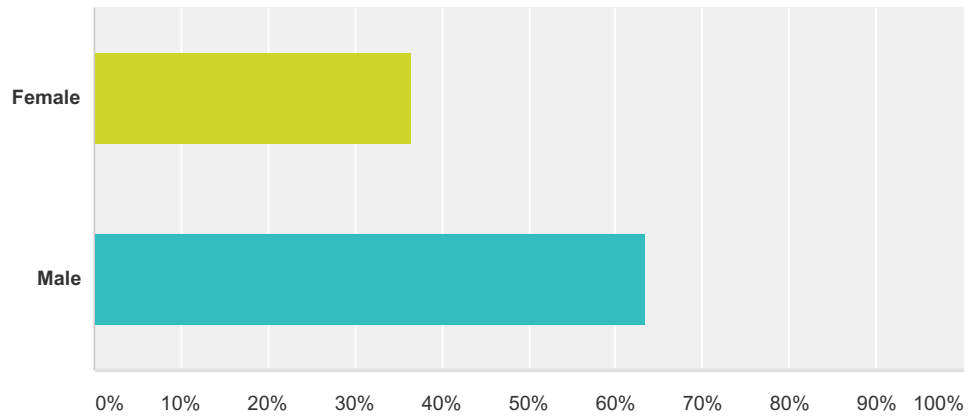
Answered: 498 Skipped: 69



Answer Choices	Responses
Hood River	52.21% 260
Other Oregon County	27.11% 135
Out of state	20.68% 103
Total	498

Q13 What is your gender?

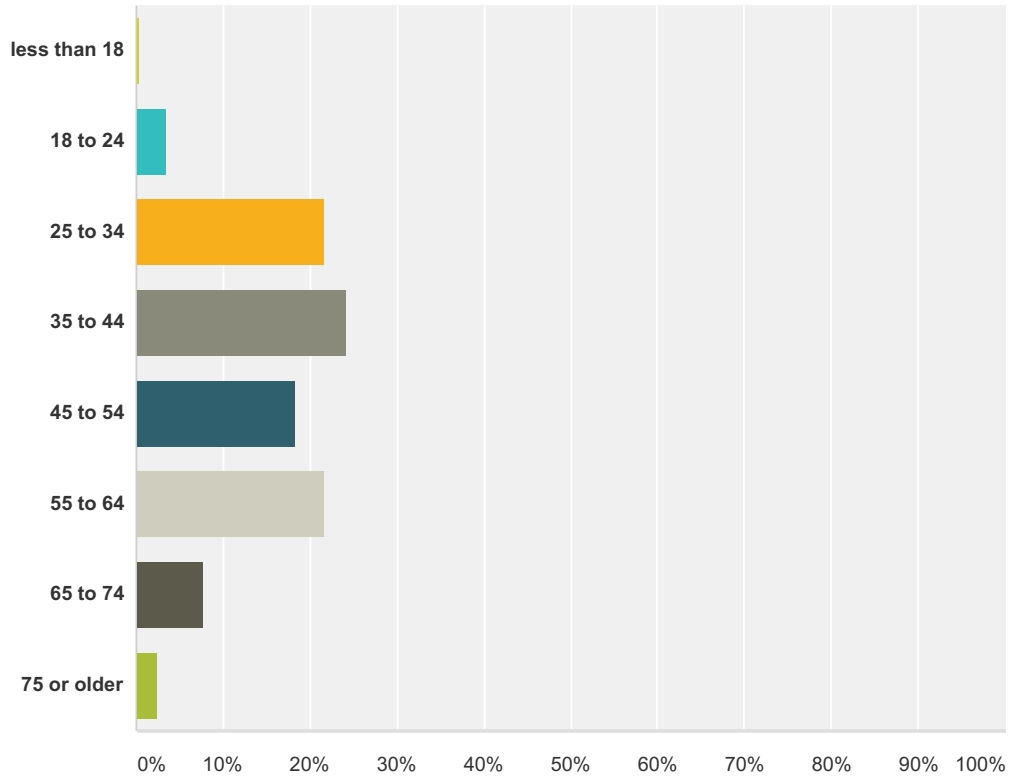
Answered: 488 Skipped: 79



Answer Choices	Responses
Female	36.48% 178
Male	63.52% 310
Total	488

Q14 What is your age?

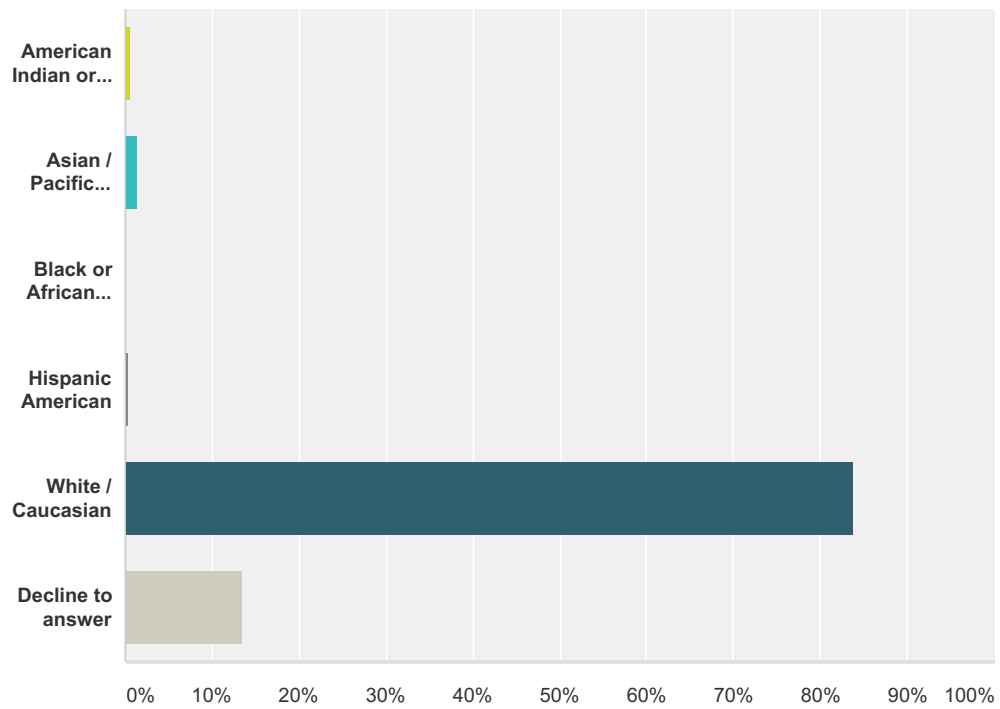
Answered: 492 Skipped: 75



Answer Choices	Responses
less than 18	0.41% 2
18 to 24	3.46% 17
25 to 34	21.75% 107
35 to 44	24.19% 119
45 to 54	18.29% 90
55 to 64	21.75% 107
65 to 74	7.72% 38
75 or older	2.44% 12
Total	492

Q15 Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

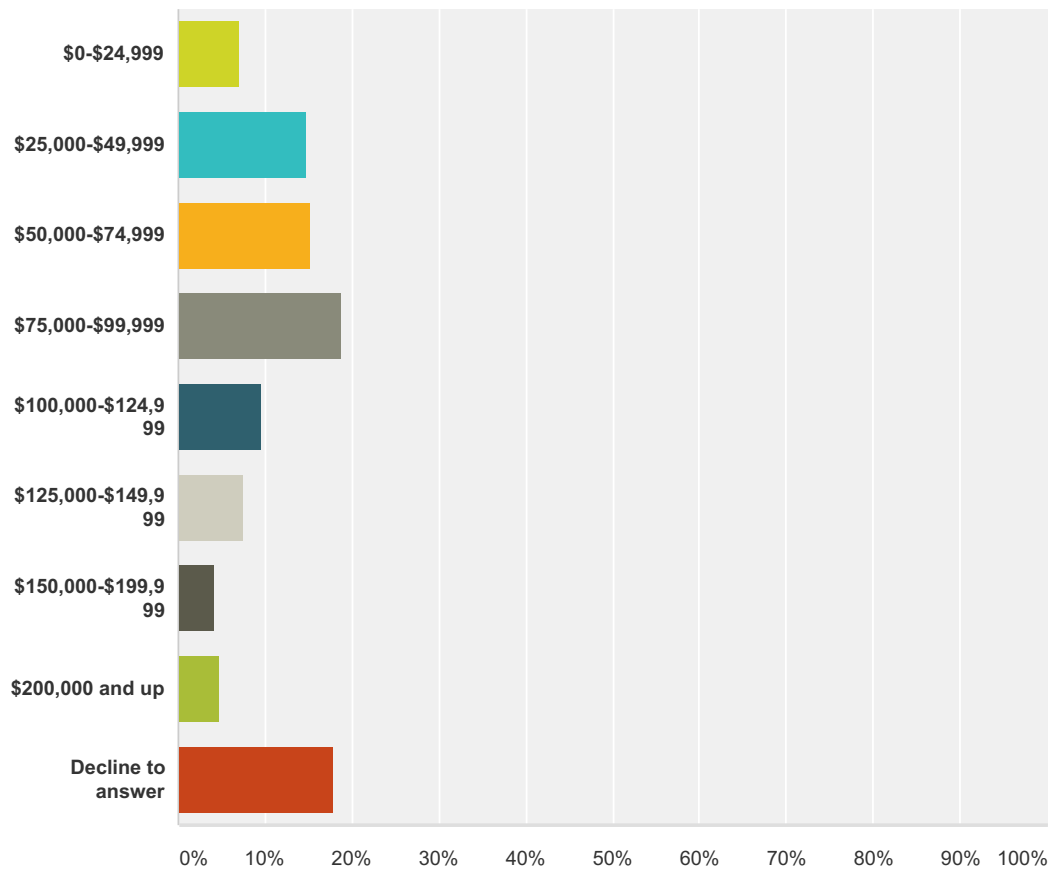
Answered: 484 Skipped: 83



Answer Choices	Responses
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.62% 3
Asian / Pacific Islander	1.45% 7
Black or African American	0.00% 0
Hispanic American	0.41% 2
White / Caucasian	83.88% 406
Decline to answer	13.64% 66
Total	484

Q16 What is your approximate annual household income?

Answered: 488 Skipped: 79



Answer Choices	Responses	
\$0-\$24,999	7.17%	35
\$25,000-\$49,999	14.75%	72
\$50,000-\$74,999	15.16%	74
\$75,000-\$99,999	18.85%	92
\$100,000-\$124,999	9.63%	47
\$125,000-\$149,999	7.58%	37
\$150,000-\$199,999	4.10%	20
\$200,000 and up	4.71%	23
Decline to answer	18.03%	88
Total		488

Q17 If you would like to be sent updates on Punch Bowl, please enter your contact info below.

Answered: 213 Skipped: 354

Answer Choices	Responses	
Name	97.18%	207
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	98.59%	210
Phone Number	0.00%	0

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - January 13, 2015

Facilitator: Josh Kling

A. List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

- 1) Tim Rayle—waterfall viewing, brings kids and dogs, hikes irrigation canal that runs along West Fork
- 2) Chuck Gehling – fishing, watch wildlife, mushrooming, walks
- 3) Jason Wells—kayaking, hikes, professional trail builder
- 4) Jess Gleas-- rafter
- 5) Abby Capovilla—year round visitor, especially in summer, swimmer, walker,
- 6) Josh Huffman--kayaker
- 7) Lia Wagner—rafting, is a commercial guide
- 8) Tom Dalbey—picnics, swimming, nature viewing, spring thru fall, year round hiking

B. What do they like best thing about the property? How is the property special or useful or unusual?

Tim- natural beauty, the waterfalls and that it is undeveloped

Chuck—represents Hood River Watershed Group, he likes natural beauty, wildflowers, notes that within 200 feet of falls it is a deeded fishery for exclusive tribal use

Jason—likes years round hiking

Abby—multiple activities and attractions, room for all, that it is for non-motorized uses only

Josh—confluence is key! Provides multiple river trip possibilities and access fall through spring

Lia—river access and natural beauty

Tom—pristine quality, no development, access to nature

C. Do they think the property should be become a public park or remain private property? If it becomes a county park, what kind of park should it be? What should be the character, amenities and programming of the park? What should be added? What should be left unchanged?

This group did think it should be a county park. They considered recreational access and maintaining an undeveloped site most important—adding new facilities was less important. They used phrases like “less is more” and said that the site should be kept as natural and undeveloped as possible. Minimal facilities development: parking, restrooms, existing trails, trash receptacles.

Real restrooms, not port-a-potties!

No overnight camping, no fires

Don't encourage more use, keep it low-impact. Possibly limit number of daily users.

ADA viewing platform is not appropriate for Punch Bowl overlook.

Trails should be improved, especially river access trails.

Terrain is not conducive to extensive development of recreational facilities.

River access for recreation!

Limit river access during fish spawning season.

Accessible for dogs under owner's control. Consider proactively managing off-leash dogs.

Interpretive signs informing public of history and ecology of site, site info, rules, fish/wildlife info

Manage parking

Manage the dangerous areas

Plan facilities so that they blend into the environment

D. What would worry them about developing the Punchbowl Falls site into a County Park?

Overuse and over development!

Camping, especially if Dee Mill becomes a concert venue

Control of dogs if allowed

Disturbing spawning fish

Too many trail users

Cliff jumping by young people

Adequate park patrols to keep it clean and rule-abiding

Conflict between user groups i.e. anglers vs. boaters

Consider limiting advertising of park to greater public

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - January 13, 2015

Facilitator: Kristyn Fix

A. List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

- 1) Andrew McWilliams - hiking, swimming, family time around 6 time/year
- 2) Guy Tauscher - hike, swim, fish around 5-6 times/year - mostly summer
- 3) Ann Dow - hike, natural experience - summer
- 4) David Winans - adjacent landowner East of HR
- 5) Peg Wooten - I live on Punchbowl right above the falls at fish hatchery for 34 years
- 6) & 7) Ron & Dawn Reynier - avid kayakers - mainly winter and spring
- 8) & 9) Graham Lavery & Lana Young - avid kayakers -fall through spring
- 10) Rob W. Cochran - adjacent landowner near Iowa Drive - concerned of landslide

Most of the users in this group used the site fall, winter and spring, not in the summer months.

B. What do they like best thing about the property? How is the property special or useful or unusual?

- An adjacent landowner on the North Side loves using the trails and is curious how they will be used if it is made into a park
- From Iowa Drive, several kayakers and rafters put in, but state it has become more difficult in recent years. Fishers put in at this side too.
- The more difficult access remains, the less recreational users will be there, which poses both positives and negatives
- The area is beautiful and dynamic
- A local landowner, who states that he is of honorary Native American decent, states that this is "truly one of the wonders of the world. It's the heart of a volcano."
- In Hood River's history, there would be up to 1500 people using this space for swimming and family time on hot, sunny days. Huge historical value.
- Several in the group agreed that it should be cared for like Tucker Park with a host and cleanliness, but not made into a campground

C. Do they think the property should be become a public park or remain private property? If it becomes a county park, what kind of park should it be? What should be the character, amenities and programming of the park? What should be added? What should be left unchanged?

Parking at Iowa Drive will be needed, but how many spots? How big? Will it even fit?

The group agrees to minimally develop, including pit toilets/compostable sanitation, trash receptacles, developing trails with signage and parking only. By starting minimally, the parks department could then wait to see what is needed.

The park should "remain as untouched as humanly possible"

Creating more parking near Punchbowl should be easier.

Currently there are other access points that cannot be disclosed

No picnic tables

Non-motorized access only

Suggestion that bike racks would not be necessary

Reasonable access at the confluence

Beaches, but those appear to already be eroding

Habitat protection, including otters, eagles and coyotes

Educational events to inform the public of its use

Limit populations who would use the space without respecting nature (for example, limit access for underage drinkers/partiers who dump garbage)

Maintain security gate in order to limit access

No camping or campfires

Interpretive and guiding signage; designated trail system

Some people suggested no entrance fees; others asked how we will afford to upkeep the area without charging fees

D. What would worry them about developing the Punchbowl Falls site into a County Park?

Parking at Iowa Drive will be very difficult; property close by will be extremely affected by parking; PARKING was a major discussion

Developing park minimally

The residences near Iowa and Linnaeus - how will they be affected?

Liabilities and legalities were major discussions as well - injuries from cliff jumpers, how to keep people from jumping, 911 calls

Concerns over funding - short vs. long-term goals

Waters are not always calm enough for swimming

Who is responsible for cleaning? Managing the roads? Making certain people follow the rules?

"The easier the access, the more trash there will be" - balance this with not being overly secure and limiting access points

Possibility of using a mushroom farm that is for sale up the road as an additional parking and access point if parks department could purchase this space as well

What would the safety measures be?

Strong encouragement from kayakers to keep the area about 15 yards before Punchbowl Falls entirely unchanged as it provides the only safe space (eddy) for kayakers to take out boats

Who is speaking with the Native American populations about their opinions? Recommendation to speak to the Intertribal Fisheries Commission or looking up federal tribes on the Watershed Council website

Motorized vehicles not having access

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - January 13, 2015

Facilitator: Polly Wood

A. List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

- 1) Mike Babcock – Boating, rafting (large in size), goes winter, spring and several times a month. Usually with 2 – 3 people
- 2) Stephen Datnoff – didn't say
- 3) Cabe Grant – Kayak, swim x a year with wife and young son.
- 4) and 5) James Byrd and Reagan (Byrd?) couple are kayakers, swimmers and haven't been there yet but are very enthusiastic about going.
- 6) Louis Geltman – kayaker, swimmer goes 6x a year.
- 7) Kate Mills – long history of knowing the place, founder, and visited it with Phil when WRC was contemplating the purchase.
- 8) and 9) Mike McCafferty Parkdale Fire Chief and fire fighter colleague (didn't catch his name) – they go to Punch Bowl a lot to rescue people!
- 10) Catherine Locke – paddler, likes the low impact trail and wildness of Punch Bowl.

B. What do they like best thing about the property? How is the property special or useful or unusual?

One of the few places where the Hood River is accessible to the public, exceptional property, beautiful spot. - James Geltman

Difficult to walk up the hill but pretty.

Steep take out but accessible to boating.

Wonderful area for outdoor education of all ages, especially school children - Kate Mills

C. Do they think the property should become a public park or remain private property? If it becomes a county park, what kind of park should it be? What should be the character, amenities and programming of the park? What should be added? What should be left unchanged?

This group felt that the property should become a public park but felt it should stay rustic and wild with certain low impact improvements. But overall minimal development.

Parking – Big concerns about parking on Iowa Drive. It borders a neighborhood. How does the County plan on dealing with that? As far as parking on the Punch Bowl Rd is concerned people feel it should not be too developed (making medians and such could actually take up valuable parking spaces. There should be enough room for trailers to turn around.

Bike Parking – This wasn't a big priority for the group but Kate Mills did bring up the fact that bikes take up a lot less room than cars so why not have a bit. People do bike up to Dee.

ADA accessible – Wasn't strongly voted for either way but Mike McCafferty said if it was designed right it would be great for viewing and visiting the dynamic confluence spot.

River access for swimming and fishing – modest trail should remain with light improvements, but don't change trails too much.

River access for kayaking, rafting, SUP. - Mike Babcock suggested put in and take ramps or amenities above and below the actual falls. See sketch on topographic map.

Interpretive signs and maps – Group supported this for a number of reasons. More emphasis on risks of jumping off high cliffs and reference to rustic type trails, but also signage about stewardship and keeping the area place clean - packing out what is brought in,. Since this is such a rich ecological area and historic, there could be signage about that too.

Restrooms – Modest restrooms, pit toilet.

Screened area for changing cloths – not a priority

Picnic tables – not a priority for this group – some one mention maybe six, but no more.

Drinking water – park users should just bring in their own as they always have.

Areas for hike in camping – Group agrees that there should be no overnight camping.

Habitat Conservation and wild areas – Very important to preserve this and a big reason why development should be minimal. The right kind and amount of signage would help.

Safe Overlook of Falls – Big concern for Fire/EMS and more on that in D. Group felt a big fence would ruin the pristine quality of the place but redesigning the trail and creating some planting that deters visitors from getting too close but enjoying the view would be a good solution. There will always those “jumpers” but creating as many deterrents as possible is recommended.

Trash Cans – Some in the group recommended trash cans but it was also recognized that trash cans and dumpsters can also invite even more trash. Signage posted should include language that asks people to “pack it out”. Also a “Friends of Punch Bowl” could form for periodic clean up...

D. What would worry them about developing the Punchbowl Falls site into a County Park?

Creating a park will certainly bring more users so accommodating a greater level of use will need to be well thought out. Parking could be an issue on Iowa drive near an established neighborhood as mentioned before.

Mike McCafferty – very concerned about the Overlook and all the people that the Fire/ EMS dept has to rescue from jumps, especially in the warmer months. The more of a park it is the more “rescuing they will need to do. Redirecting the trail away from the jump spot could help, as well as more signage, but it not going to get rid of the problem. Catherine Lock suggested part of the improvement could be to set up anchor points in the cliff rock to aid rescues. Fire and Rescue will also need access and adequate parking for these emergencies at both park entrances.

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - January 13, 2015

Facilitator: Nick Kraemer

A. List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

1) and 2) Isaac (Ike) and Nikki - live on Iowa Drive. Concerned about parking area on that side. Their driveway is currently used as a turn around.

3) Linda Maddox - uses area for walking and most concerned with protecting public access to the river

4) Kristen Godkin - recently visited the area for the first time. concerned with protecting conservation of the area more than public access. worried about over-use

5) Billy Sheely - lives on Iowa Drive. concerned with private property trespassing. feels there is no space for parking on the Iowa Drive side. feels the park would be encroaching on his property - and cliff edge is right there.

6) Erin Willis - kayaker. wants to maintain boater access points

7) Peter Seuchert - new to hood river. very interested in public parks and maintaining public access

8) John - kayak shed owner. uses the park for fish/kayak/hikes

B. What do they like best thing about the property? How is the property special or useful or unusual?

It is a beautiful spot in the river with the confluence and swimming hole.

C. Do they think the property should become a public park or remain private property? If it becomes a county park, what kind of park should it be? What should be the character, amenities and programming of the park? What should be added? What should be left unchanged?

most folks in the group agreed that they want primitive improvements on the punchbowl side (trash bins, signage, existing trails)

parking should be leveled out, some signage on pb side. not sure how to address the iowa side

public access to water should remain about the same on pb side. john the kayak shed guy said there is a popular take out upriver from falls that would be nice to improve. the cliff side ropes as access should be eliminated from iowa side. fishermen generally take the path down to the confluence on iowa side.

they feel there is limited capacity at each nature viewing spot. "there are 2 small access points for 100 acres of land and only 2 acres of that are really usable for visitors"

The potential impacts of dee tour and more activity at dee on the site was brought up. It was felt that Punch Bowl may get "discovered" and more people will be visiting the site after deetour is going.

amenities list:

parking lot - size is fine, level it out, put signs

bike parking - no

trails - no paved, no new aside from kayak take out mentioned above

ada trails - no paved

river access - no new aside from kayak take out mentioned above

screened areas - no this is oregon get naked haha

interpretive signs - nothing fancy

restrooms - pit toilets maybe

picnic tables - maybe one or two

drinking water - no

camping - no

conservation - yes

overlook - like this idea - not sure it is feasible

pay station?

major goals agreed upon:

-maintain public ownership

-reduce negative impacts on adjacent private property owners

-keep amenities basically the same

-avoid over-use of the park

-conservation

D. What would worry them about developing the Punchbowl Falls site into a County Park?

Iowa Street Folks voiced many concerns about the proposed map and parking located on the Iowa Side

-worried about over-use, camping, fires etc.

-don't see feasible access with the small amount of space between private land and the cliff

-feel the punchbowl side is better for park - but worried too many park amenities will lead to over-use

-concerned that the county doesn't have the resources to maintain well

-concerned with garbage pickup and dumping

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - January 13, 2015

Facilitator: Heather Staten

A. List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

- 1) Dave and Stella Waag. School field trips/environmental education, visit as family for swimming/hiking in all seasons
- 2) Ben Bromham. Hiking trails, visiting confluence
- 3) Megan Saunders. Hiking, conducts Salmon spawning studies for the Warm Springs tribe in Sept/Oct
- 4) Emie Eikorn. Lives near PDX but uses area for river access for rafting
- 5) Scott Harvey. Lives near PDX. Familiar with spot since mid 1980s. Boater who uses it as take out from West Fort and as put in for mainstem of Hood River.
- 6) Maria Eby. Lives in Dee. Goes there a lot, up to once a week in spring, summer and fall. Uses it to take kids and dogs hiking and swimming.
- 7) Zach Collier. Uses site in every way possible, probably once a week. Very familiar with site. He rafts and kayaks in the area as part of his commercial rafting business. Also swims there.
- 8) John Roberts. Confluence is a great place to take the family.

B. What do they like best thing about the property? How is the property special or useful or unusual?

Access to the river.

The spot where the rivers meet is beautiful.

There are nice areas for picnicking.

The property is fairly undisturbed, not much built by humans, it still has a pristine feel.

You can feel like you are in the wild, although you are close to town

The area is noted for the falls but for a hiker, the confluence is more important

Punch Bowl is the famous waterfall but Dead Point Creek is very cool—it is huge and impressive during spring run off

There are pretty and varied wildflowers

There is a view of Mt. Hood if you look up the west fork from a cliff near the confluence

C. Do they think the property should become a public park or remain private property?

If it becomes a county park, what kind of park should it be? What should be the character, amenities and programming of the park? What should be added? What should be left unchanged? They can draw on the maps!

Group thought it should be a public park but noted that there are few places that you can go that are undeveloped, they like the primitive, rustic feel that exists now. It is gorgeous because it is wild.

Because this group wanted to preserve the wild/primitive/rustic feel of the site they were not in favor of including these improvements: drinking water (would lead to prolonged camping), picnic tables, screened changing areas or hike-in camping.

They did want:

For kayakers, access is most important thing and existing access is adequate for them. Rafters felt like they could use improved access. Suggestions were made for log slides or metal rails or to widen/modify the path to the confluence to make it easier to use. Zach felt that improvements at confluence were more important than improvements to the take out above Punch Bowl Falls. The mainstem Hood River north of the confluence is very good for intermediate paddlers, it should be made more accessible through put-in improvements at confluence.

Trash cans are needed, a lot of litter is left.

Half the group felt that restrooms would be a good addition, the other half felt they were optional. If restrooms were installed they should be near the Punch Bowl Road parking lot.

The cliff and viewing area for punchbowl should be made safer for families and pets.

Signage is recommended to welcome people to the park and let them know the rules.

Suggestion was made to create more trails and possibly a trail leading from the Punch Bowl to the Iowa drive property by putting a footbridge over the East Fork.

It was noted that the site is on a popular bike route to Lost Lake and Watham and that cyclists will stop at Punch Bowl for a break. Even so, this group did not see the need to add bike parking, said cyclists could just lean their bikes against trees.

D. What would they worry about developing the Punchbowl Falls site into a County Park?

Punch Bowl Road makes a sharp turn before the parking lot, there is a steep cliff drop-off from the road. Guard rails or some signage could make the road more safe.

Concern that neighbors impacted by park should be notified and consulted about project.

Some concern about fire danger, another reason not to encourage camping.

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - January 13, 2015

Facilitator: Terri Veatch

A. List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

- 1) Jim- kayaker
- 2) Trevor Sheehan- kayaker
- 3) Rachel Crowder- kayaker
- 4) Mike F. -kayaker
- 5) Brian Z- Kayaker
- 6) Joe S- kayaker
- 7) Dan Pierce—fishing winter
- 8) Adam—kayaker, rafting
- 9) Trevor Tostad--kayaker

Most of the users in this group used the site fall, winter and spring, not in the summer months.

B. What do they like best thing about the property? How is the property special or useful or unusual?

Access for kayaking

C. Do they think the property should be become a public park or remain private property? If it becomes a county park, what kind of park should it be? What should be the character, amenities and programming of the park? What should be added? What should be left unchanged?

The overriding theme with this group is they really don't want things to change much. They like the raw and undeveloped aspect of the place. They just want to make sure they will have access and be able to use the park as they have been doing.

Access to recreation is the most important thing. Would like better access to water as opposed to adding more facilities.

No RV hookup

Should have interpretive trail

Wild nature of site should be maintained. Day use only.

Confluence may be better place for ADA and pedestrian access than Punch Bowl cliff face.

Restroom—pit toilet ok.

Should remove dilapidated staircase above fish ladder.

Improved parking lot and trash cans ok.

Signage for trails and streams keep people on designated trails. With a large number of users, erosion becomes an issue.

D. What would worry them about developing the Punchbowl Falls site into a County Park?

Worry that increased use will lead to liability or access issues.

Would people have to pay to park? Perhaps paying is necessary to pay for maintenance.

More people would lead to more vandalism and trash.

Small Group Notes from February 10 Public Meeting

Punchbowl Falls Group List

Phil W - western rivers

Sara Martin - pearpeople@gmail.com

Fran Finney - ffinney@aol.com

Todd Collins - todd@wetplanetwhitewater.com

Jaco Klinkenberg - jaco@wetplanetwhitewater.com

Alan Winans - norse3553@ymail.com

Peter Zurcher - p.chzurcher@yahoo.com

Megan Saunders - meeg47@yahoo.com

Land

Restrooms – people are gonna go so we gotta control it.

Cheap porta potties at the parking lot were suggested. Something simple cheap to solve the issue

West Fork side should be the priority area for improvements

Remove informal trails and focus on a handful of main trails

Alan was really focused on ADA/paved access from parking to the falls. Either as a path or a lockable gate that senior groups could drive down...

Kayakers would prefer to put-in on the east fork – but up river from the current property line. The west fork sees a lot more kayaker use than rafter use.

The dreamers of the group really wanted a bridge reconnection across the east fork.

There are some safety concerns about the cliff. How to keep it natural but safe. ...most people didn't want guard rails but supported official viewpoints.

Park Management

Signage – mixed opinions on interpretive signage. Most want to leave it natural and are concerned about the upkeep with signs distributed throughout the park.

Some simple wood directional signs (like forest service directional signs).

Signs only at the parking lot with map.

Permissible Activities: dogs on a leash, no camping, no fires, 24/7 accessibility, cliff jumping (keep sign and add fine). Alan wants to remove gate so you can drive down.

Restroom at the parking area. Most thought a 1 or 2 sided pit toilet was best.

Orientation Signage from road? Mixed on whether there should be signage from Dee Highway.

Park fee – mixed take on whether to charge for the park. Most saw problems with policing and collecting the fees.

Making it Happen

Develop friends of the waterfront type of group to help manage the park. Can we group up with the existing friends of the waterfront – what is their status?

Get the message out that we will lose access to this property if we can't find the funding by sending letters to the editor, telling friends, etc.

Is a petition needed?

Present letters of support to the County Commissioners

It would be cool to do a gopro video of the park to help with the grant application and presentation. Wet Planet Whitewater could help with this.

Community Event like in White Salmon to get community members on that section of the river.

It would be cool to have a produced little information film about the park for the grant presentation. Approach the local extreme kayaker film folks.

Make sample letters of support for people to grab from website

Get the word out about the survey on pdxkayaker.org

Is there a Spanish version of the survey?

Maintenance should be covered by the county budget with help from volunteer groups like Friends of the Waterfront.

River

Be careful not to step on the tribal rights. Some thought that the conflict was minimized by the nature of seasonal uses on the site (kayakers on high flows, fishing during certain times of the winter, etc.)

Signage at the parking lot could explain the rules with fishing and the tribal rights.

Commercial river rafting will not be impacted greatly by the park because of the fluctuation of the river levels. However public access makes commercial trip stop here viable.

Rafting, kayaking, hikers, and fishing bring positive impacts to the downtown economy in Hood River and the Valley.

Discussion about the large influx of boaters on big water days and then basically no use from this group for majority of the year. How to mitigate the impacts of these large groups is difficult

The lack of easy access for boaters self regulates the number of rafters – maybe this is better?

Are there laws about handicap access requirements (or parking lot requirements) that come with state

February 10, 2015

Punchbowl Falls County Park Visioning Project

Participants

Gloria Krantz

Carrington Barrs cebalaro@gmail.com

Trevor Jostad

Larry Martin pearpeople@gmail.com

Lucy Hill lucyh6@gmail.com

Elmer Ward

John Hart

Kristin Godkin

Making it Happen

1. Reach out to local corporate community for assistance with fundraising and financial donations. Insitu, ICE, Full Sail Brewing, Tofurky, Keen Footwear, Google, Dakine, Clear Creek Distillery, Logston Brewing
2. Contact Friends of Waterfront Park for assistance in setting up a Friends of Punchbowl Park for fundraising and stewardship
3. Contact Lori Stirn from Park and Recreation for support. She is the Chairperson for the State Park grant committee.
4. Contact Columbia Land Trust ,ODFW for possible funding sources.
5. Reach out to local non-profits to help spread the word about the Park and obtain more community support. Organizations such as GO local, Sense of Place tours.
6. Contact Becky Brun for assistance with grant writing, and Gil Sharp for assistance with Pro Bono legal services.

River

1. Maintain limited access for users. No river access by vehicles. Current parking lots would be the furthest private vehicles should be able to travel.
2. The group is very concerned about potential conflict with residents on Iowa Drive. Small parking area and the trail down to the river direct from Iowa Drive is steep and susceptible to erosion. Erosion an issue with stream turbidity and fish habitat.
3. Warm Springs Fishermen are concerned with safety of being below lookout. Many times people can't tell there are men below and either kick or throw rocks over the edge.

Land

1. Trail system needs to focus on fewer, well maintained trails to limit erosion and maintain visual beauty. For example, railroad tie stairs at Iowa Drive location would help stem mud going to river and provide safer area for kayakers accessing this take out point.
2. The final trail end down to the confluence needs work -huge boulders in the trail.
3. Bathrooms only at main parking lot, preferable just beyond the gate and visually obscured from the road to decrease incidental use from non-park users.
4. Signage is preferable at the parking areas only to maintain natural beauty of the park further in toward the river. Group would like the park to be left as natural as possible.

Park Management

1. Parking lot needs some leveling and the gate to remain closed to vehicle traffic.
2. Long term plans would be helpful to have a suspension bridge from the Iowa Drive side over the river.
3. Need signage to indicate appropriate use- no fire, no overnight camping, day use only.
4. On high traffic days, perhaps a docent for crime protection and directions. This could be sourced from a Friends of Punchbowl Falls organization
5. Possible one way trail in the center of the park? Would help visitors enjoy the solitude and nature of the park.
6. Want to see the pine/White Oak habitat to preserved.

Punchbowl Park Visioning Project - February 10, 2015 Notes Taken by Kristyn Fix

· List the individuals in your group. What activities do they do at Punch Bowl property currently? What times of year, how often and with whom?

- o William Sheeley - wrsheeley@gmail.com
- o Nikki Guerra-Smith - nikkiguerra9@hotmail.com
- o David Winans - dswinans@aol.com
- o Robin W Cochran
- o David Hupp - davidhupp@charter.net
- o Dale Hill - hilldale1@gmail.com
- o Chris Brun, Elmer Ward, Phil Wallin and Carrington Barrs all participated at one point

· Make It Happen

- o Support letters - group shared email addresses and the samples were shared; more support letters will prove more care and concern from the county
- o Letters to the Editor - speak from the heart, pick a few points to focus on, make them short and write the letters from the point of view as WHEN we get the park, not IF
- o Two stages: 1. Local support and 2. Targeting other areas of state with social media
- o We need to get the whole town behind it - local businesses end up sharing a lot of info with tourists and could advertise this park too
- o Dale Hill says there are basically four groups who use this area: 1. Rafters/Kayakers 2. Locals who like nature 3. Fishers and 4. Environmental Educators; by tapping into each of these groups to offer support and support letters, we might also be able to have them get funding sources from small constituent groups; What are these local groups? Teachers? Nature groups such as Friends of Trails? How do we keep them organized?
- o Partnering with other like-minded organizations
- o Newspaper stories to educate community
- o Extra money through grant applications, fundraising, networking with funders
- o Inviting specific groups to forums and to provide input - Downtown business association; Heights business association; City hall meetings; Support from Odell
- o Who will maintain the funding and marketing once this is developed as a park? Volunteers most likely. What is the outreach to get more volunteers?

· River

- o Restored areas are not available for recreation at this time
- o Kayakers have one egress 100 yards south of Falls

that this area is already over-utilized when waters are high for kayakers and all year round for hikers

- o "When there is water there are fish and kayakers" - busiest from December to March
- o Fishing access can be very dangerous - Pillar Hole as an example
- o At Iowa Drive there is a steep cliff and it is difficult to access the river except by rope for kayakers
- o Dee would be the best put-in for rafters, but there is a lot of private property that needs to be respected - Kayakers in group says that they try to abide by signs in order to respect launch access; Tribal members disagree stating that kayakers and rafters still put in on private property frequently
- o Tribal fishers have issues with the kayakers running the Falls when they are fishing; May to July is tribal fishing
- o All agree there should not be a boat ramp
- o There should remain a place to take out boats and kayaks before the Falls and to put back in at the Confluence
- o What happens with runoff? Will there be testing and maintaining water quality in order to limit damage?

· **Land**

- o Maintenance of the park is very important - this group has three adjacent landowners and one avid user of nature
- o Forest management requires funding and is very important, in addition to trails, access and maintenance; forest management could include logging the hills up to the side for one-time revenue source in order to put money back into the development
- o Disease and bug concern; concern about invasives
- o Near-term Visions: no over-development, preservation, do as little as possible with development, less work and maintenance over short and long-term
- o Long-term Visions: maintenance? Who cares for the park? How frequently? After storms? What is the cost? Will need a large budget.
- o County hopes for volunteers, community involvement, stewardship programs, adjacent landowners and corrections to take care of maintenance
- o Parks/county believe there will be a long-term need for bathrooms, but don't want to just develop up front for no reason
- o Some costs could be FIXED, but not all of them over time
- o One resident brings out one bag of trash per month - trash receptacles are needed
- o Does the operation need to bring in revenue? How to enforce this and avoid paying more taxes?
- o County sees this as a low maintenance park - won't need as much revenue; to be developed based on demand
- o Group recommends trail consolidation with less goat trails
- o Tribal fisheries group members state that there is always an impact, but we can control how we do it responsibly
- o Residents in Dee are experiencing RAPID changes and are fearful that if we give people an inch they will take a mile

· **Park Management**

- o Gate should stay so people won't drive in; but it is ugly and should be equipped with more secure lock that is difficult to cut; possibly could use the gate AS signage
- o Trails and signage should be minimal and authentic/natural; signage and interpretation would make the area feel less wild, but wouldn't necessarily take away; it's probably not necessary onsite at each interpretive area, but rather at the entrance
- o Signs may deteriorate
- o Possibly a sign at parking lot with map and historical information including habitat and geological
- o Elmer Ward - information is always helpful for diverse users; father signage is from the resource, the less people are likely to interpret and retain
- o Signage can be the most cost efficient way to educate people - group asks if this is supposed to be an educational site? Could tours/interpretive groups just post small signs with numbers on them and county would be responsible for maintaining a pamphlet that corresponds?
- o Loop trail is a great idea, although it will have a steep grade. One way trail is not a good idea because people will not abide
- o Suspension Bridge - met with much concern regarding structure, maintenance and engineering; another artificial addition; cost of repairs; more foot traffic on Iowa Drive trail; where would the access be and how intrusive?
- o Day Use Only - dogs on leash; no camping and no campfires
- o Warning signs for swimming and diving
- o Guardrail on cliff defeats purpose of sightseeing - we should consult risk management; development may open up liability vs. just leaving it natural
- o Toilets - yes at the trailhead, but we should wait and see what the use is to determine; if it might be necessary in the future we should build it into strategic plan now
- o Less "official" signage offsite for Punchbowl - just small signs; no signage for Iowa Drive
- o How will this be accessible online? On the county website?
- o Elmer Ward - potable water, pit toilets and garbage are pretty basic at parks, especially near parking lot

Notes from Feb. 10 Punch Bowl Forum

Group:

Chuck Gehling with HRSWC

Sam Doak – Dee resident, sdoak@me.com

Buck Parker – Odell resident buck.parker@sbcglobal.net

Catherine Loke – attended first forum as well, kayaker? catherine.s.loke@gmail.com

Tim & Ellen Heltzel – Dee neighbors close to Iowa drive, but Dee is second home.

timheltzel@comcast.net

eheltzel@hotmail.com

Linda Maddox,

Scott Baker – HRVPRD parcsprograms@gorge.net

Mikel Diwan (joined in on Park Management portion) mikel.diwan@co.hood-river.or.us

Park Management:

1. Interpretive signage – what's the take on it? Natural and social history, geology, habitat, stewardship of area and park information and rules, education – giving an opportunity to tell the story of Punch Bowl Falls. Why this place is special. Indian fishing area then and now.

Scott Baker – Signage at the lookout would detract from the place, Just a good place to be.

Chuck – Put the sign back near parking, entrance area or more obscure area so the dynamic spots are not compromised.

Linda – Just signage at the parking lot.

Take away – No signage at the view sheds. Signage meant to enhance the area and promote stewardship.

2. What about restrooms and garbage?

Tim – restroom – not yet.

Scott – Seasonal port-a-potty for now, see how much it is used and then go from there with the longer term goal of getting a CXT type later.

Chuck – manage it based on reality.

Take away – Something needs to be there. A portable, non-permanent type in the beginning with the plan of something permanent down the line – budget for this.

3. Entrance – Leave the gate.

4. Safety and minimizing accidents. This falls in with signage. Information Kiosk/ Rules and Regulations at the parking/gate area.

Catherine – signage at the gate.

Buck – are rocks a problem? Chuck answered yes, near the jumping area – they can fall on tribal fishing area but rock is fairly stable so not to much of a problem.

Catherine – nice to have some bolt in the rocks so EMS/Fire Dept can have easier time with rescues. **Michael** said that's pretty affordable.

Sign age for safety and other rules (eg. No fires, no overnight camping, dogs on leash, hour of operation – dawn

as if they were a done deal.

Take away – not too many signs as they get vandalized – especially the deeper into the park one goes as the public is not there to catch the perps.

5. Special Events – no.

Making it Happen:

How can we strengthen the support for a good grant application and make the application stronger?
Educate more folks and create more interest groups.
Grant ask is \$578K. This will be the 3rd attempt with OPRD

Buck – try to get in touch with the Lyons Club, the JC's. Get a group of volunteers to lead tours and build interest. Once a week in summer.

Scott – only have until April 1 so not time for tours in summer. Need letters of support soon. Also a long term commitment on behalf of the County. They need to write in a line item in their budget towards future maintenance of the Park. They are the applicant and have to show they have skin in the game. Lobby the County to do this. Talk to the County Commissioners.

Chuck – yes, not showing public support/county commitment these last few grant application cycles were grounds for rejection.

Tim – Get a petition going.

Buck – Need to know what the costs will be for maintenance, show that to the County, see what the County can commit to and put that in the application.

Polly - Proposing some type of group like Friends of Punch Bowl Park is one way to show support and public buy-in. Seed money.

Sam – what about crowd funding? Local donors? Demonstrates the Co. needs to buy into it too. We already have 550 interested people (survey).

Feb. 16 bring it up at BOC meeting.

Other sources of revenue – ODFW or LWCF

River:

(Ron and Dan ran this but they didn't pull as much information from as tell us what goes on here recreationally and said we could ask them questions. It would have been good if I saw their work sheet ahead of time to see what their guidelines were supposed to be).

Ron pointed out the one take out above the falls and said kayakers were okay with they way things are now - but rafters need more access and tend to make more impact. Dan – they drag their rafts over vegetation. Kayaker/Rafter difference – harder for rafters to manage their equipment due to size. Need roads for hauling. They will not get as much out of this park if it remains low profile.

Chuck – there is a less steep area for raft access across Punch Bowl road - up an private road. Could we get an alternative easement there for rafts?

Scott – Any discussion about River left for raft access. Ron: no. Scott: River left portage would be easy to do. Dee often not enough water.

Tim – Anyway an access easement could be purchased if we don't get the grant? Ron: yes, you can with WRC.

Chuck – WRC will sell with a conservation easement - but that is not an access easement. Access easement would likely lower the selling price and yo would need to know the seller was willing.

Dan - fishing use is broken up during different times of year. Spring Chinook at Punch Bowl and Winter steelhead at Iowa Dr. side.

Ron – Basically rafting will be on low end of priority as their need will be hard to accommodate if park remains primitive.

No one wants the road punched through for general vehicular access. Trail instead? Dan turn road into trail?

Chuck – must still keep it as a road for power line and fisheries access even though it's gated most of the time.

Scott – when it becomes a county park there will be more folks.

Land:

Trails – Keep them as they are or consolidate them? How to manage the land. Do people care about cleaning up after ice storms, controlling invasive species, bug issues (tree disease), etc.

I described the possibility of a short loop trail that Heather and I walked on Sunday 2/8.

Linda Maddox said yeas to extra trail and others concurred.

Foot Bridge from Punch Bowl to Iowa Drive portion?

Tim and Ellen said no tho this which prompted the discussion about more emphasis on the amenities to happen on the Punch Bowl portion of the park first anyway. We then talked about the fact that there is land available for eventual parking near Iowa Dr. further back in the woods a little to the east. This could be part of a longer term plan.

Sam – Iowa Dr. neighbors neighbors can have access if it becomes a public park, so the general public should be able to access it as well.

The good thing about parking further back in the woods is that it will take pressure off the end of Iowa Drive and divert the “crowd”.

Scott asked what is this land zoned in general and I told him Forest land.

Tim and Ellen – no overnight camping!

Take away on development – Develop west side (Punch Bowl road side) first. Don't have to plan for 'the most' in the beginning. Gradual approach. See what works. Overall yes on consolidation of trails.

Heather put in that we can build a wild, natural place into the plan that we submit in the OPRD grant.

Elizabeth asked what is the criteria for the OPRD grant?

Scott – scoring is based on recreational opportunities and amenities. LGGP is about promoting outdoor

last time but it didn't tell the story of public buy-in, or have a skin in the game commitment from the County or a line item for yearly maintenance in the County budget.

Scott also said that the use of this particular park changes throughout the year (doesn't necessarily close down in the winter like Tucker). There are also different grants we could go for – LWCF.

Linda – talk to BOC Commissioners to encourage County to support park maintenance. Work up a proposed budget for maintenance.

Kick starter funding.

Chuck – will retract his bias for no picnic table if that helps with the OPRD grant!



Phone: (503) 684-8168
1-800-783-6818
Fax: (503) 684-9158
www.nwforestryservices.com

11825 SW Greenburg Road, Suite 200, Tigard, Oregon 97223-6466

Date: March 5, 2015

To: Josh Kling
Assistant Program Director
Western Rivers Conservancy

Heather Staten
Executive Director
Hood River Valley Residents Committee

From: Jerry Witler, ACF
Forester
Northwest Forestry Services

Subject: Beetle-Killed Douglas-fir Trees on Punch Bowl Property

This letter summarizes my findings and recommendations related to the beetle-killed and other dead trees on the Punch Bowl property. It lays out a broad outline of my approach to managing the property and is not intended to be a detailed plan. I examined the property yesterday, March 4, 2015. I was accompanied by Heather Staten. Most of the dead trees are near the north end of the area between the East and West Forks of Hood River.

Background Information: The following information about the Douglas-fir bark beetle will help in understanding my conclusions and recommendations. The beetles are endemic in Douglas-fir stands and generally are not a threat to healthy trees. They are attracted to trees that are weakened by fire, drought, or disease, as well as to logging slash, stumps, and other down wood. When a lot of such material is available, their population expands rapidly, and subsequent generations attack surrounding healthy trees. As more trees are killed, the growing population is forced to attack increasingly healthier trees. The population then declines.

Outbreak cycles generally last two to four years. Some outbreaks have lasted longer, and these outbreaks usually are associated with drought conditions. The current cycle in the Hood River Valley apparently began after an ice storm in January 2012. The storm left lots of down wood, which was populated the following spring and summer by the beetles.

The beetles usually have only one generation per year. In most cases, the adults overwinter under the bark and emerge between mid-April and early June, depending upon location and weather. They likely will emerge early this year due to the mild winter. The beetles then attack trees in spring and early summer. The female beetles construct egg galleries, or tunnels, in the sapwood. The eggs hatch in one to three weeks. The newly hatched larvae mine outwards from the egg gallery and usually develop into adults before winter. The beetles sometimes overwinter as larvae. In this case, the larvae complete their development in spring and early summer and then emerge as adults in mid-summer.

Confirmation of Cause of Death: Because the beetles generally kill only weakened trees, I needed to determine whether some other agent was killing the trees and the beetles merely were colonizing trees that were already dead or dying. Trees with root disease are a particularly attractive target for the beetles. I checked the roots of five dead and dying trees. All five had evidence of bark beetle attack, and none had any evidence of root disease. I did find one fallen tree that appeared to have died due to a root disease. Like the beetle, root diseases are endemic to Douglas-fir stands. However, disease does not appear to be the cause of the mortality. It almost certainly is due to the bark beetles.

Several trees also have died east of the East Fork of Hood River, north of Iowa Street. I found two dead trees that may have been killed by beetles, but in general, beetles do not appear to be the cause of mortality in this area. Several trees have fallen over, and their root systems do not appear to have penetrated very deeply into the soils. The soils appear to be wet, and the water table appears to be high in spots. A high water table appears to be the major cause of mortality in this area.

Control Measures for the Bark Beetle: The immediate problem is the dead trees and down wood that contain bark beetles, especially in the area between the East and West Forks of Hood River. The beetles will emerge from this material in the next month or so and go on to attack new trees. If possible, these trees and down wood should be removed before they emerge. Besides being a breeding ground for the beetles, the dead and down material represents a significant fire hazard.

The best long-term control for bark beetles is to maintain a healthy stand. Attacks are most successful on trees that are mature or over-mature, largest in diameter, and in densely stocked stands. Smaller trees are susceptible at very high stand densities. Density is high in much of the area that is being attacked on the Punch Bowl property. Live crown on most of the trees covers only 20 to 30 percent of the length of the stem. A low crown ratio indicates that trees are not growing vigorously. Crown ratio should be 40 percent or higher. Density needs to be reduced in order to allow the crowns to expand and the trees to grow more vigorously. After thinning, time is needed before stand vigor improves significantly. Average crown ratios may not reach 40 percent for 10 years or more.

Many of the smaller trees outside of the attack area have died or are dying due to suppression from the larger trees. These trees constitute a fire hazard, as well as a safety hazard for people in the forest. They can be removed as part of a thinning operation.

Chemical treatments that disrupt aggregation of the beetles are available. These chemicals do not allow the beetles to build up enough population to successfully attack healthy trees. However, they generally are effective only for protecting individual trees or small groups of trees. Their use on the Punch Bowl property would not be practical.

Recommendations:

- (1) Remove dead and dying trees and down wood in the area of the beetle outbreak as soon as possible. The volume in dead trees may be sufficient to cover most or all of the cost of removal.

If this material is not removed before most or all of the beetles emerge, several more healthy trees likely will be killed this spring and summer. Eventually, the outbreak will subside, but a substantial portion of the stand likely will have been damaged by then.

- (2) In the areas adjacent to the killed trees, thin the trees to improve stand health and vigor. Remove small trees that have died or that will die soon due to suppression from larger trees. Larger trees with damage or poor vigor also should be removed. The result will be a healthier, more vigorous stand that is less susceptible to beetle attack. Any large accumulations of down wood in this area also should be removed. The revenue from the thinning should help offset the cost of removing dead and dying trees. Trees should be marked by a forester prior to thinning in order to ensure that the proper trees are removed.

Thinning is a long-term strategy. It likely will have little effect on the current outbreak. However, it will help protect the stand in future outbreaks.

- (3) Replant any large openings created by the timber harvest. Trees can be planted in spring, 2016. Douglas-fir is the dominant native tree species on the site and the most desirable tree for replanting.
- (4) On the east side of the East Fork of Hood River, remove dead trees and down wood. Doing so will help prevent a beetle outbreak in this area as well as reduce fire hazard. Such an operation will be costly, with little return. Cost could run as high as \$1,000 per acre, depending on the type and thoroughness of the treatment.
- (5) Heather Staten mentioned an interest in enhancing oak habitat in the area east of the East Fork of Hood River. Restoration would consist of thinning the areas where oak stocking is dense in order to allow space for the remaining oaks to fully develop. In addition, it would include removal of large conifers that are overtopping the oaks. This operation also would not generate enough revenue to pay for its cost.