Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area – Site Development Plan

Prepared for
Oregon Parks & Recreation Department

Prepared by
Mayer/Reed
Landscape Architects

15 December 2000
Acknowledgments

Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
Salem Headquarters
  Michael Carrier, Director
  Henry Kunowski, Project Manager
  Kathy Schult, Heritage Assessment Coordinator

Baker City Area 6 Office
  Rick L. Taylor, Area Manager
  Cindy Vergari, Coordinator, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
  Karen Spencer, Park Ranger, Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
  Roger Pence, Park Manager, Farewell Bend Management Unit

Mayer/Reed Project Team
  Carol Mayer-Reed, FASLA, Partner
  Teresa Chenney, Project Manager
  Elizabeth Crowe, Landscape Designer
  Jim Love, Landscape Architect
  Scott Shigii, Landscape Designer

Contributing Partners
  United States Forest Service
  United States Bureau of Land Management
  Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
  Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
  Baker County
  City of Sumpter
  Sumpter Valley Railroad

Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area Steering Committee
  Jan Alexander  Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
  Kent Bailey  Guyer, Lindley, Bailey & Martin CPA’s PC
  Ron Brinton  President, Sumpter Valley Railroad
  Tim Walters  Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
  Ken Carlson  Store Manager & Sumpter Valley Railway
  Nils Christensen  Sumpter Valley Railway
  Brian Cole  Chair, Baker County Board of Commissioners
  Jack Colton  Mayor, City of Sumpter
  Jim Grigsbey  Sumpter Valley Railway
  Matthew Mettlick  Sumpter Valley Railway
  Roger Pence  Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
  Norma Rankin  Friends of the Dredge
  Stephen Rich  Photographer, Sumpter City Council
  Karen Spencer  Park Ranger, Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
  Teri Strimple  Sumpter Chamber of Commerce President
  Rick Taylor  Area Manager, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
  Cindy Vergari  Coordinator, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
  Paul York  Baker County Board of Commissioners

Special thanks to Henry Kunowski and the OMD Area 6 Baker City staff for the tremendous amount of time, effort and information contributed to this project.

Photographs and illustrations by Mayer/Reed unless individually noted.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Background</td>
<td>Site Survey Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brief History of the Community of Sumpter &amp; the Dredge</td>
<td>1994 Master Plan Table of Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land Ownership &amp; Surrounding Parcels</td>
<td>Project Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship to the Sumpter Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Preservation, Conservation &amp; Interpretation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Dredge Landforms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Landscapes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transitional Landscapes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Park Activity Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surface Water Systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Park Development Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site Development: Overview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site Development: Plan Pedestrian Trail System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site Access, Vehicular Circulation &amp; Parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site Conceptual Circulation Diagram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Development Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Development Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Design Detail Guidelines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation Tower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Picnic Shelter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Picnic Tables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trails &amp; Steps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overlooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pedestrian Bridges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview – Project Background

The Master Plan for the conservation and development of the 80-acre plus Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area was prepared by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and was adopted in 1994. The Master Plan contains a great deal of information regarding Sumpter Valley, site conditions and land use suitability. It also describes plant and wildlife communities and contains a discussion on jurisdictional wetlands. In the Development Proposal portion of the document, improvements are generally described. The Appendix of this Site Development Plan includes the Table of Contents from the 1994 Master Plan as a reference to these elements.

The Site Development Plan, prepared in an informal workbook format, addresses more specific issues, opportunities and constraints of the site. These will need to be addressed in order to implement the development program and built environment. This report is specific speaking to three aspects of the project:

1. preservation, conservation and interpretation of historic, cultural and natural resources;
2. development of visitor use areas; and,
3. passive visitor use facilities such as trails, overlooks and interpretation.

One program element of the Site Development Plan that has been given priority consideration is the site for the new Sumpter Valley Railroad (SVRR) ticket and freight depots. The siting and construction of the depots will move forward in the spring of 2001.

The process of the Site Development Plan preparation included a number of meetings with state parks staff, special interest groups such as the Sumpter Valley Railway and representatives of the city of Sumpter, other public agencies and stakeholders. With this valuable input and comment provided in review meetings, the plan has taken

considered so as to reduce negative impacts of park development on neighboring properties. Trail connections to the site were examined so that park visitors will have convenient access to the Sumpter commercial district.

The Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area is a unique site that encompasses significant natural and cultural resources. Interpretation of these resources is key to an understanding of historic, economic and cultural patterns caused by gold exploration and extraction operations. Out of these historic activities through interpretation, park visitors can begin to understand the following interrelated aspects:

1. the underlying geology and water systems which produced the gold and mineral deposits in the area;
2. the discovery, motivation and drive behind gold extraction;
3. the significant regional social and cultural impact of mining operations;
4. the machinery and physical impacts of the mining operations; and,
5. the evolutionary state of the natural environment through time since mining has ceased.
Sumpter has an interesting boom-town history. According to the book, Gold in Sumpter Valley, it got its name in 1862 from five Confederates who slipped out on the Civil War and wintered near there. They called their primitive log cabin, "Fort Sumter." After 1874, the "Fort" was dropped and the 'p' was added in the spelling for post office purposes.

In the 1860s, there was only a vague idea about the mineral wealth of the region. Sumpter, then a modest community of about thirty acres, began to transform when the transcontinental railroad reached Baker (City) in 1884 and narrow-gauge Sumpter Valley Railroad was extended from McEwen in 1895. This new mode of transportation enabled more export of its timber resources; yet the real gold boom of Sumpter was between 1897 and 1903.

"Like all mining towns of those early days, Sumpter was somewhat of a 'rip-roaring' place..."

as described in Gold in Sumpter Valley. "The town was remarkably complete—- a brick yard, sawmill, a smelter, the railroad, electric lights... a fine water system with a reservoir and a street paved with planks and miles of wood sidewalks. There were also sixteen saloons, hotels, two banks, four churches, a hospital, a diary, two cigar factories, several assayors and quite an extensive China Town. There was even an opera house used for grand balls and traveling vaudeville shows. Sumpter swelled to about fourteen hundred acres during its heyday.

In 1901, a local newspaper claimed, "Mines around Sumpter processed 500 to 600 tons of ore a day, estimated monthly output of $250,000... about 850 men employed at the larger mines with a payroll of about $90,000 a month". However, in 1904, there was not enough ore coming in to keep the mills busy. Sumpter lost population during the next few years. However, the Columbia Mine operated continuously for nearly twenty years more.

In August 1917 a disastrous fire started at a hotel which burned the town to the ground. "...a few old houses (were) saved by a change in the wind. ...Most such rashackette towns were usually burned down—sooner or later. Sumpter had become a tinder box with many deserted old buildings," according to Gold in Sumpter Valley. Today, Sumpter has a population of about 175 persons.

The historic Sumpter gold dredge later operated from 1935 to 1954. The historic dredge, along with 80 acres of mined tailings, is now the centerpiece for the State Heritage Area. The dredge was constructed in 1935, the third such dredge to operate in the Sumpter and Powder River valleys. The current dredge mined approximately 2,500 acres in 20 years, operating 24 hours a day, 363 days a year. It is the last remaining gold dredge of its kind in the state.

The dredge measures 52 by 120 feet at its hull. Its stern tailing stacker arm and bow digger buckets add an additional length of 100 feet. Since ceasing operation in 1954, the dredge remained abandoned and basically deserted until it was purchased by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) in 1993. The dredge was one of the first properties in Oregon placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

While the iron and steel upper structure of the dredging components have remained relatively stable over time, the wood timber hull and frame "house" had deteriorated to the point of partial collapse. In 1996, OPRD initiated a plan to protect the structure from further deterioration through stabilization and rehabilitation. This work has been completed for a cost of approximately $1 million dollars. The estimated cost of the next round of construction work is approximately $350,000. An additional $500,000 is estimated for full completion in anticipation of public access and interpretation.
Overview – Land Ownership & Surrounding Parcels

The State Heritage Area is made up of approximately 80 acres of state-owned land. In addition, 9.4 acres, owned by the Bureau of Land Management, are a future acquisition. Adjacent property includes privately owned parcels in the City of Sumpter along State Highway 220 (Mill Street) on the east, 10+ acres of privately owned undeveloped land along Sawmill Gulch Road on the south and the Whitman-Willox National Forest on the west.

On the northwest corner, there is undeveloped privately owned property and directly north, there are approximately 3 acres of city-owned property. In the plan, connections for trails were considered so that linkages to town are possible and future resources, such as mining sites located in the National Forest, can be accessed. A 3.9-acre parcel owned by the Sumpter Valley Railroad located on the south is included in the heritage area site plan since there are opportunities for joint use.

Site access to Sawmill Gulch Road will be achieved through an easement or other means.

Property adjacent to the park will be investigated for potential acquisition and use in the overall development plan. However, the current site shall be designed to function without these acquisitions. Easements for access may be involved. The 1994 Master Plan references parcels contemplated for future acquisition. These parcels, particularly the forested slopes to the north and west, provide significant visual resources to the State Heritage Area. In fact, these parcels are critical in that they define the character of the total environment. These parcels should be preserved in their current, natural state.
Overview – Plan Summary

At a broad planning scale, OPID envisions development of the site to be designed in keeping with the context of Sumpter and constructed in the architectural vernacular of the local valley environment. Therefore, the final “build-out” of the site should appear to be a natural outgrowth of the community, given the park’s direct relationship to Sumpter. The outward appearance of new deposits, visitor services buildings and other buildings will be of a period industrial “shop yard” or historic documentation so the site is what a visitor might expect to see at the heart of a railroad and gold dredge operational area.

Vehicle and pedestrian access will be developed at the far south end through an entrance to Sawmill Gulch Road. Additional pedestrian entrances and egress will connect from the park to the downtown core on the northeast. Limited winter snowmobile routes will be kept. However, the existing entry southeast of the current OPID office will be relocated.

Display of artifacts at the mining shop yard.

The site’s main entrance and core development area will be located as shown in the 1994 Master Plan, directly west of the downtown at Austin Street. New pedestrian and vehicular access will utilize the Austin Street right-of-way. Secondary
Overview – Plan Summary

Development of the site will focus on two of the major attractions and related landscape features. The major attractions are the historic Sumpter Gold Dredge and the narrow-gauge Sumpter Valley Railroad. Additional themes and opportunities include interpretation of other types of placer mining, native plant communities and wildlife environments. Several "hands-on" interactive interpretive stations and activities such as gold panning will also be included.

While the park is currently open throughout the year, the dredge is open for interior viewing between April and October. Future development of facilities and programs in the park will extend the visitor season up to 10 months. OSP, SVRR, Friends of the Dredge, the City of Sumpter and other regional public and private partners will continue to work in cooperation to implement a broad vision for the site and the community.
Overview – Relationship to the Sumpter Community

The Site Development Plan shows improved pedestrian connections with the Sumpter downtown. Access to the park via Austin Street provides more direct integration with Sumpter's commercial districts. In the future, the park and its facilities can be used in conjunction with events in the City of Sumpter. Park management staff will continue to work with the citizens of Sumpter in coordinating community events. Staff will also work with the city to plan park construction activities. OPRD will continue to develop the partnership for construction of a 100-seat meeting and presentation space for park, OPRD and community functions. This facility, designed as an historic freight depot, is currently intended to be part of the train depot complex of buildings.

It is anticipated that at its full build out, the Park will serve 150,000 to 200,000 visitors per year. A joint effort between OPRD and the city will find solutions to seasonal heavy traffic and parking, site drainage and infrastructure development. OPRD will coordinate with Sumpter's proposed water system development and other infrastructure needs in relationship to the park's proposed development.

Sumpter Valley Dredge Heritage Area aerial view looking east toward Austin Street and future park entrance.

Early Conceptual diagram for the new park entrance.
The consultant team examined the site, explored opportunities and constraints and identified possible topics for interpretation. More in-depth program and interpretive story line development will occur as a future effort by OPRD. In keeping with the land use suitability discussed in the Master Plan, more detailed criteria were used to define various zones of the site. This information is further studied to determine more specific suitability for areas zoned for preservation, conservation or site development. Preservation and activity zones are as follow:

1. Pre-Dredge Landforms
2. Cultural Landscapes
3. Transitional Landscapes
4. Park Activity Areas
5. Surface Water Systems

Legend

- Park/Activity Zone
- Pre-Dredge Landforms (tidal freshwater forest or developed areas)
- Cultural Restoration Zone (Calving)
- Natural Restoration Zone (Wildlife Habitat)
- Transitional Zone
- Vegetation Enhancement or Buffer
On the pre-dredge landforms, removal of invasive, non-native plant species is important and restoration of native plant communities is suggested. Wetlands must be preserved and the forested areas must retain the character of pre-development times, both on and off-site. Wildlife habitat should be protected and restored or enhanced when possible. Perc features must be designed around these areas. Trail access to these habitat areas will be kept to a minimum. For a comprehensive evaluation of plant and wildlife communities, reference the 1994 Master Plan.

Pre-Dredge Landforms are areas of the site which do not appear to have been mined by dredge operations. These areas include meadows and flat areas of wetlands, forested slopes and areas that appear to be otherwise non-disturbed. Grades in these areas appear to be consistent or matched with what would have naturally existed.

Areas containing mature trees are all assumed to be second growth vegetation, even though the landforms appear to be intact. There do not appear to be original old-growth trees on site or on adjacent forested slopes, since most of the area was logged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The interpretive opportunities for pre-dredge landforms can address the fundamental ecological systems of the vicinity. Visitors can imagine what the Sumpter Valley must have been like in pre-agricultural times, prior to the era when cattle ranching was prevalent.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation

Pre-Dredge Landforms

Description
- Intact meadows and non-disturbed areas
- Intact landforms with second growth tree cover (both on and off park site)

Interpretive
- Landforms intact in a pre-dredge, pre-agricultural condition
- Basic ecological systems of this vicinity

Management
- Remove invasive non-native plant species
- Design park pathways around natural features
- Restore and protect wildlife habitat
- Limit trail access into habitat areas

The wetlands in the foreground are part of the site undisturbed by dredge operations.

Open meadow at core development area.

Wooded northeast property boundary.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation  – Cultural Landscapes

Cultural Restoration Landscapes are the intact dredge tailings and resultant ponds. These site features are remnants of dredge operations. The tailings, created by the sweeping motion of the dredge stacker, are extensive linear mounds of stone cobbles, in some places achieving heights of 14-16 feet. These landforms range from 170 to 700-plus feet long on the site and are on the average 95 feet wide. Tailings typically have steep side slopes with small, detailed ridges that are best observed in early morning or late afternoon when the light does not wash out the texture. The cobbled side slopes are highly unstable and not suitable for public access.

Between tailings, numerous linear and circular ponds have filled with water. The ponds range in depth from a few inches to ten feet or more. They too have steep, unstable side slopes. The ponds have become valuable habitat over time. Some ponds have open water while others have become filled with native riparian plants such as cattail, tule, willow and dogwood. Some of the shallower ponds have become dense thickets of vegetation.

The pond where the dredge is now located has the best opportunity for restoration of landforms. Vegetation should not be allowed to establish in this pond, in order to replicate the appearance of a working dredge environment.

The interpretive value of the tailings and ponds is to show the significant alteration of the original landscape and long-term effects of gold dredge operations. The extent of tailings can be seen for several miles in the Sumpter Valley, the vastness of the impact of dredging operations is staggering.

As cultural artifacts, the dredge tailings must be protected from disturbance as much as possible. Site development in the tailings is limited to only the railroad alignment, pedestrian trails and viewpoints. All pedestrian foot traffic must be kept to designated trails, in the interest of preservation of the landforms and public safety.

The dredge tailings have some woody vegetation in the process of establishment. Vegetation should be removed from the intact tailings in order to preserve the stark appearance of the tailing landforms. Lower shrubs and herbaceous plants on the lower side slopes work to stabilize the tailings and should be left in place.

The northeast corner of the site contains Montigan tailings, which are also steep-sided, elongated landforms. These landforms, however, had soil replacement as a part of mining operations and now sustain a vegetative cover of trees, shrubs and herbaceous grasses. The vegetation has wildlife value and should remain. Non-native vegetation should be removed. Grading necessary for the future railroad alignment may impact these landforms.

The area directly west of the dredge once had tailings, but was regraded over time. Tailings should be reconstructed in this area in order to complete the story of how the dredge moved through the site and created the pattern of landforms we now see.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation

Cultural Landscapes

Description
- Intact dredge tailings and resultant ponds
- Dredge operational remnants

Interpretive
- Alteration and long-term effects on landscape
- Evidence of how dredge equipment worked

Management
- Restore cultural landforms disturbed since dredging was halted
- Accommodate railroad, trails and limited pedestrian access
- Allow selective growth for slope stabilization
- Determine which areas are appropriate for removal of vegetation on tailings to reveal and sustain tailing landforms
- Restrict snowmobile use to maintained trails and roads off of the tailings and impact sensitive landforms

Snow accentuates the lobed, wind-drawn patterns of dredge tailings created by the sweeping action of the dredge stacker arm.

In the background, the area adjacent to the dredge stacker requires tailing to be reconstructed.

Lower shrubs and herbaceous plants at the base of tailing side slopes contribute to the stabilization of the rock and should be left in place.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation – Transitional Landscapes

Transitional Landscapes are areas which were once tailings or otherwise disturbed, but have been overtaken by native vegetation or modified in other ways over the years. Many of these areas have become valuable wildlife habitat for nesting and feeding. They should be enhanced where necessary to reconstruct tailings or create additional habitat areas, but should remain in an otherwise undisturbed state. Access should be limited and focused for interpretive purposes.

The interpretive message is that Nature has begun to reclaim portions of the site which, over time, benefits wildlife. This story is about new vegetation regimes becoming established, despite the degree of disruption that has occurred from mining activities. In addition, the story depicts how soils can accumulate over time and how seeds disperse to create new habitat. It is about the essential microclimate in combination with slope orientation, moisture and nutrients creating an environment that becomes conducive to the most opportunistic plant communities that adapt as pioneering species. This is a story of regeneration.

Wildlife benefits from "edge" environments of wetlands and uplands.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation

Transitional Landscapes

Description

- Disturbed areas, interfacing with pre-dredge landforms
- Revegetation beginning to occur at the interface of dredge tailings and non-disturbed areas

Interpretive

- Evolution of plant regeneration in the disturbed landscape

Management

- Enhance wetland/riparian habitat
- Limit trail access in wildlife areas
- Clearly delineate trails, overlooks and linkages between activity areas

Vegetation establishes well at the moist, low edges of remnant ponds.

Thickets of willows and reed canes disguise and create suitable wildlife habitat.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation  – Park Activity Areas.

Park Activity Areas are parts of the site that have been most heavily altered over time from grading operations and pedestrian and vehicular traffic. These areas are those closest to the town and are the most suitable for development. Some designated park activity areas have vegetation characteristics of the site, but no longer are natural landforms or tailings left from mining operations. These parts of the site are well suited to become programmable areas for day use. Uses include interpretive and picnic areas, parking, buildings, general circulation and other uses outlined in the Master Plan program as the core development area.

Some tailings will be reconstructed by the pond and dredge area. Visitors who do not have time or the ability to take an extended trip through the site can experience first-hand the characteristics of these landforms. In addition, the story of the dredge will be more complete if replicas of tailings are constructed at the stacker end. Visitors can better understand how the equipment influenced the landscape.

In these program areas, it is desirable to have controlled pedestrian access to and from destination points. Trails can be clearly defined using site materials which blend with the surrounding environment. Native vegetation can be used for erosion control, bank stabilization, shade, routing of pedestrians, screening of parking and spatial definition of use areas. Trails in the core development area will be barrier-free and accessible to persons in wheelchairs. More information regarding the development of the site and facilities is contained in Section III of this document.

Interpretive opportunities for this part of the site include the dredge and its related interpretive outdoor area, artifacts and programmable gathering areas. The interpretive stories are informative and colorful and should be well represented through the use of the dredge equipment, artifacts and interpretive panels. A beach for gold panning is a tactile and interactive way to appreciate the natural resources, and educate the public about this aspect of mining activities.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation

Park Activity Areas

Description
- Program use areas, including dredge, railroad and depots and visitor services building
- Visitor panning area, and creek adjacent to gold dredge
- Accessible shoreline along panning area
- Picnic shelter and picnic facilities

Interpretive
- Dredge: visitors center, interpretive outdoor area, mining artifacts display and programmable gathering areas
- Sumpter Valley Railroad: freight train depot, water tower, shop yard and railroad artifacts display

Management
- Control access to and from destination points
- Clearly delineate trails, overlooks, linkages between activity areas
- Limit irrigation within visitor areas to picnic areas and vegetative buffers at edges of parking lots.

View looking north towards the main development area and entry to the dredge. In the foreground, park visitors take the opportunity to pan for gold along the enhanced shoreline of the shallow remnant pond.
Preservation, Conservation & Interpretation – Surface Water Systems

The Surface Water Systems through the site are made up of a number of creeks, oxbows and ponds. Over time, water has created channels through the dredge tailings. The main waterways are Crocker Creek, McCully Creek and the Powder River. The creeks frequently have steep side slopes and are often lined with thickets of riparian vegetation. The creeks tend to be fast flowing and cold. The creeks and vegetation should be preserved and protected from pedestrian impacts. Where bridge crossings occur, special attention must be paid to the revetment design, revegetation of the slopes and floodways so that water conveyance is not impeded.

Interpretive opportunities include the story of the water and its influences in the valley. The story could include the following:

1. an account of the source of the water as generated by the upper watersheds of the region;
2. the differences of how water historically moved and currently moves through the site;
3. how water was the means for deposition of gold as well as extraction, and
4. how water conveyed the rich soils displaced by dredge operations, and where are these soils now?

Still water of this pond captures a reflection of the clouds overhead.

A series of ponds have been formed through the activities of ambitious beavers.

Vista over Powder River to the west’s forested hillys.
Surface Water Systems

Description
- Ponds left as remnants of dredging and result of groundwater
- Streams, creeks, and rivers through park

Interpretive
- Original source of water as it relates to the geology of the valley
- Mineral conveyance of gold through streams
- Topical conveyance during dredge operations
- Impacts on fisheries and wildlife
- Regeneration of natural systems

Management
- Restore and preserve ponds disturbed by post-dredging activities
- Restore wildlife habitat of streams, ponds and wetlands of pre-dredge areas

This sharp bend of the Powder River illustrates how the water has cut its way around dredge takings.

The regeneration of habitat is well underway along the lower more fertile edges of this remnant pond.
III Park Development Program – Overview

Through several meetings with community representatives and public agencies, the program proposed in the 1994 Master Plan was discussed and refined. The following pages describe the physical improvements proposed to be included in the site development for Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area. For purposes of discussion, most of the activities and facilities are located in the core development area. Winter use snow park at the southern end of the park will be accessible through Sawmill Gulch Road. The balance of the site contains passive, dispersed recreational improvements such as trails, overlooks and railroad tracks.

Aerial view of the north portion of the park illustrates the strong connection of core development area and new park entrance to the City of Sumpter.
Park Development Program – Site Development Plan Overview

Legend
1. Park Primary Entry
2. Park Secondary Entry
3. SVRR Depots & Platform
4. Railroad Spur Line & Work Shed
5. Sumpter Valley Railroad Loop
6. Dredge Interpretive Center
7. Picnic Shelter
8. Information Kiosk
9. Dredge Gathering Area & Entry
10. Picnic & Rest Area
11. Mining Artifacts "Shop Yard"
12. Railroad Artifacts "Shop Yard"
13. Railroad Bridge
14. Pedestrian Bridge (typical)
15. Pedestrian Trail (typical)
16. Parking Beach
17. Michigan Demonstration Area
18. Observation Tower & Rest Area
19. Two-Way Driveway
20. Pedestrian Drop-off Zone
21. RV Parking Area
22. Car Parking Area
23. Overflow & Snow Park Parking Area
24. Reconstructed Dredge Tailing
25. Restroom
Park Development Program  – Site Development Plan Pedestrian Trail System
Park Development Program – Site Access, Vehicular Circulation & Parking

Vehicular access to the main entrance to the park from the Sumpter Valley Highway will be via Austin Street. The existing gravel road entry along Highway 220 will be abandoned and re-landscaped. Views into the dredge area from the highway will be maximized, while also screening parking lot views with low to medium height buffer planting.

The Austin Street entry drive will be coordinated with a crossing of the narrow-gauge railroad.

Some off-site grading of Austin Street will be necessary to meet the railroad track elevation. The railroad freight and ticket depots and dredge visitor services facility will flank the drive, appearing as though the city street system has been extended and the buildings were part of the town.

Compacted gravel parking areas will be developed in three locations. One each in the two core development area parking areas will help disguise visitors, provide closer access to the two main attractions, the railroad and the dredge, and reduce the site impact of one large parking lot. The parking area north of the Austin Street entry will accommodate approximately 53 cars. A bus drop-off area will be part of the entry drive leading to this area.

The south parking lot, accommodating 47 standard car spaces or 22 RV or trailer pull-through spaces, will be located on the west side of the railroad tracks. Parking and pedestrian bus drop-off at this area will be convenient to the dredge area. Signage will indicate that the larger recreational vehicles, buses and trailers should use this lot and a third lot further south toward Sawmill Gulch Road. This third lot will also work for overflow parking/day use and seasonal use for snowmobile parking. This entry will be accessed directly from Sawmill Gulch Road or through the parking area adjacent to the dredge.

The SVRRR narrow-gauge railroad track will enter the site from the southern boundary, stop at the depots and loop through the park. This loop will involve two creek crossings and several pedestrian trail crossings, as well as two vehicular crossings.

The park pedestrian trail system is an important part of the visitor experience. There will be designated primary and secondary trails. The primary trail system will link spaces within and between the two primary development areas. Trails of the core development area will be accessible to persons in wheelchairs. Trails will be composed of fine crushed rock delineated with a matrix of larger cobblestones over a 24” to 36” wide shoulder (see Design Detail Guidelines for typical trail section).

Secondary pedestrian trails will be extended through the larger remaining sites, giving a number of interesting vantage points and experiences of tailings, wildlife habitat, vegetation and waterways. There will be six bridge crossings over creeks and/or swales. Existing trails will be incorporated into new trail system to the maximum degree possible, since they tend to follow the flattest route, and have the least construction impact in developing the new system. Viewpoints and overlooks containing information will be located in strategic places to highlight the most significant site features. Trails and overlooks will be delineated with native rock (see Design Detail Guidelines for overlook section). Visitors will be periodically reminded to use the designated trails for safety and preservation reasons. Interpretive signage will be kept to a minimum and be of an appropriate small scale or in shelters.

At the west side of the site an elevated viewpoint will be provided through an observation tower. The observation tower will afford a great perspective over the site, where patterns of the landforms and waterways can best be appreciated. Interpretive information will be located there as well.
Park Development Program – Site Conceptual Circulation Diagram

Legend

- SVRR Train Track
- Pedestrian Trail
- Overlook Point
- River Centerline
The Core Development Area contains the main attractions of the site. The Sumpter Valley Railroad will be located in the north development area and the dredge located in the south development area. The freight and ticketing depots will be adjacent to the entry drive off Austin Street in the north development area. A water tower to service the trains will help define the site entry. Firewood stacks and utility sheds will be interesting site features. On the west side of the depot complex, a demonstration railroad car storage shed and spur track will be constructed. Railroad artifacts will be informally displayed in the "operational" shop yard. Themed interpretive signage and map of the park will be located in this vicinity along with other site furnishings. In the future, a new visitor services center, including restrooms and gift shop, will be built on the south side of the access road.

The south development area features the dredge, the dredge pond and resulting landforms. All dredge restoration and pond reconfiguration will reflect the original operations. Adjacent to the pond will be a small dredge visitor kiosk. The existing gift shop and interpretive display building (approx. 2,500 SF) will be moved to a temporary location across the entry drive from the main depot at the site for the future new visitor services building. The design development area will have space to display mining artifacts related to the dredge operation.

Directly south of the dredge development area, a small gold panning bench will be improved. This area will have the appearance of a natural creek-side bench with a walkable shoreline for access. Picnic areas will be developed at several locations. The main group and individual picnic area will be located between the two primary development areas, among a stand of mature Ponderosa pine trees. Site amenities include a group picnic shelter, picnic tables and trash containers. It is suggested that this area be lightly irrigated, not under oot- maintain a grassy cover able withstand foot traffic.

A secondary picnic area will be located at the south end of the dredge parking lot. This area overlooks wetlands and tailings and will be convenient to park users wanting closer access to their vehicles and the gold panning area.

At the far south end of the site, the day use area of Snow Park will be developed. This area will have parking, a public restroom and picnic tables. Foot trails of the site will connect to this area.
Park Development Program – Core Development Plan
Design Detail Guidelines – Observation Tower

This braced timber tower reflects a rustic style of architecture and use of indigenous materials. Open framework and overhanging landings contribute to the overall appeal of the simple form of the tower. The height illustrated is not necessary to gain a long perspective on this site.

Design Detail Guidelines – Picnic Shelter

The materials and detailing of the picnic shelter should remain in keeping with a rustic architectural style. This example illustrates an appealing simplicity of structure with an appropriate scale maintained in every detail.

Picnic shelter, Park View State Park, New Jersey. Photograph and drawings from plate II D-2 of *Park & Recreation Structures*, by Albert H. Good, Gilyhouse, 1930.
Design Detail Guidelines – Picnic Tables

Picnic tables in the designated picnic areas shall remain in keeping with the idea of using local materials. The table illustrated here is neither too machined in appearance, nor too rustic in nature. The scale of its wooden members and strength of its construction make this table suitable for the intensive use anticipated at the park.

Picnic unit, South Mountain Reservation, New Jersey. Photograph and drawings from Albert H. Good, Graphic Arts, 1950.
Design Detail Guidelines – Trails & Steps

Where steps are necessary along the trails, the use of low-key materials such as wood or rock and simple details of construction will preserve the quality of each natural-cultural environment. Trail steps in the more natural areas of the site must facilitate walking to just such an extent as to not corrupt the natural quality of the surroundings.

The boundaries of use areas and gravel trails through the stone tailings can be difficult to perceive. Therefore, use areas and trails should be constructed of compacted, fine aggregate and marked with larger 6-8" rocks at the edges. The shoulders of the trails should extend at least 18-36" to blend into adjacent cobbles. The color of the aggregate will be similar, but the contrast of texture should be very evident.

These stippled log rails illustrate the ability to achieve a look harmonious with the environment without sacrificing function. These could be used on the Morgan area trail, within the picnic areas or wooded areas of the site.

Talus and rubble rock section

This standard Forest Service detail for trail on rubble rock side slopes shows a method to stabilize the outside edges. Where aggregate material is to be placed on top of existing rubble, an interface fabric may be necessary to provide adequate base support and separation. Depth of aggregate will be dependent upon type of aggregate used.
Design Detail Guidelines – Overlooks

1. Typical Plan View at Overlooks

Overlooks shall be reinforced along the perimeter of the space to discourage park visitors from reaching down unstable side slopes. Viewpoints are located in both high and low places along the trail system to provide views into protected natural habitat areas as well as gaining the best advantage for more distant views.

2. Typical Section at Overlooks

The Forest Service standard detail for buffering edges of trails and pedestrian areas illustrates the relationship of large stone material along the top of slopes. For the park, stones should match the material found on site. Final dimensions and batter would be subject to site-specific detailing.

Mayer/Read

Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area
Design Detail Guidelines – Pedestrian Bridges

The material and scale characteristics of the foot bridges shall incorporate materials and detailing that maximizes compatibility with the surrounding landscape. Simplicity of construction form and pattern is of paramount consideration so as not to distract from the landscape. The structural components of the bridge shall be designed to maintain a good scale relationship with the natural elements of the site, without compromising the visible assurance of strength and stability to the park visitor. Bridges of stone or timber are more indigenous to this park than those of steel or concrete.

This example of a wooden foot bridge found on the Lost Lake Trail of the Mount Hood National Forest displays the simple, mildly arched form of laminated wood and rubber rails.
V Conclusion – Summary

This Site Development Plan for the Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area describes the design intent for further restoration and development of the park and its facilities. The stated guidelines for the protection and development of the parks' natural habitat areas, cultural landforms, the dredge and proposed structures and facilities further illuminate the 1994 Master Plan.

The photographs, illustrative plans and details contained in this workbook are meant to serve as a way to create visitor accommodations within this authentic cultural landscape setting. The intent is to create a meaningful and rustic visitor experience, so that the colorful history is conveyed and the characters come alive. It is also hoped that an understanding is gained of the relationship of natural resources and man’s alterations through the evidence of this unique heritage site. And, ultimately, if a visitor is observant, one can bear witness to the power of nature’s attempt to heal the landscape over time.
Appendix – Site Survey Plan
## Appendix – 1994 Master Plan Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Master Plan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Process</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumpter Valley Vicinity Map #1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nature Conservancy and the Data Base Program</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sumpter Valley Setting</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography and Geology</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soils</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Resources</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Background</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Development Concepts</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Site Conditions</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Conditions Map #2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Use Suitability</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Information</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Use Suitability Classes</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Use Suitability Definitions</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Use Suitability Percentages</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition Proposal</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Use Suitability Issues</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-Use Suitability Map #3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition Map #4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Opportunity and Needs</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Communities</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened, Endangered and Candidate Plant Species</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polustrine Emergent Wetlands</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assessment</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine Scrub-Shrub Wetland (Riparian)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation and Plant Communities</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Other Open Water Body Areas Between Dredge Tailing</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Area of Braided Channels Along Cracker and McCully Creeks</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man-Induced Alteration of Stream Beds</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetland Determination Summary</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurisdictional Wetlands</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife communities</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Habitat Area Map #7</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resource Map 1' = 320'</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resource Map 1' = 640'</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Proposals</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement Proposals</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilisation and Restoration of the Dredge</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Areas and Roads</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Other Outdoor Displays and Interpretation Projects</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Proposal Map #10</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depot Drawing Map #11</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Area

Appendix

Mayer/Reed
Appendix — Project Resources

Publications

An Illustrated History of Baker, Grant, Malheur and Harney Counties, with a Brief Outline of the Early History of the State of Oregon
Western Historical Publishing Company, 1902

Gold in Sumpter Valley
Second printing - December, 1968
Brooks Hawley, Sumpter Stage, Baker, Oregon

Park & Recreation Structures, Good, Albert H.,
Graybooks, Boulder, Colorado, 1950

Standard Drawings for Construction and Maintenance of Trails, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Engineering Staff
Washington, D.C., December 1956

Sumpter Valley Dredge State Park Master Plan,
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 1994

Photography & Illustration

Aerial & Historic Photography; Stephen Rich
Sumpter Historic Aesthetics Committee
Sumpter, Oregon

Watercolor Illustrations: Martha Kyle-Milward
Portland, Oregon, November 2000

Survey Data

Digital Orthophoto and Electronic Contour Survey
Spencer & Gross, Inc.
Portland, Oregon, July 2000

Site Survey Plan
Hanley Engineering
Baker City, Oregon, Summer 2000