

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

February 27, 2025

Project# 27003.038

To: Sandra Hikari, Oregon Department of Transportation
Doug Decker, Oregon Solutions

From: Nick Gross, Max Heller, Cameron Bennett, and Hermanus Steyn, P.E.; Kittelson & Associates

CC: Project Planning Steering Committee

RE: Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project - Potential Opportunity Sites

Purpose

This memorandum summarizes the technical analyses performed as part of Task 6 *Site Criteria & Preliminary Site Screening* and presents five (5) Potential Opportunity Sites identified as candidates for the development of the relocated Mt. Hood Rest Area. The goal of this document is to present the Potential Opportunity Sites and their attributes to guide technical conversations regarding Most Promising Site Alternative selection (future Task 7).

This memorandum is informed by other deliverables developed under this *Project Planning* phase of the Mt Hood Rest Area Relocation project, including:

- Draft Purpose and Need Statement (Task 3, Reference 1)
- Project Charter (Task 4, Reference 2)
- Public Involvement Plan (Task 5, Reference 3)
- Site Selection Evaluation Criteria Memorandum (Task 6.1, Reference 4)
- Preliminary Cultural Review & Site Screening (Task 6.1, Reference 5)
- Preliminary Environmental (HazMat) Review & Site Screening (Task 6.3, Reference 6)
- Preliminary Natural Resource Review & Site Screening (Task 6.4, Reference 7)

The site selection process described in this memorandum has also been influenced through design coordination activities (Task 2) with the Project Management Team (PMT) and Steering Committee, the project Draft Purpose and Need (Task 3), and feedback received from the public and small-group meetings (Task 5).

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Glossary of Terms

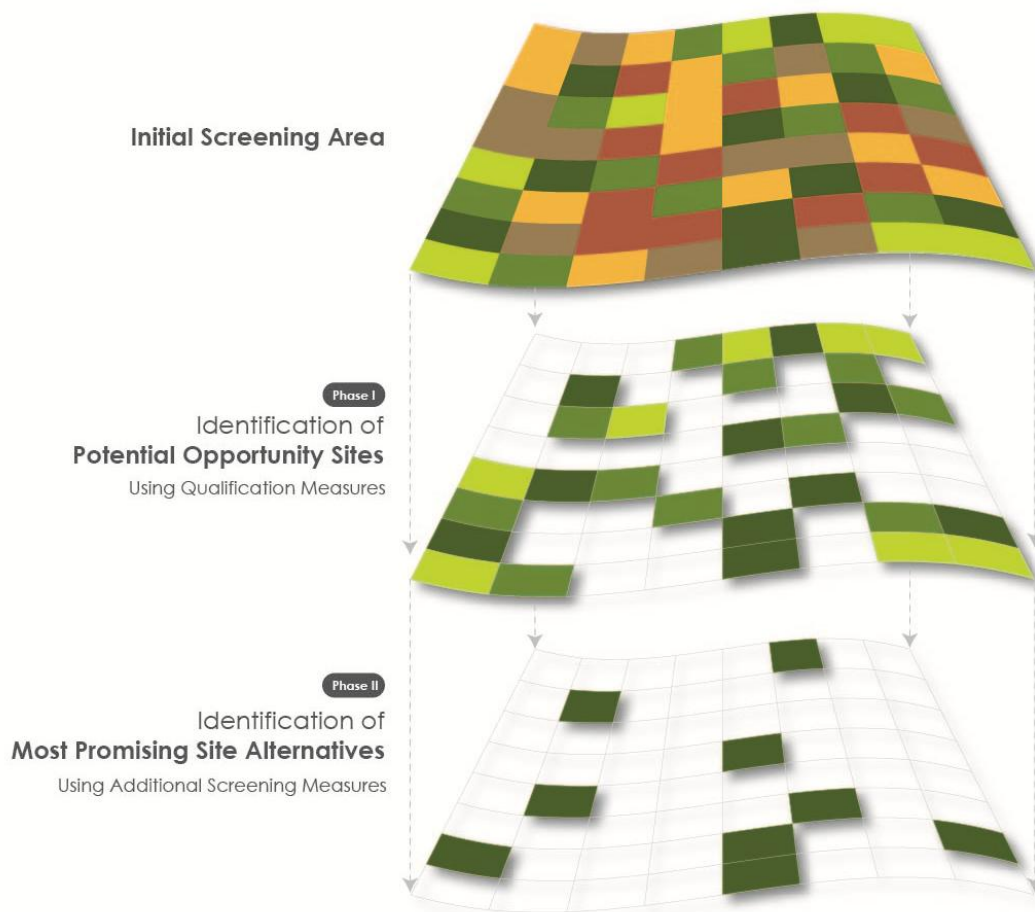
- **Initial Screening Area** – The section of the U.S. 26 corridor (Rhododendron to the Warm Springs Reservation) to be considered for rest area relocation, identified by the PMT and Steering Committee
- **Qualification Measures** – Phase I Performance Measures, used to identify Potential Opportunity Sites, evaluated with binary pass/fail criteria
- **Additional Screening Measures** – Phase II Performance Measures, used to identify Most Promising Site Alternatives, evaluation strategies to be determined at a later date
- **Potential Opportunity Sites** – Viable sites for rest area relocation within the Initial Screening Area selected during Phase I of the process through the use of Qualification Measures
- **Most Promising Site Alternative(s)** – Preferred site(s) selected from Potential Opportunity Sites during Phase II of the site selection process through the use of Additional Screening Measures

Methodology

As described in the *Site Selection Evaluation Criteria* memorandum and shown in Figure 1, the site selection process for the Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project will occur in two phases.

- **Phase I:** Application of "Qualification Measures" to identify "Potential Opportunity Sites." Phase I evaluates landscape, natural, and built environment characteristics to identify sites that are suitable for further consideration on the basis of engineering, safety, operational, or geometric features. Qualification Measures are applied in a binary "pass/fail" manner.
- **Phase II:** Application of "Additional Screening Measures" to identify "Most Promising Site Alternatives." Phase II will assess the Potential Opportunity Sites identified in Phase I based on a range of preferred rest area attributes and conditions, including an assessment of each site's respective benefits and tradeoffs. The result will be the selection of one or more Most Promising Site Alternative(s).

Figure 1: Site Selection Methodology



The process used to develop and evaluate Phase I Qualification Measures is discussed at-length in the previous *Site Selection Evaluation Criteria* memorandum. This memorandum describes the outcomes of that Phase I process. Table 1 summarizes the Phase I Qualification Measures and pass/fail criteria as they were applied to identify the Potential Opportunity Sites presented in this memorandum.

Table 1: Phase I Qualification Measures

Phase I Qualification Measures		Scoring Scale	
		Pass	Fail
Site Quality (Features)	Minimum site footprint	Area meeting other Qualification Measures is larger than the minimum site footprint	Area meeting other Qualification Measures is smaller than the minimum site footprint
	Suitable topography for construction	Contiguous area with an average terrain grade of 3% or less	Slopes steeper than 5% grade
	Suitable soils for construction ¹	No present water body or wetland	Water body or wetland present
	Avalanche hazard	Not located where avalanches can start, run, or stop	Located where avalanches can start, run, or stop
Utilities Available	Water, power, gas, internet, and telephone	Water, electricity, internet, and telephone coverage provision possible	Site location precludes access to one or more utilities
	Wastewater disposal	On-site wastewater disposal or municipal wastewater system tie-in is feasible	No feasible option for on-site wastewater disposal or municipal wastewater system tie-in
Site Spacing	Spacing to other rest areas and alternative stopping opportunities	<i>Current rest area spacing along the U.S. 26 corridor and other typical travel paths that carry travelers over Mt. Hood is significantly greater than recommended in AASHTO guidance (Reference 8). Any site located in the Initial Study Area will improve upon this, making this criterion inapplicable for Phase I screening. Spacing to alternative stopping opportunities for passenger and freight vehicles will be assessed as part of Phase II.</i>	
Corridor Geometry	Sight distance	Sight distance to the rest area access point is 1,000 feet or greater from both directions	Sight distance to the rest area access point is less than 1,000 feet from either direction
	Roadway grade	Average grade is 4% or less over a distance of at least 1,000 feet	Average grade is more than 4% over a distance of at least 1,000 feet.
Potential Environmental Impacts	Wildlife and habitat	No "Fail" criteria related to wildlife and habitat impact and compliance	Sites where development would be illegal , or regulatory compliance would be challenging and/or prohibitively expensive , such as in designated wilderness areas, "Wild" rivers, and/or Priority Wildlife Connectivity Areas
	Cultural, historical, archeological resources	No "Fail" criteria related to cultural, historical, archeological resources impact and compliance	Conflicts relating to cultural, historical, archeological resources are likely to be prohibitively challenging and/or expensive
	Hazardous materials (HazMat)	No "Fail" criteria related to HazMat mitigation and compliance	Regulatory compliance would be prohibitively challenging and/or expensive
Right-of-Way Opportunities	Approval by landowner/manager	Public land available for rest area development or private land with willing seller, as determined by PMT meeting(s) with pertinent parties	Landowner/manager not willing to allow development
Community Acceptance	Planned and in-process development	No planned and in-process development	Planned and in-process development precluding rest area development

¹ Detailed geotechnical investigation of prospective sites is expected to occur in a later *Preliminary and Intermediate Design* phase of the project.

DESIGN COORDINATION AND SMALL-GROUP MEETINGS

Preliminary findings from Phase I have been presented to the project Steering Committee, a Technical Workshop with Clackamas County, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Oregon Travel Information Council (OTIC) staff; and the Oregon Solutions Team². Further small-group coordination meetings have been conducted with the Clackamas County Tourism and Development Council, Government Camp Community Planning Organization (CPO), Oregon Trucking Association (OTA), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Some of the specific feedback received in these meetings has influenced the process used to select and evaluate *Potential Opportunity Sites*, including the following:

- ODOT maintenance yards (located near mileposts 54.2, 57.8, and 71.4) will not be made available for redevelopment into a rest area.
- Hesitance to support sites at existing Sno-Parks for redevelopment into a future rest area due to the strong public support for their continued existence as accessible and affordable recreational destinations.
- Hesitance to relocate the rest area near recreational access opportunities, citing capacity and operational issues expected to arise from dual use.
- Because the future rest area is intended to cater primarily to long-distance travelers between the Willamette Valley and Central Oregon, positioning the site on the east side of Government Camp may be preferred. Recreational users, primarily those coming from the Portland area, are more likely to have their stopping opportunity needs met at the ends of their shorter trips. Locating the rest area on the east side of the pass is also preferred due to its increased spacing from Portland.
- Designated wilderness areas and areas around rivers with a “wild” designation will be extremely difficult to develop on, requiring changes to land designations and associated public process. As such these areas were excluded from consideration as Potential Opportunity Sites.

Future conversations with project teams and other interested parties will support Phase II of the screening process. Additional Screening Measures and other site-specific considerations will be discussed with the Steering Committee, Technical Workshop participants, and interested parties—including the USFS and Confederated Tribes of Warm Spring, Siletz, Grand Ronde and Yakima—in order to inform the second phase of technical evaluation. The results of that process will be presented in a future memorandum under *Task 7 Most Promising Site Alternatives*.

² Each respective project team is described in the *Project Charter* memorandum.

PUBLIC INPUT

The first public survey associated with the project Online Open House has received over 1,250 responses. In addition, an open house and pop-up event were held in Government Camp on January 10, 2025; more than 100 participants and local residents were engaged at these events. The consultant team is actively working to process these comments. Initial findings will be presented at the Steering Committee meeting on January 30, 2025, and results will be summarized in the final edition of this memorandum. Input pertaining to the development and application of Additional Screening Measures may result in modifications to the content contained in the "Potential Opportunity Sites" section; these changes will be clearly tracked in a redlined version of the memorandum.

GEOSPATIAL ANALYSIS

Geospatial data describing each Phase I Qualification Measure was uploaded (when existing) or developed (when not existing, in the case of roadway geometry Measures) in a Geographic Information System (GIS) environment, where each Qualification Measure was depicted on one layer. These parameters were not scored or weighted against one-another in any way. Layers were then overlain on a single map, allowing analysts to visually identify sites which met all the Phase I Qualification Measures. Sites which clearly fulfilled all of the mapped Qualification Measures were noted for further assessment. Some of these viable sites were then removed from consideration on a case-by-case basis, as described in the "Other Possible Sites Considered" section of this document. The remaining sites were then further evaluated as Potential Opportunity Sites.

Appendix A includes the GIS data for each site.

UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Conversations with USFS technical staff are ongoing to determine the processes to provide utility access (electrical, water, wastewater, internet, and cell coverage) at the future rest area site. It is currently unknown if this will be a determining factor in site selection.

Ready tie-in to existing drinking water and wastewater systems may be possible for sites in the vicinity of Government Camp but may be more challenging. Like most existing rest areas in Oregon, the future rest area will likely require on-site well water and septic wastewater disposal.

Ready tie-in to electric grids and access to internet and cellular coverage may be challenging outside of Government Camp, although all sites lie within Portland General Electric (PGE) and Wasco Electric Cooperative (WEC) service areas. The project team is in the process of identifying opportunities to provide these utilities at the other four identified Potential Opportunity Sites.

LAND OWNERSHIP

There are three significant areas of private land within the Initial Study Area. The rest of the land is owned and operated by the USFS.

- The community of Government Camp (milepost 53-54)
- The Trillium Lake Basin Cabin (milepost 55.3)
- The area around East Old Wapinitia Road, East High Meadows Lane, and Deer Fern Lane, near the Government Camp Chevron and Mt. Hood Skill School (milepost 59.5-60)

No viable sites were found to be located on these plots of private land. All five of the Potential Opportunity Sites lie on USFS land. The USFS is engaged in ongoing conversations with the PMT and Steering Committee to ensure ongoing agreement with the site selection process and its outcomes.

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

There are two known instances of significant planned development in the Initial Study Area. Given the nature of the planned site developments, the two sites describe below will not be considered for rest area relocation due to the conflicting land uses and functionality of planned sites.

The redevelopment of the Summit Pass Ski area and installation of an aerial gondola in the vicinity are included in the Purpose and Need for this project and have been discussed in previous deliverables (References 1, 4, and 9). This redevelopment requires the relocation of the existing rest area in order to provide the necessary space and access for the proposed development.

There is a planned housing development on the parcel owned by Mount Hood Still Creek LLC, south of U.S. 26 and East Morrison Lane, west of Potential Opportunity Site 2. The planned layout and access configuration of the development are not known at this time.

Potential Opportunity Sites

This section presents the findings of the Phase I screening process and begins the application of Phase II Additional Screening Measures. Five (5) Potential Opportunity Sites were identified for further evaluation:

1. Zigzag Riverside (milepost 47.2)
2. Government Camp (milepost 54.0)
3. Clear Lake (milepost 64.5)
4. Skyline (milepost 66.4)
5. Warm Springs Junction (milepost 70.5)

Figure 2 (next page) shows the location of each site along U.S. 26 on an aerial map of the Initial Screening Area. The polygons identified as Potential Opportunity Sites represent the largest contiguous area suitable for rest area development at each location. Each Potential Opportunity Site has sufficient space to support many possible site layouts. Up to three concept designs will be developed for the selected Most Promising Site Alternative(s) as part of Task 7.

The following section discusses the consideration of sites on the Warm Springs Reservation, documents viable sites within the Initial Study Area that were not advanced as Potential Opportunity Sites and provides a detailed evaluation of the five Potential Opportunity Sites.

WARM SPRINGS RESERVATION DISCUSSION

ODOT Tribal Liaison and the project team staff will meet with Warm Springs to provide information about the project and understand their needs and interest. Many opportunities for rest area relocation exist on the Warm Springs reservation (south of milepost 71.5). This area has not been thoroughly evaluated for Potential opportunity Sites to-date. An meeting with Warm Springs is anticipated to occur in March 2025.

Figure 2: Potential Opportunity Sites



- US-26
- ▨ Potential Opportunity Site
- ▭ Warm Springs Reservation

0 5 Miles 

Potential Opportunity Sites

SITES REMOVED FROM CONSIDERATION

The results of the screening process yielded four additional sites which met all or most of the Phase I Qualification Measures but were not advanced as part of the five identified Potential Opportunity Sites.

Many of these sites appear to be viable alternatives for rest area redevelopment due to the site access, area availability, and relation to surrounding forest land. While relocating the rest area to already-developed land satisfies project goals for minimizing impacts to the natural and recreational resources, doing so could result in new and unnecessary complexities including potential conflicts with existing uses. These challenges, coordination needs, and risk are not anticipated for the five Potential Opportunities Sites described later in this memorandum. As a result, these sites have been removed from consideration as Potential Opportunity Sites to minimize risks associated with this dynamic.

- Wood Lot (Link to map: [45°18'29"N 121°50'13"W](#), near milepost 48.7)
 - There is a suitable area on the south side of U.S. 26 approximately one half mile west of Silent Rock near the intersection of U.S. 26 with Wood Lot Road. There is an active lumberyard within this area. Steep roadway and terrain grades in this area and proximity to a horizontal curve on U.S. 26 also make access to this site challenging.
- Snow Bunny and Trillium Sno-Parks (Link to map: [45°17'12"N 121°43'43"W](#), near milepost 55.6)
 - The area surrounding the Snow Bunny and Trillium Sno-Parks was identified as a possible site. However, the terrain is topographically challenged with steep grades limiting development opportunity and may increase costs for construction beyond an acceptable level. Furthermore, the public shared the importance of preserving access to existing Sno-parks and not redeveloping them into a rest area.
- OR 35 Interchange (Link to map: [45°16'59"N 121°42'51"W](#), milepost 57.6)
 - Possible sites exist within the vicinity of the interchange of U.S. 26 and OR 35. Siting a rest area here would require close access spacing with interchange ramps, reconfiguration and potential reconstruction of the interchange, and/or the introduction of complex maneuvers for traffic traveling through on U.S. 26. The existing interchange area as defined by the directional ramps may not provide sufficient space for the minimum area needed for a viable rest area, the associated directional ramps, and spacing between directional interchange ramps and site access. The area is also an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife-designated Priority Wildlife Connectivity Area.
- Frog Lake (Link to map: [45°13'42.1"N 121°41'53.7"W](#), milepost 62.5)
 - Frog Lake is a popular camping, hiking, and fishing destination with views of the Mt. Hood summit. Based on the geometry of viable site footprints, recreational access to the lake would need to pass through the rest area if constructed in this location. Removing this possible site from consideration reflects a desire from interested parties to avoid recreational use of the rest area.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY SITES EVALUATION

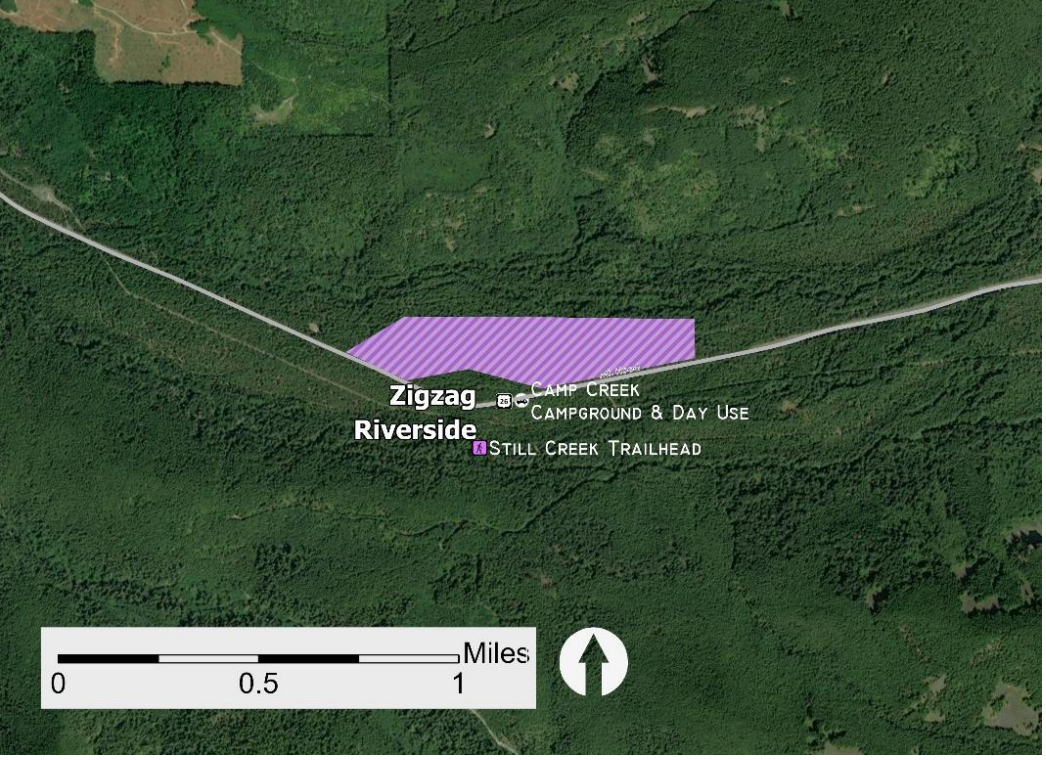
The following sheets for each Potential Opportunity Site identify findings and provide additional commentary and considerations for each site. These sheets are intended to support ongoing conversations with the PMT, Steering Committee, and other project partners, to guide the selection of the Most Promising Site Alternative(s).

Each opportunity site is described in detail and the qualification measures section reflects what is summarized in Table 2 and Table 3. On both tables, cells are highlighted to indicate relative positive (blue), neutral (yellow), or negative (red) outcomes. These evaluations will be used to consider Potential Opportunity Sites against one-another, to provide a foundation for discussion among interested parties, and to support the forthcoming *Most Promising Site Alternatives* memorandum. It should be noted that formal consensus on the assessment of the Additional Screening Measures has not yet been reached by the project teams; the findings presented in Table 3 represent the recommendations of the PMT and are based on preliminary conversations with interested parties held to-date. Some rows have been left without highlights; approaches for these Additional Screening Measures will be discussed with the Steering Committee and Technical Workshop participants.

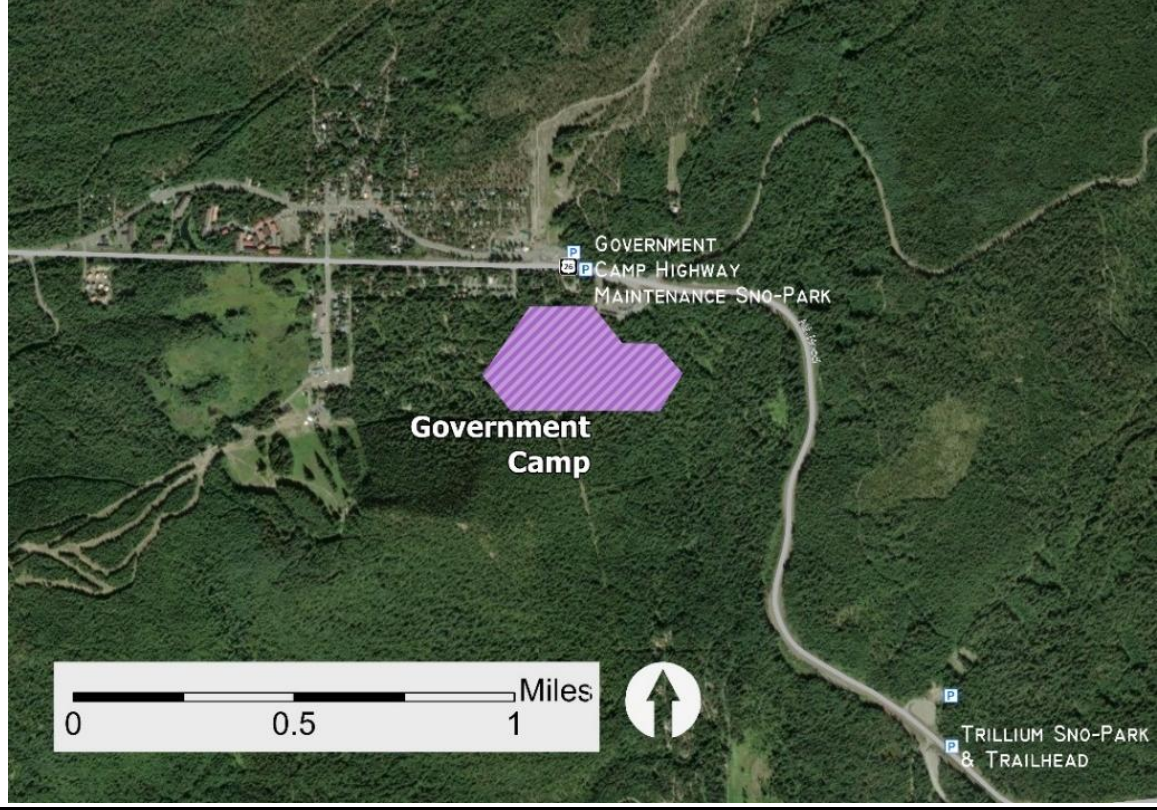
Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) values are provided for each site to estimate the relative demand for rest area services at each Potential Opportunity Site, which is assumed to be correlated with through traffic volume. Year 2023 AADT values were collected from the Oregon Traffic Monitoring System (OTMS) for the nearest count location on U.S. 26. In some cases, these values are estimates based on grown counts from previous years, presented as provided by ODOT. Truck percentage (Truck %) indicates what proportion of traffic on U.S. 26 is heavy vehicles, as reported in OTMS.

The Mt. Hood National Forest Land & Resource Management Plan, or "Forest Plan" (Reference 9), guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management standards and guidelines for the Forest. While amendments to the Forest Plan are possible, they can be challenging and time-consuming to approve. Forest Plan designations have been listed here for the land on which each Potential Opportunity Site is located.

Potential Opportunity Site 1 — Zigzag Riverside


<p>Site Location</p> <p>Coordinates: 45°18'23"N 121°52'11"W, near milepost 47.2</p> <p>Elevation: 2,200 feet</p> <p>Size: 74 acres</p> <p>Location: 3 miles east of Rhododendron 7 miles west of the Government Camp Rest Area</p> <p>AADT: 10,170 (near Camp Creek Road/USFS Road 28)</p> <p>Truck %: 13.2%</p> <p>Posted Speed: 55mph</p> <p>Existing access: Road through site, accesses to east and west (USFS Road 29/31 & 35)</p> <p>Zoning: Timber (Clackamas Co.)</p> <p>Forest Plan designation: Administratively Withdrawn Area</p>	
<p>Qualification Measures Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderate relative presence of environmentally sensitive resources - Proximity to wetland and Zigzag River may make soils unsuitable and runoff mitigation more challenging - May require a septic system for wastewater disposal; suitability of this site for this system has not yet been established with the USFS - Potentially challenging roadway geometry due to preliminary assessment of sight distance and grade - Located near Rhododendron; may provide redundant service for travelers 	
<p>Key Site Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located near the bottom of a long, steep, and continuous descent from Government Camp; could be used as a brake cooling area - Located below the typical snow line; less maintenance costs and lower potential for winter recreational use - Utility connections may be possible due to proximity to Rhododendron and many private cabins - Opportunity to use multiple suitable access points 	<p>Key Site Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paired rest area facilities—with one rest area site for each direction of travel, located on each side of the highway—not desirable due to recreational uses south of U.S. 26 - Located near Rhododendron; may provide redundant services - Site might experience higher volumes of users parking to access nearby recreation facilities due to its positioning and access to nearby cabins, trailheads, and campgrounds which may prohibit people wanting to “rest” at the rest area. - Potential environmental challenges due to proximity to wetland and Zigzag River - Development may be incompatible with Forest Plan designation - Potential complications and increase cost associated with site access based on ODOT HDM standards Section 325 Safety Rest Areas.
<p>Summary: Zigzag Riverside offers brake cooling opportunities to truckers and may have maintenance cost savings due to proximity to existing development. Besides the Zigzag River and Camp Creek Campground, there are known recreational destinations nearby (including the Camp Creek Campground, Flag Mountain East Trailhead, Still Creek Trailhead, and Pioneer Bridle Trail). The proximity of these recreation destinations could attract recreational uses to the rest area. There are also nearby private cabins (permitted use on USFS land) in the site’s vicinity, north of USFS Road 29/31 and south of U.S. 26. Potential site design limitations may be due to space constrictions and proximity to sensitive environmental resources. Additionally, the site may not provide maximum return on investment due to redundant and nearby services offered in nearby communities.</p>	

Potential Opportunity Site 2 — Government Camp

<p>Site Location</p> <p>Coordinates: 45°17'59"N 121°44'37"W, near milepost 54.0</p> <p>Elevation: 4,000 feet</p> <p>Size: 50 acres</p> <p>Location: 10 miles east of Rhododendron Across U.S. 26 from Government Camp 49 miles northwest of the community of Warm Springs</p> <p>AADT: 6,684 (near site access)</p> <p>Truck %: 13.2%</p> <p>Posted Speed: 55mph</p> <p>Existing access: Three accesses near site: Summit Trail, Cascadia Center for Arts and Crafts, and ODOT Maintenance Yard driveway</p> <p>Zoning: Mountain Recreational Resort, Timber (Clackamas Co.)</p> <p>Forest Plan designation: Administratively Withdrawn Area, Other³</p>	
<p>Qualification Measures Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tie-in to local utilities may be possible - Low relative presence of environmentally sensitive resources - Proximity to culturally sensitive resources - Located in Government Camp; may provide redundant services for travelers - Potential operational conflicts with access to ODOT maintenance facility 	<p>Key Site Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High potential to attract a high volume of recreational users due to adjacent trails and proximity to Summit Pass Ski Area - Site access may be challenging due to adjacent use of ODOT maintenance facility and existing uses adjacent to highway. Land west of Government Camp Loop intersection is privately-owned and has plans to be developed in the near future. - Located in Government Camp; may provide redundant services to travelers - Potential complications and increase cost associated with site access based on ODOT HDM standards Section 325 Safety Rest Areas.
<p>Key Site Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially streamlined construction process from tie-in to existing utility services - Opportunity to incorporate a scenic vista of the Mt. Hood Summit - Consistent experience for traveling public; rest area not significantly moved - Potential shared access road to planned residential development to the west 	<p>Summary: Relocating the rest area within Government Camp would maintain a consistent experience for the traveling public, being sited near the existing rest area, and would allow the rest area to use existing utilities and accesses, which would save construction complexity. The site could be subject to many of the same downsides that face the current rest area due to its location in Government Camp, including overcrowding, recreational use, and imposed limitations on future development in the area. Being located at the top of the pass, the site might be subject to more severe wind and weather than alternatives at lower elevations. Site access would need to be designed not to conflict with ODOT maintenance yard operations. The site is also located close to many cultural resources, which may add to construction complexity.</p>

³ This category depicts a mix of Matrix, Riparian Reserves, and other unmapped land allocations.

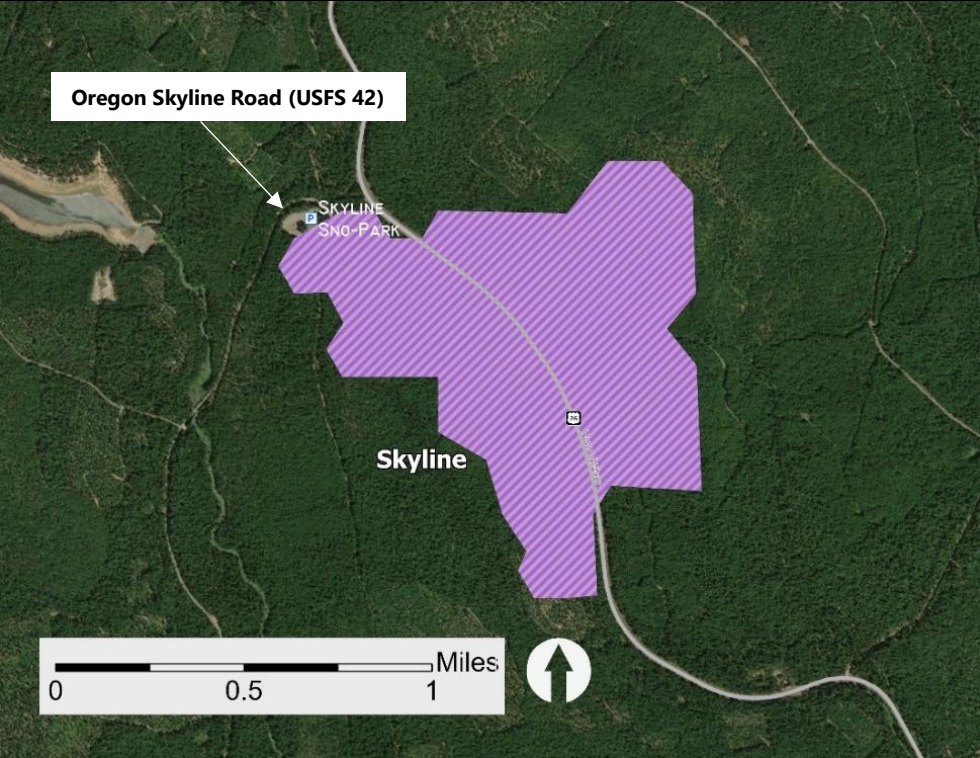
Potential Opportunity Site 3 — Clear Lake

<p>Site Location</p> <p>Coordinates: 45°11'31"N 121°41'26"W, near milepost 64.5</p> <p>Elevation: 3,900 feet</p> <p>Size: 165 acres</p> <p>Location: 10 miles east of Government Camp 40 miles northwest of the community of Warm Springs</p> <p>AADT: 4,376 (near Frog Lake/USFS Road 2610)</p> <p>Truck %: 28.6</p> <p>Posted Speed: 55mph</p> <p>Existing access: Nearby forest road with southbound right turn/deceleration lane</p> <p>Zoning: Forest (Wasco Co.)</p> <p>Forest Plan designation: Other⁴</p>	
<p>Qualification Measures Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderate/low relative presence of environmentally sensitive resources⁵ - May require a septic system for wastewater disposal; suitability of this site for this system has not yet been established with the USFS - Proximity to a known HazMat location - No existing utilities readily available - Cell coverage is currently limited 	
<p>Key Site Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing gravel lot could reduce impact to trees/surroundings - Large potential area increases design options, including paired facilities—where there is one rest area site for each direction of travel, located on each side of the highway - Desirable spacing from alternative stopping opportunities 	<p>Key Site Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to a known HazMat location - Lack of existing utilities
<p>Summary: The Clear Lake site has adequate space for a wide range of design options and offers desirable spacing from other rest areas and alternative stopping opportunities (i.e., places where motorists can rest, fuel, or eat that are not designated rest areas). However, there are no existing utilities in the area and additional care will be needed regarding potential HazMat sites in the vicinity. The site is approximately 7 miles north of the Warm Springs Reservation; siting here may help to reduce dispersed restroom activities on Tribal lands.</p>	

⁴ This category depicts a mix of Matrix, Riparian Reserves, and other unmapped land allocations.

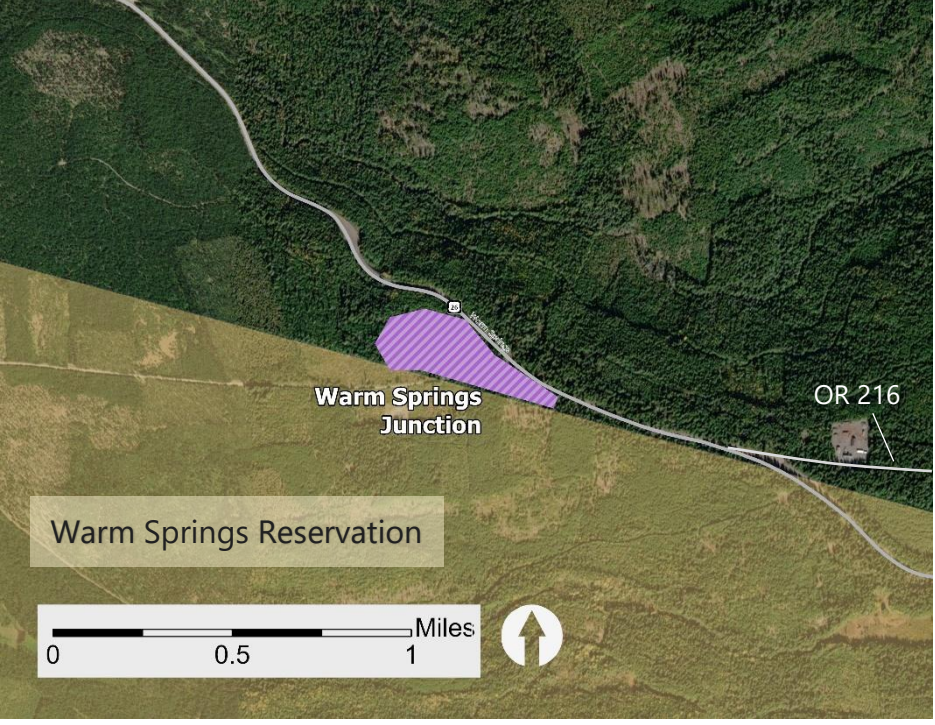
⁵ Average score of environmental resource screening areas #8 and #9.

Potential Opportunity Site 4 — Skyline

<p>Site Location</p> <p>Coordinates: 45°11'31"N 121°41'26"W, near milepost 66.4</p> <p>Elevation: 3,600 feet</p> <p>Size: 456 acres</p> <p>Location: 12 miles east of Government Camp 38 miles northwest of the community of Warm Springs</p> <p>AADT: 4,268 (near Warm Springs Junction)</p> <p>Truck %: 28.6%</p> <p>Posted Speed: 55mph</p> <p>Existing access: Skyline Sno-Park, deceleration lanes in both directions</p> <p>Zoning: Forest (Wasco Co.)</p> <p>Forest Plan designation: Other⁶</p>	
<p>Qualification Measures Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low relative presence of environmentally sensitive resources - Proximity to Elk Creek may make soils unsuitable and runoff mitigation more challenging - No existing utilities readily available - Cell coverage is currently limited - May require a septic system for wastewater disposal; suitability of this site for this system has not yet been established with the USFS 	
<p>Key Site Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large potential area increases design options, including paired facilities—where there is one rest area site for each direction of travel, located on each side of U.S. 26 - U.S. 26 access to USFS Road 42/Oregon Skyline Road/Skyline Sno-Park provides deceleration/turn lanes in both directions - Desirable spacing from alternative stopping opportunities 	<p>Key Site Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The public shared the importance of preserving access to existing Sno-parks and not redeveloping them into a rest area - Lack of existing utilities - Site is located close to wetlands and water bodies – potential for HazMat mitigation requirements - U.S. 26 access to USFS Road 42/Oregon Skyline Road/Skyline Sno-Park sees comparatively high levels of all-season use - Potential complications and increase cost associated with site access based on ODOT HDM standards Section 325 Safety Rest Areas.
<p>Summary: The Skyline site offers space for flexible site configurations and designs. In addition to the public interest of preserving Sno-Parks, potential impacts to environmental resources may be an additional challenge. A lack of existing access to utilities at the site could also increase construction complexity. USFS Road 42/Oregon Skyline Road provides a paved connection to OR 224 (approximately 20 miles west) through the Cascade Range; this site could provide a departure point from U.S. 26 for travelers on this remote route. The site is approximately 5 miles north of the Warm Springs Reservation; siting here may help to reduce dispersed restroom activities on Tribal lands.</p>	

⁶ This category depicts a mix of Matrix, Riparian Reserves, and other unmapped land allocations

Potential Opportunity Site 5 — Warm Springs Junction

<p>Site Location</p> <p>Coordinates: 45°07'54"N 121°36'50"W, near milepost 70.5</p> <p>Elevation: 3,500 feet</p> <p>Size: 40 acres</p> <p>Location: 15 miles east of Government Camp 34 miles northwest of the community of Warm Springs</p> <p>AADT: 4,268 (near Warm Springs Junction)</p> <p>Truck %: 28.6%</p> <p>Posted Speed: 55mph</p> <p>Existing access: Nearby forest road</p> <p>Zoning: Forest (Wasco Co.)</p> <p>Forest Plan designation: Other⁷</p>	
<p>Qualification Measures Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low relative presence of environmentally sensitive resources - No existing utilities readily available - Cell coverage is currently limited - May require a septic system for wastewater disposal; suitability of this site for this system has not yet been established with the USFS 	<p>Key Site Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No existing utilities readily available - Paired rest area facilities—one rest area site for each direction of travel, located on each side of the highway—not possible due to steep terrain on northeast side of U.S. 26 - Directly adjacent to Tribal land; access roadway passes across boundary and is a Tribal Road; would require close coordination and agreement - Potential complications and increase cost associated with site access based on ODOT HDM standards Section 325 Safety Rest Areas.
<p>Key Site Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly adjacent to Warm Springs Reservation; could reduce dispersed restroom use - Existing access and road to the site - Lowest elevation among sites east of Government Camp resulting in anticipated lower maintenance and operational needs due to snow levels - Desirable spacing from alternative stopping opportunities 	<p>Summary: The site is directly adjacent to the Warm Springs Reservation; siting the rest area here may reduce dispersed restroom activities on Tribal lands. The site has desirable spacing from other stopping opportunities. There are few known recreational destinations nearby, making the site less likely to be used as a recreational destination or trailhead. An existing access for a forest road (S-507A Road) is located approximately 0.6 miles north of the interchange of U.S. 26 and OR 216; it does not have deceleration lanes in either direction. Limited space and lack of existing utilities could limit the design options and increase costs.</p>

⁷ This category depicts a mix of Matrix, Riparian Reserves, and other unmapped land allocations.

Table 2: Phase I Qualification Measures applied to Potential Opportunity Sites

Phase I Qualification Measures		Potential Opportunity Site				
		1. Zigzag Riverside	2. Government Camp	3. Clear Lake	4. Skyline	5. Warm Springs Junction
Site Quality (Features)	Minimum site footprint	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Suitable topography for construction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Suitable soils for construction	~	✓	✓	~	✓
	No avalanche hazard	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Utilities Available	Water, power, gas, internet, and telephone	✓	✓	~	~	~
	Wastewater disposal	~	✓	~	~	~
Site Spacing	Spacing to other rest areas and alternative stopping opportunities	~	~	✓	✓	✓
Corridor Geometry	Acceptable sight distance	~	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Acceptable roadway grade	~	✓	✓	✓	✓
Potential Environmental Impacts	No critical issues with protected/sensitive wildlife and habitat	~	✓	✓	✓	✓
	No critical issues with cultural, historical, archeological resources	✓	✓	~	✓	✓
	No critical issues with hazardous materials (HazMat)	✓	✓	~	✓	✓
Right-of-Way Opportunities	Approval by landowner/manager	✓	~	✓	✓	✓
Community Acceptance	No planned and in-process development	✓	~	✓	✓	✓

Table 3: Potential Opportunity Sites vs. Phase II Additional Screening Measures

Phase II Additional Screening Measures The rest area could...	Sites				
	1. Zigzag Riverside	2. Government Camp	3. Clear Lake	4. Skyline	5. Warm Springs Junction
Be comprised of “paired” facilities , with one rest area site for each direction of travel, located on each side of the highway	Not possible due to cabins and campground south of U.S. 26	Not possible – area north of U.S. 26 is developed	Possible	Possible	Not possible – area north of U.S. 26 is too steep
Sized to incorporate amenities* such as: – Typical rest area amenities – Travel information center components – Facilities for official use	Potential for large site footprint	Potentially constrained site footprint	Potential for large site footprint	Potential for large site footprint	Potentially constrained site footprint
Support use as a brake cooling area	7.0 miles from top of hill (avg. 4.9% grade above)	At top of a hill 5+ miles downhill in either direction	1.0 miles from top of a hill (avg. 3.1% grade above)	2.9 miles from top of a hill (avg. 2.7% grade above)	At top of a hill, 1.5+ miles downhill in either direction
Not act as a recreational trailhead and/or Sno-Park access point	Likely to be used for recreational access to Zigzag River, Camp Creek campground, etc.	Likely to be used for recreational access to Government Camp, Summit Pass ski area, and adjacent trails	Likely to be used for recreational access to Clear Lake	Likely to be used for recreational access to Skyline Sno-Park	Unlikely to be used for recreational access
Be located below the typical snow line **	2,200’ – less frequently receives snow	4,000’ – frequently receives snow	3,900’ – frequently receives snow	3,600’ – frequently receives snow	3,500’ – frequently receives snow
Operate as a public transportation layover and/or transfer point	On route for Mt. Hood Express and Central Oregon Breeze	Mt. Hood Express and Central Oregon Breeze use current Govt. Camp rest area as a stop and layover; using relocated rest area would only slightly change operations	On route for Central Oregon Breeze	On route for Central Oregon Breeze	On route for Central Oregon Breeze
Incorporate cultural, historical, topographic, architectural, and/or informational features, reflecting the unique location on Mt. Hood	Near historic Barlow Road	Near Government Camp, potential vista of Mt. Hood summit, near historic Barlow Road	Near historic Barlow Road, potential vista of Blue Box Pass Peak to the NW	Near historic Barlow Road	Near historic Barlow Road, near Warm Springs Reservation
Provide environmental and topographic shelter from wind and weather	Low-lying forested area	Potential for more severe wind and weather, colder temperatures	Low-lying forested area	Low-lying forested area	Low-lying forested area
Prioritize already-developed opportunity sites for re-development into a rest area site, minimize tree removal from development	Existing site access and road through forest	Existing site access	Existing ~3 acre gravel lot with vista clearing	Existing site access and Sno-Park lot	Existing site access
Be located away from existing alternate stopping opportunities for passenger vehicles	3 miles east of Rhododendron, 6 miles west of the Government Camp	In Government Camp	10 miles east of Government Camp, 40 miles northwest of Warm Springs	12 miles east of the Government Camp, 38 miles northwest of Warm Springs	15 miles east of the Government Camp, 34 miles northwest of Warm Springs
Be located away from existing alternate stopping opportunities for freight vehicles ***	5.5 miles east of Hoodland 76 (limited capacity), 11.8 miles west of Government Camp Chevron (limited capacity)	12.6 miles east of Hoodland 76 (limited capacity), 4.7 miles west of Government Camp Chevron (limited capacity)	4.6 miles south of Government Camp Chevron (limited capacity), 39.7 miles north of Indian Head Casino	6.4 miles south of Government Camp Chevron (limited capacity), 37.8 miles north of Indian Head Casino	10.5 miles south of Government Camp Chevron (limited capacity), 33.7 miles north of Indian Head Casino
Be located as near as possible to the Warm Springs Reservation to offset dispersed restroom use on Reservation lands	~23 miles from Warm Springs Reservation	~16 miles from Warm Springs Reservation	~7 miles from Warm Springs Reservation	~5 miles from Warm Springs Reservation	<1 mile from Warm Springs Reservation
Have U.S. 26 access(es) spaced in accordance with ODOT HDM (Reference 10) and AASHTO (References 8 and 11) guidance	4 existing USFS Road accesses within ½ mile on west side of site, 2 within ¼ mile on east side of site	9 existing accesses within ½ mile west of site, 5 within ¼ mile east of site	No existing accesses within 1 mile , except the offset intersection with USFS Roads 2630 and 2640	No existing accesses within 1 mile , except USFS Road 41/Oregon Skyline Road/Skyline Sno-Park	0.6 miles northwest of junction with OR 216 , no other existing accesses within 1 mile except USFS Road 2651/S-507A Road
Consider the relationship to wildfire risk, mitigation, and response operations	<i>The entire Initial Study Area is located within areas with “High” wildfire hazard ratings, as quantified by the Oregon Department of Forestry. Conversations with USFS staff are ongoing to identify opportunities for Potential Opportunity Sites to support potential wildfire response operations, and to understand the benefits and risks associated with wildfire as it relates to a new rest area facility in the National Forest.</i>				

* **Typical rest area amenities** might include electric vehicle (EV) chargers, public hoses, recreational vehicle (RV) dump stations, picnic tables and shelters, pet areas, sleeping areas, vending machines, and public electrical outlets

Travel information center components might include additional wayfinding, and informational components; and additional indoor public spaces and amenities.

Facilities for official use might include offices, restrooms, storage, and/or operations facilities for law enforcement, ODOT, custodial, fire response, or other official users.

** Typical snow depths were evaluated using year 2010-2025 data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center (NOHRSC) (<https://www.nohrsc.noaa.gov/interactive/html/map.html>).

*** Based on a review of [Bureau of Transportation Statistics data](#) and Google Maps, no official truck stop parking exists along U.S 26 between Portland and Madras.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The completion of Task 6 represents a key milestone in the Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project. Five locations have been identified as Potential Opportunity Sites for further evaluation. Task 7 will select one or more of the five Potential Opportunity Sites to advance as the Most Promising Site Alternative(s) and will develop up to three preliminary rest area design concepts.

Project partners have had and will continue to have opportunities to provide comments and influence the site selection and refinement process. This process will continue to incorporate technical analysis of the Initial Study Area and feedback from interested parties and the community, while ensuring alignment with the project's Purpose and Need.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

While all five sites remain under consideration, the findings from this report indicate that the Clear Lake, Skyline, and Warm Springs Junction sites demonstrate the greatest potential for rest area relocation. These sites have several key advantages—such as relatively low anticipated environmental impact and favorable site spacing for long-distance motorists—that better align these sites with the established Purpose and Need of the project. Additionally, the Clear Lake and Skyline sites offer the largest areas suitable for development, potentially providing additional flexibility in site placement and design.

The Zig Zag Riverside and Government Camp sites are in more highly-developed areas, increasing the potential for conflicts with existing uses. Both are located near residential developments; light, noise, and other environmental effects from a rest area location could negatively affect the quality of life for nearby residents. Future planned development in Rhododendron and in Government Camp may exacerbate these concerns and place additional pressures on any land uses in these areas.

Under Task 7, additional data and feedback will be applied to the site selection process to further advance the site selection process as part of the *Most Promising Sites Alternatives* memorandum. This memorandum will also provide conceptual design alternatives for the potential configuration of the future Mt. Hood rest area.

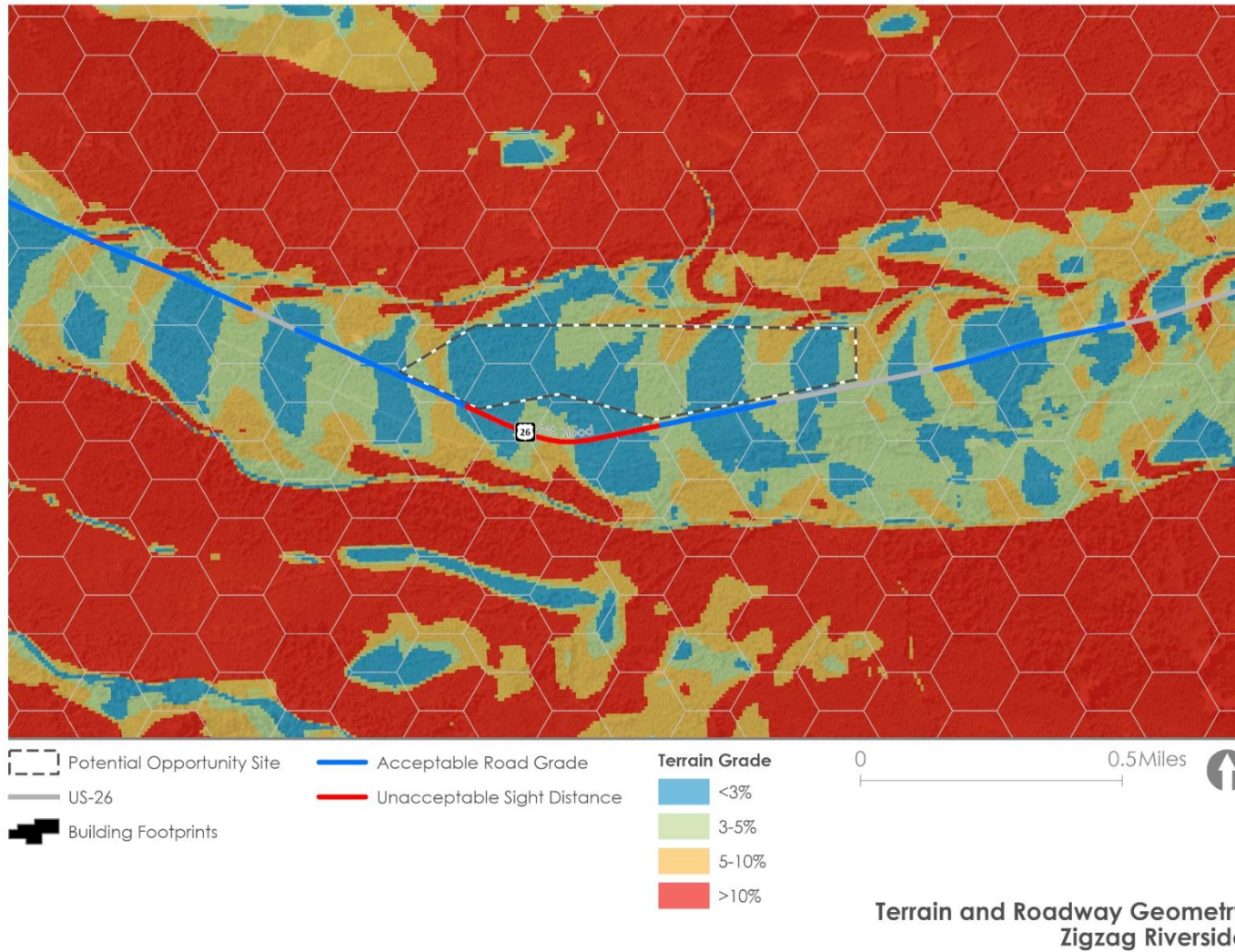
References

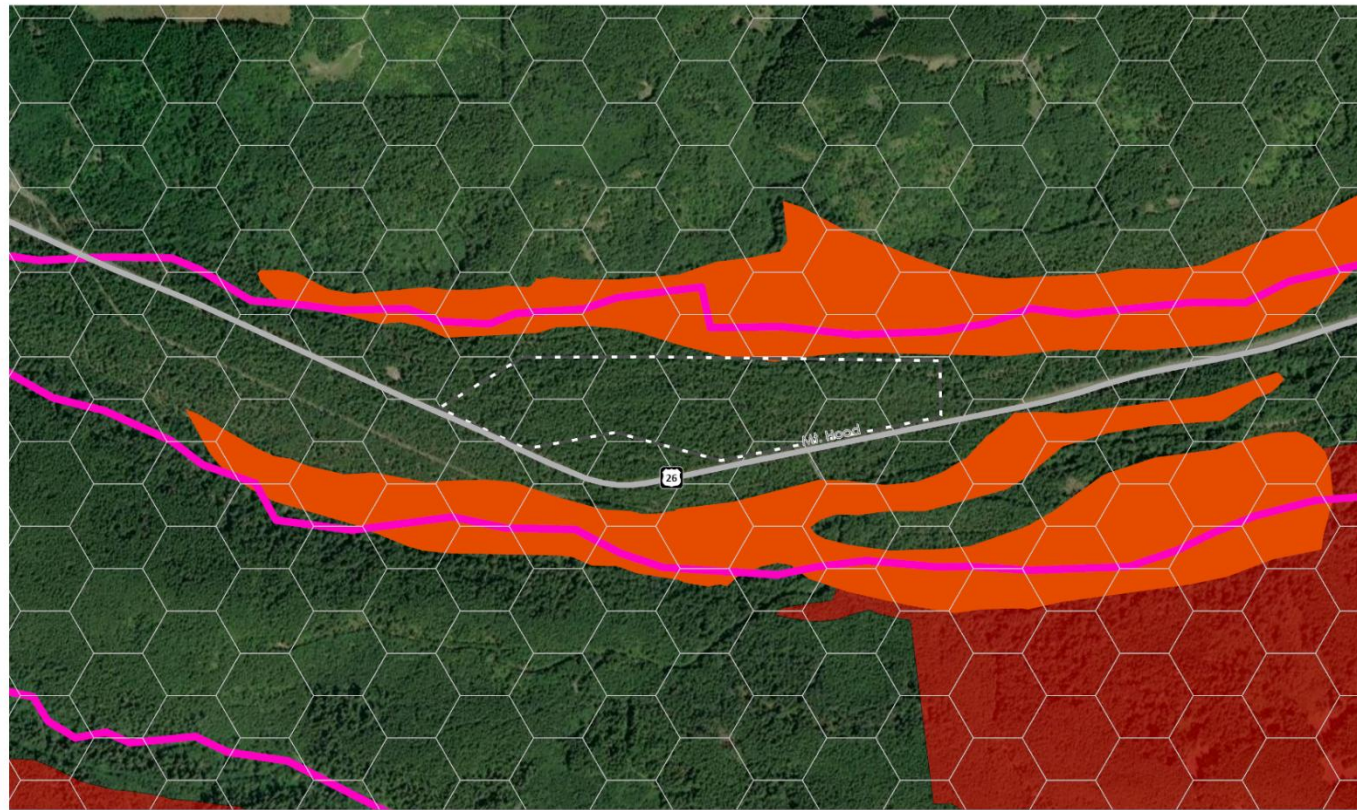
1. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Draft Purpose and Need Statement*
2. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Project Charter*
3. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Public Involvement Plan*
4. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Site Selection Evaluation Criteria* Memorandum
5. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Preliminary Cultural Review & Site Screening*
6. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Preliminary Environmental (HazMat) Review & Site Screening*
7. Mt. Hood Rest Area Relocation Project *Preliminary Natural Resource Review & Site Screening*
8. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for Development of Rest Areas on Major Arterials and Freeways* (2001)
9. R.L.K. and Company *Timberline 2022 Master Development Plan*
10. Oregon Department of Transportation *Highway Design Manual* (2025)
11. AASHTO *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* (2018)

Appendix A – GIS Data

A web-based version of the maps shown in this Appendix can be accessed here: <https://arcg.is/15jz0S1>

SITE 1 – ZIGZAG RIVERSIDE



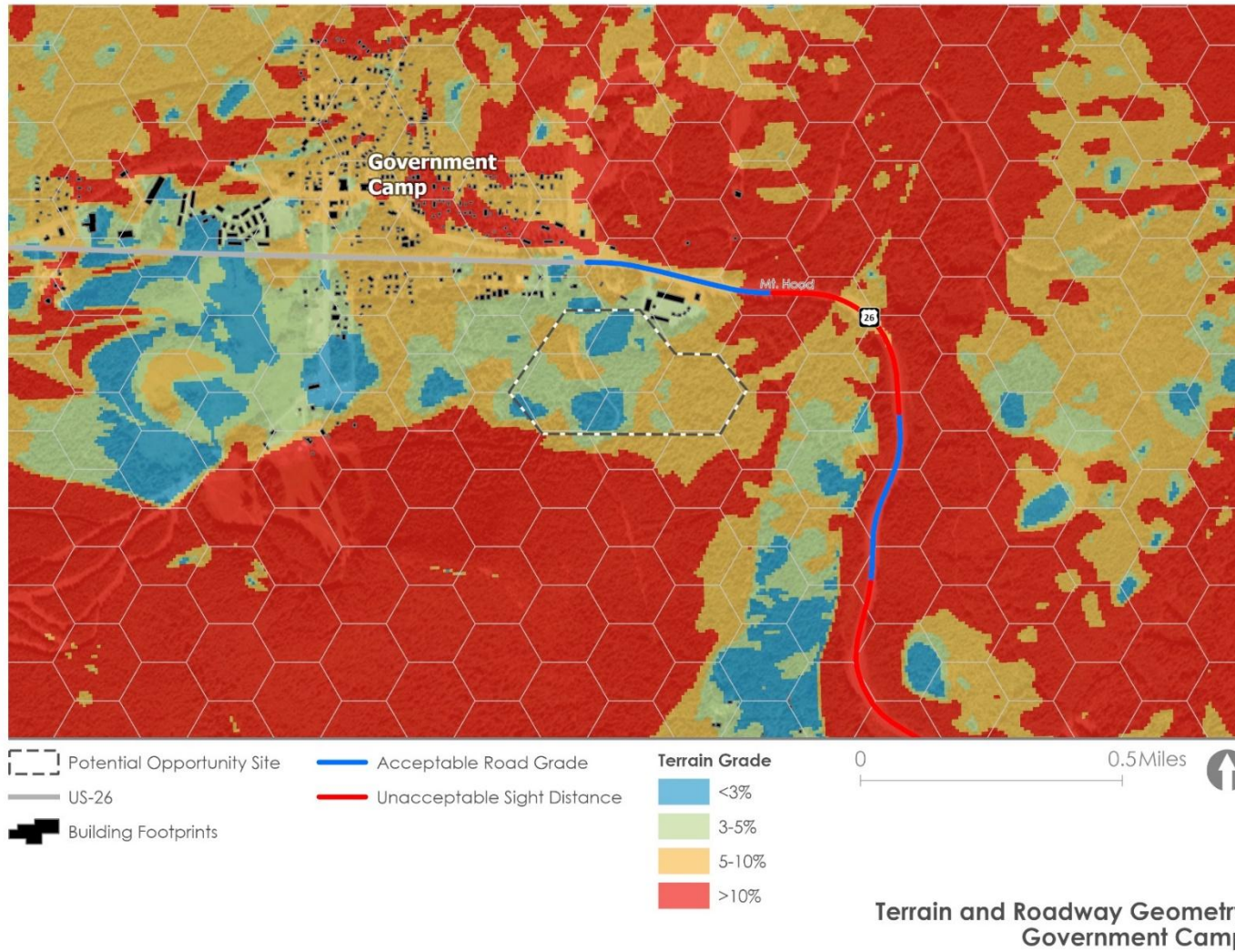


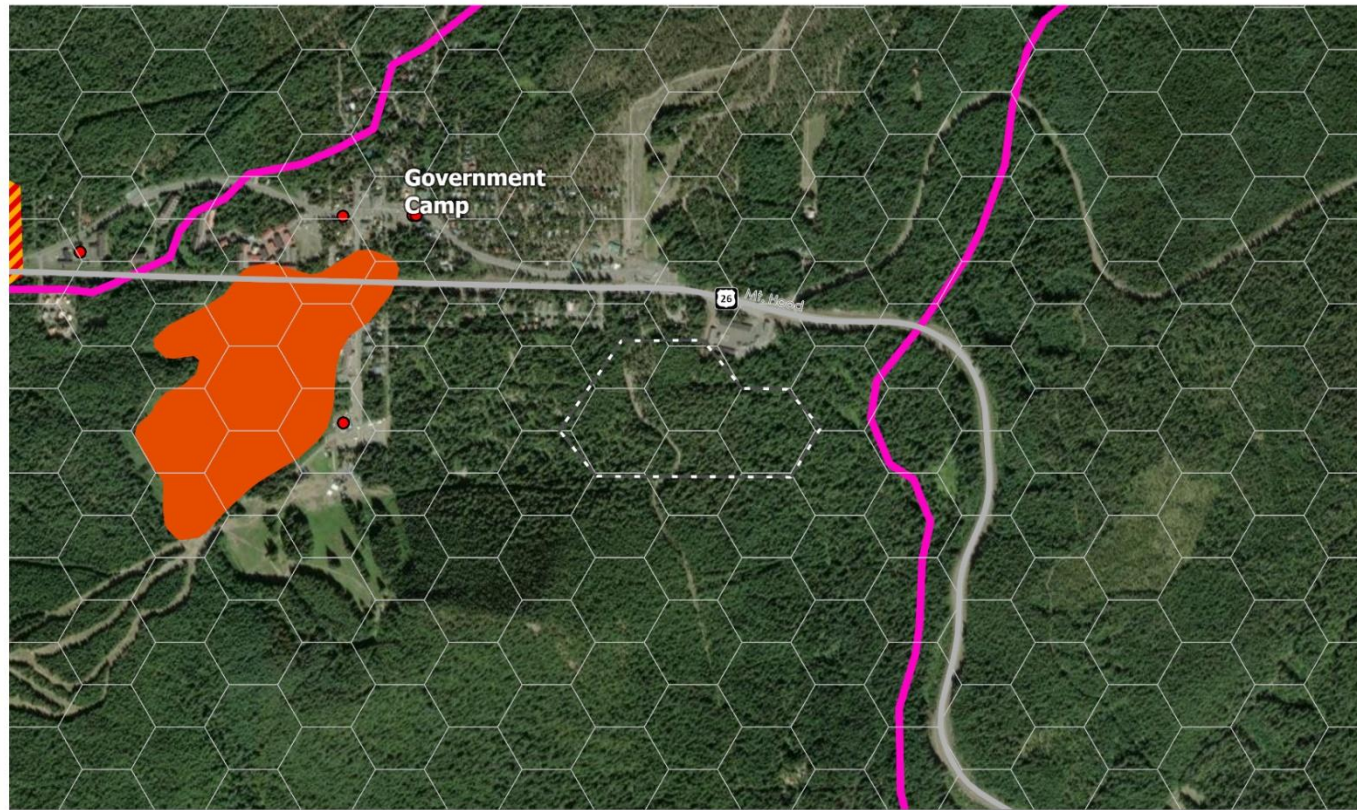
Potential Opportunity Site	Wild and Scenic Rivers	Wilderness	0	0.5 Miles	
US-26	Recreational	Wildlife Connectivity Priority Zone			
Potential HazMat	Scenic	Wetlands			
	Wild	Water Bodies			
		Other Streams			

**Natural Resources
Zigzag Riverside**

**REDACTED MAP
CULTURALLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

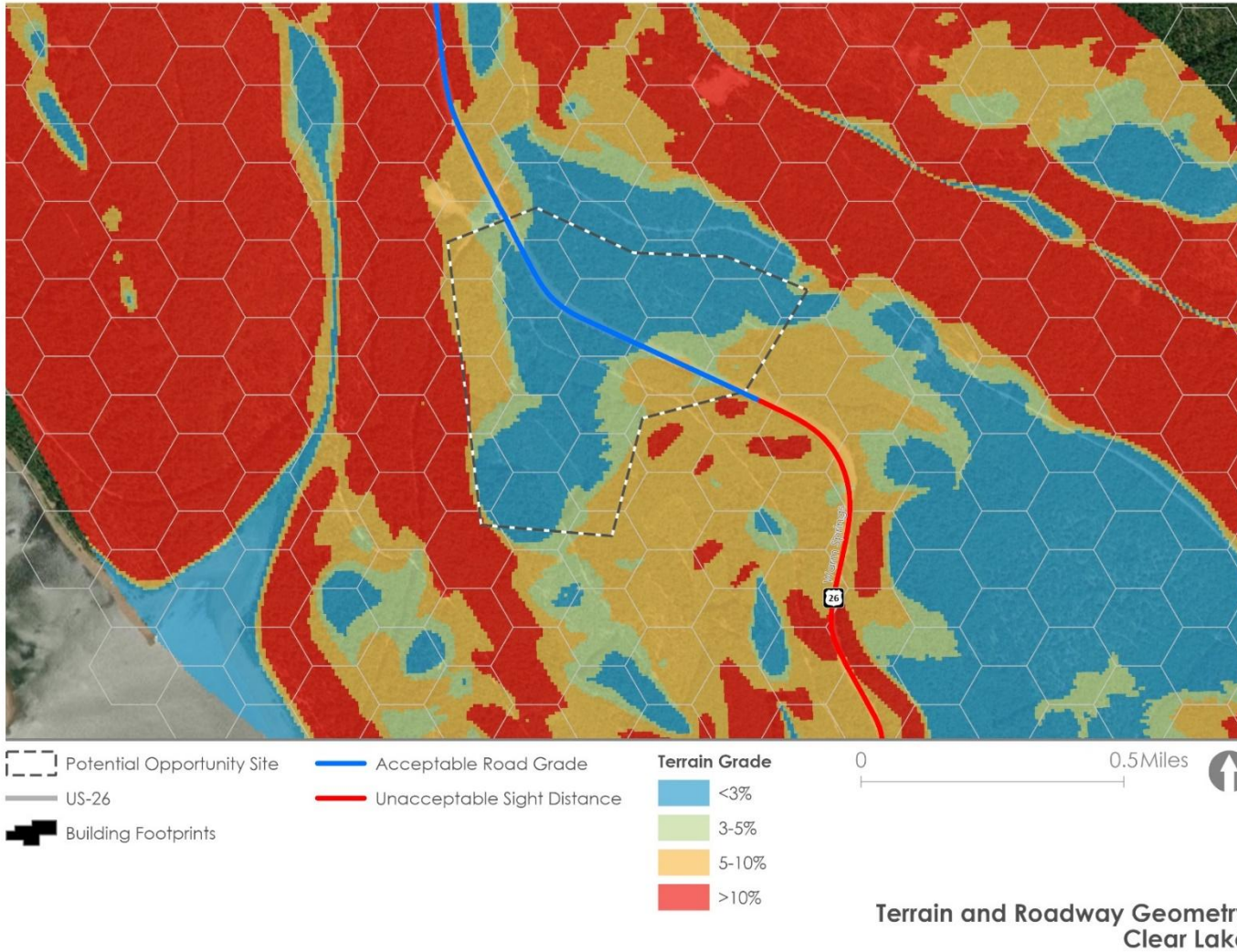
SITE 2 – GOVERNMENT CAMP

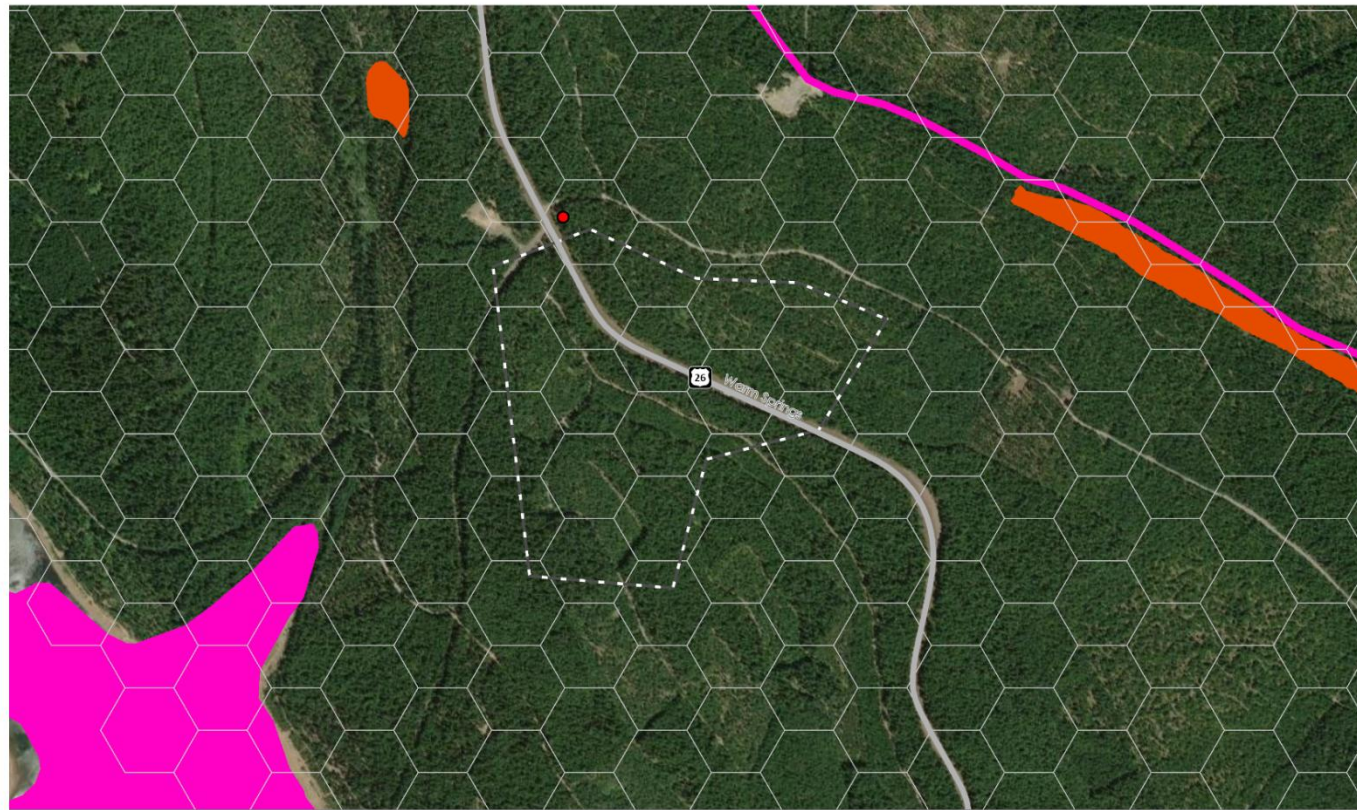




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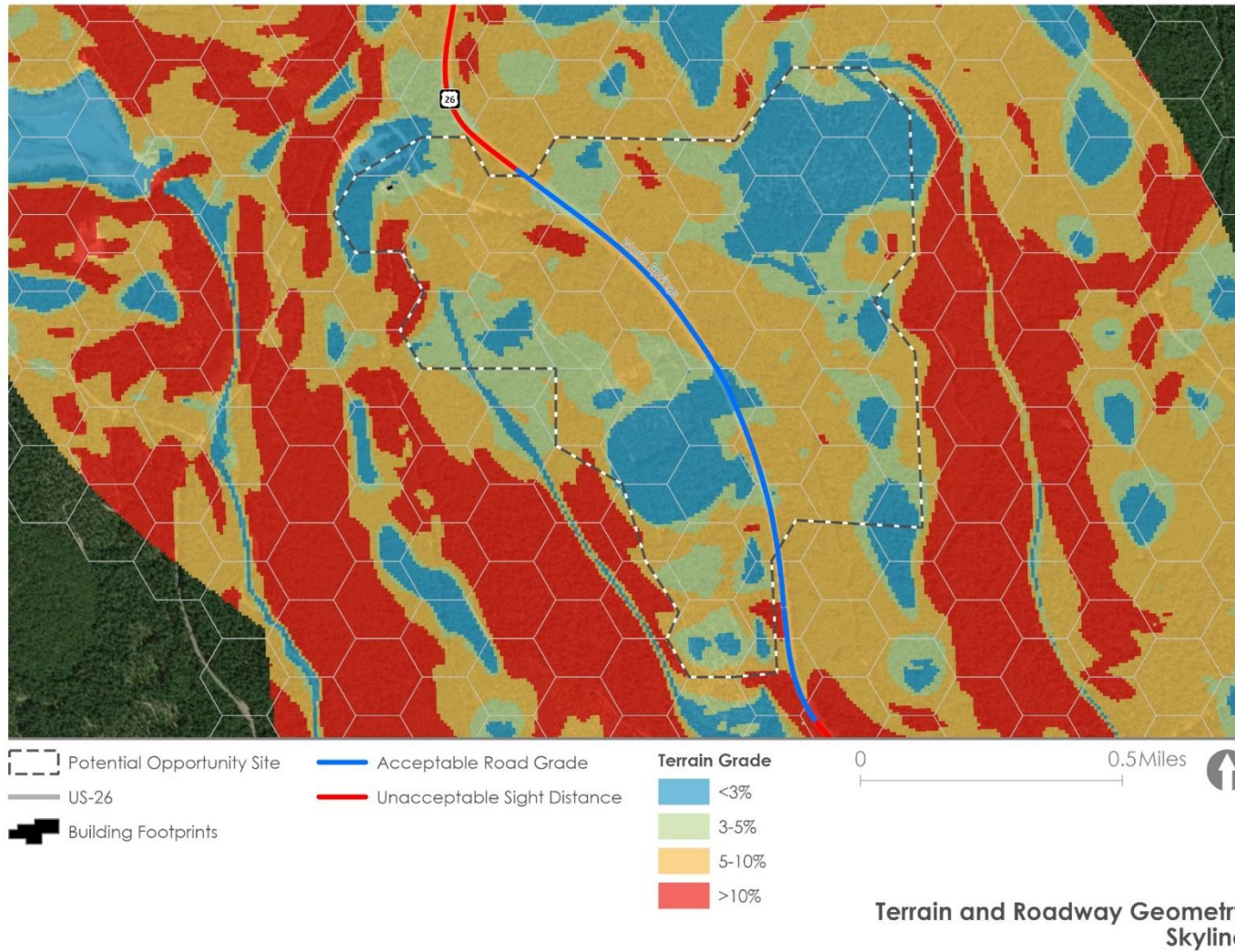
SITE 3 – CLEAR LAKE

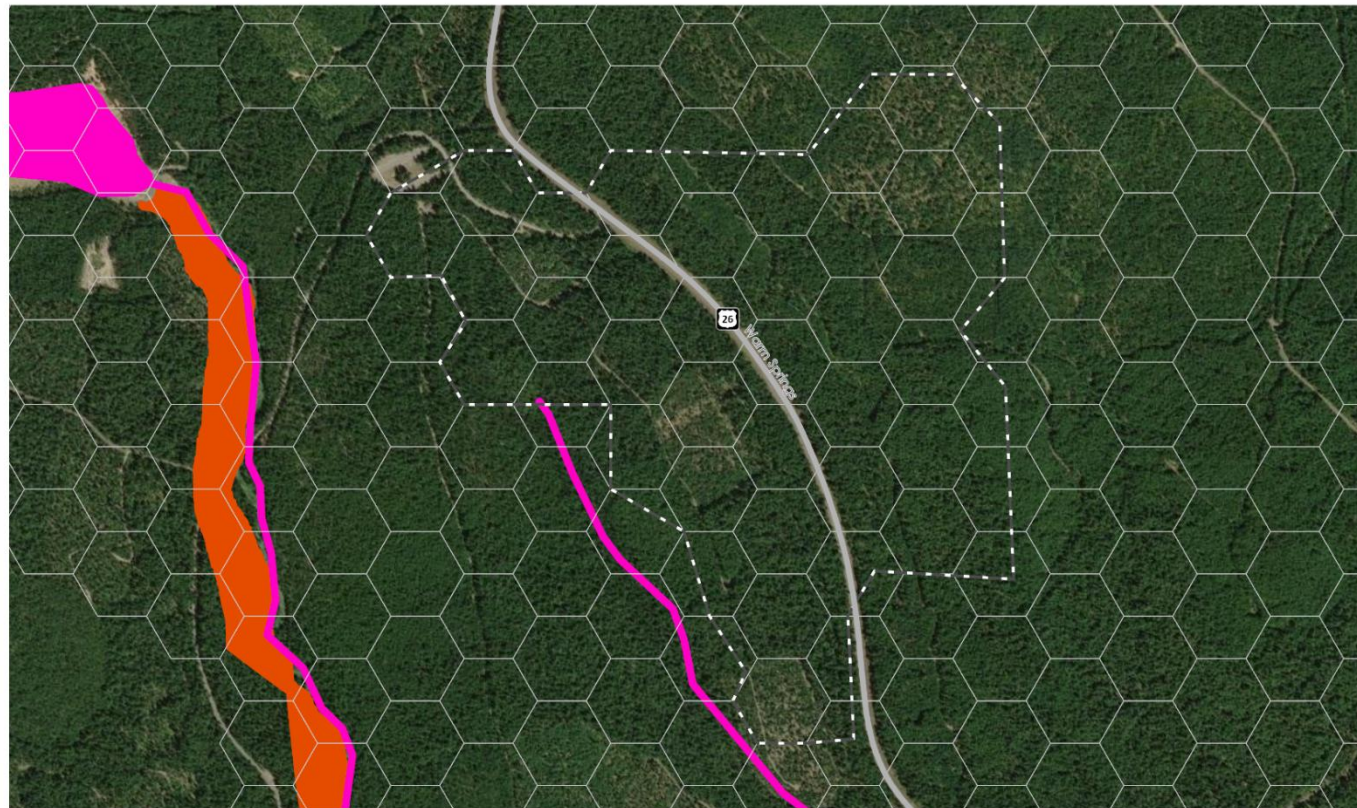




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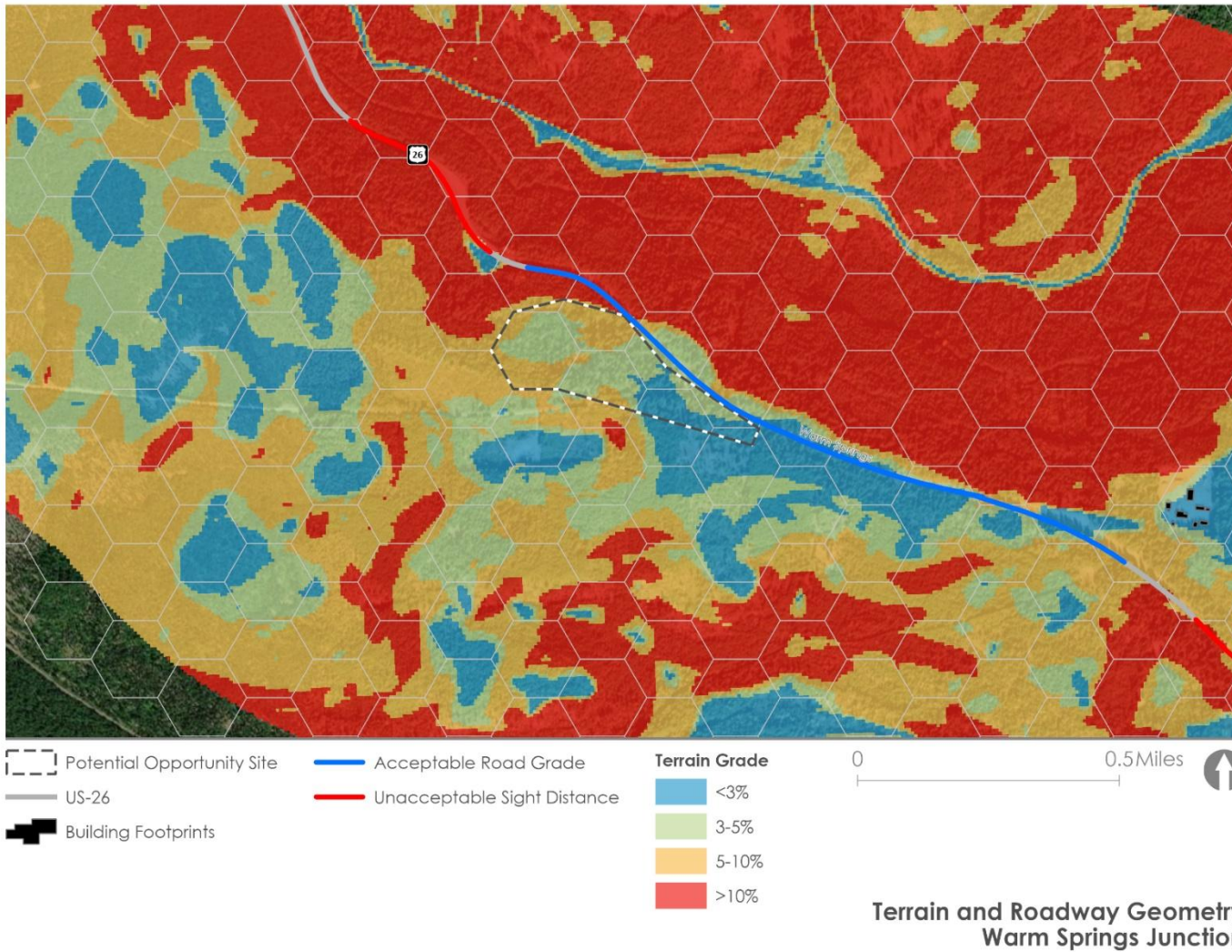
SITE 4 - SKYLINE

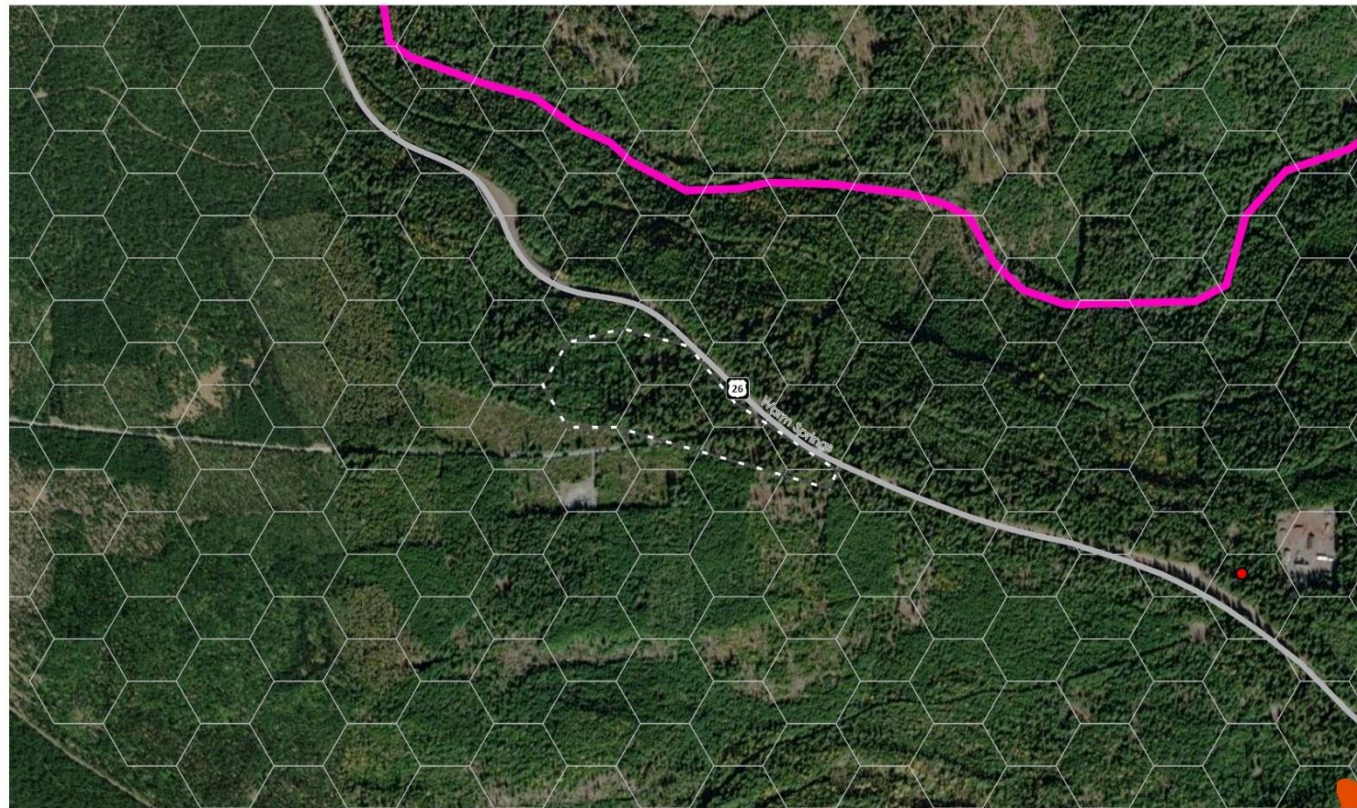




**REDACTED MAP
CULTURALLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

SITE 5 – WARM SPRINGS JUNCTION





**REDACTED MAP
CULTURALLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION**