

# Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

February 5, 2014

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Agenda Item: 11a

Information

Topic: Gorge State Parks Comprehensive Plan

Presented by: Jaime English

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## **Background:**

OPRD has been working to update the 1994 Master Plan for Oregon State parks in the Columbia River Gorge. In the time since the Parks Commission was last updated in November, an existing conditions inventory and planning analysis have been completed and were presented at a second round of public meetings on January 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. At these meetings, community members and park staff discussed the values and strategies needed to guide the planning and management efforts for the Oregon State Parks in the Gorge over the next 12 years.

## **Existing Conditions:**

Identifying and assessing the existing conditions of its parks allows the department to better understand opportunities and constraints for the future management of our park system. Existing conditions were inventoried for natural resources, cultural resources, visitor experience, facilities conditions, and regional context.

The following existing conditions diagrams are attached:

1. Context and Existing Conditions.
2. Natural Resource Habitats Inventory.
3. Cultural Resource Inventory.

## **Planning Analysis:**

Many park improvements identified in our 1994 plan are relevant today, however there are key issues that the updated plan will address.

The planning will take into consideration the following:

- The Historic Columbia River Highway Trail development as it relates to other OPRD park lands, visitors, and management.
- Aging facilities most in need of maintenance or significant renovation.
- Advances in natural resource assessment and management practices.
- Limited capital money for improvements.
- An increase in overall visitation to the Columbia Gorge.
- Visitors' desire for more access to natural areas and recreation in the Gorge.
- Changing demographics of visitors.
- Evolving recreation opportunities and local economics.
- Technological innovations.
- Limited opportunity for increasing park staff.

The newest park unit in the system is the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail which is quickly becoming one of the premier destinations among the properties that we manage. We are

fortunate to be working with an engaged advisory board that is, with the support of ODOT, leading the planning and funding efforts for this project. The stretches of the old highway that have been reconnected for bike and pedestrian recreation are incredibly popular. Our trailheads and associated parking are already very well used. As the trail connection project continues, we will learn more about the demand for facilities needed to support the recreation activity along the trail as well as the maintenance and programs required to provide an excellent visitor experience.

### **The Final Plan:**

Overall the plan for the Oregon State Parks in the Columbia River Gorge will address the needs and challenges faced by OPRD. It will propose solutions and identify realistic opportunities, and then prioritize the staff time and budgets for the implementation of projects identified. This will guide park management over the next 12 years.

The complete updated plan will:

- Summarize the existing conditions of OPRD parks, programs, recreation activities, and park resources.
- Analyze of the opportunities, needs, and constraints for OPRD parks, programs recreation activities and park resources.
- Describe the public involvement process and identify guiding values and benefits for the parks.
- Recommend strategies for the East and West park management units and park specific enhancements.
- Identify priorities for budget and phasing of identified enhancements and programs including long term maintenance needs and staffing.

### **Next Steps:**

Upcoming public meetings:

Meeting III. Concept Alternatives - March 2014

Meeting IV. Draft Comprehensive Plan Review - June 2014

Presentati9on for Commission Adoption in September 2014

**Prior Action by Commission:** Updates on the planning process were given at the September 2013, and November 2013 commission meetings.

**Action Requested:** none

### **Attachments:**

1. Context & Existing Conditions.
2. Natural Resource Habitats Inventory.
3. Cultural Resource Inventory.

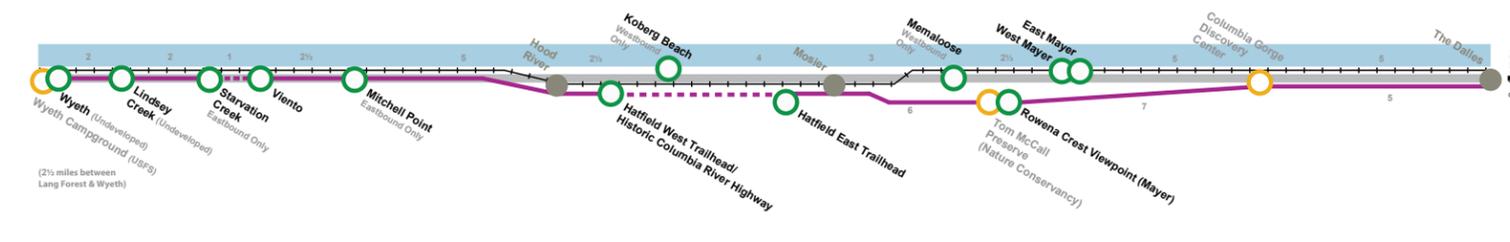
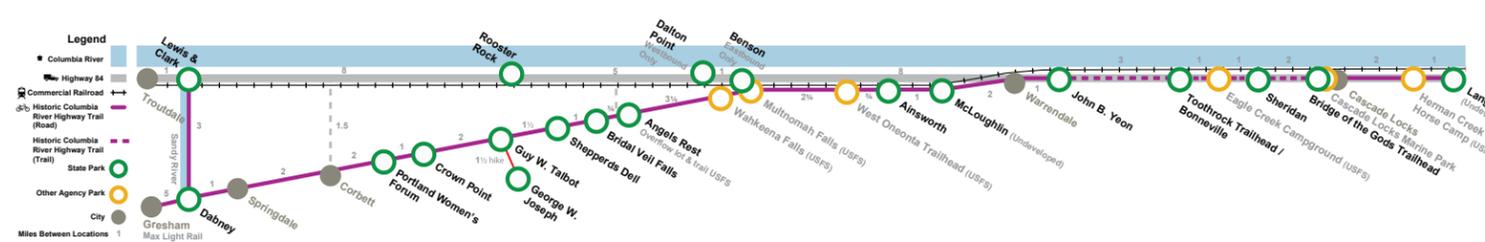
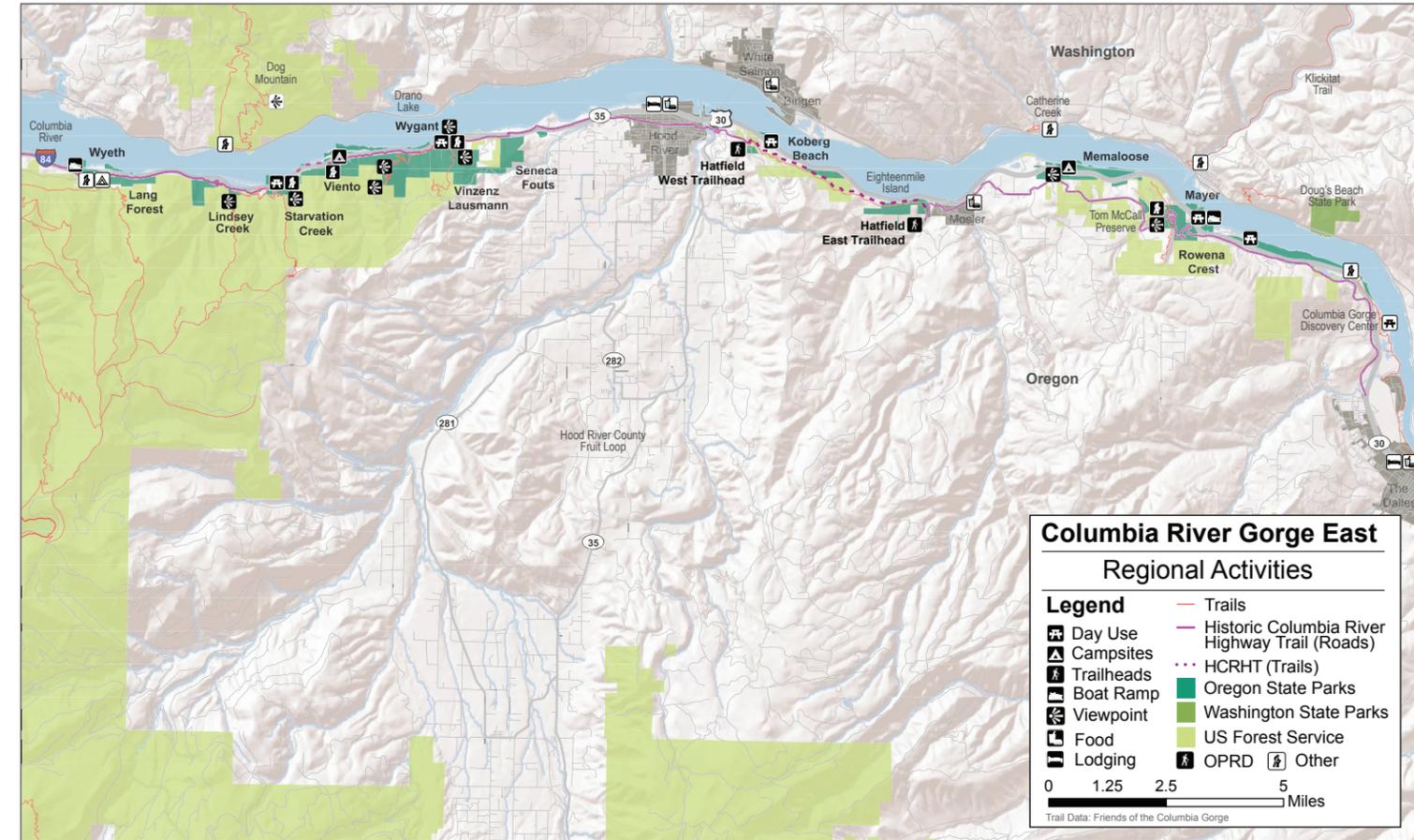
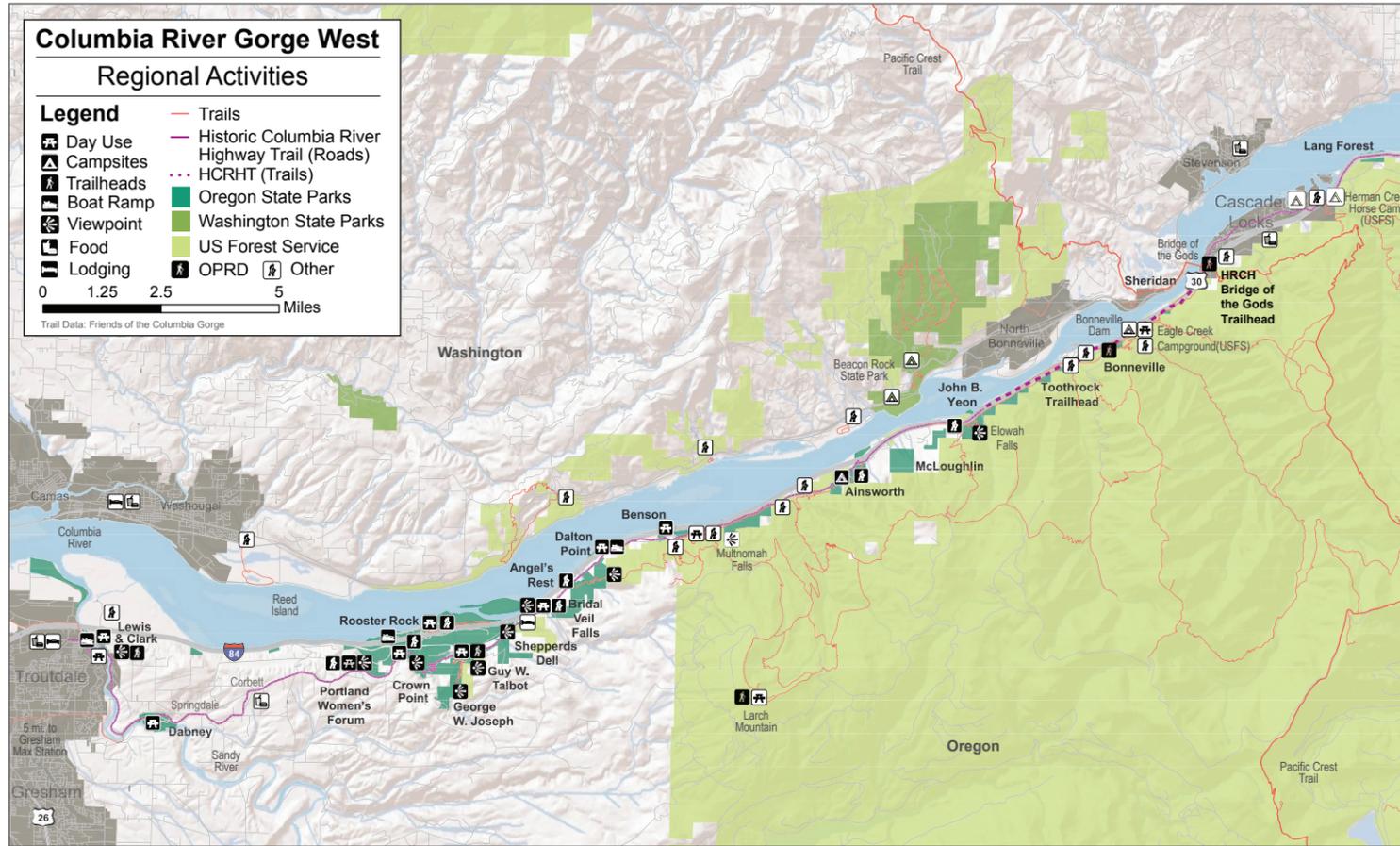
**Prepared by:** Jaime English



# Columbia River Gorge Oregon State Parks Plan



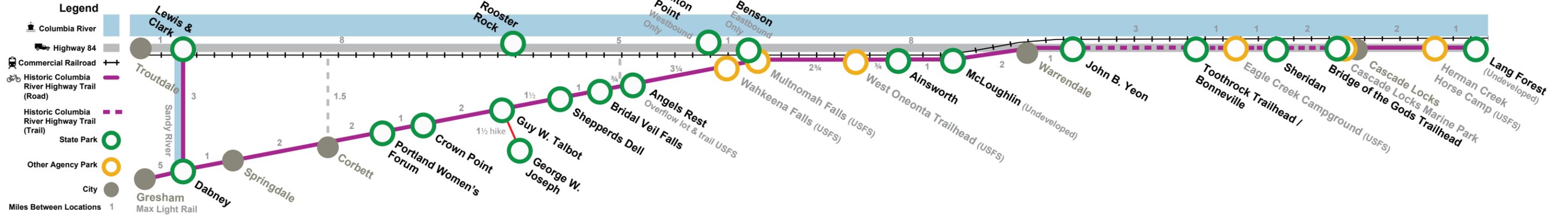
# Understanding Context & Existing Conditions



# Columbia River Gorge Oregon State Parks Plan

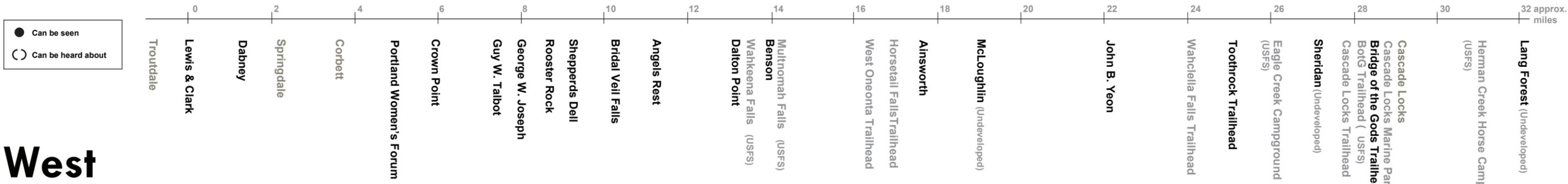


# Cultural Resources Inventory



Cultural Resources related to...

Cultural Resource	Troutdale	Lewis & Clark	Dabney	Springdale	Corbett	Portland Women's Forum	Crown Point	Guy W. Talbot	George W. Joseph	Rooster Rock	Shepperds Dell	Bridal Veil Falls	Angels Rest	Dalton Point	Wahkeena Falls (USFS)	Multnomah Falls (USFS)	Benson	Wahkeena Falls (USFS)	Multnomah Falls (USFS)	West Oneonta Trailhead	Ainsworth	McLoughlin (Undeveloped)	Warrendale	John B. Yeon	Wahculla Falls Trailhead	Toothrock Trailhead	Eagle Creek Campground (USFS)	Sheridan (Undeveloped)	Bridge of the Gods Trailhead	Cascade Locks Trailhead	Cascade Locks Marine Park	Herman Creek Horse Camp (USFS)	Lang Forest (Undeveloped)			
Native American History																																				
Lewis and Clark Expedition	( )																																			
Euro-American Settlement						( )																														
19th Century Railroads and Industry																																				
Historic Columbia River Highway																																				
Civilian Conservation Corps																																				
Post-1930s Development																																				

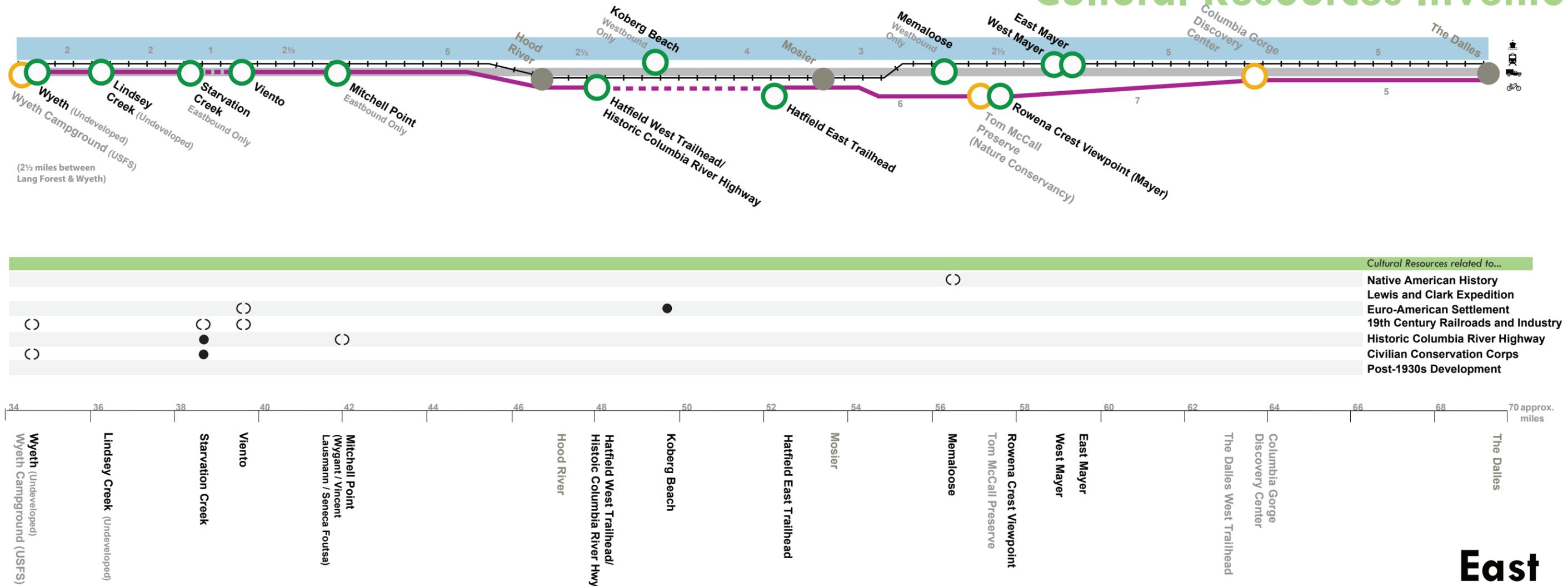


**West**

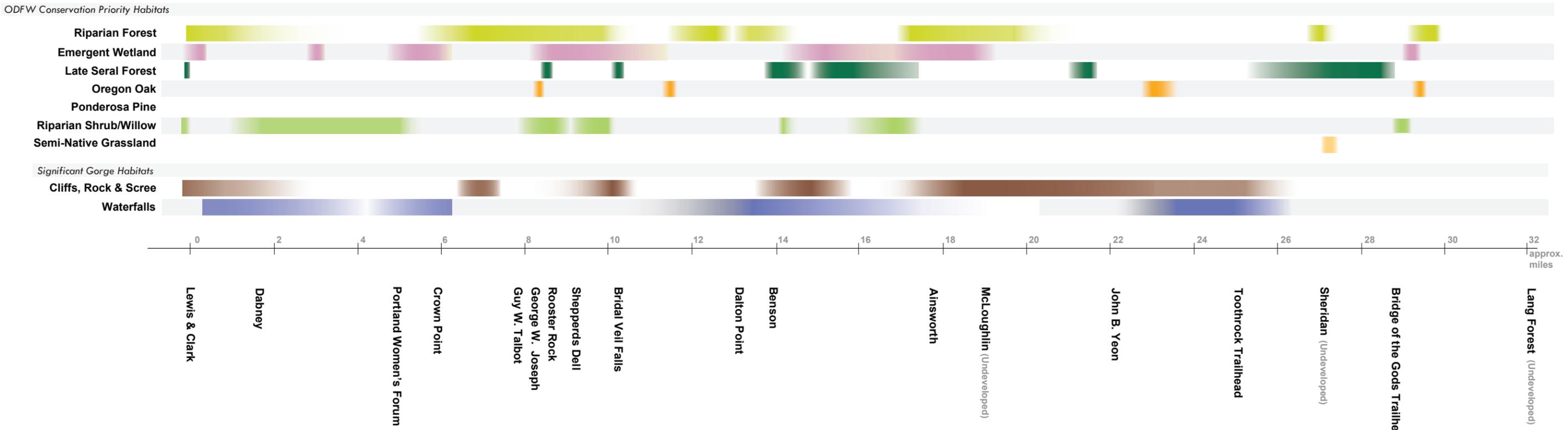
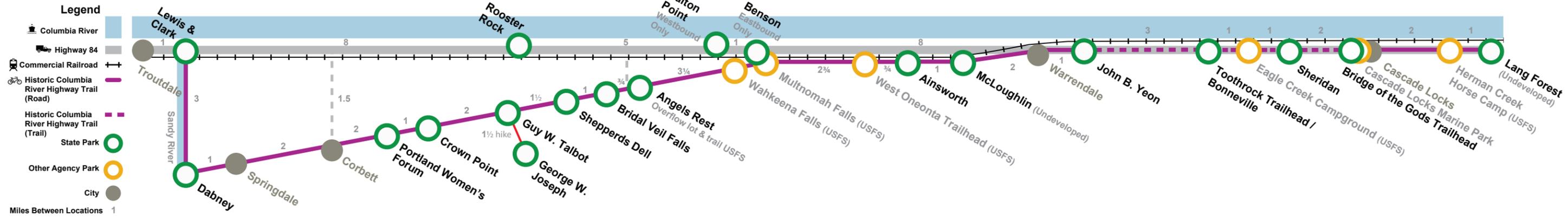
# Columbia River Gorge Oregon State Parks Plan



# Cultural Resources Inventory



# State of Oregon Priority Habitats

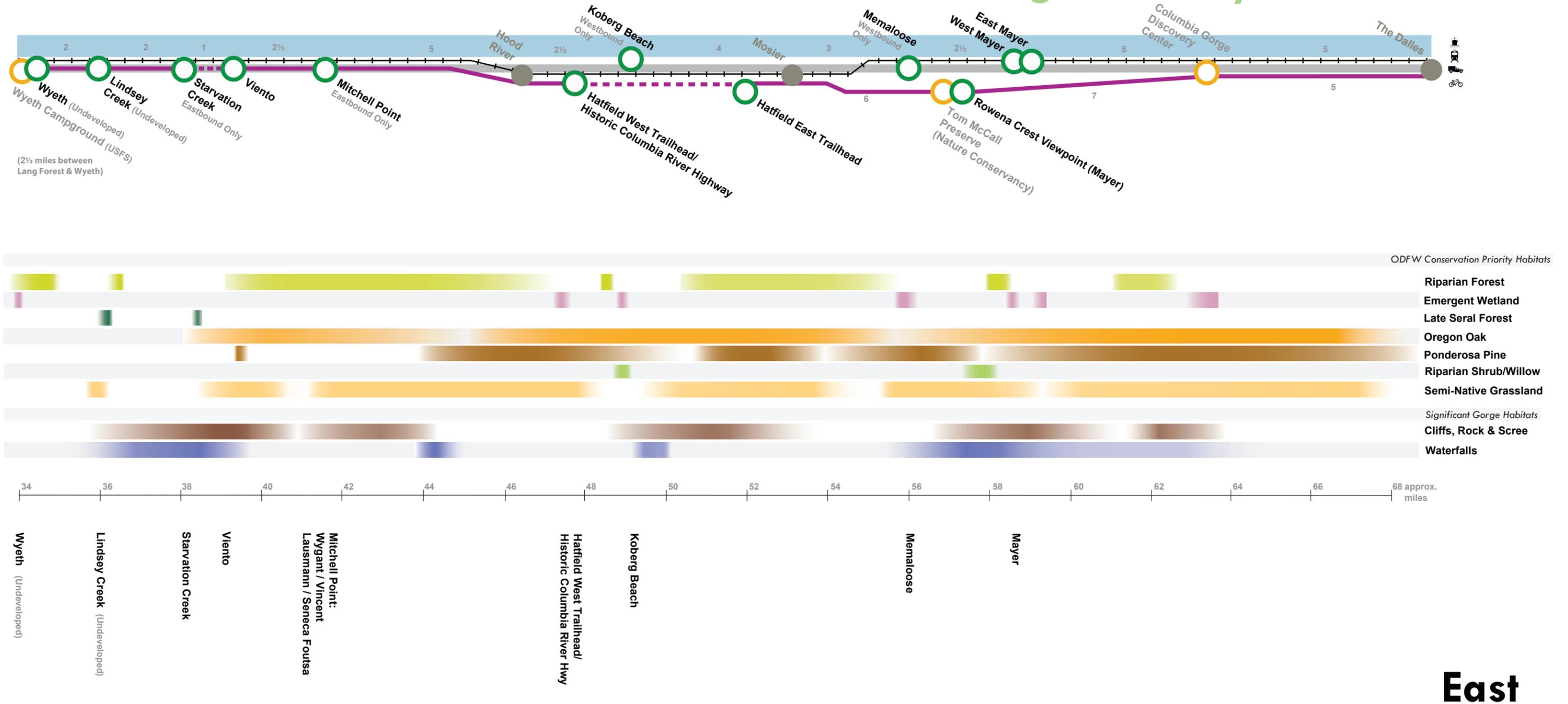


West

# Columbia River Gorge Oregon State Parks Plan



# State of Oregon Priority Habitats



## Columbia River Gorge Oregon State Parks Plan



## Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

February 5, 2014

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Agenda Item: 11b

Information

Topic: Historic Columbia River Highway Trail

Presented by: Wayne Stewart  
Chair, Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee

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The Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee (HCRHAC) was created by the Oregon Legislature (ORS 366.550). HCRHAC makes recommendations to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) concerning the historic highway. Membership includes representatives from ODOT, OPRD, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Oregon Tourism Commission. Six private citizens are on the committee, two from each of the three counties (Multnomah, Hood River and Wasco) – one appointed by the governor and one appointed by each county.

The Historic Columbia River Highway Trail Advisory Committee will provide an update to the Commission on engineering, construction, and funding for the last ten miles of the trail being developed.

**Prior Action by Commission:**

**Action Requested:** None

**Attachments:** None

**Prepared by:** Jaime English

# Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

February 5, 2014

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Agenda Item: 11c

Action

Topic: Brian Booth State Park Comprehensive Plan

Presented by: Ron Campbell

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## Background

In early December OPRD staff held public meetings to discuss the draft Plan for Brian Booth State Park, completing the third phase of public involvement leading to presentation of the draft Plan to the Commission. As discussed at the last Commission meeting, three geographic sub-areas of Brian Booth State Park are named in the Plan - Ona Beach, Beaver Creek Natural Area and Ona Hills – and the proposed campground will be named after Chester Armstrong.

## Summary of Plan Proposals

At Ona Beach, the picnic area will be enhanced with a new restroom building, drinking fountain, and potentially with the addition of a picnic shelter. Areas chronically flooded will be restored to wetland plant communities coupled with removal of damaged walkways, and the parking lot will be rehabilitated and reconfigured with improved circulation. The proposed highway underpass trail from Ona Hills will connect with the beach near the west end of the existing trail bridge that crosses Beaver Creek to the beach from the picnic area.

In Beaver Creek Natural Area, the water trail will be enhanced with improvements at both access points. A new kayak launch at the boating access next to the highway will prevent conflicts between motor and non-motor boating, and a new launch near the Nature Center will replace the existing temporary launch. The Nature Center's interior space will be improved, and future extension facilities near the Center, at the existing pole barn and home site, will expand the Nature Center's educational functions. Viewing structures will enhance wildlife viewing at points along the marsh edge. The Department continues to seek ways to improve access to the south Beaver Creek trails, by locating a site for a small south trailhead parking area, and by exploring feasible alignments for a trail connection across the marsh from the Nature Center. A boardwalk trail through the marsh continues to be a popular idea to enhance visitor experience opportunities, but needs much more study to assess its feasibility and optimal location.

Most of the new development will be in the area now called Ona Hills. The proposed campground totaling 164 sites will include traditional drive-in sites that cater to campers using tents and small self-contained RVs and trailers without utility hook-ups, areas with walk-in tent sites, camper cabins, a small equine camp, a hiker biker camp and a few remote Adirondack campsites. A central program area will offer evening programs and a gathering shelter for Junior Rangers. Restrooms with showers will be available short distances from campgrounds, and group shelters will enhance opportunities for group gatherings. About 20 miles of trails offering hiking, biking and horseback riding opportunities in the Ona Hills will add to the existing 5 miles of hiking trails in Beaver Creek Natural Area. The Department continues to explore ways to connect the Ona Hills and Beaver Creek NA trail systems with additional land purchase or easement. Conversion of the ODOT office and maintenance complex to OPRD's administration facilities will provide administrative support for the park and the larger Coast Region.

Development will be carefully designed around the natural resource values, habitat preservation

and restoration opportunities, taking advantage of suitable topography and existing infrastructure. The Plan identifies numerous habitat protection and restoration opportunities, with particular emphasis on designating habitat reserves for key areas, controlling invasive weeds and managing the former commercial forest plantations for healthy forest succession.

### **Key Issues Raised in Public Meetings**

While comments on the draft Plan have mostly been supportive, some concerns were raised about the locations of the proposed park road and central campground. Suitable areas for park facilities, on the gently sloping high ground of Ona Hills, is limited and mostly fragmented by steep topography, natural drainages and sensitive natural resources. In locating facilities, consideration must also be given to distances from existing infrastructure and management feasibility. The central campground location is the largest suitable area at a reasonable distance from existing infrastructure, administrative functions and the park entrance.

Comments from a few land owners in the nearby, mostly undeveloped Seal Rock neighborhood raised concerns about potential trespass, visibility of the campground, noise from the park road and campground, and air pollution from campfires. In response, staff made adjustments to the road and campground access alignments to widen forested buffer widths between park development and the neighborhood. The relationship of the park road and main campground to the neighborhood is illustrated by Figure 9.4 Elevation and Distance Profiles 5 and 6.

Comments from local Watershed Council staff recommended various conservative measures, including increased buffering between the marsh and visitor facilities. The comments addressed potential effects of recreation development and activity on wildlife values along the marsh, floodplain and adjacent hillside forest, and potential impacts of runoff and subsurface sewage effluent disposal on marsh water quality. The concerns focus mainly on areas of the central campground that are closest to the marsh, and two hiking trails from the campground that will reach to destination points at the marsh edge. The roads, campground facilities and drainfields are well above applicable setback standards, and great care has been taken to limit upland trail access from the campground to the marsh floodplain to only a couple of locations. OPRD's own Stewardship staff helped with the park design, including the protection of key areas needed to support the life cycles and movement of wildlife, as illustrated by Figure 9.2. To help address the concerns, staff made some adjustments in facility locations in the part of the campground closest to marsh to widen the forest buffer. The relationships of these facilities to the marsh are illustrated by Figure 9.4 Elevation and Distance Profiles 1, 2 and 3.

### **Next Steps in the Planning Process**

On January 29 staff will brief the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners on the draft Plan. Staff will report any significant comments from the County Board at the Commission meeting February 5. With the Commission's concurrence, staff will proceed with the final phase of Plan development involving the rule hearing process and review by Lincoln County Planning staff for compatibility with local zoning.

**Action Requested:** Staff requests Commission approval of the draft Plan, allowing staff to move forward with the state rule hearing and county land use review that lead to adoption of Plan.

**Prior Action by Commission:** No previous action. The Commission was last updated on the planning process in November 2013.

**Attachments:** Brian Booth State Park Comprehensive Plan – January 2014 Draft

**Prepared by:** Ron Campbell