

OREGON RECREATIONAL TRAILS PLAN
SUSTAINING TRAILS FOR ALL

2026



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Cover photo: Julie Zaremskiy

Message from the OPRD Director

I am pleased to present the 2026 Oregon Recreational Trails Plan. This plan is the product of more than two years of consultation and collaboration with recreational trail partners, land managers, and trail users across the state. It is the state's official plan for recreational trail management, serving as a statewide information and planning tool to assist local, state, federal, and private partners supporting Oregon's trails and waterways. It also identifies how the state's limited resources will be prioritized for motorized, non-motorized, and water trail projects throughout Oregon.

Recreational trails provide many benefits to the residents of Oregon, including recreation, health, transportation, community, and environmental benefits. They also make a substantial contribution to the state's economy. Each year, participation in recreational land and water trail activities by Oregon residents and out-of-state visitors generates over \$890 million in spending at Oregon businesses and creates \$14.5 billion in economic benefits for participants.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) takes an innovative approach to statewide trails planning by conducting simultaneous all-terrain vehicle (ATV), snowmobile, non-motorized, and water trails planning efforts. Public outreach was a key emphasis in the planning effort, including surveys gathering feedback from 192 recreational trail providers and 4,295 trail users. OPRD also partnered with the Oregon Trails Coalition to host trails plan workshops at the 2024 and 2025 Oregon Outdoor Recreation and Trails Summits and 8 virtual focus groups, allowing additional public discussion of trails issues and funding needs. We would like to thank everyone who took time to participate in the surveys and workshops.



The plan has identified seven statewide needs that impact all categories of trails in the state: funding and capacity; maintenance, rehabilitation, and stewardship; connectivity and access, information and signage; safety and user conflicts; reducing barriers to recreation; and balancing conservation and outdoor recreation. Recommended actions and investments are included for addressing these issues in the coming years.

OPRD will support the implementation of key statewide and user-specific planning recommendations through internal and external partnerships and OPRD-administered grant programs. My hope is that all Oregonians involved in the administration of recreational land and water trails take time to read this important document and make use of its recommendations to support your strategic planning.

Sincerely,


Director Lisa Sumption

Executive Summary



TRAILS ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF OREGON'S OUTDOOR LIFESTYLE AND RECREATION ECONOMY.

More than 83% of Oregonians walk, hike, bike, run, skate/scoot, ride horseback, snowshoe, cross-country ski, paddle, float, snowmobile, or ride all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) on the state's extensive network of land and water trails. Each year, these activities generate over \$890 million in spending at Oregon businesses and create economic benefits of \$14.5 billion for participants. Trails account for one-quarter of the value generated by all outdoor recreation in Oregon. Trail use indirectly supports Oregon's economy with a cost of illness savings of over \$945 million from increased physical activity and access to nature. In addition, trails often function as safe and sustainable active transportation facilities.

Participation in land and water trail activities has spiked in recent years. Walking or hiking, non-motorized water sports, and biking are the top three recreational activities Oregonians started doing during the COVID-19 pandemic. These habits seem to be continuing; most trail users report the number of trips they take for their favorite trail activity has stayed the same or increased since 2020.

 NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS	 MOTORIZED TRAILS	 WATER TRAILS
TRAIL USE		
% Residents Participating		
80%	11%	21%
Annual Activities		
258 million	9.7 million	7.8 million
ECONOMIC IMPACT		
Annual Spending		
\$501 million <small>Backpacking, skiing, and biking only.</small>	\$276 million	\$115 million
Economic Value		
\$13.1 billion	\$581 million	\$785 million
HEALTH IMPACT		
\$872 million	\$51 million	\$22 million
FUN FACTS		
Walking and hiking is the top outdoor activity for all demographics.	ATV permit sales peaked in 2021 and snowmobile registrations peaked in 2006.	Top three new activity during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Increasing trail use is a positive trend but comes with increasing maintenance and operational costs for the federal, state, and local governments and private partners that own and operate Oregon’s trail network. In addition, growing maintenance backlogs, social media exposure, wildfires and extreme weather events are further deteriorating trail conditions and crowding in some areas. Uncertain funding and staffing at multiple levels of government have left land managers and trail organizations struggling to keep up with increasing demand and deferred maintenance. Electric mobility devices like e-bikes and e-scooters have also rapidly become more prevalent on trails - 1 in 5 non-motorized trail users reported using an electric mobility device on trails in 2024 - creating both opportunities to improve trail accessibility as well as new challenges for safety and resource management.

STATEWIDE NEEDS

The 2026 Oregon Recreational Trails Plan identifies seven priority statewide needs for trails based on broad outreach to land managers and trail users. It also identifies user-specific needs for non-motorized, ATV, snowmobile, and water trail users. The plan recommends investment priorities and strategic actions trail partners can take to address each need.



1: FUNDING AND CAPACITY

Identify strategies and tools to address inadequate funding and resources for trail development, operations, and maintenance. Example strategic actions include:

- 1.** Prioritize statewide and user-specific needs identified in the Trails Plan when making funding decisions.
- 2.** Pursue and leverage multiple funding sources (e.g. state, federal, private/foundation, volunteer contributions) to support trail work.
- 3.** Expand opportunities for trails skills training.
- 4.** Use agreements, staffing collaboratives, and/or community-based stewardship models to fill gaps in staffing and maintenance.



2: MAINTENANCE, REHABILITATION, AND STEWARDSHIP

Prioritize maintaining the existing trail system. Expand partnerships and promote a culture of stewardship to stretch limited resources and preserve Oregon's trails legacy. Example investment priorities include:

1. Provide routine upkeep and clean, well-maintained facilities.
2. Complete major trail restoration/rehabilitation.
3. Fund trail maintenance equipment.
4. Expand partnerships and coordination with volunteer and other organizations.



3: CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS

Connect and expand existing trails to create a statewide network of diverse trail opportunities that provide easy access between neighborhoods and nature. Example investment priorities include:

1. Connect existing trails to communities, destinations, and/or to create larger trail systems.
2. Construct new trails and open new ATV riding areas.
3. Provide safe walking and biking routes and public transportation to parks and trails.
4. Create new or expand existing trailheads, parking areas and access points.



4: INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE

Increase availability of trail information to make it easy for Oregonians to recreate responsibly and identify trail experiences that meet their needs. Example investment priorities include:

- Informational signs at trailheads and access points (maps, difficulty level, surface, conditions, allowed/prohibited uses).
- Wayfinding signs along trails (direction, distance, land ownership).
- Online information to support trip planning and decision-making.
- Digital/GPS maps including public/private land boundaries.



5: SAFETY AND USER CONFLICTS

Promote responsible trail use and management to minimize safety/security concerns and support positive shared trail experiences. Example investment priorities include:

- Trail improvements to address safety concerns (e. g. user conflicts, natural hazards).
- Improvements for security or crime prevention (e.g. enforcement, lighting and security cameras at trailheads, operational or design changes).
- Education programs, materials, and signs regarding etiquette, rules, and/or safety.



6: REDUCE BARRIERS TO THE OUTDOORS

Reduce barriers to enjoyment of trails by all Oregonians. Increase accessible outdoor recreation opportunities for people with disabilities. Example investment priorities include:

- Assess existing trails for accessibility and universal design improvements and implement those improvements.
- Provide detailed information on accessibility of trailheads and trails online, in publications, and at the trailhead (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain).
- Increase engagement in the recreation planning process with low-income residents, households with disabilities, and diverse communities.
- Offer free trail access and free or low-cost gear and equipment rental.
- Provide information about public transportation to recreation areas.
- Offer group activities, events, volunteers/guides, and other social supports to encourage participation by new users and underrepresented groups.



7: BALANCE CONSERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Encourage sustainable trail design and usage to reduce the negative environmental impacts of outdoor recreation. Example investment priorities include:

- Adapt trails to respond to climate hazards (e.g. wildfire resilience and recovery).
- Maintain and protect natural, cultural, and historic resources (e.g. vegetation, erosion, noxious weeds, invasive species, water resources, wildlife habitat).
- Provide and highlight nature and wildlife viewing areas.
- Educate trail users on low-impact recreation practices/principles to minimize visitor impacts, particularly reducing trash and minimizing fire risk.
- Adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts. .

The 2026 Oregon Recreational Trails Plan will guide the use of Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) grant funds over the next 10-years to address these top priority needs.

The plan also provides information and identifies collaborative actions to inform trail planning and decision-making done by federal, state, local, and private partners.

The plan consists of overviews of:

- The plan development process (Chapter 1),
- Oregon’s existing trail network (Chapter 2),
- Data on trail use trends (Chapter 3),
- Economic and health impacts of trails (Chapters 4 and 5),
- Barriers to trail use (Chapter 6)
- Trail funding priorities (Chapter 7),
- Recommended actions and investments to address statewide and user-specific trail needs (Chapters 8 and 9), and
- Updated guidelines for the RTP and ATV grant programs (Chapters 10 and 11).

A companion “toolkit” of case studies and resources to assist recreation providers and trail partners in addressing these needs and implementing this plan can be found on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) website at bit.ly/RecreationToolkit.



Oregon Trails Toolkit

Prepared by: Oregon Parks and
Recreation Department

This document can be made
available in languages other
than English and alternate
formats, including but not
limited to large font and braille.

To request this document in
another language or alternate
format, please contact
Oregon Parks and Recreation
Department, General Park
Information by phone at
1-800-551-6949 or by email at
park.info@opr.d.oregon.gov



1

INTRODUCTION

The 2026 Oregon Recreational Trails Plan is Oregon’s ten-year plan for recreational non-motorized, motorized, and water trail management. The plan guides the use of Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) grant funds. It also provides information and recommendations to inform trail planning and decision-making done by federal, state, local, non-profit, and private sector partners across Oregon.

The plan provides an overview of Oregon’s existing trail network, data on trail use trends, the economic and health impacts of trails, barriers to trail use, funding priorities, recommended actions to address statewide and user-specific trail needs, and updated guidelines for the RTP and ATV grant

programs. Throughout the plan, case studies illustrating best practices or innovative approaches to common challenges and links to a companion “toolkit” of resources are provided. Toolkit materials can be found on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) technical resource website at bit.ly/RecreationToolkit.



[Oregon Trails Toolkit](#)

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) was given responsibility for recreation trails planning in 1971 under the “Oregon Recreational Trails System Act” (ORS 390.950 to 390.990). Under Federal Recreational Trails Program (23 U.S.C. 206) requirements, states must obligate apportioned RTP funds for projects that further goals specified in a current recreational trails plan or statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This plan builds on the 2025 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and broad, collaborative outreach to recreation trail providers and users. Throughout 2024 and 2025, OPRD conducted trail partner and user surveys, workshops, and focus groups to identify primary challenges facing trails, funding priorities, and recommended actions to address these

challenges. Detailed data and findings from the outreach conducted for the SCORP and Trails Plan are available in the following companion reports:

- [Oregon Trails: 2025 SCORP Summary Report](#)
- [Oregon Recreational Trails Outreach Summary Report](#)

For consistency with other statewide recreation and tourism planning efforts, this plan uses Travel Oregon’s seven destination management regions as the basis for regional analysis of trail needs. The seven regions are:

- Coast (Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, Coos, Curry, and western Lane and Douglas counties)
- Portland Metro (Multnomah, Columbia, Washington, and Clackamas counties)
- The Gorge (Hood River, Wasco, and eastern Multnomah counties)
- Willamette Valley (Yamhill, Polk, Marion, Benton, Linn, and eastern Lane counties)
- Southern Oregon (eastern Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath, and Lake counties)
- Central Oregon (Sherman, Gilliam, Jefferson, Wheeler, Deschutes, and Crook counties)
- Eastern Oregon (Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Grant, Baker, Harney, and Malheur counties)

Top priority needs and management concerns were largely consistent across regions statewide. An evaluation of priorities by region is included in the [Oregon Recreational Trails Outreach Summary Report](#).

TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION

In alignment with the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department’s Tribal Relations Policy (CUL.020.000) and ORS 182.164 - 182.168 (Government-to-Government Relations), OPRD recognizes the sovereign status of Oregon’s nine federally recognized Tribes and their deep cultural and ancestral connections to lands and waterways included in this plan. While participation from Tribal governments during initial outreach was limited due to competing priorities, OPRD is committed to ongoing coordination with Tribes throughout plan implementation. Future trail projects and policy updates led by OPRD and other trail partners should include early and meaningful tribal consultation to identify opportunities for cultural resource protection, Traditional Ecological Knowledge integration, and collaborative stewardship of trail corridors.

Map of Oregon Travel Oregon Destination Management Regions

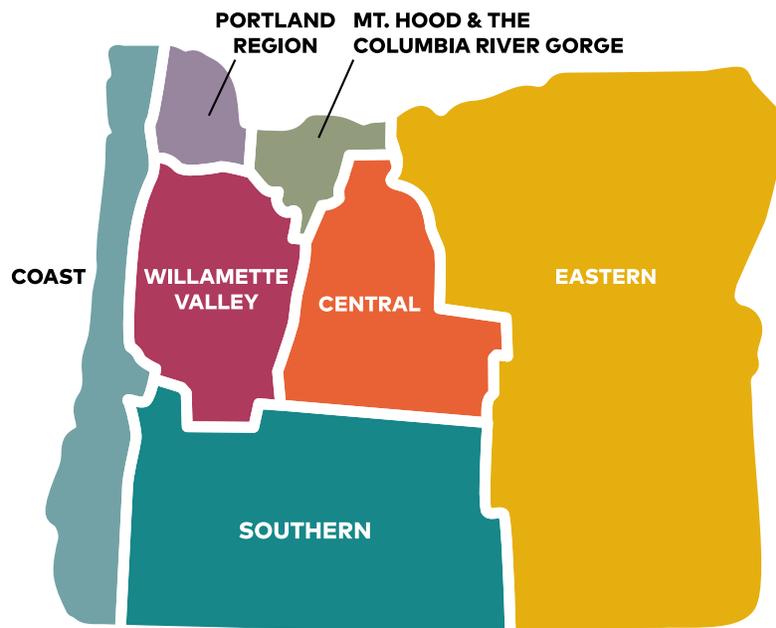


Figure 1 Map of Oregon Travel Destination Management Regions (Travel Oregon)



2

OREGON'S TRAIL NETWORK

The Oregon State Legislature passed the Recreation Trails System Act in 1971, directing OPRD to create a statewide recreation trail system in coordination with other government agencies, partners, and the Oregon Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (ORTAC). Both at the federal and state levels, decision-makers recognized the pressures of growing populations and interest in outdoor recreation. The Trails Act recognized Oregon's trails as essential to promoting public access to and travel within outdoor areas, as well as providing enjoyable and memorable outdoor destinations in and of themselves. The Trails Act inspired a new vision for trail advocates and public land managers, jumpstarting some of Oregon's first signature trails including the

Oregon Coast Trail, the Bear Creek Greenway, and the Corvallis-to Sea Trail.

Over 50 years later, there is still much work to be done! Many trails constructed decades ago require rehabilitation to meet growing demand, the design needs of new and evolving trail uses (e.g. mountain biking, adaptive mountain biking), and changing climate conditions. In 2022, the Oregon Trails Coalition, with support from Travel Oregon and OPRD, led a robust statewide stakeholder engagement process to identify 15 Oregon Signature Trails (13 non-motorized trails and 2 water trails) that serve as a modern addendum to the 1971 vision. Signature Trails have the existing infrastructure, support or potential, and momentum to provide access to iconic places and scalable (multi-day), world-class trail experiences with further investment. Visit the Oregon Trail Coalition's website for more information about Oregon Signature Trails: oregontrailscoalition.org/signature-trails.



NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK

Non-motorized trails are linear routes (not including roads and sidewalks) used for walking, running, hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and other primarily human-powered activities (including riding electric-assist bicycles, scooters, etc.). Trails can be narrow or wide,

CHAPTER 2: OREGON'S TRAIL NETWORK

1971 Oregon Recreational Trail System Map



2022 Oregon Signature Trails Map

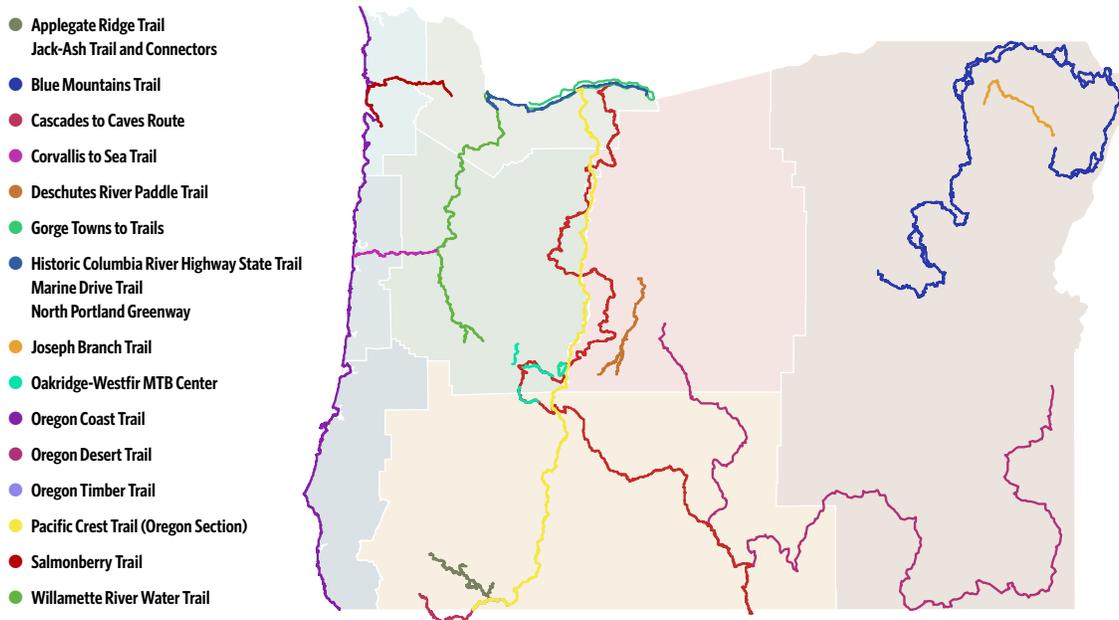


Photo (top): 1971 Oregon Recreational Trail System Map (OPRD)
 Photo (bottom): 2022 Oregon Signature Trails Map (Oregon Trails Coalition)

CHAPTER 2: OREGON'S TRAIL NETWORK

paved or dirt, in urban or wilderness areas, and can sometimes be used for transportation as well as recreation. Oregon has an extensive network of federal, state, and local non-motorized trails. Oregon is home to over 8,900 miles of non-motorized trail in National Forests, over 680 miles in State Parks, over 145 miles in State Forests, and over 775 miles in local communities. Many of Oregon's 100 designated Sno-Parks provide access to cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails in winter.



ATV TRAILS AND RIDING AREAS

For the purpose of the Trails Plan, ATV "trail" use was considered to be any ATV riding activities on public lands in Oregon, including designated and dispersed riding areas. Oregon has over 50 designated ATV/OHV riding areas with staging areas. These areas receive funding from fuel taxes and ATV permit sales. In 2023, 60% of ATV funds were allocated to operations and maintenance and 25% to law enforcement of OHV riding areas. Remaining funds went to other programs such as safety education, development, and Emergency Medical Services.

Oregon State Forests are home to over 500 miles of motorized trails. Along the coast, Oregon has over 7,500 acres of sand dunes from Coos Bay to Tillamook open to all Classes



CASE STUDY

MAINTAINING ATV ACCESS IN THE OREGON DUNES

The Siuslaw National Forest receives ATV operations and maintenance grant funding for motorized facilities and trails in the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area (ODNRA). In addition, the Forest periodically applies to RTP for funding to hire contractors to complete major restoration projects beyond their normal maintenance capacity.

Photo: Side-by-side ATV in Oregon Dunes. (OPRD)

of ATVs. Across the state, ATV destination areas support local economies with ATV rentals, campgrounds, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses that serve riders. The Coast Range, Cascades, Central Oregon and NE Oregon have numerous trail systems, which serve local residents and are destination areas. Throughout the State and especially SE Oregon, there are numerous areas with dispersed use occurring on gravel roads, dirt roads and trails.



SNOWMOBILE TRAILS AND RIDING AREAS

Of the 100 designated Sno-Parks in Oregon, approximately 64 serve designated snowmobile riding areas. Snowmobile areas are generally maintained by local member clubs of the Oregon State Snowmobile Association (OSSA). A list of these clubs is available on the OSSA website: oregonsnow.org. A list of Sno-Parks in Oregon and the activities allowed at each location is available on ODOT's TripCheck website: tripcheck.com/pages/sno-parks.



WATER TRAIL NETWORK

A "water trail" is a designated route along a lake, river, reservoir, or bay specifically designed for people using small, primarily non-motorized watercraft. Federally designated National Recreation Water Trails in Oregon are the Tualatin River, Willamette River, and Tillamook County Water Trails. The Willamette River Water Trail and Deschutes River Water Trail were identified as Oregon Signature Trails by the Oregon Trails Coalition, Travel Oregon, and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in 2022. In addition to these designated water trails, there are many other water bodies in Oregon with non-motorized boating facilities and paddling guides supported by local land managers and partners.



CASE STUDY

PARTNERSHIPS MAINTAIN WINTER TRAIL ACCESS

The Oregon State Snowmobile Association (OSSA) and their clubs have agreements with National Forests to groom snowmobile trails, as well as Nordic trails in some cases. OSSA has received multiple RTP grants to purchase snowmobile groomers. Volunteer club members also conduct trail maintenance in the summer months to keep trails clear and wide enough. When trail restoration is needed beyond the capacity of volunteers, OSSA applies to RTP to hire contractors for heavy restoration.

Photo: Snowmobile trail grooming equipment (OSSA)



CASE STUDY

INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY ON THE OREGON COAST

The Oregon Coast Visitors Association works along with coastal cities and organizations to improve travel conditions and accessibility to the coast. Some examples of these programs are David's Chair, which allows anyone with disabilities to be able to reserve a Track Chair free of charge in many locations from Seaside to Gold Beach. Another program brings mobi-mats to coastal communities. Mobi-mats are recycled polyester mats that are anchored into sand and provide a stable, flat surface for wheels to roll on. This allows for those who need mobility aids or just a stable place to walk or roll on to reach the beach.

Photo: Mobi-mat providing accessible beach access (OCVA)



CASE STUDY

EASTERN OREGON SIGNATURE TRAIL PROVIDES WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCE

In 2021, after more than 50 years of community visioning, the Greater Hells Canyon Council (GHCC) publicly launched the Blue Mountains Trail (BMT) as the newest long-distance trail in Oregon. This Signature Trail consists of over 530 miles of trail and forest roads connecting all seven of northeast Oregon's wilderness areas and the communities of Joseph, La Grande, Troy, Sumpter, John Day, and Tollgate. BMT offers section- and thru-hike opportunities to traverse high mountain peaks, expansive intact forests, wild free flowing rivers, and deep gorges including Hells Canyon, the deepest river gorge in North America. Adjusting the route, refining maps and guides, monitoring trail conditions, and hosting maintenance work parties has been supported by multiple organizations and countless volunteer hours, demonstrating the vision and community partnerships that define Oregon's Signature Trails. GHCC's vision for the BMT is to demonstrate the ability of long trails to connect our world and the value of responsible recreation as a tool for environmental engagement, education, and advocacy.

Photo: Blue Mountains Trail (Philip Redding)



CASE STUDY

LAND TRUSTS SUPPORT CRITICAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS

For decades an informal trail wound through the basalt rocks surrounding Mosier and across private property to Mosier Creek Falls, leading to liability concerns. Over many years, Friends of the Columbia Gorge (FCG) Land Trust worked with City of Mosier and adjacent private property owners to acquire land, trail easements, and eventually construct a 3.5-mile trail from downtown Mosier to the preserve. Land acquisition work was funded primarily through private donations, and trail work was primarily completed by Trailkeepers of Oregon and volunteers. The plateau is part of the Gorge Towns to Trails initiative, which envisions a 200-mile trail network linking communities, promoting recreational access, and encouraging sustainable transportation options throughout the Columbia Gorge. FCG and USFS recently completed a project to gather feedback on impacts of trail use and inform planning of a new trail from Mosier to The Dalles.”

Photo: Wildflowers at Mosier Plateau Trail (Cate Hotchkiss)



3

TRAIL USE AND TRENDS

More than 83% of Oregonians use trails. Residents participate in nearly 275 million trail activities per year. Detailed data and findings on trail use and trends from the outreach conducted for the SCORP and Trails Plan are available in the following companion reports:

- [Oregon Trails: 2025 SCORP Summary Report](#)
- [Oregon Recreational Trails Outreach Summary Report](#)

 NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS	 MOTORIZED TRAILS	 WATER TRAILS
TRAIL USE		
% Residents Participating		
80%	11%	21%
Annual Activities		
258 million	9.7 million	7.8 million
ECONOMIC IMPACT		
Annual Spending		
\$501 million <small>Backpacking, skiing, and biking only.</small>	\$276 million	\$115 million
Economic Value		
\$13.1 billion	\$581 million	\$785 million
HEALTH IMPACT		
\$872 million	\$51 million	\$22 million
FUN FACTS		
Walking and hiking is the top outdoor activity for all demographics.	ATV permit sales peaked in 2021 and snowmobile registrations peaked in 2006.	Top three new activity during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

PARTICIPATION RATES

Non-Motorized: According to the SCORP, walking/hiking on local trails is the most popular form of outdoor recreation in Oregon, with nearly three-quarters (72%) of residents participating. Walking on local trails accounts for over half (54%) of all trail use in the state. Traveling to walk/hike on trails away from home accounts for another 22% of all trail use. Walking/hiking on local trails is the outdoor activity the most Oregonians started participating in during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2025 Trail User survey found that soft surface trails are most popular for walking/hiking - including among trail users with disabilities - followed by paved trails.

Riding bikes is the next most common trail activity, according to the SCORP, with 21% of residents riding on local trails and 14% traveling to ride on trails in other communities each year. Biking on trails is the third most common activity Oregonians started participating in during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2025 Trail User Survey found that the largest number of trail users biked on paved trails. Fewer trail users reported mountain biking on soft surface trails, but those who did reported mountain biking very frequently. One-third of mountain bikers report they ride trails once a week or more.

ATV/OHV: Motorized trail activities such as riding ATVs and snowmobiling make up 3.5% of trail use in Oregon (9.7 million activities). According to the SCORP, 11% percent of

Oregonians drive ATVs on public lands each year. ATV permit sales peaked in 2021 but have remained higher than pre-pandemic levels over the last several years. "Class II" 4x4 trucks and SUVs are the most used ATV/OHV based on the SCORP. "Class I" quads and 3-wheelers are the most used based on the 2025 Trail User Survey and permit data. Fewer trail users report riding "Class III" off-highway motorcycles in a typical year, but those who do report riding very frequently. Fifteen percent of Class III users report they ride on public lands once a week or more.

Snowmobile: Three percent of Oregonians snowmobile on public lands each year, according to the SCORP. Snowmobile registrations peaked in 2006 and have trended gradually downward since. This could indicate a decrease in snowmobile use associated with changing snow levels and other trends or reflect low levels of registration enforcement. Respondents who snowmobile are frequent trail users based on the Trail User Survey; 58% report snowmobiling once a month or more in a typical winter season

Water: According to the SCORP, one in five Oregonians (21%) participate in water trail activities such as canoeing, kayaking, rafting, floating, and sailing per year. Non-motorized water paddle sports are one of the fastest growing forms of outdoor recreation in Oregon and the second most common activity Oregonians started doing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Residents participate in 7.8 million water trail activities per year (3% of all trail

Percent of Residents Participating in Trail Activities

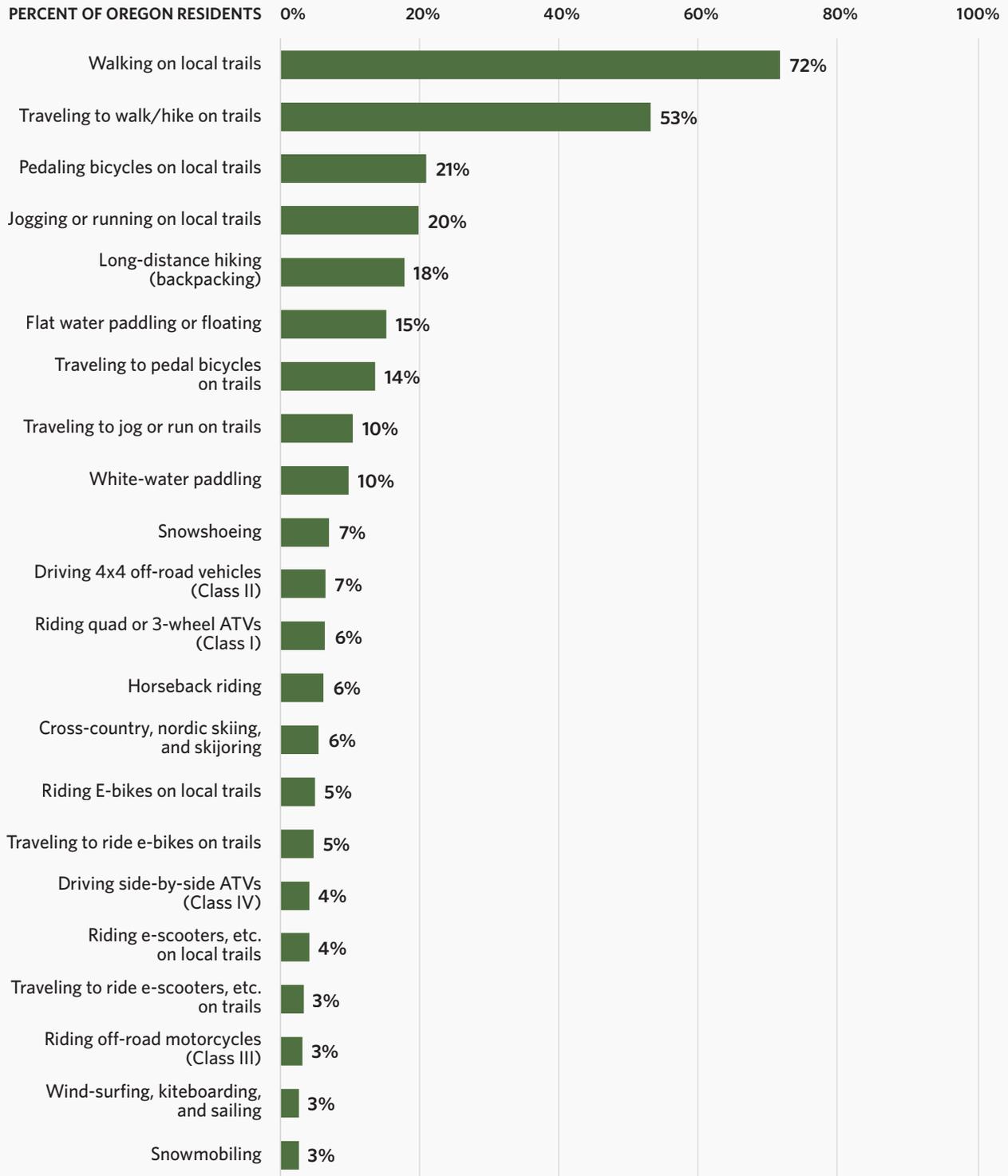


Figure 3: Percent of Residents Participating in Trail Activities (2022 SCORP Resident Survey)

Resident Trail Activity User Occasions

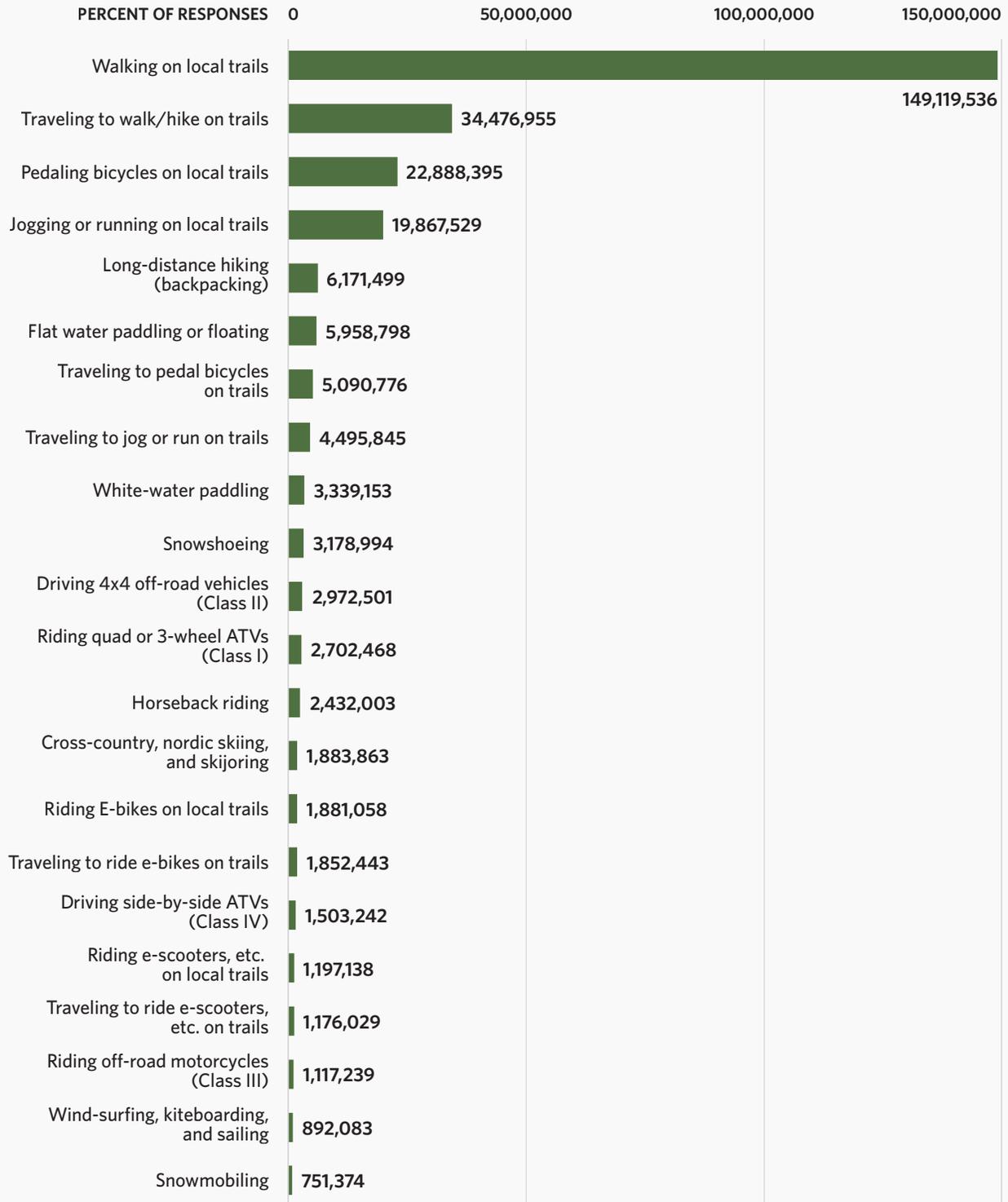


Figure 4. Resident Trail Activity User Occasions (2022 SCORP Resident Survey)

Trail Activity Participation in a Typical Year*

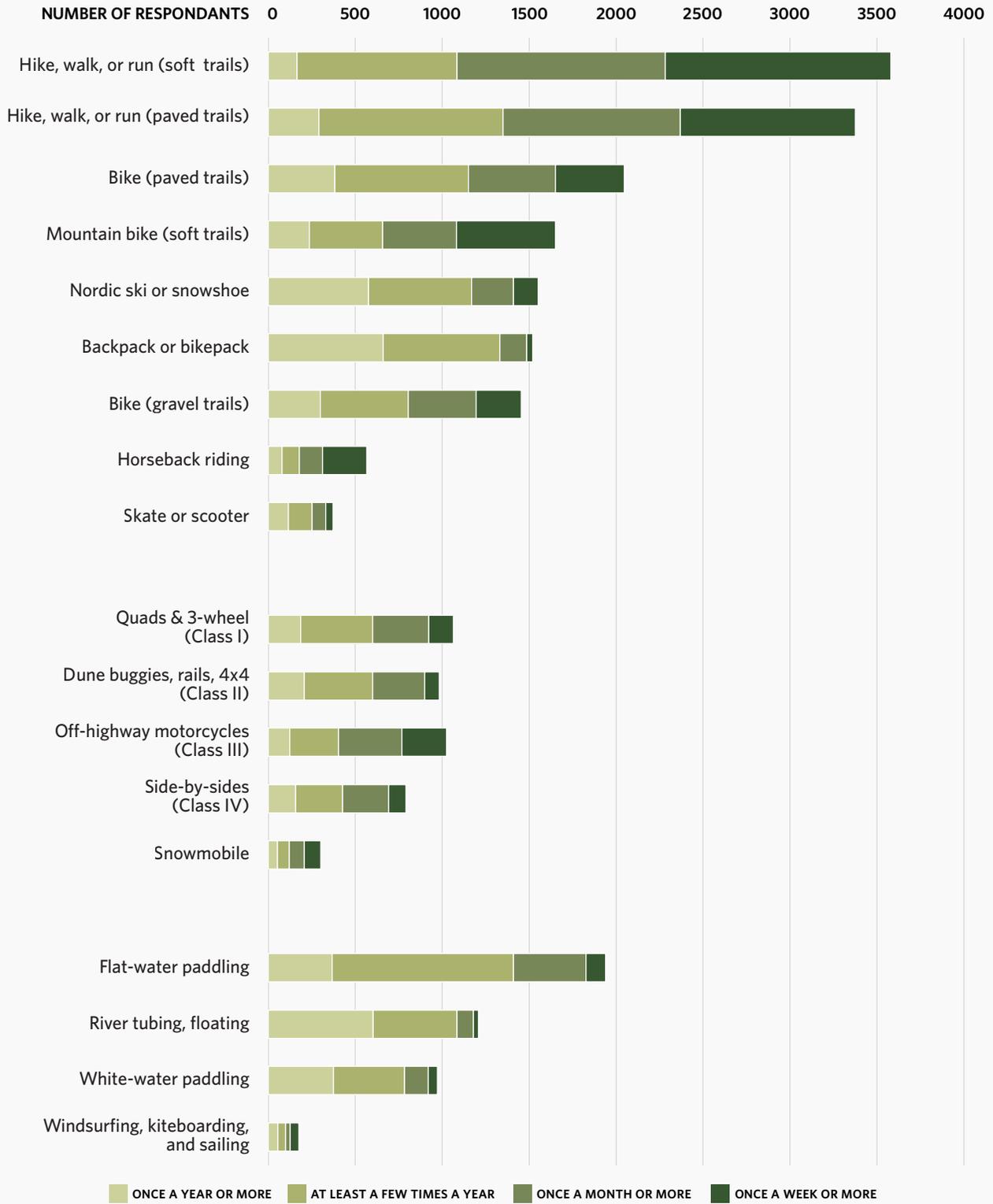


Figure 5 Trail Activity Participation in a Typical Year (2025 Trail User Survey). *Frequency of participation in winter trail activities (e.g. snowmobiling, Nordic ski or snowshoeing) is based on participation during typical winter months.

use). Based on the Trail User Survey, flat-water paddling is the most common water trail activity, followed by river tubing/floating, and white-water paddling. Most respondents reported participating in water trail activities a few times per year.

ELECTRIC MOBILITY

A major change that has occurred on Oregon's trail network since the 2016 Trails Plan is the rapid increase in availability and adoption of electric bicycles ("e-bikes") and other electric-assisted ("e-assist") mobility devices such as scooters, skateboards, monowheels, segways, and hoverboards. In a SCORP survey conducted in 2022, 5% of Oregon residents reported riding e-bikes on trails and 4% reported riding other e-assist devices on trails. The same survey found that e-bikes made up an estimated 13% of all bicycle use on local trails (over 5 million use occasions) and nearly one-quarter (23%) of bicycle use on non-local trails (2.7 million use occasions). The Trail User Survey found that the popularity of e-bike and e-assist devices is continuing to increase. In 2025, 1 in 5 non-motorized trail users (20%) reported using an e-bike or e-assist device on trails at least once in the last year. One-third (33%) of trail users who biked on trails in the last 12 months reported using an e-bike at least once. Over half (51%) of trail users who skated or used scooters on trails in the last 12 months reported using an e-assist device.

Widespread adoption of e-mobility devices offers a unique opportunity for more people

with disabilities and aging populations to participate in a broader range of trail activities. But it also presents a variety of safety, operational, and resource management challenges. Over one-quarter (28%) of Trail Partner survey respondents identified e-bike and micromobility management guidance as a priority resource needed to support their trails work. Recommended strategies to address safety and user conflicts related to e-mobility are discussed in Chapter 8, Statewide Priority Need #6 of this plan.

OREGON “E-BIKE” LAWS

In 2024, Oregon adopted a three-tiered classification system for e-bikes like many other states. In Oregon law (ORS 801.258), an “electric assisted bicycle” (e-bike) is a bicycle with an electric motor that:

- *Class 1: Assists only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to assist when the bicycle reaches 20 miles per hour*
- *Class 2: May be propelled by its motor without a rider pedaling and ceases to assist when the bicycle reaches 20 miles per hour*
- *Class 3: Assists only when the rider is pedaling, ceases to assist when the bicycle reaches 28 miles per hour, and has a speedometer.*

Only Class 2 e-bikes may have a throttle that allows propulsion without pedaling. The minimum age to legally operate an e-bike in Oregon is 16. Class 1, 2, and 3 e-bikes are considered a bicycle, not a motor vehicle, for most purposes. Some products marketed as “e-bikes” do not meet the Class 1-3 criteria above and would legally be considered a Class III all-terrain vehicle, moped, or motorcycle in Oregon.



CASE STUDY

IN OREGON STATE PARKS, E-ASSISTED BIKES ARE BIKES

In 2024, OPRD went through a public process to update administrative rules regarding where e-bikes are allowed in Oregon State Parks. Previous rules allowing e-bikes on trails over 8 feet wide were confusing to visitors and did not meet growing demand for recreation using e-bikes. The updated rules include stronger and clearer language around safe operation of bicycles, particularly around other visitors, pets, children, and equestrians. The new rules allow a person to safely ride Class 1, 2, or 3 e-assisted bikes on trails where other bicycles are allowed unless specifically restricted.

Photo: E-bikes parked at a trailhead (OPRD)



CASE STUDY

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS INFORM E-BIKE POLICY IN DESCHUTES NATIONAL FOREST

The US Forest Service (USFS) does not currently allow e-bikes on non-motorized trails in national forests. National forests may individually consider e-bike use in non-motorized areas through a USFS-led environmental analysis that includes public engagement. In 2023, the Deschutes Trails Coalition (DTC) convened a community conversation on potential use of Class 1 pedal-assist electric bicycles on soft-surface trails in the Deschutes National Forest to help inform future USFS led analysis. Interviews with community leaders, roundtable discussions, and town hall meetings explored concerns and pros/cons of various scenarios. This process provided community members with a shared understanding of the changes being considered and allowed for robust dialogue, sharing of perspectives, and relationship building across different trail user groups (e.g. mountain bikers, runners, equestrians, adaptive athletes). Deschutes National Forest used the resulting report to better understand the desires, needs, and concerns of trail users and to help inform their analysis and decision to allow Class 1 e-bikes on select existing soft-surface and paved trails currently designed for bike use.

Photo: Community meeting to discuss e-bikes (Deschutes Trails Coalition)

TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

TRAVEL DISTANCE AND DESTINATION

Trails are both an important local amenity and a travel destination. One quarter (25%) of non-motorized trail users report traveling less than 5 miles one-way to the trailhead they use most frequently. On the other hand, more than 80% of motorized trail users report traveling 20 miles or more one-way to reach the trailhead or riding area they use most frequently. Most water trail users travel 5 to 50 miles to reach their most frequently used water access. Travel distance to access trails is the shortest on average in the Columbia

River Gorge and Central Oregon regions and the longest on average in Eastern Oregon. The Coast and Central Oregon are the regions where residents reported participating in non-motorized, ATV, and water trail activities most frequently.

On average, trail users report making frequent use of trails close to home and traveling to other regions for trail activities a few times per year. Desire for more “close-to-home” trail opportunities was a common theme in focus groups and open-ended survey question responses, especially among mountain bikers and ATV users. Portland and Willamette Valley residents report traveling outside their home region for trail activities more often than residents of other regions, especially for ATV

One-Way Travel Distance to Most Frequently Used Trailheads

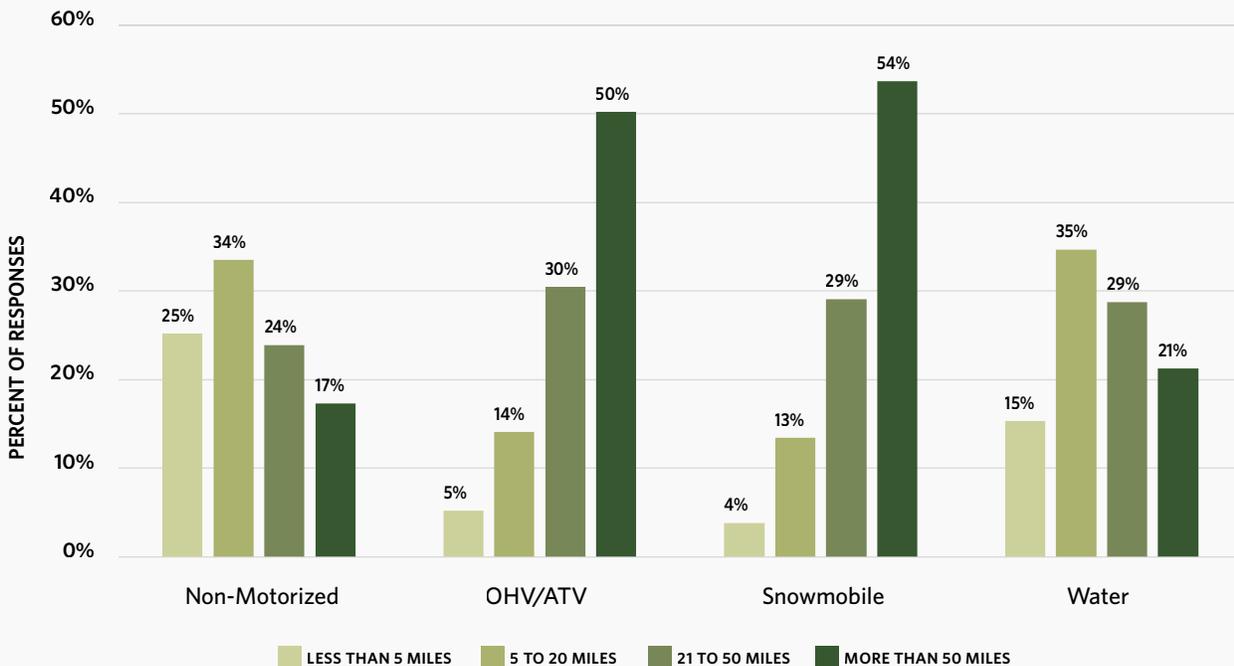


Figure 6: One-Way Travel Distance to Most Frequently Used Trailheads (2025 Trail User Survey)

and snowmobile activities. Coast residents travel to other regions for the majority of snowmobile activities.

ATV trail users were provided with a list of the 50 designated riding areas in Oregon and asked to identify up to 3 locations where they rode the most often in the past 12 months. Tillamook State Forest OHV Area is by far the most referenced, with 46% of respondents including it in their list of top three most used riding areas. The Oregon Dunes and East Fort Rock are the next most popular, with roughly one-quarter of respondents referencing each location as a top three most used riding area.

Most ATV users (82%) used at least one designated riding area and 75% used other dispersed riding areas in the last year.

SINGLE AND MULTI-DAY TRIPS

Nearly all respondents to the Trail User survey reported taking at least one day trip to participate in their favorite trail activity in the last year. Participation in multi-day trips for trail activities varied greatly based on the type of trail activity.³ 77% of ATV trail users participated in at least one multi-day trip in the last year, 74% of non-motorized trail users, 48% of snowmobilers, and 46% of water trail users.

³ Multi-day trips are defined as those involving an overnight stay away from home, even if the respondent only used trails one day during the trip.

Percent of Trail Users Taking Single-Day Trips

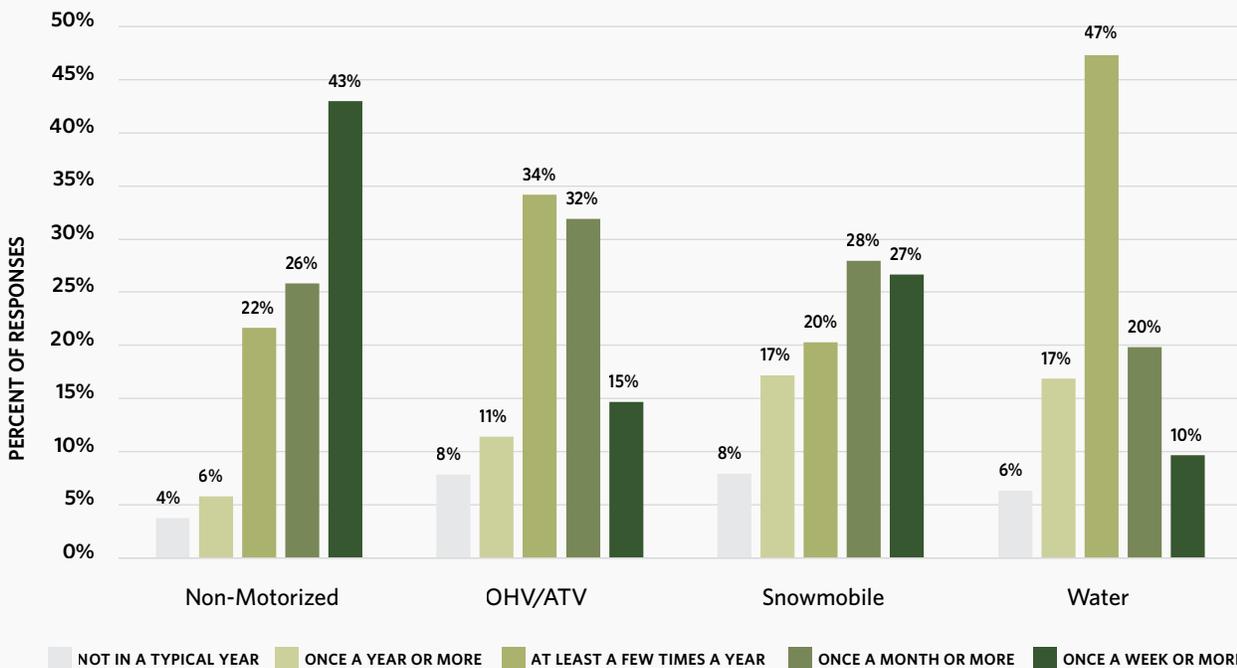


Figure 7: Percent of Trail Users Taking Single -Day Trips for (2025 Trail User Survey). Frequency of snowmobile trips is based on participation during typical winter months.

Percent of Trail Users Taking Multi-Day (Overnight) Trips

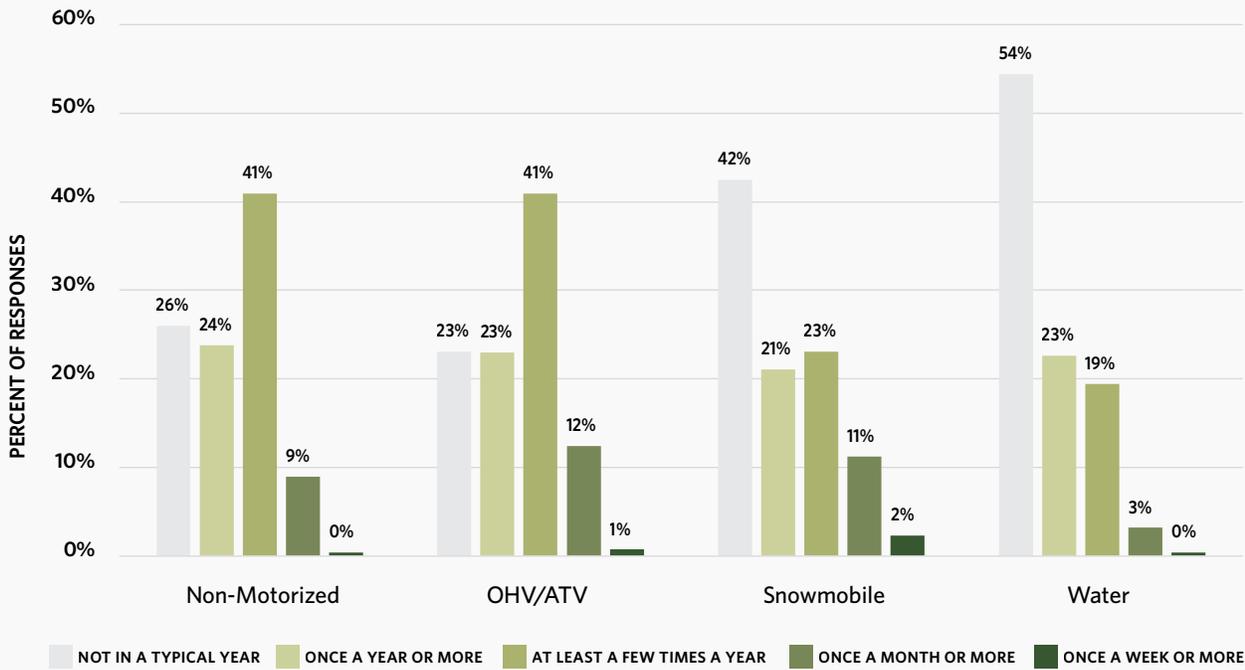


Figure 8: Percent of Trail Users Taking Multi-Day (Overnight) Trips (2025 Trail User Survey). Frequency of snowmobile trips is based on participation during typical winter months.

More than 80% of trail users reported that the number of single-day and multi-day trips they take to participate in their favorite trail activity has stayed the same or increased over the last 5 years (2020-2025). COVID era trends of increasing participation in outdoor recreation seem to be holding, with 40% of respondents increasing participation in trail-related day trips and 24% increasing participation in overnight trips. Participation in single day trips has increased the most for gravel biking (56% of users report increased trips), mountain biking (54%), and non-motorized winter trail activities (50%). Participation in multi-day trips has increased the most for non-motorized winter trail activities (41%) and backpacking/ bikepacking (40%). Trail users with disabilities

were more likely to report a decrease in single- and multi-day trips overall, but reported increased trips for equestrian, mountain bike, Class II ATV, and whitewater activities.

PREFERRED TRAIL CHARACTERISTICS AND EXPERIENCES

FAVORITE TRAIL ACTIVITY

The Trail User survey asked respondents to identify their “favorite” trail activity and share information about their preferences when participating in that activity. Respondents were instructed that their “favorite” activity could be the one they participate in the most often or the activity that they don’t do often but enjoy the most. Hiking/walking on soft surface trails is the favorite trail activity of 27% of respondents, followed by mountain biking (14%) and off-road motorcycling (11%).

Hiking/walking on soft surface trails was also the favorite activity identified by the largest number of trail users with a disability. Hiking/walking on paved trails, horseback riding, and side-by-side riding were more popular with users with disabilities compared to the overall sample.

Five Year Change in Participation in Favorite Trail Activity

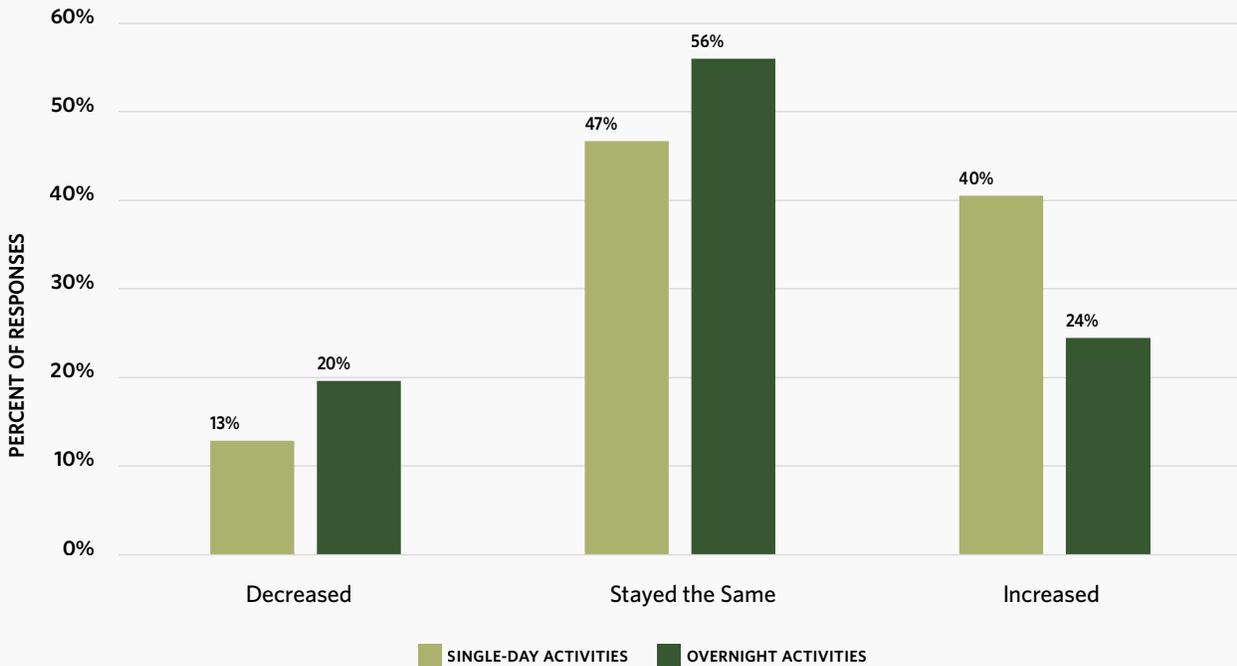


Figure 9: Five Year Change in Participation in Favorite Trail Activity (2025 Trail User Survey)

Trail Users' "Favorite" Trail Activity

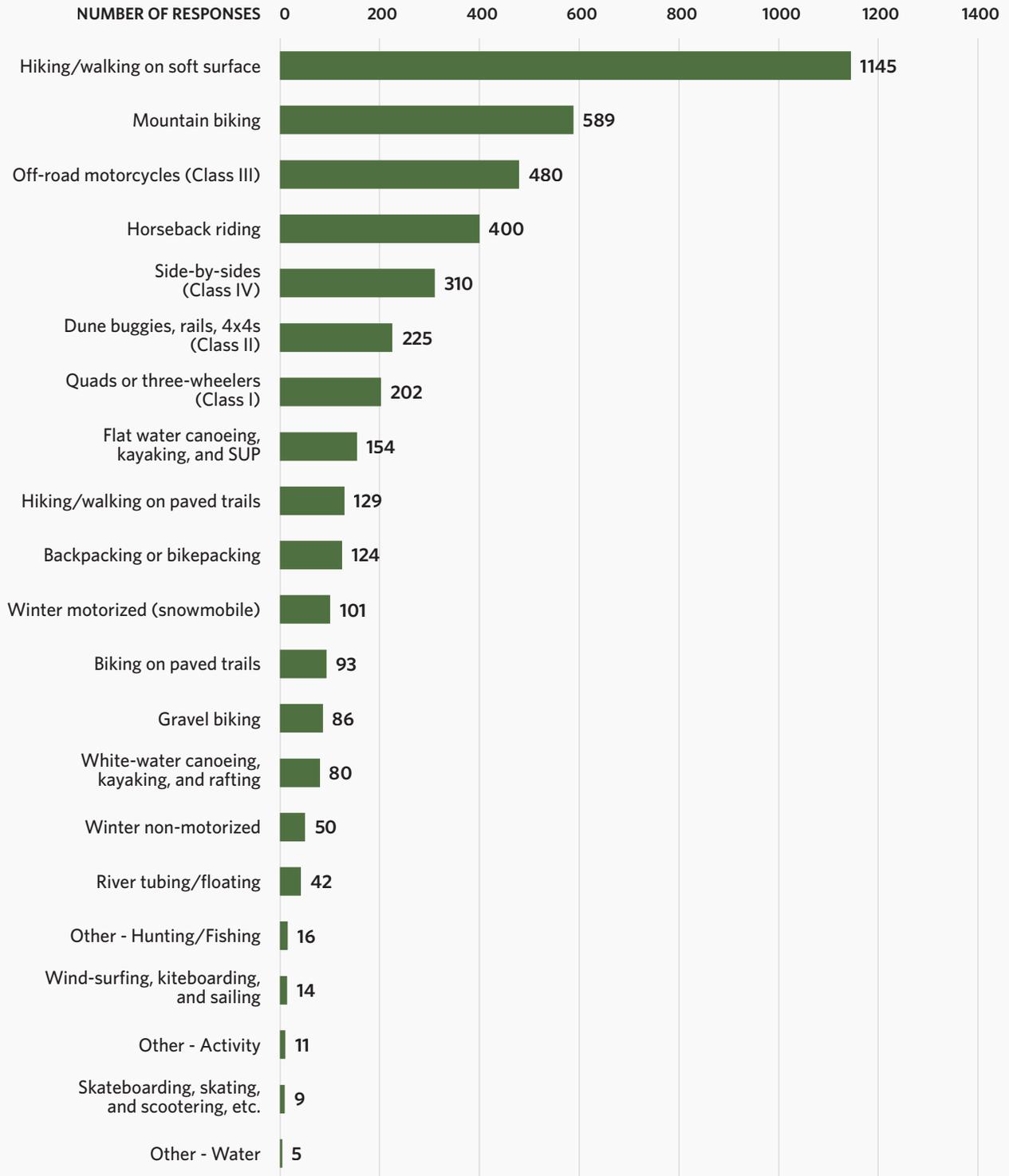


Figure 10: Trail Users' "Favorite" Trail Activity (2025 Trail User Survey)

SATISFACTION LEVEL

Overall, trail users responded that they are somewhat to very satisfied with the opportunities to participate in their favorite trail activity in terms of:

- Proximity: I can access trails/opportunities for this activity within a reasonable distance from my home.
- Quality: Trails/opportunities are well-suited to the experience I seek.
- Variety: I can access multiple trails/opportunities.

Users with disabilities were slightly less satisfied with quality and variety of opportunities.

DEVELOPED VS. DISPERSED TRAILS

Trail users' preference for trail experiences in developed versus dispersed areas is split, with 48% of respondents preferring dispersed areas and 52% preferring activities in their home or other community. Backpacking/bikepacking and hunting/fishing are two activities with a notable preference for dispersed areas.

Satisfaction with Proximity, Quality, and Variety of Experiences for Favorite Trail Activity

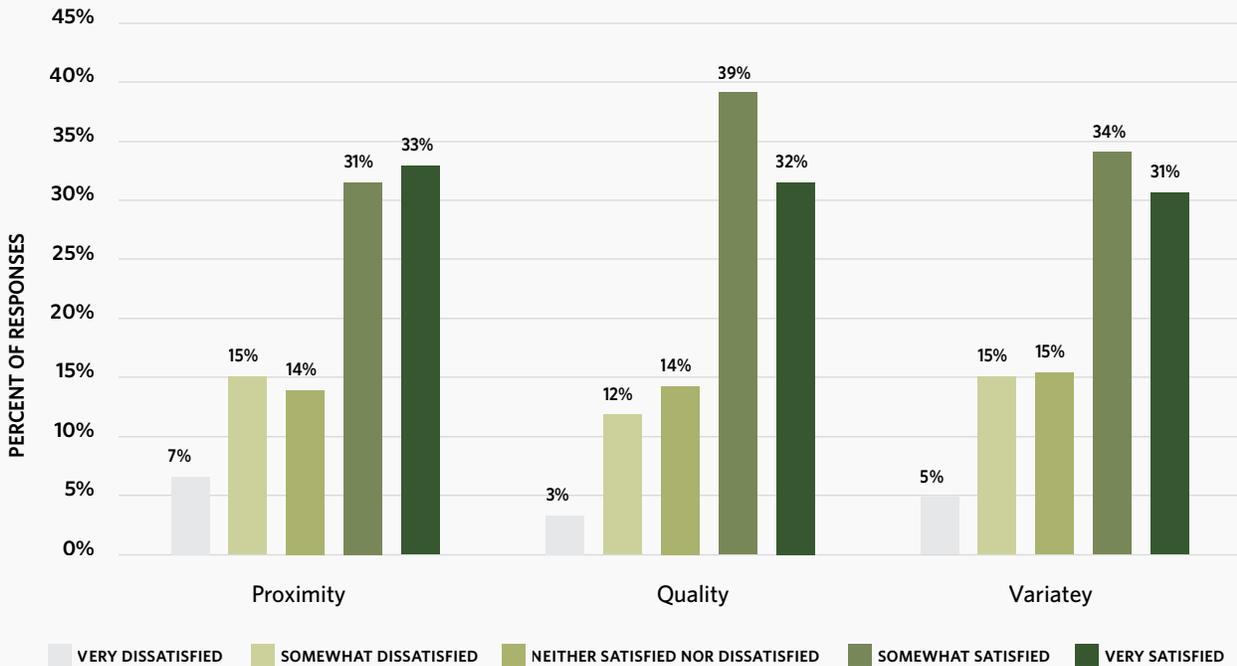


Figure 11: Satisfaction with Proximity, Quality, and Variety of Experiences for Favorite Trail Activity (2025 Trail User Survey)

TRAIL LENGTH

The majority (54%) of trail users reported a preference for 1- to 10-mile-long trails. Shorter trail lengths are generally preferred for walking/hiking and flatwater paddling or floating activities, while longer trail lengths are generally preferred for motorized trail activities, gravel biking, and backpacking/bikepacking. Slightly shorter trails are preferred by trail users with disabilities for some activities.

Preferred Trail Length for Trail Activities

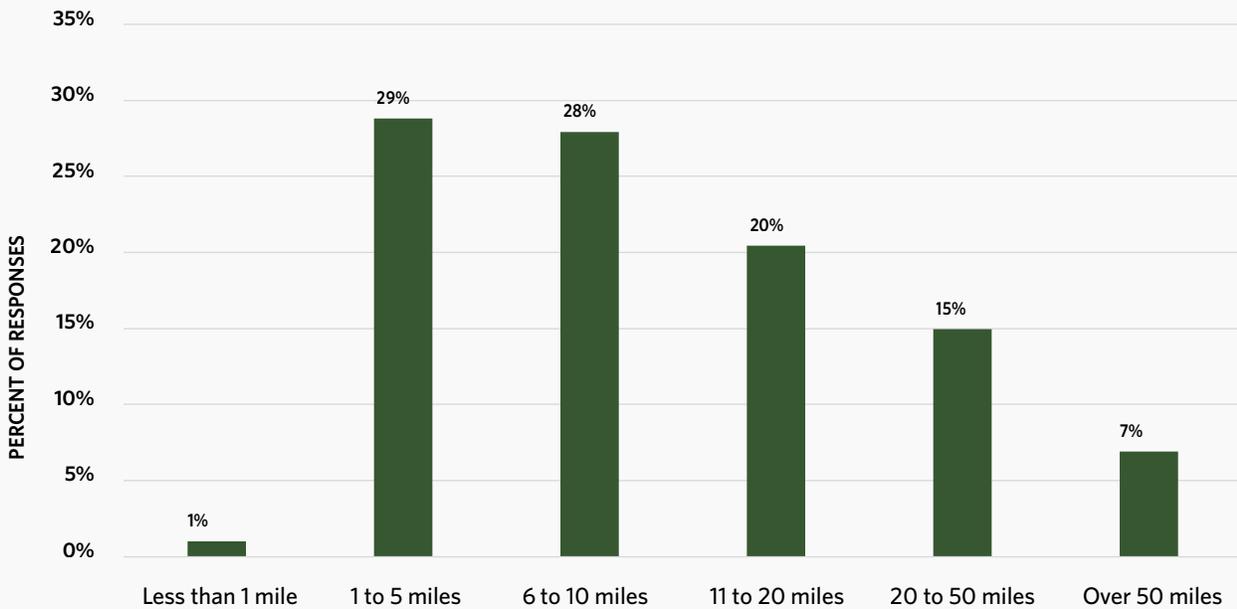


Figure 12: Preferred Trail Length for Trail Activities (2025 Trail User Survey)

TRAIL DIFFICULTY

Moderate, varied trails with some ups and downs and/or areas with mixed levels of challenge are preferred by 77% of respondents. Moderate difficulty trails are also the most preferred by trail users with disabilities. Mountain bikers (40%) are most likely to prefer challenging trails.

Areas with a mixed level of challenge are most preferred by backpackers/bikepackers (47%), side-by-side drivers (45%), off-road motorcyclists and snowmobilers (43%), and Class II OHV drivers (38%).

Because perceptions of trail difficulty are subjective, land managers should provide information on trail characteristics (e.g. surface, length, grade) online and at trailheads to help trail users make informed decisions.

Preferred Level of Difficulty for Trail Activities

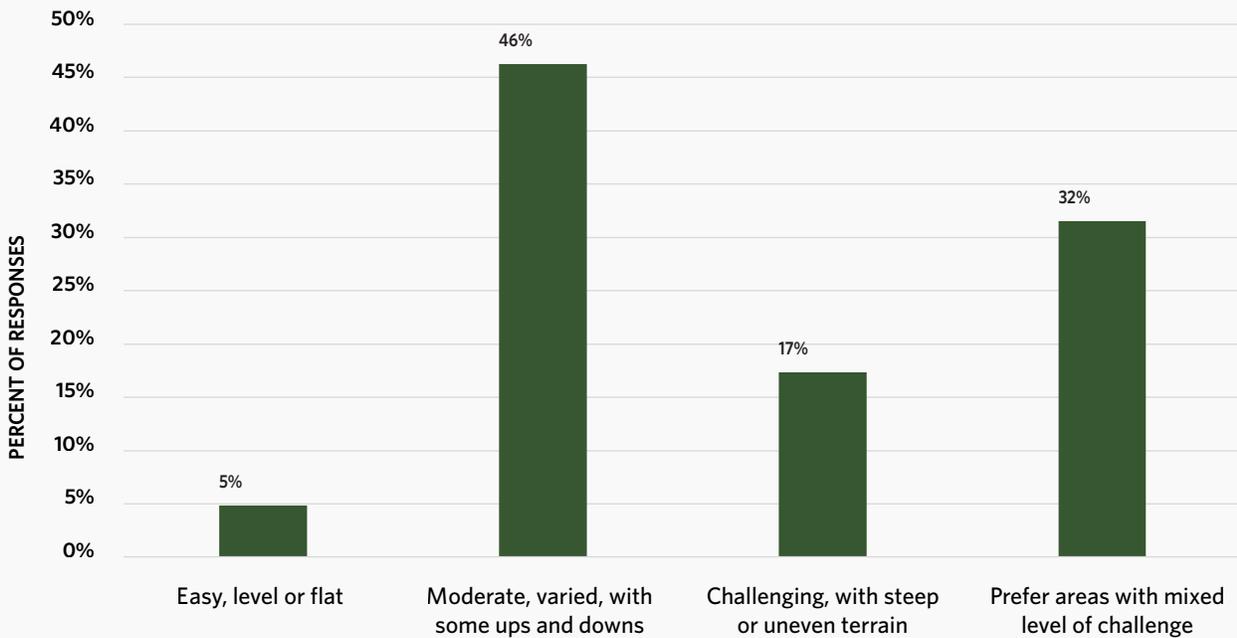
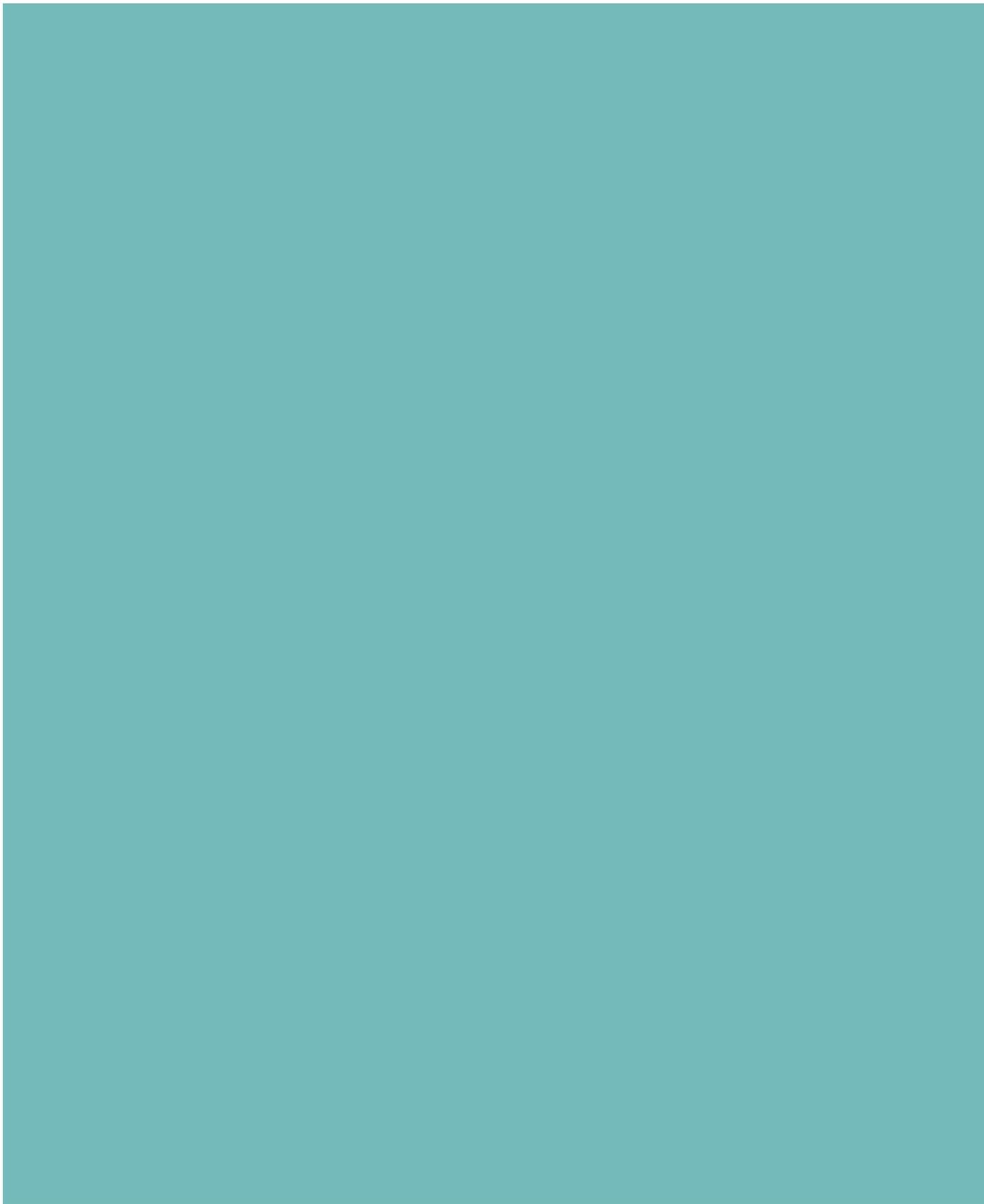


Figure 13: Preferred Level of Difficulty for Trail Activities (2025 Trail User Survey)





4

ECONOMIC IMPACT AND VALUE OF TRAILS

Trails are a key component of Oregon’s outdoor recreation economy. The role of trails in supporting Oregon’s economy can be measured in two ways:

- “Economic impact” is the amount of money residents and visitors spend on food, lodging, gear rentals, etc. while participating in a trail activity and the jobs/wages that spending supports that further impact the local economy.
- “Economic value” is measured as the maximum amount an individual is willing to pay to participate in an activity, minus the costs incurred in participating. In other words, it is the economic value of the

recreation activity to the participant above and beyond what they must pay to enjoy it.

Based on a 2022 resident survey, the SCORP estimates the annual economic impact of outdoor recreation in Oregon was \$16 billion in spending, supporting 192,000 jobs, and \$8.2 billion in wages. Non-motorized trail activities such as bicycling, backpacking, and cross-country skiing were estimated to generate \$501 million in annual spending.⁴ Motorized trail activities generated \$276 million in annual spending (\$247 million from ATV/OHV activities, \$28 million from snowmobiling). Non-motorized water trails generated \$115 million in annual spending.

The SCORP estimated the annual net economic value of outdoor recreation to Oregon residents at \$57.1 billion based on 2022 use levels. One quarter (25%) of the total economic value of outdoor recreation in Oregon comes from trail activities, with an annual estimated economic value of \$14.5 billion.

Local non-motorized trails generate over half (53%) of the annual economic value Oregonians receive from the trail network (\$7.6 billion). Travel to use non-motorized trails away from home accounts for over one-third (38%) of value associated with trail activities (\$5.5 billion). Water trails are associated with 5% of value (\$785 million) and motorized trails 4% of trails value (\$550 million from ATVs, \$30.5 million from snowmobiling).

⁴ Walking, hiking, jogging, running, e-micromobility, and equestrian trail uses are not included in the SCORP estimates of spending.

Annual Spending by Trail Activity

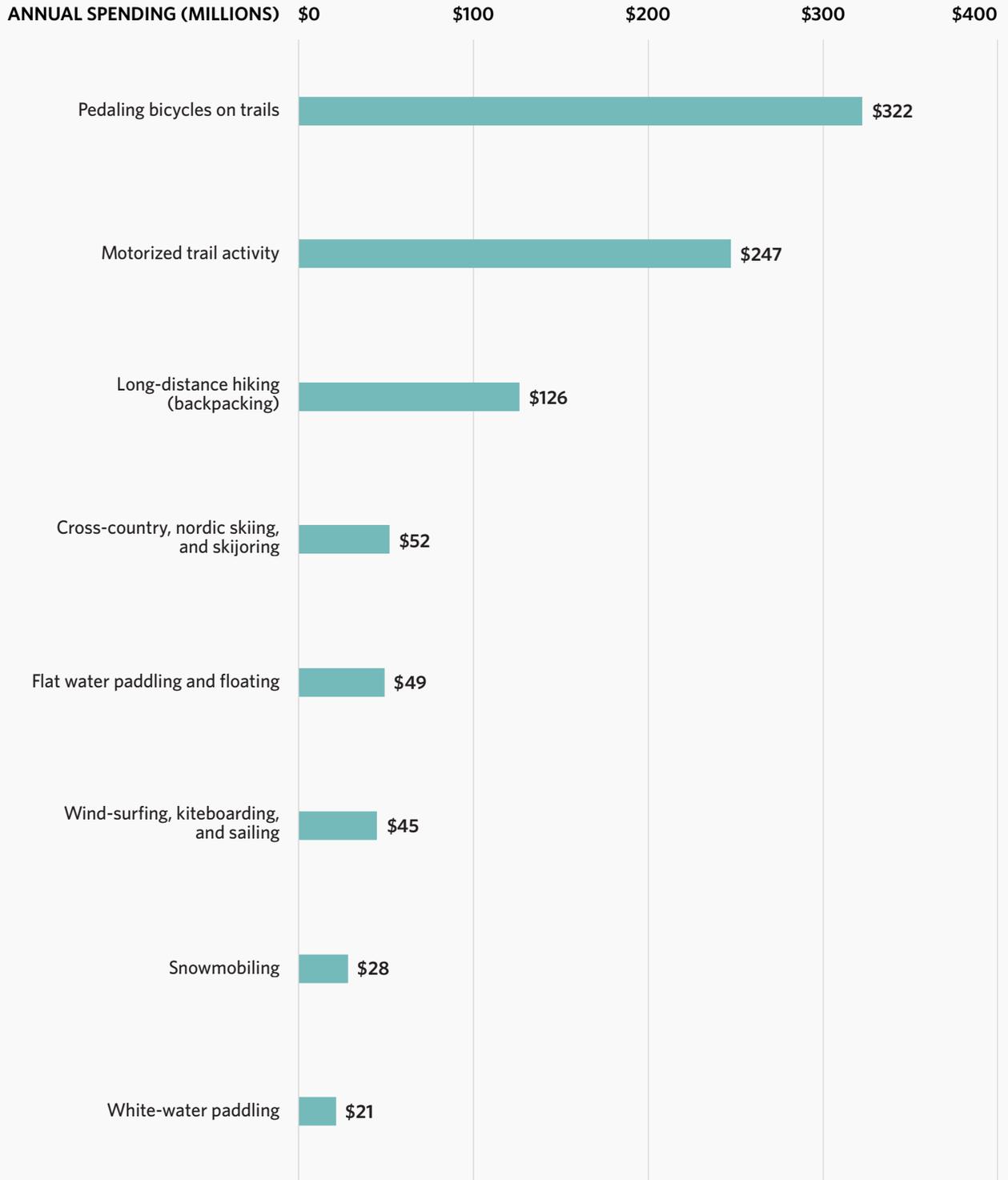


Figure 14. Annual Spending by Trail Activity (2022 SCORP Resident Survey)

Net Annual Economic Value of Trail Activities in Oregon

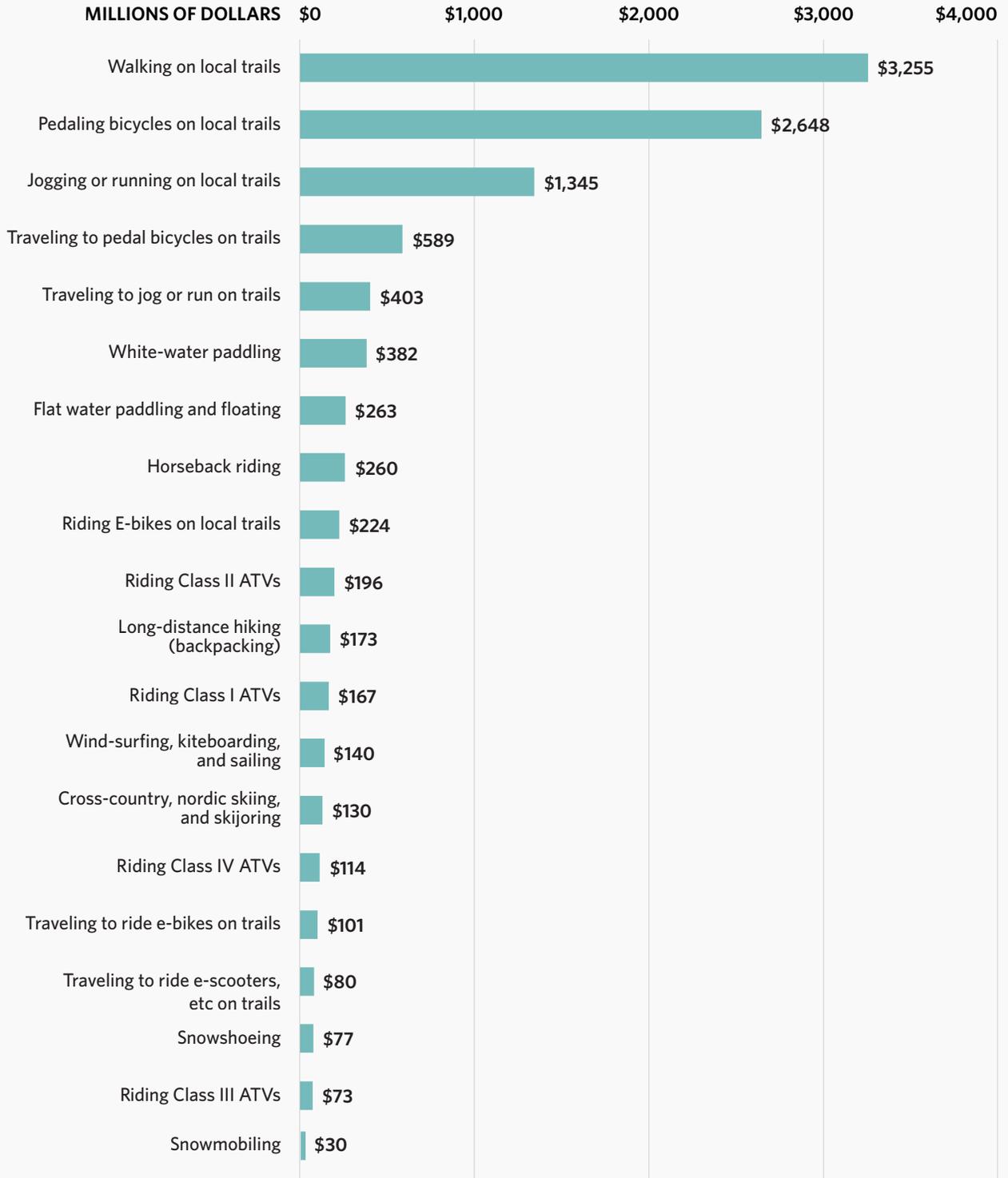


Figure 15. Net Annual Economic Value of Trail Activities in Oregon (2022 SCORP Resident Survey)



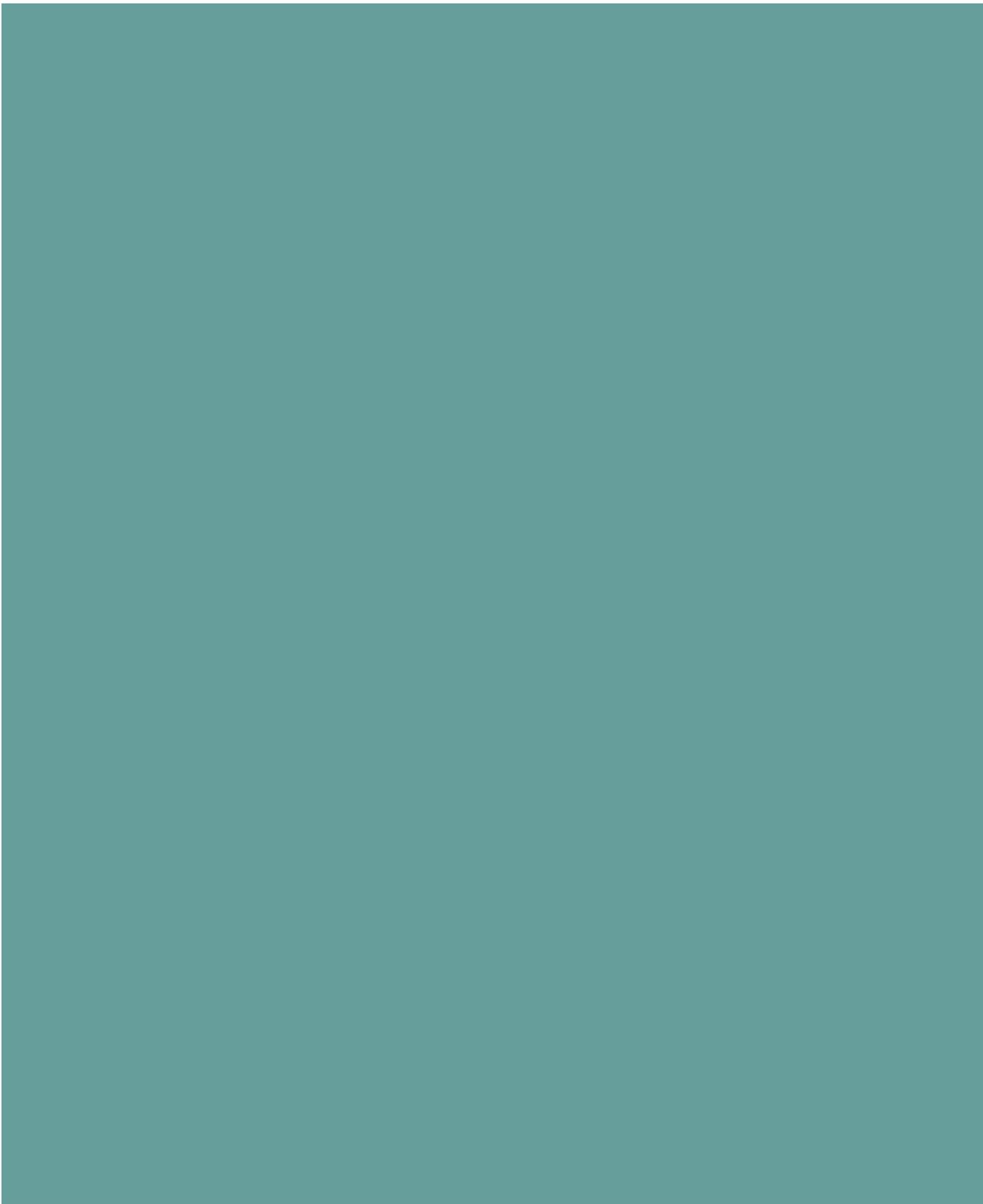
CASE STUDY

PARKING FEES SUPPORT TRAILS IN WORKING FORESTS

The primary purpose of the Hood River County Tree Farm is to produce and sell timber. It also serves as a multi-use recreational area supported by the County Forest Parking Permit program. Since its launch in 2022, all funds generated through the Parking Permit program have been directly allocated to the maintenance and development of trails and recreational areas. “The funding from parking permits and grants plays a crucial role in trail maintenance and improvement, much more than many people realize,” says Forestry Director Doug Thiesies. “The revenue generated from parking permits supports our county recreation trail staff, who also seek grant funding for trail projects. These grant funds are substantial, and with the support of HRATS and other volunteers, their impact is even greater.” Paid parking zones are clearly marked with signs and shown on the county’s online trail map. Permits may be purchased on mobile devices at staging areas in the County Forest.

Photo: “Parking permit required” sign with QR code at Hood River County Tree Farm (Hood River County)





5

HEALTH IMPACT OF TRAILS

Oregon's trail network supports outdoor recreation, access to nature, and physical activity; all of which are associated with positive impacts on physical and mental health. Oregonians spent over \$31 billion on health care in 2021 (Oregon Health Authority, 2023). Based on a 2022 resident survey, the SCORP estimates the total Cost of Illness savings from Oregonians participating in outdoor recreation is nearly \$3 billion per year. Trail activities generate an estimated \$945 million in Cost of Illness savings per year, 32% of the total health savings from all outdoor recreation by Oregon residents.

Local non-motorized trails generate over half (59%) of the annual health savings Oregonians receive from the trail network (\$555 million).

Travel to use non-motorized trails away from home accounts for one-third (33%) of savings from trail activities (\$316 million). Motorized trails are associated with 5% of savings (\$45.5 million from ATVs, \$5.6 million from snowmobiling) and water trails 2% of savings (\$22 million).

Total Annual Cost of Illness Savings from Trail Activities in Oregon

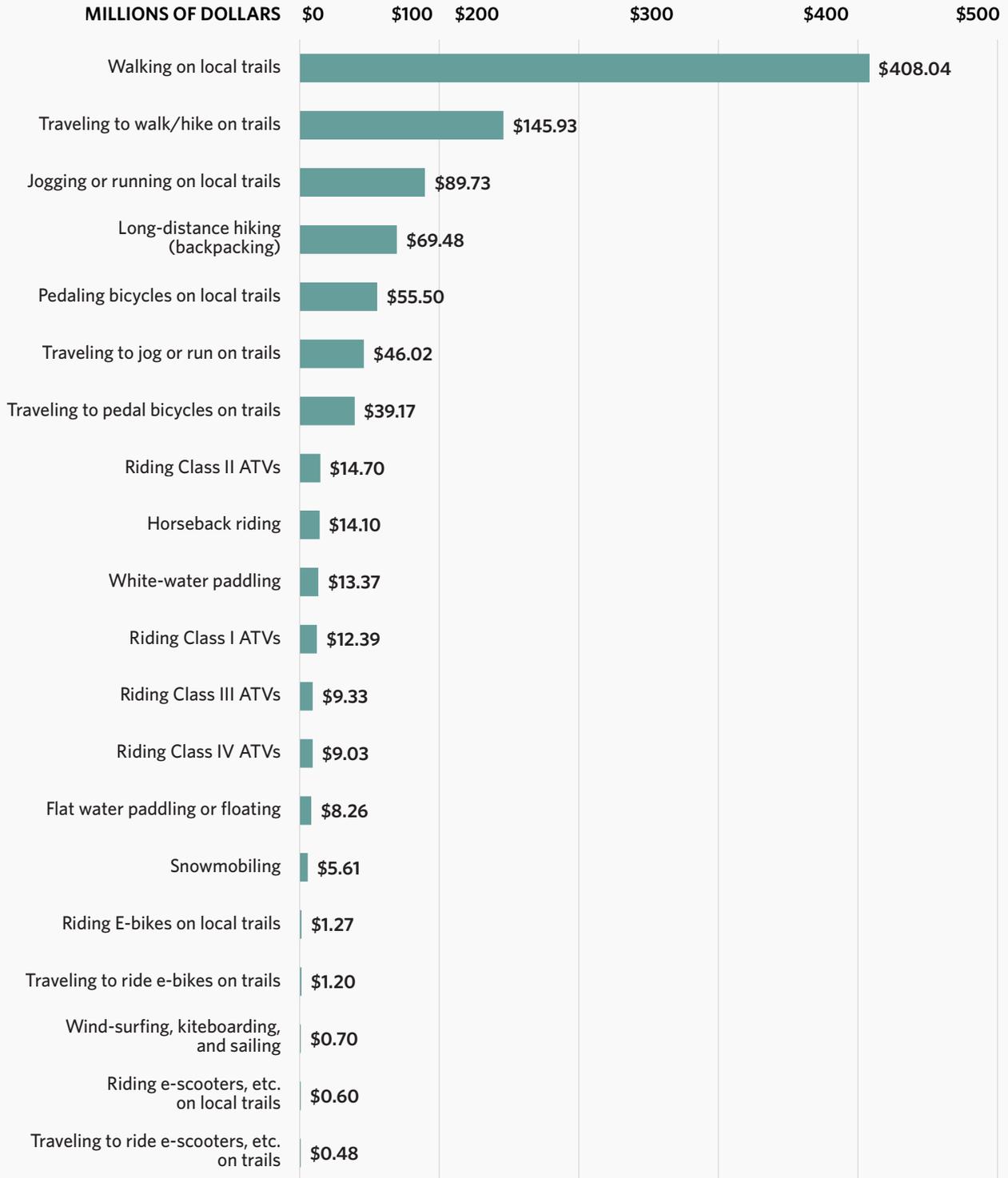


Figure 16. Total Annual Cost of Illness Savings from Trail Activities in Oregon (2022 SCORP Resident Survey)

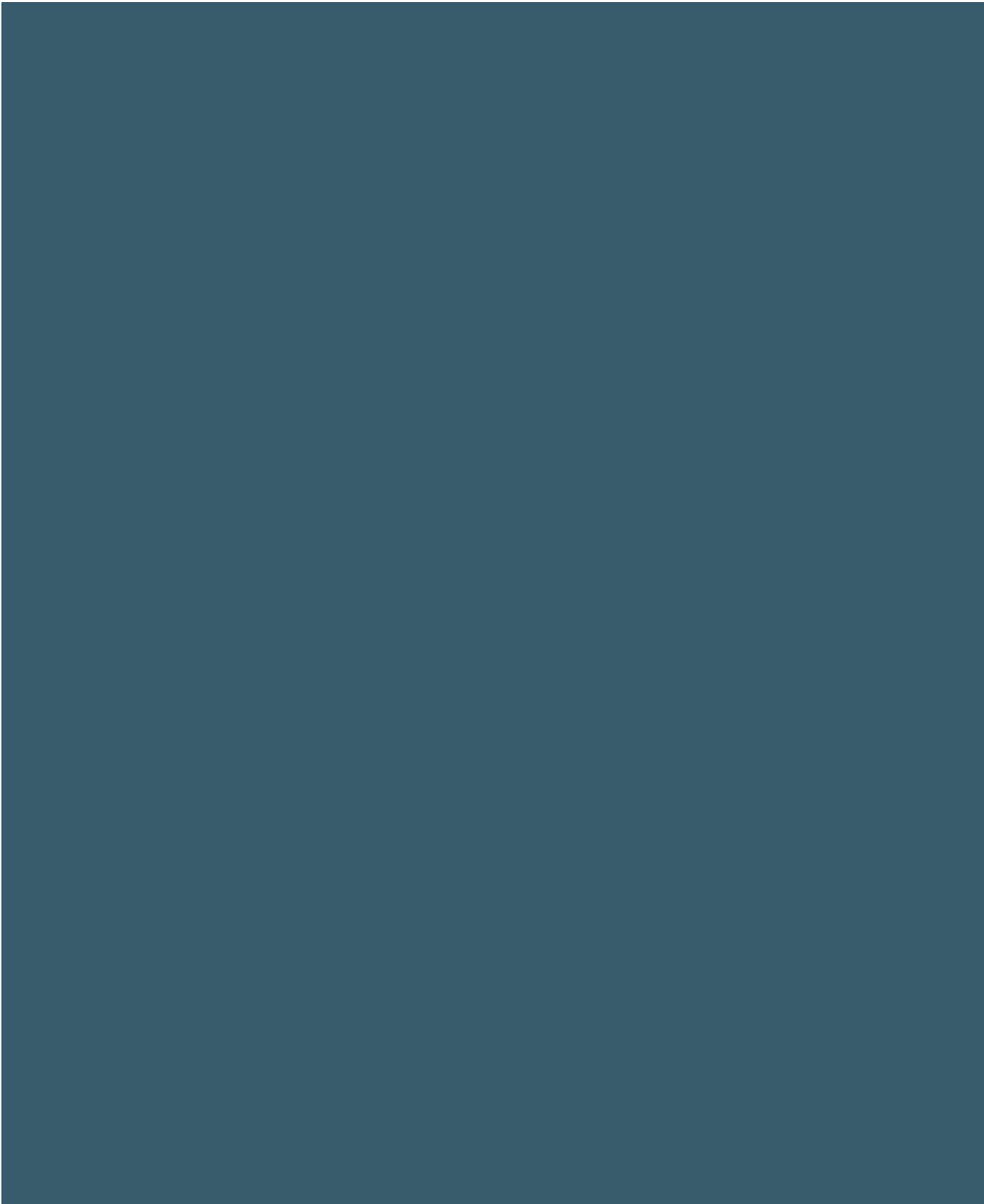


CASE STUDY

LEADING THE WAY TO TRAILS AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Healthy Klamath Coalition and City of Klamath Falls developed a Trail Wayfinding and Signage Plan to provide templates for clear, consistent maps and signs that make it easier for people to “find their way” to parks, trails and other destinations that support healthy lifestyles. As part of the Blue Zones Project, the plan was funded through a 10-Minute Walk Grant and Technical Assistance offered by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Trust for Public Land (TPL), and Urban Land Institute (ULI). Healthy Klamath also raised funds to purchase wayfinding signs, pet waste stations, and trash cans to improve the Link River, Wingwatchers, and Lake Ewauna Trails.

Photo: Crews adding signage in Klamath Falls (Healthy Klamath)



6

BARRIERS TO TRAIL USE

Walking on streets, sidewalks, and local trails is the most common outdoor recreation activity for all Oregonians within their communities, regardless of age, geography, income, or race/ethnicity. Walking or hiking on trails is also the most common outdoor activity Oregonians participate in outside their home communities across nearly all demographics.⁵ However, some disparities appear to exist in access to and participation in trail activities in Oregon.

Surveys conducted for the 2025 SCORP found that residents living with a disability or a household member with a disability, who are

over 60 years old, and/or living in suburban or rural areas participate in many trail activities at significantly lower rates compared to the overall population despite having similar motivations for recreating. These observations are concerning because it indicates barriers may exist to all residents accessing the same enjoyment, physical/mental health benefits, and other opportunities provided by Oregon's trail network.

Top barriers to outdoor recreation identified by multiple groups in the 2025 SCORP include:

- high cost of trips to visit natural areas,
- transportation to recreation areas is difficult,
- lack of accessible features for people with disabilities,
- lack of information about which locations have accessible features,
- lack of appropriate gear or clothing,
- lack of social support or people to recreate with,
- presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform, and
- personal health.

These barriers were reiterated in the Trail User survey and in Trails Plan focus groups conducted with trail users with disabilities and members of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Nature Network.

Walking/hiking on trails is one of the most common outdoor recreation activities because walking trails exist close to most

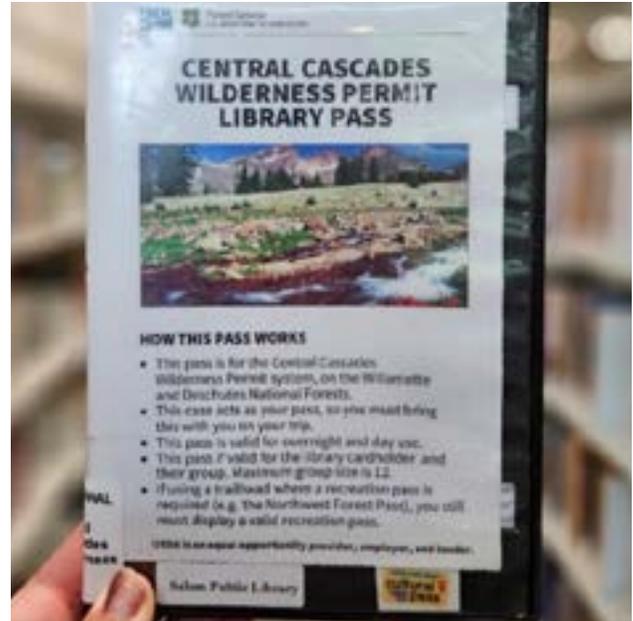
⁵ For Black/African American residents, traveling to walk/hike on trails is the second most common outdoor activity after ocean beach activities.

CHAPTER 6: BARRIERS TO TRAIL USE

residential areas in Oregon and can generally be enjoyed for free with no special knowledge or equipment. Other trail activities such as bicycling, snowshoeing, driving ATV/OHV, snowmobiling, or boating often require longer travel distances, parking fees, and/or expensive specialized equipment that can be a barrier to participation. Recommended strategies to address these barriers are discussed in the 2025 SCORP and Chapter 8 of this plan.



Photo: Adaptive mountain biker assessing trails in Central Oregon (COTA)



CASE STUDY

CHECK OUT FREE RECREATION PASSES

Many libraries in Oregon offer “Cultural Passes” for free checkout. At some libraries, this includes Oregon State Parks parking permits and Central Cascades Wilderness Permits. This is one way to reduce barriers such as cost or lack of internet access.

Photo: Central Cascades Wilderness Permit available through Salem Public Library (OPRD) Klamath Falls (Healthy Klamath)



CASE STUDY

WATER TRAILS SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY RESTORATION

People of Color Outdoors hosts Wednesday paddling trips on the Columbia Slough weekly in the summer, introducing families and children to water-based recreation in an accessible urban waterway. The Columbia Slough has transformed from a site where chemical and industrial waste was routinely dumped into a place of ecological restoration and healing, which makes it a particularly meaningful location for POCO's work with communities of color who have also experienced environmental injustice.

The POCO Guardians environmental education program (serving children preschool through fifth grade), in partnership with the Columbia Slough Watershed Council (CSWC), provides access to paddling for the first time for many participants. Participants learn paddling skills, watershed ecology and stewardship, and water safety while building confidence on the water. POCO also hosts educational outings at Whitaker Ponds Natural Area, which is bordered by the Columbia and Whitaker Sloughs. By providing equipment, instruction, and culturally responsive programming in a restored urban waterway, POCO and CSWC demonstrate how water trails can be sites of both environmental and community restoration.

Photo: POCO Guardians build confidence and paddling skills on the Columbia Slough. (Pam Slaughter)

UNIVERSAL TRAIL AND FACILITY DESIGN

Approximately 15% of Oregonians (1 in 6 residents) live with some type of disability; mobility, cognitive, and independent living difficulties being the most common. Many people will also experience short-term disability in their lifetime due to injury, illness, or age; 34% of Oregonians 65 and older live with a disability (US Census, 2020). Access to nature provides mental and physical health benefits that can be especially important for people living with short- or long-term disability. Increasing availability and variety of mobility devices is also making it possible for more people to engage in the outdoor activities they enjoy for longer, with appropriate modifications to facility designs and policies. The combination of all these trends means the need for accessible trail opportunities will continue to grow over the next decade.

Improving accessibility of recreational trails does not mean converting existing trails into broad, flat, paved roads. Accessibility planning includes both built features and interpretive content (e.g. tactile maps, auditory signage, sensory trails). Trail users with disabilities also desire the same variety of experiences, opportunities to challenge themselves, and ability to experience the natural beauty of Oregon as other trail users. Types of disabilities (e.g. sensory, mobility, intellectual) and the accommodations needed to make different experiences “accessible” can vary greatly. Information about site conditions, including information about site elements that are not accessible, empowers users to make

informed decisions. In an open-ended trail user survey question, many users with disabilities shared that the accommodations they need to participate in a trail activity depends upon factors such as type of activity, trail length, surface conditions, slopes, etc. When accurate information is made available, for example, a person can identify short walks on paved trails they can take with a cane or walker and longer trail experiences or uneven terrain where they may need to use an electric wheelchair or adaptive e-bike/trike.

Top recommendations for recreation providers to improve accessibility based on surveys and focus groups conducted to inform development of the SCORP, Trails Plan, and OPRD Accessibility Design Standards include:

- Utilize a universal design approach. Universal design is “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (Center for Universal Design, 2006). All Oregonians benefit from trails, facilities, and information systems that use a universal design approach.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) design standards should be used as starting point. Engage visitors and potential visitors with disabilities in planning, design, and maintenance of trails and facilities to better understand accessibility needs.
- Provide accurate information online, at visitor centers, and at trailheads to help users make informed decisions about what experiences meet their needs both when planning ahead and when making spur of the moment trips.

Focus on Accessibility Triangles to Create Accessible Experiences

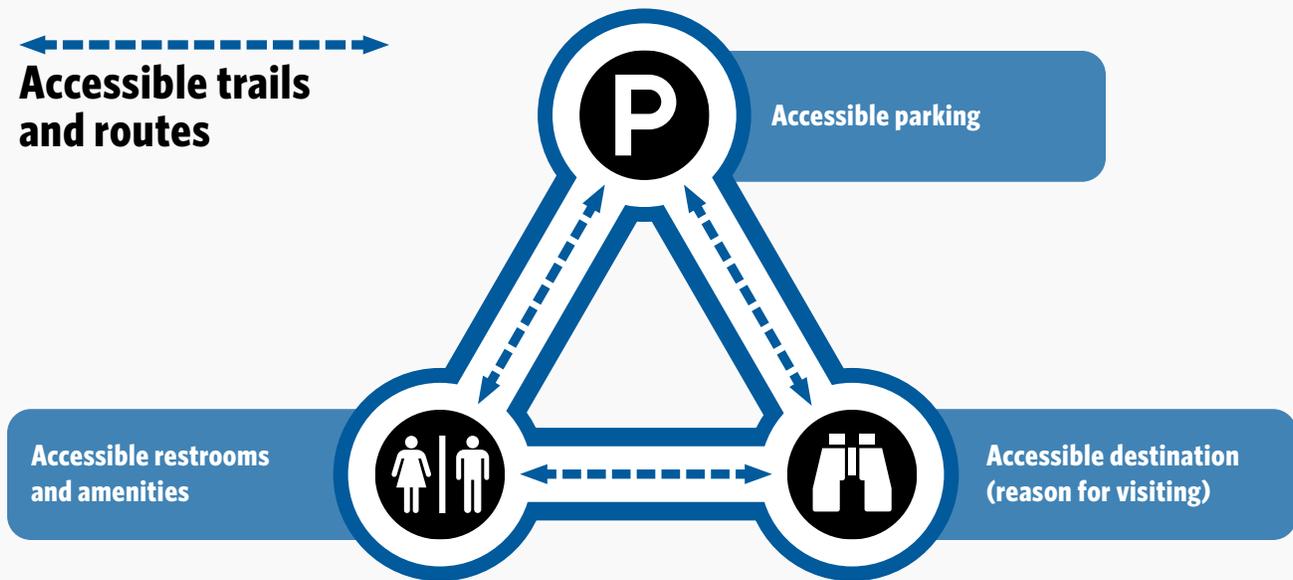


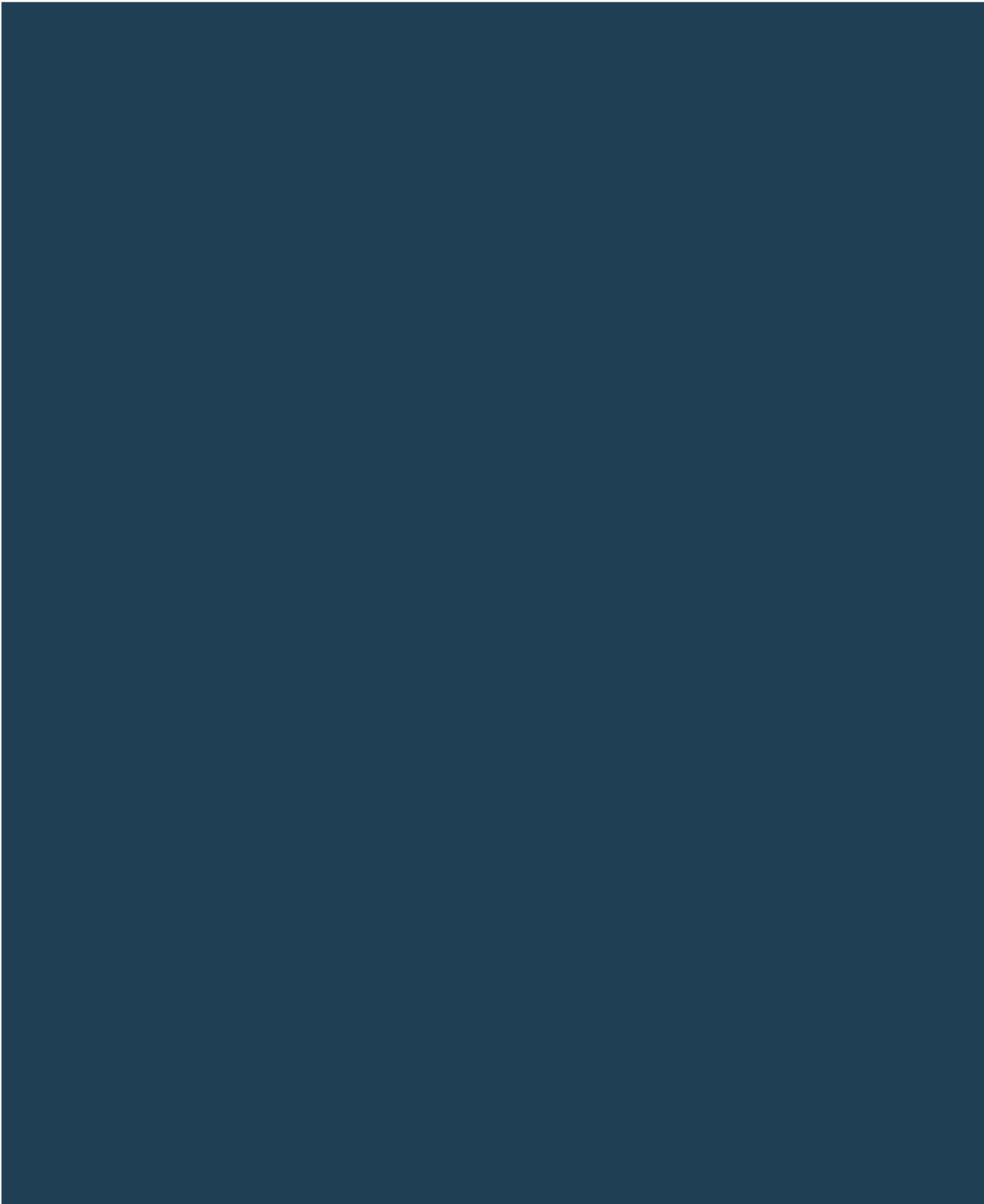
Figure 17 Focus on Accessibility Triangles to Create Accessible Experiences Rather than Individual Accessible Features

Access to a person to answer questions (e.g. hotlines, staff or volunteers at trailheads) is also helpful.

- Transitions at structures (e.g. bridges, docks), doorways, and where surface types change are key! Pay special attention to minimizing abrupt grade changes, minimizing trip hazards, and maintaining firm, level surfaces at transitions. Tactile safety cues and/or edge delineation is also helpful for navigation and to indicate transitions.
- Provide resting spaces, landings, and benches.
- Provide accessible experiences, not just individual accessible facilities, by focusing on “accessibility triangles” including:
 - Accessible parking and transit stops
 - Accessible restrooms and amenities

- Accessible destinations (e.g. nature trails, viewpoints)
- Access routes between all of the above.

OPRD’s Accessibility Design Standards align with Title II ADA and ABA requirements and are a resource for trail and facility design, maintenance, and signage. Additional recommended strategies to improve trail accessibility are discussed in Chapter 8 of this plan.



7



TRAIL FUNDING PRIORITIES

This chapter summarizes funding priorities based on statewide surveys of trail users, land managers, and partners. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of potential improvements for funding over the next 10 years based on their experience in Oregon, keeping in mind limited budgets/resources.



NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL FUNDING PRIORITIES

Surveys conducted for the Trails Plan obtained information on funding priorities from 3,735 non-motorized trail users and 170 partners who manage or support non-motorized trails in Oregon.

Trail users were asked to rank the types of non-motorized activities that should be prioritized when new trails are constructed.

- New natural or soft surface trails for hiking, running, or walking are the highest priority, with 80% of users ranking them “moderately important” or “very important”.
- Trail users with disabilities also identified soft surface trails as the highest priority for new trail investment.
- New backpacking or bikepacking opportunities consisting of long-distance trails and hiker/biker campsites are second highest priority.
- New natural or soft surface trails for mountain biking and new paved shared use trails were ranked as equally important by users.

Figures 18 and 19 show the percentage of respondents to the trail partners and trail user surveys who rated each issue as “important.”

The most important funding priorities for both trail partners and users are:

- Maintaining and restoring existing trails,
- Expanding and/or connecting existing trails into larger systems,
- Improving trails to protect natural resources and address safety concerns, and
- Making information about trails more available along trails (wayfinding signs), at trailheads, and online.



User Priorities for New Non-Motorized Trail Construction

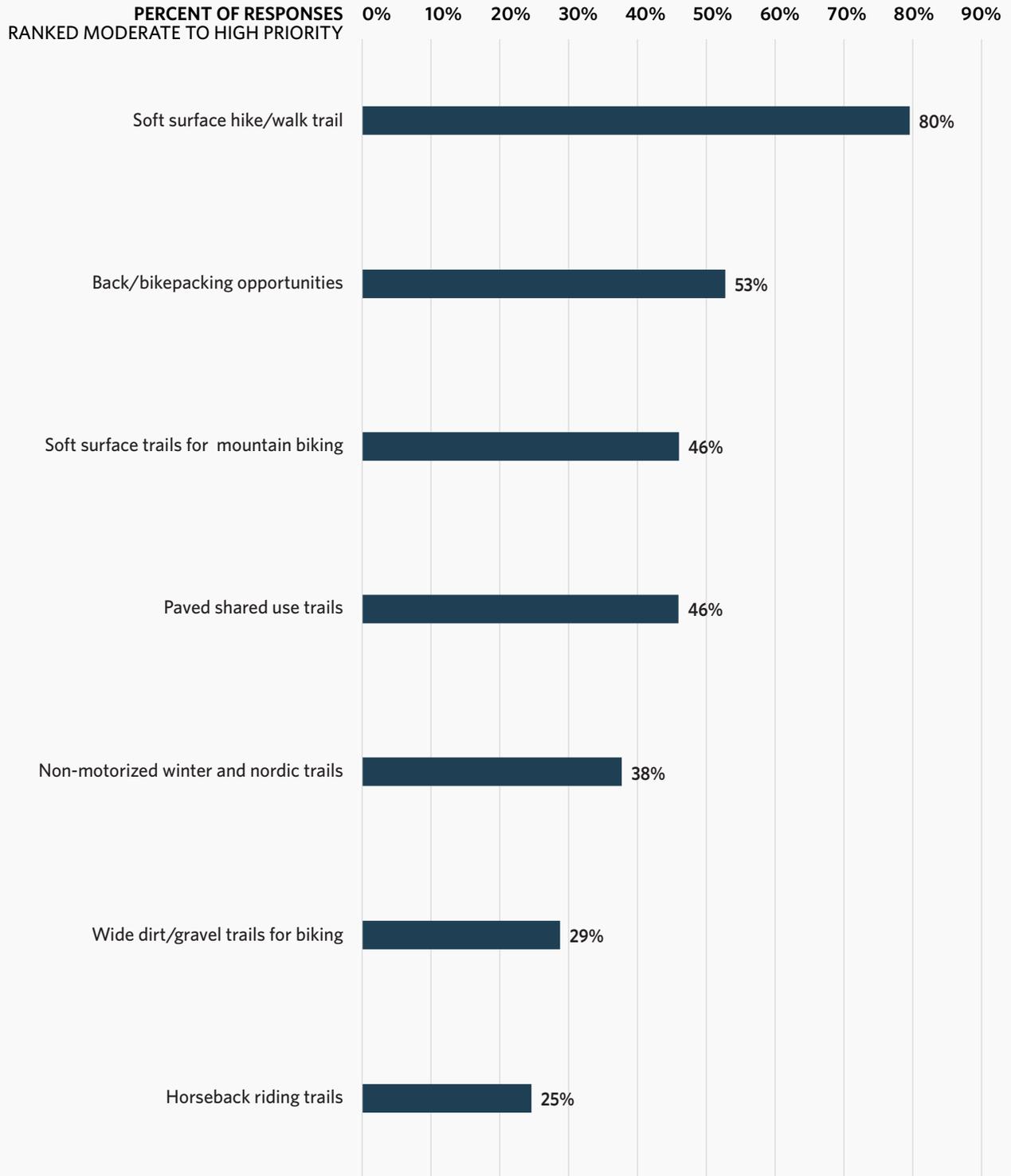


Figure 17 User Priorities for New Non-Motorized Trail Construction (2025 Trail User Survey)

 **Partner Non-Motorized Trail Funding Priorities**

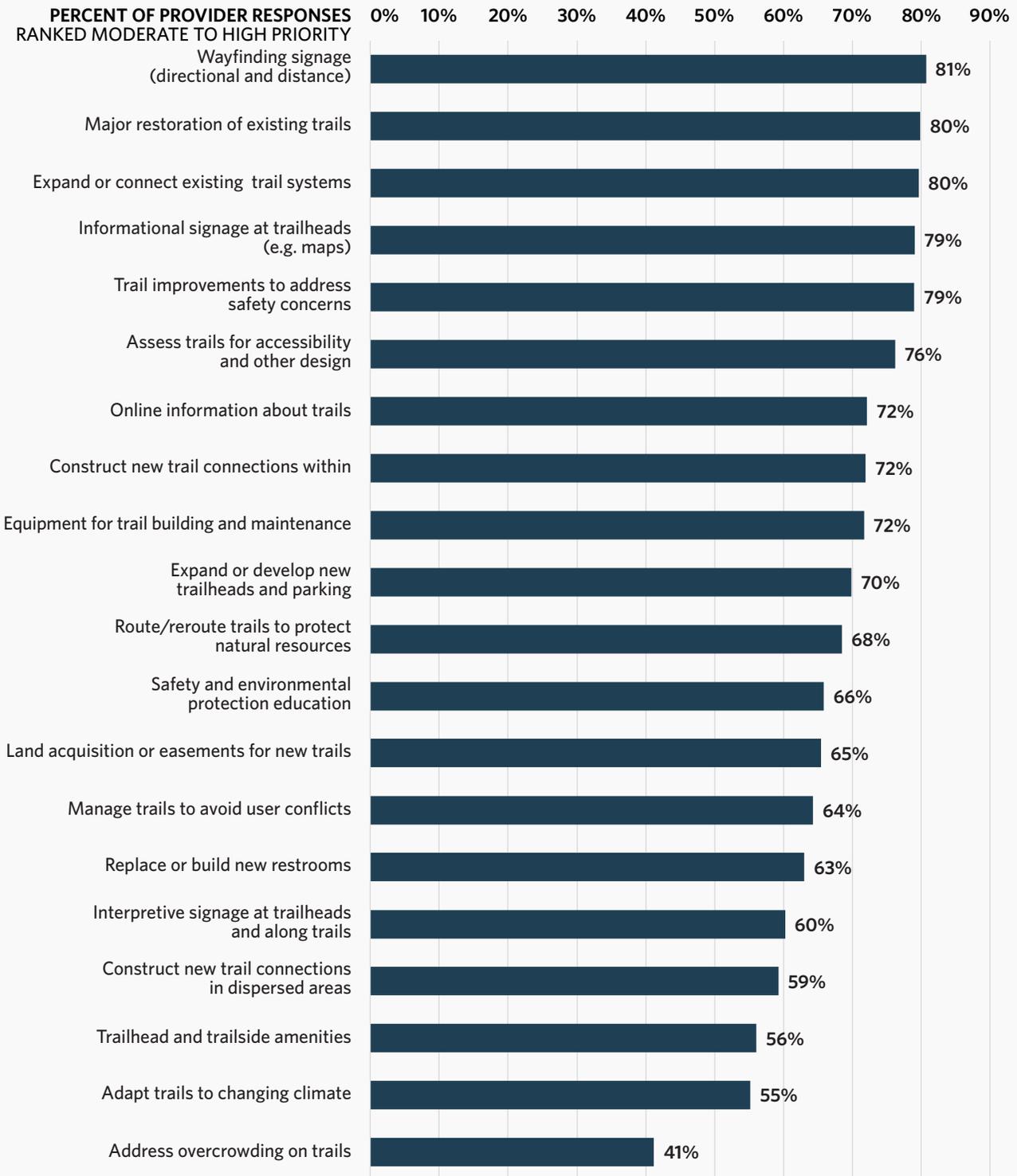


Figure 18 Non-Motorized Trail Partner Funding Priorities (2024 Trail Partner Survey)

 **User Non-Motorized Trail Funding Priorities**

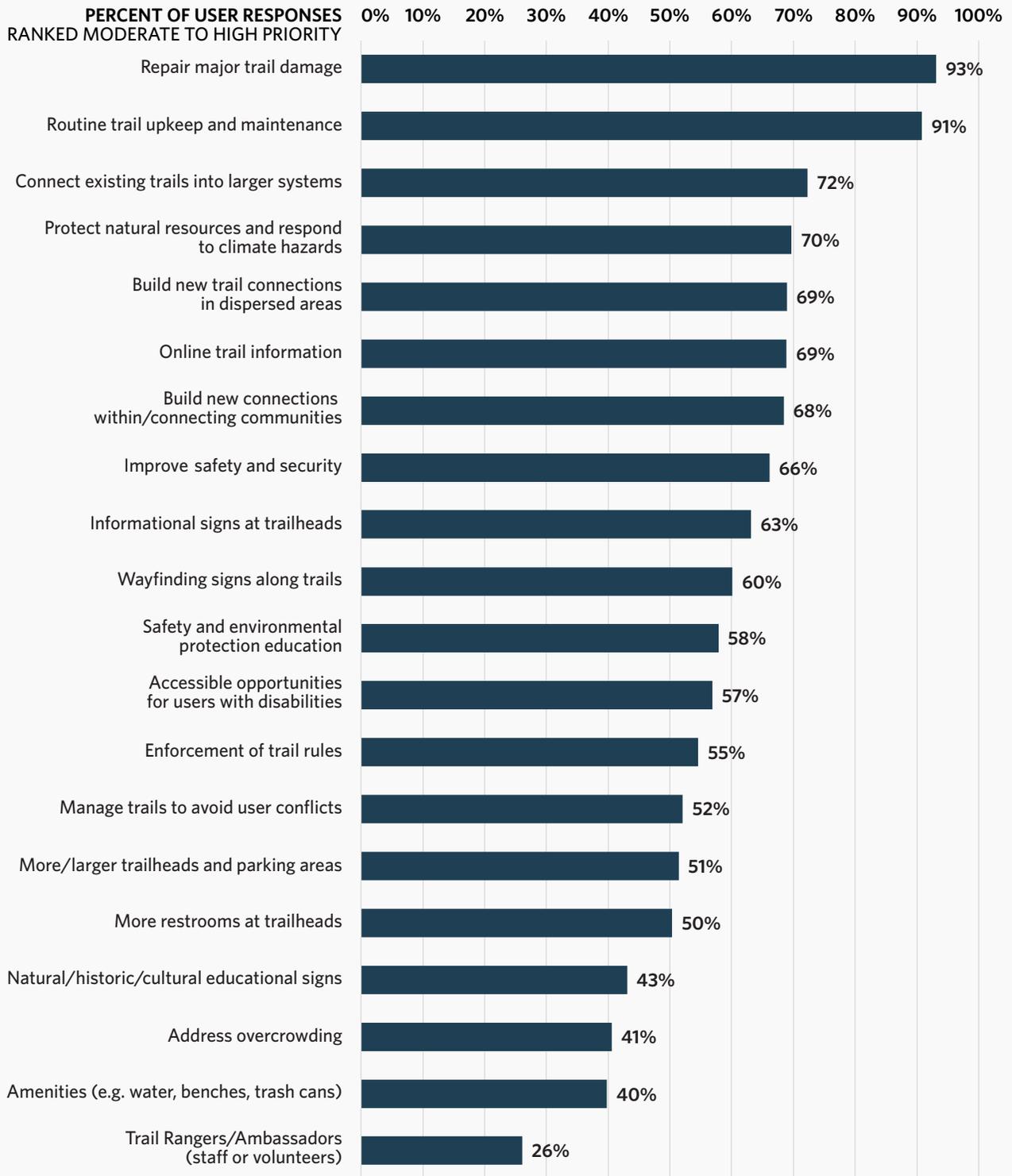


Figure 19 Non-Motorized Trail User Funding Priorities (2025 Trail User Survey)



ATV FUNDING PRIORITIES

Surveys conducted for the Trails Plan obtained information on funding priorities from 1,804 ATV users and 60 partners who manage or support ATV trails in Oregon.

Trail users were asked to rank the types of ATV activities that should be prioritized when new trails are constructed.

- Single track trails for Class III off-road motorcycles are the highest priority, with 63% of users ranking them “moderately important” or “very important”.
- New side-by-side trails are second highest priority with 49% of users ranking them moderately or very important.
- Trail users with a disability identified side-by-side trails as the highest priority for new ATV trail construction.

Figures 21 and 22 show the percentage of respondents to the trail partners and trail user surveys who rated each issue as “important”.

- The most important funding priority for both ATV trail partners and users is maintaining current maintenance and operations levels.
- Law enforcement, and trail etiquette education are high priorities for providers.
- Constructing new trails and increasing availability of information online and at trailheads are high priorities for users.
- Increasing accessible ATV facilities, online information about trails, and trail etiquette and environmental protection education were higher ranked top priorities for ATV trail users with disabilities.



User Priorities for new ATV Trail Construction

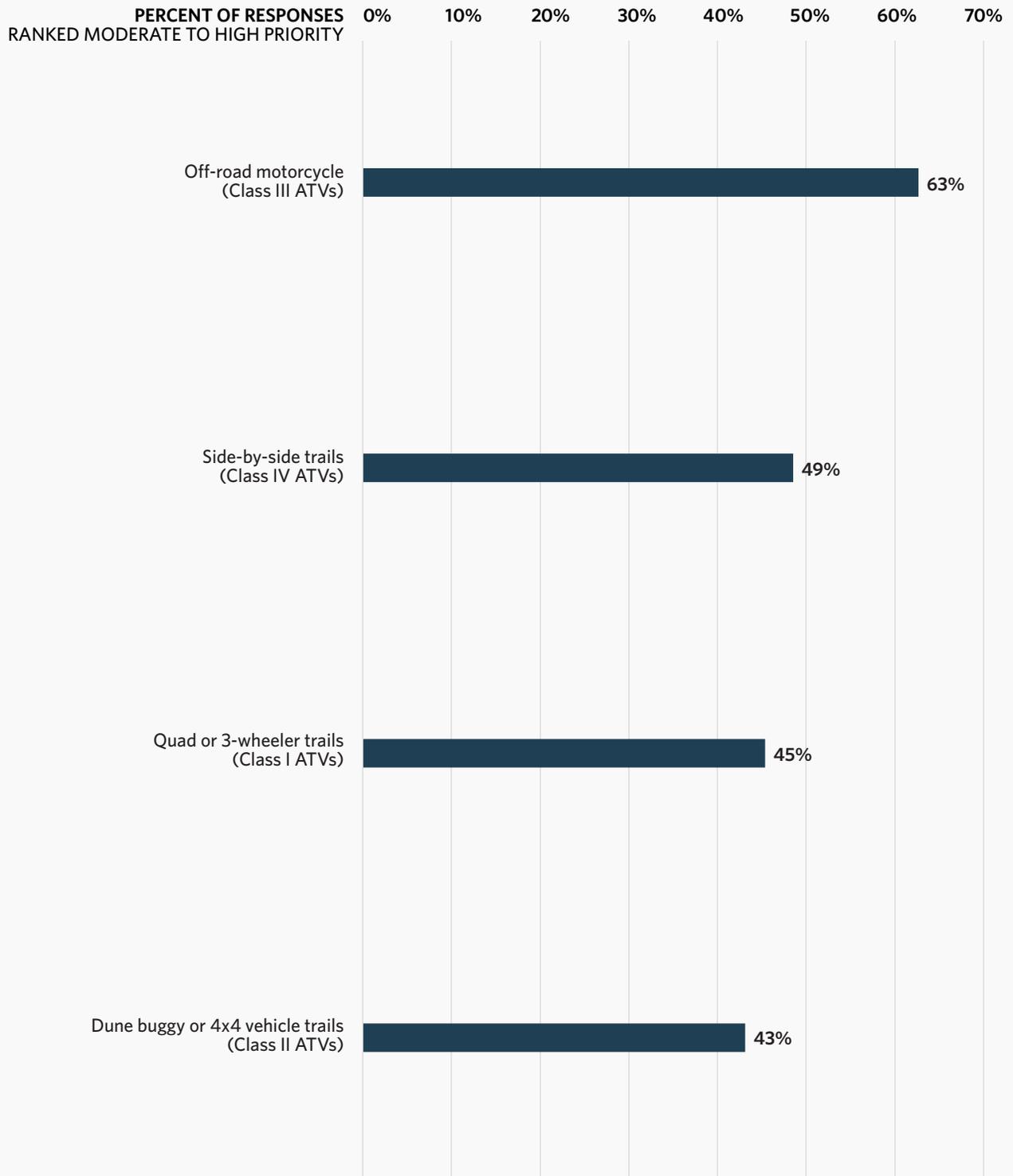


Figure 20 User Priorities for new ATV/OHV Trail Construction (2025 Trail User Survey)

 **Partner Funding Priorities for ATV Trails**

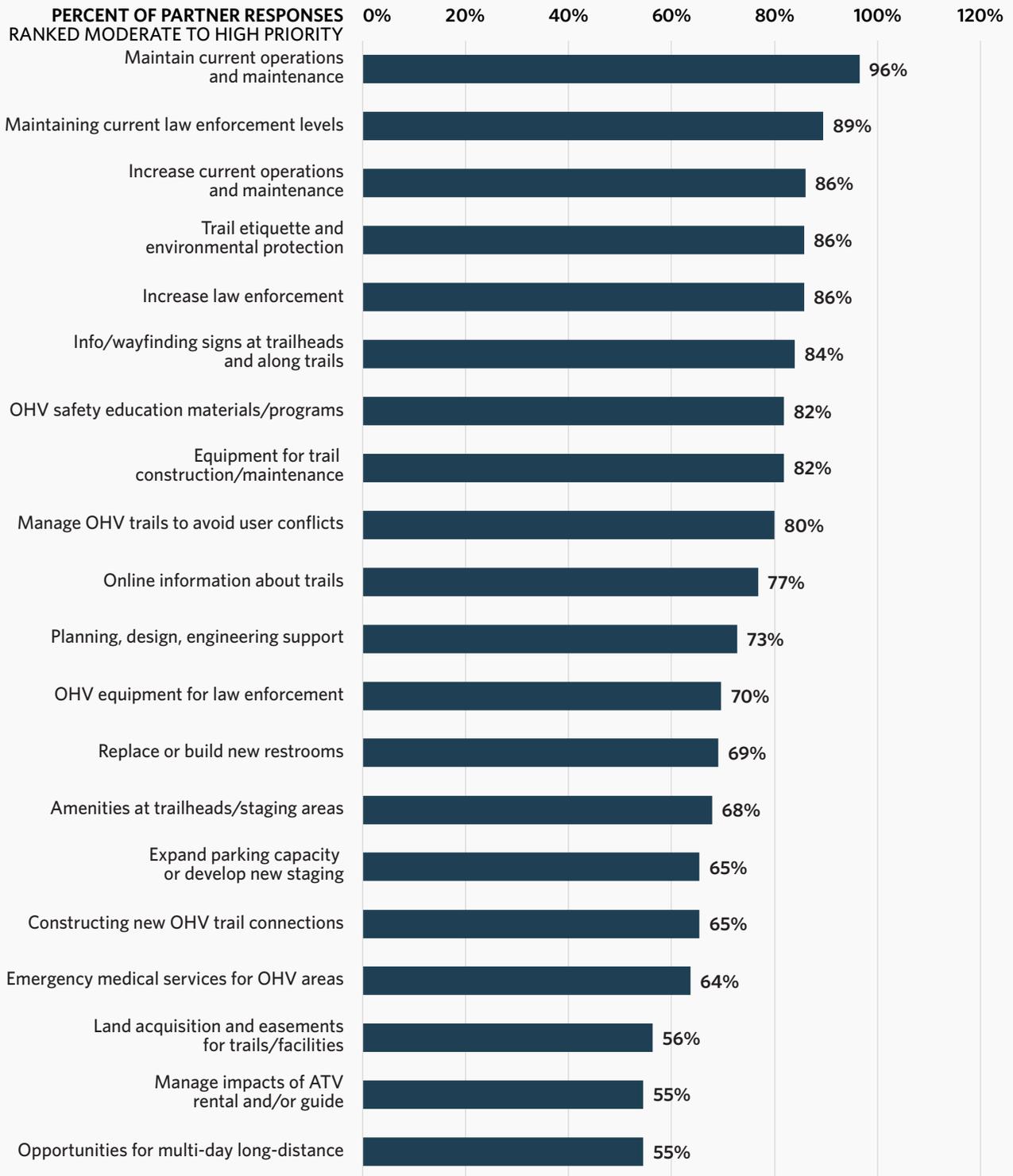


Figure 21 Partner Funding Priorities for ATV/OHV Trails (2024 Trail Partner Survey)

 **User Funding Priorities for ATV Trails**

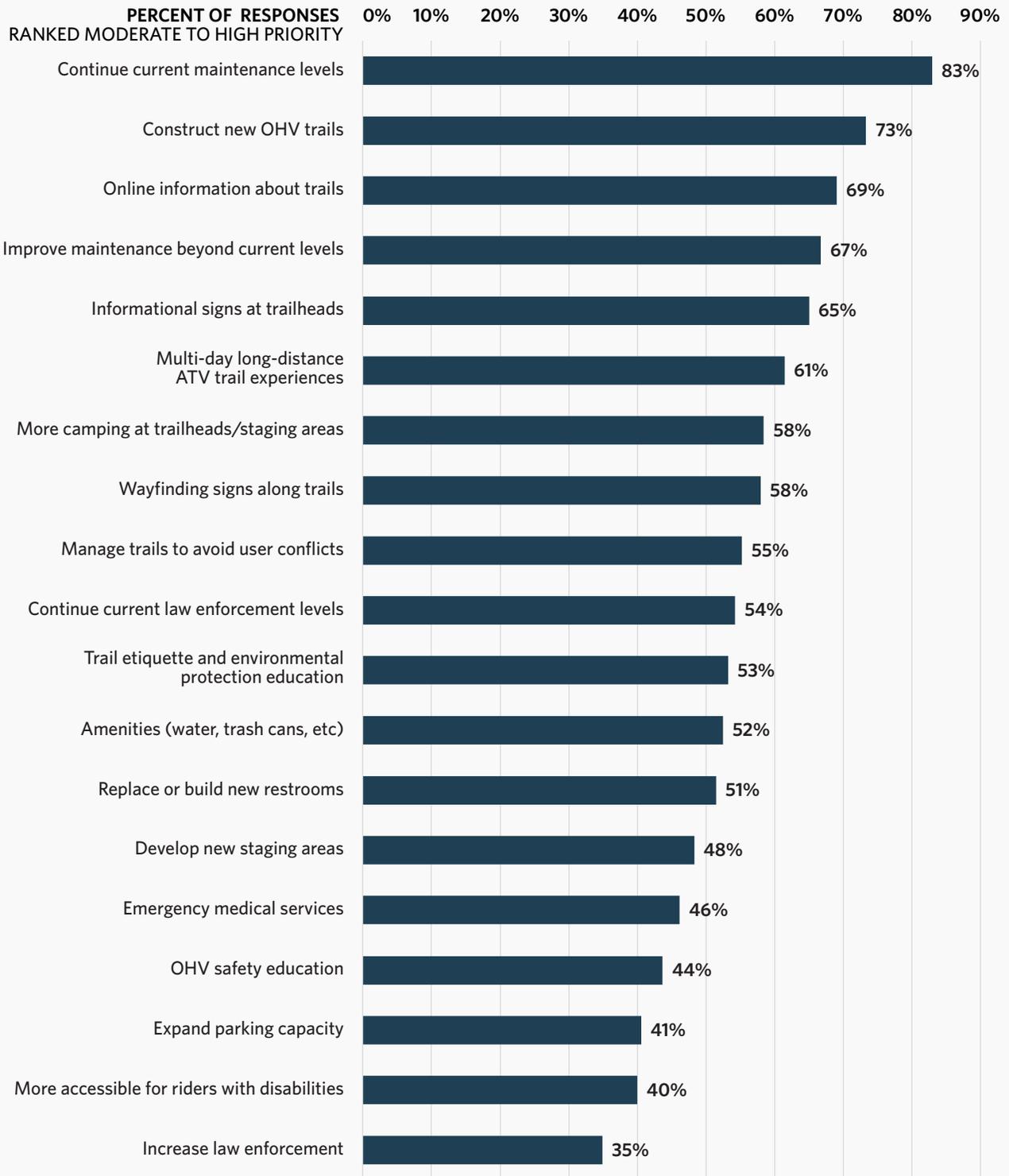


Figure 22 User Funding Priorities for ATV/OHV Trails (2025 Trail User Survey)



SNOWMOBILE FUNDING PRIORITIES

Surveys conducted for the Trails Plan obtained information on funding priorities from 318 snowmobilers and 30 partners who manage or support snowmobile trails in Oregon. Figures 23 and 24 show the percentage of respondents to the trail partners and trail user surveys who rated each issue as “important”.

- The most important funding priorities for both snowmobile trail partners and users are grooming/maintenance and avalanche safety education.
- Informational and wayfinding signage is a high priority for partners.
- Expanding and/or connecting existing snowmobile trail systems is a high priority for users.
- Increasing operations and maintenance levels, avalanche safety education, informational signs at trailheads, and warming shelters were higher ranked top priorities for snowmobilers with disabilities.

 **Partner Funding Priorities for Snowmobile Trails**

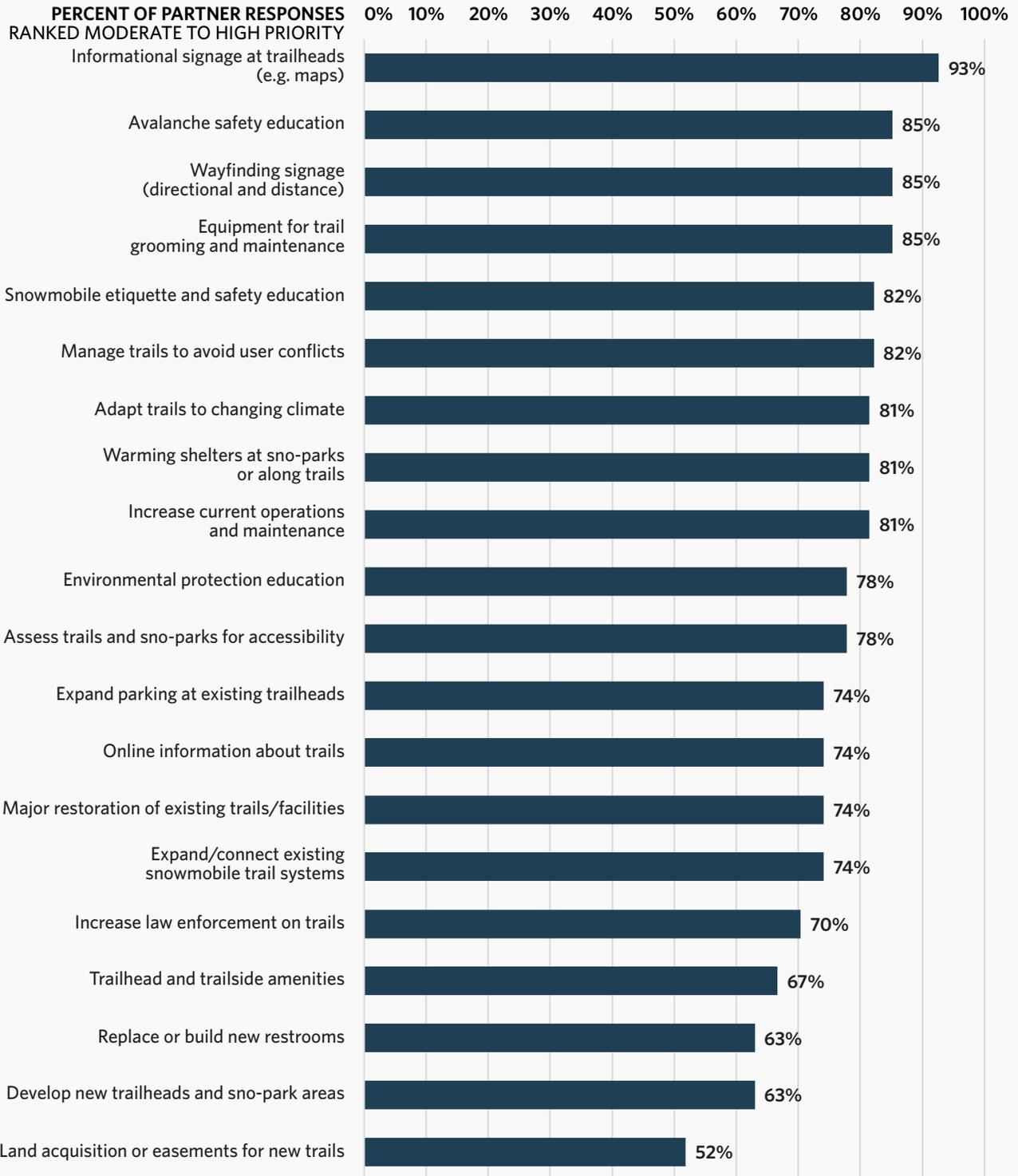


Figure 23 Partner Funding Priorities for Snowmobile Trails (2024 Trail Partner Survey)

 **User Funding Priorities for Snowmobile Trails**

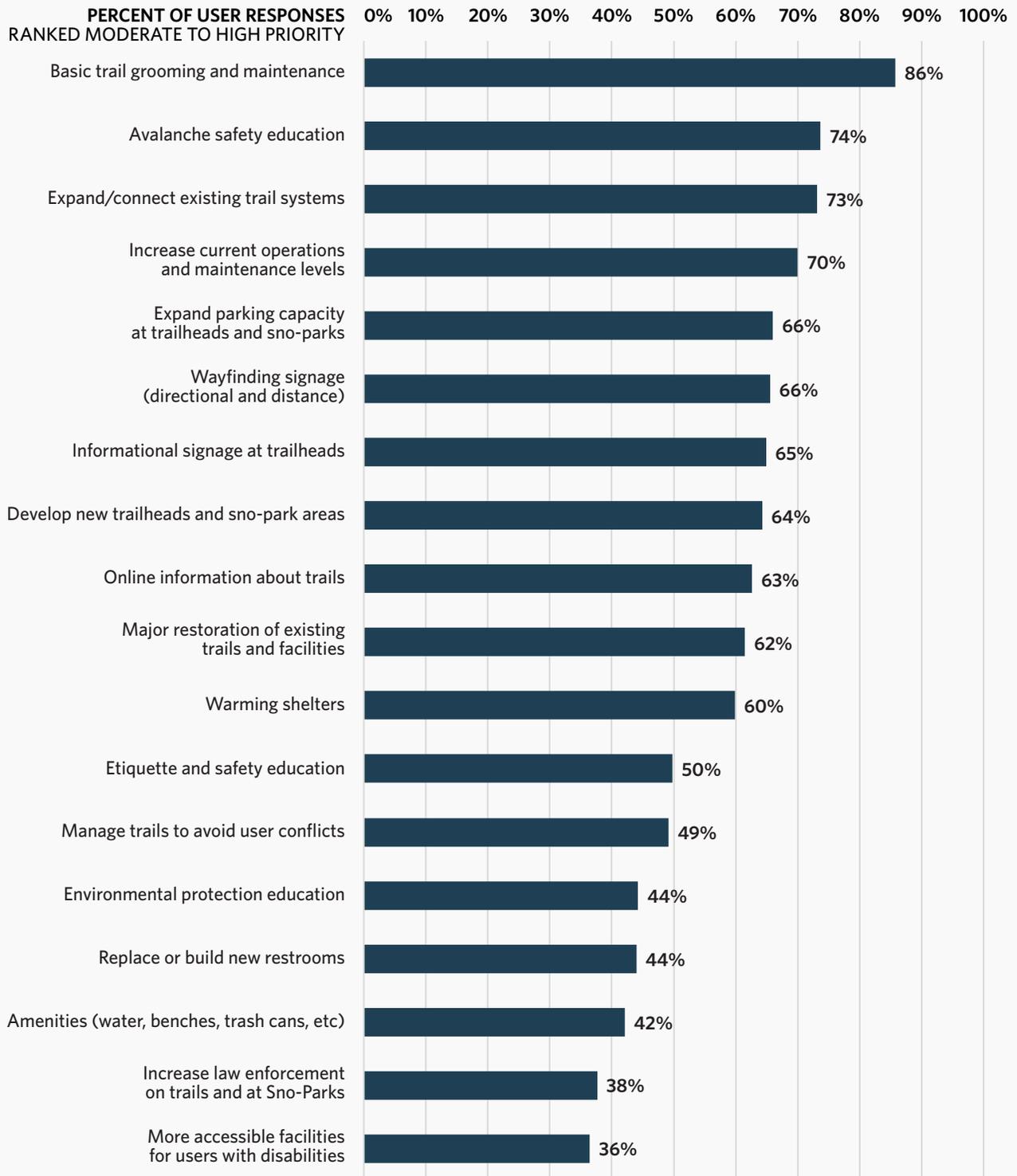


Figure 24 User Funding Priorities for Snowmobile Trails (2025 Trail User Survey)



WATER TRAIL FUNDING PRIORITIES

Surveys conducted for the Trails Plan obtained information on funding priorities from 2,040 water trail users and 54 partners who manage or support water trails in Oregon. Figures 26 and 27 show the percentage of respondents to the trail partners and trail user surveys who rated each issue as “important.”

The most important funding priorities for partners are:

- accessible parking, sanitation, water access, and access routes; and
- informational and interpretive signage at access points.

For users, the most important funding priorities are:

- digital/GPS maps and information about water trails and public lands along water trails, and
- more or improved flat water paddling access points.
- improved flatwater access points, more accessible facilities, aquatic invasive species infrastructure, improved restrooms, and water trail etiquette and safety education were higher ranked top priorities for non-motorized water trail users with disabilities.



Photo: POCO Guardians paddling the Columbia Slough (Pam Slaughter)

An additional question asked what length of overnight parking stays respondents wanted to be able to accommodate at water trails. The majority (62%) of respondents indicated no need for overnight parking, 17% responded 1-2 days, 15% responded 3-5 days.

 **Partner Funding Priorities for Water Trails**

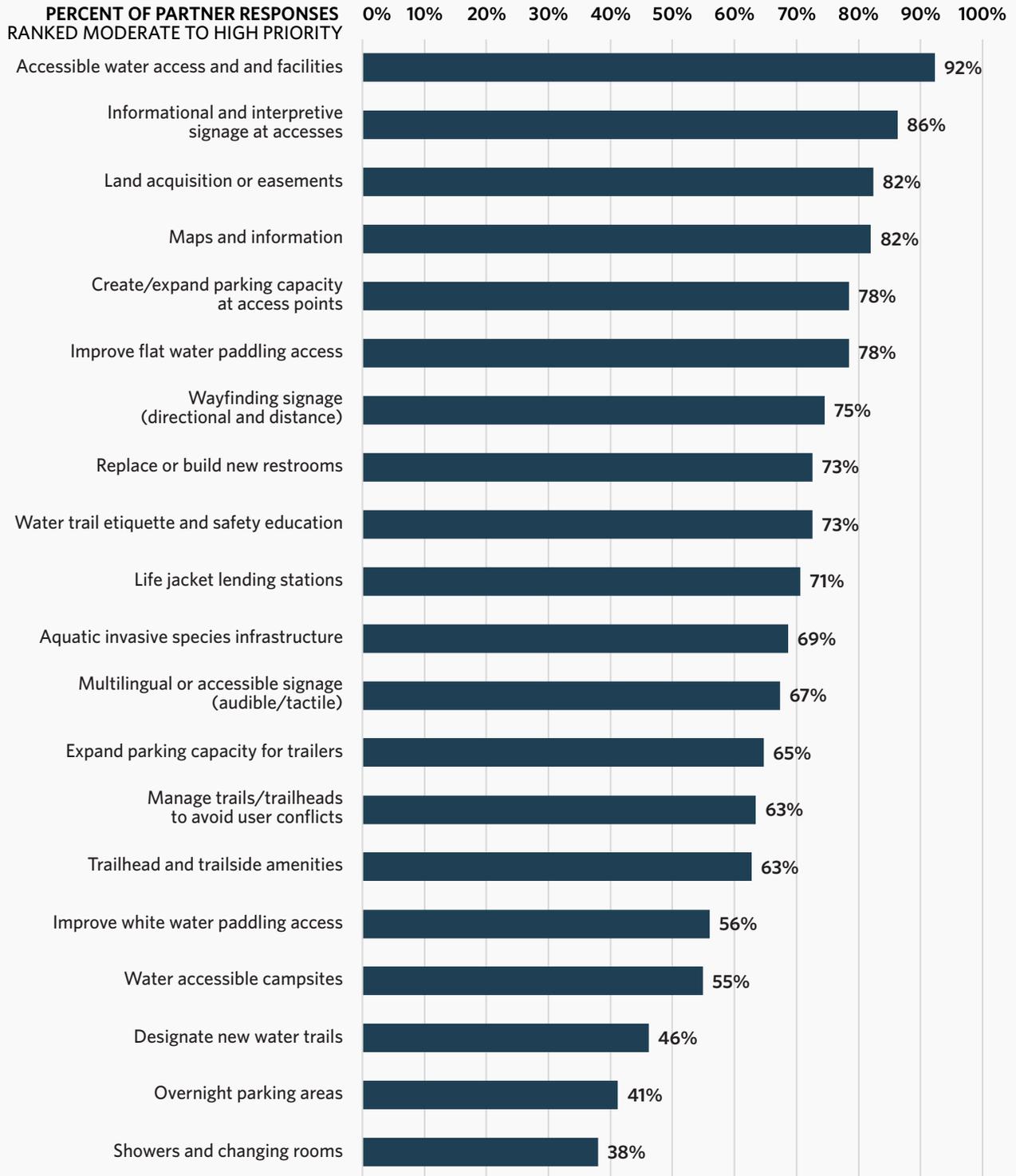


Figure 25 Provider Funding Priorities for Water Trails (2024 Trail Partner Survey)



User Funding Priorities for Water Trails

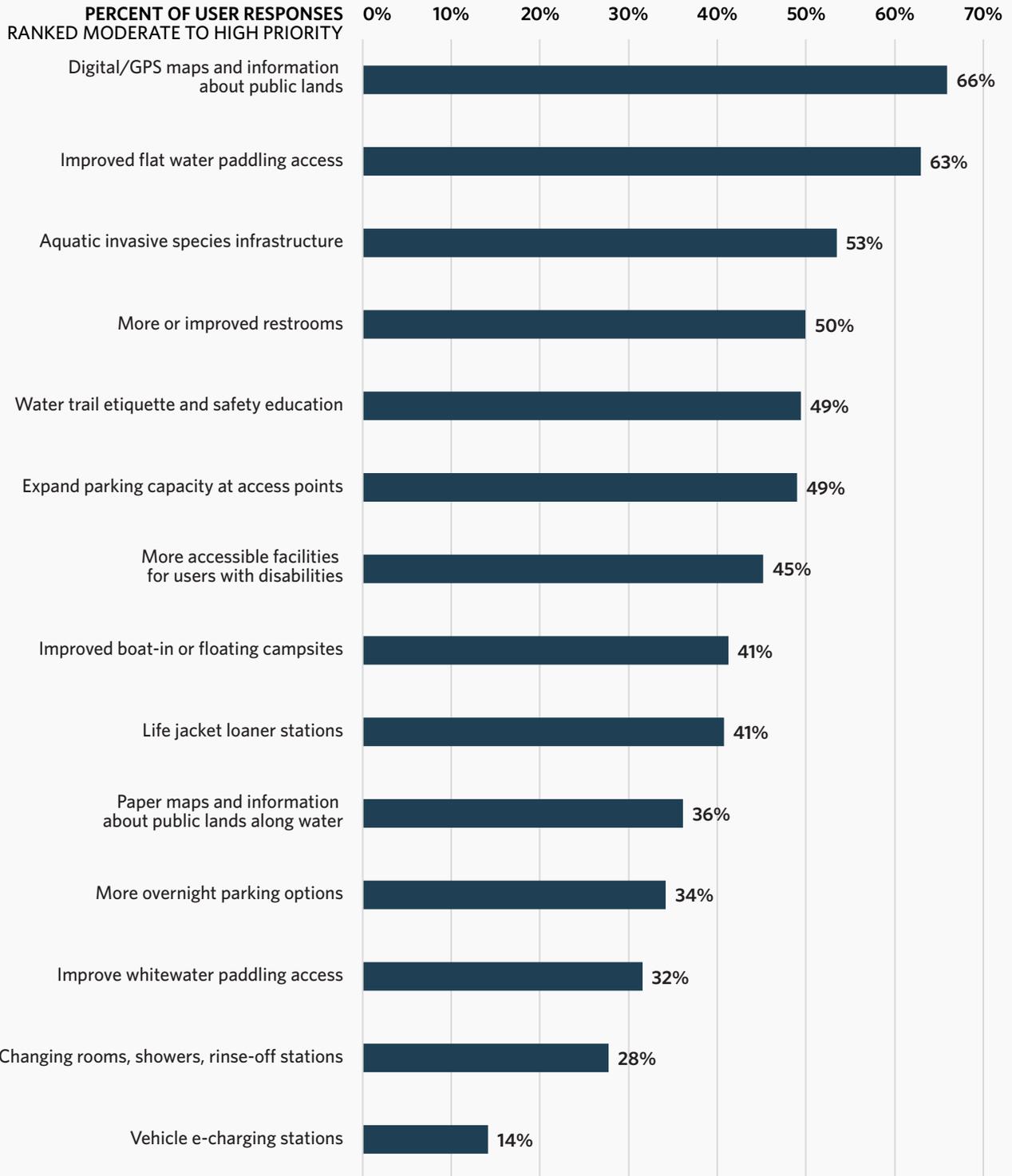


Figure 26 User Funding Priorities for Water Trails (2025 Trail User Survey)



8

STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

Based on outreach to trail users, partners, and land managers, OPRD identified seven statewide priority needs for recreational trails in Oregon. The seven statewide needs reflect overarching issues that were identified as important across all recreational trail types and activities (non-motorized, ATV, snowmobile, non-motorized boating/paddling). OPRD will prioritize these statewide needs and investments in their Recreational Trails Program and ATV Grant Program evaluation processes. (Refer to Chapters 10 and 11 for more detailed RTP and ATV Grant Evaluation Criteria.)

For each statewide priority need, this chapter provides a summary of:

- Relevant challenges and opportunities facing recreational trails.
- Investment priorities and a framework for collective action for the next ten years.
- Resources to assist trail partners in addressing issues and implementing strategic actions available at bit.ly/RecreationToolkit.



[Oregon Trails Toolkit](https://bit.ly/RecreationToolkit)



1: FUNDING AND CAPACITY

Limited funding was identified as a key issue for land and water trails in multiple previous Trails Plans and SCORPs and persists as the top trails challenge today. Overall, trails funding has not increased enough to meet growing needs, costs, and demand - particularly for non-motorized trails. Since 2016, Oregon Department of Transportation's Oregon Community Paths Program and Oregon State Marine Board's Waterway Access Program have created new sources of funding for transportation trails and water trails. ATV funding has increased due to increased state gas tax, allowing the ATV Grant Program to keep up with inflation. RTP funding, however, has stayed the same despite a federal fuel study showing it should be increased to correctly capture revenue paid into the Highway Trust Fund by motorized **trail users**.⁶ Trail budgets have decreased at multiple state and federal agencies, impacting trail maintenance and access. Ongoing major restructuring and funding uncertainty at federal agencies has also resulted in reduced trails staff and resources; impacts to grants, grantees, and stewardship partners; and trickle-down effects at state, local, and private/non-profit levels.

Additional major challenges identified through

outreach include:

- Maintaining adequate staff and volunteer capacity to support trail work.
- Accessing appropriate training to develop the next generation of trail professionals.

In 2024, USFS announced a hiring freeze impacting seasonal positions and trail crews vital to operating and maintaining Oregon's trail network. Subsequent reductions of force and restructuring at federal agencies have resulted in elimination of multiple trail and recreation positions serving Oregon. At the state level, transitions within the Office of Outdoor Recreation (OREC), the Oregon Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (ORTAC), and the Statewide Trails Coordinator position have led to changes in statewide trail coordination capacity. The Oregon Trails Coalition, "a cooperative body of broad-based, statewide trail interests dedicated to supporting, promoting, and advocating for the preservation, development, and stewardship of a statewide network of sustainable, world class trails", has stepped in to lead some statewide trails coordination and training activities though it does not have consistent funding or capacity to assume the statewide trail leadership role previously served by government agencies.

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support trail partners in addressing funding and capacity needs:

- Matrix of Oregon recreational trail funding

⁶ www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/motorfuel/non-hwy_recreational_fuel_tax_estimate_report_2021.pdf

sources

- Evaluation of potential alternative sources for non-motorized trail funding
- Links to resource and training libraries to support trail staff development

ACTIONS

To address trail funding and capacity needs over the next 10 years, recreation providers and trail partners should:

FUNDING

1. Prioritize the statewide and user-specific priority needs identified in the Trails Plan in Recreational Trails Program, ATV Grant Program, and other funding evaluation processes to make the most of limited funds.
2. Educate the Oregon public on the economic and health impacts of trails as the most popular form of outdoor recreation in Oregon and the additional funding and staff needed to meet growing demands.
3. Advocate for increased state funding for programs that support recreational and transportation trails, such as the Oregon Community Paths Program. Utilize or leverage State Highway Fund dollars to fill trail gaps within road rights-of-way, as feasible.
4. Support full federal funding of the Recreational Trails Program. Nationally, RTP is currently funded at \$84 million annually, which is substantially less than the estimated \$281 million in taxes paid on gasoline used to fuel snowmobiles, ATVs, and other recreational vehicles that do not use highways.⁷
5. Monitor and participate in state and federal rulemaking and legislation related to water rights and access to minimize negative impacts on water trail recreation use and funding.
6. Coordinate with public agencies, elected officials, and non-profits to identify, evaluate, and pursue new and innovative funding sources for non-motorized trail funding.
7. Explore opportunities to collaborate with the public health community to promote the use of trails for physical and mental health and leverage public health funding for trails.
8. Update the Oregon Recreational Trail Funding Sources tool as necessary to assist trail partners in identifying appropriate funding opportunities for diverse trail projects.
9. Pursue multi-source funding strategies leveraging state, federal, private/foundation, and volunteer-based contributions to make larger projects possible with limited resources from individual sources.
10. Consider agreements, staffing collaboratives, and/or community-based stewardship models to fill gaps in staffing and maintenance.
11. Work to update and clarify language in state and federal trail funding programs to recognize water trails as eligible investments for funding in addition to land trails.
12. Explore opportunities with nonmotorized boaters and other water trail users to generate new revenue sources to support water trails and access.

⁷ www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/811/text

CAPACITY: STAFF, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT

- 13.** Re-establish and consistently staff Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation and Trails Coordinator positions at OPRD to provide statewide leadership, technical guidance/assistance, and accountability for statewide trail plan implementation.
- 14.** Expand opportunities for staff, youth conservation and service corps, volunteers, and other partners to provide and receive trail skills training to develop and retain professional trail workforce expertise.
- 15.** Consider opportunities to utilize flexibility provided by the EXPLORE Act to create “Good Neighbor” agreements for collaboration on trail and recreational issues across federal and local land management boundaries, in context of reduced federal staff/capacity.
- 16.** Encourage regional staffing collaboratives and/or community-based stewardship models to fill gaps in staffing and maintenance.



CASE STUDY

LEVERAGING MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES FOR PHASED TRAIL PROJECTS

The City of Sutherlin received multiple grants from OPRD to develop Ford’s Pond Community Park, starting with a planning grant from the Local Government Grant Program (LGGP), and seven more grants for project implementation. A trail circling the pond was funded in two phases. The first phase was funded by RTP and LGGP, and the second phase was funded by RTP and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). A playground, restroom, parking area, and other park amenities were also funded by LWCF and LGGP.

Photo: Sutherlin boardwalk trail (OPRD)



CASE STUDY

CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TRAIL CHAMPIONS

Trailkeepers of Oregon (TKO) has been steadily expanding their presence from the busiest trailheads to the most remote corners of Oregon’s wilderness through its Trail Ambassador Program. What began in the Columbia River Gorge has grown to include sites on Mt. Hood, along the Oregon Coast, throughout the Willamette Valley, and in the Portland Metro area. These volunteers greet visitors, share safety information, teach Leave No Trace principles, and foster stewardship of Oregon’s trails and natural areas. They also contribute to programs like the Trail Accessibility Survey Team and OregonHikers.org Field Guide, ensuring access and information for all trail users.

Building on this success, TKO launched the Trail Champion Program—a part-time, paid internship supported by a Recreational Trails Program grant. Trail Champions are young adults trained in outdoor education and visitor engagement, helping to advance public understanding of wildfire resilience, drought awareness, native flora and fauna, and responsible recreation. Through this innovative model, TKO is cultivating the next generation of stewards who meet Oregonians and visitors alike where they are—at the trailhead and out on the trail—turning everyday recreation into shared care for Oregon’s trails.

Photo: Trail Ambassador at work (TKO)



2: MAINTENANCE, REHABILITATION, AND STEWARDSHIP

Maintenance and funding are closely related issues. Routine maintenance and major rehabilitation of trails were the primary funding needs identified in the 2016 Trails Plan, 2019 SCORP, and 2026 Trails Plan. Maintenance is a critical component of creating positive visitor experiences and increasing safety and accessibility of trails for all Oregonians. Trails can quickly be rendered unsafe and/or inaccessible to many users without regular maintenance to address surface heaving, treefall, and other issues that create unexpected obstacles. Routine trail maintenance is necessary to address minor issues before they become more expensive safety or reconstruction project needs.

Improving trail maintenance was identified as a priority need by all trail types of trail users. Non-motorized and motorized trail users identified trail tread maintenance, log out after storms, and repairs or reroutes to address drainage, landslide, and fire damage as specific needs. Funding and equipment to support regular trail grooming is a top priority for snowmobilers that also benefits non-motorized winter trail users. Maintenance of boat ramps, docks, restrooms, and parking areas is a priority for non-motorized boaters/paddlers.

Recreation providers shared that they continue to struggle to maintain existing trails due to the combined effects of decreasing maintenance budgets and increasing damage from overuse, fire, and extreme weather events. As a result, providers report increasing deferred maintenance backlogs, extended trail closures, and increasing reliance on volunteers for trail maintenance and rehabilitation work. Multiple land managers requested resources to help them increase engagement of volunteers in trail work in the absence of trails staff and work crews. Multiple non-profit organizations mentioned wanting resources to develop stronger partnerships with public agencies. Many partners discussed the need to cultivate a “culture of stewardship” that acknowledges, respects, and facilitates the work of volunteer, non-profit, and land manager partners via improved policies and processes, training, and dedicated staff/resources to support partnerships.

Just as the Oregon Trails Coalition has stepped in to support statewide trails coordination and funding advocacy in an environment of reduced public agency capacity, since 2016 multiple non-profits such as Trailkeepers of Oregon, Northwest Youth Corps, and regional trails associations have expanded and become more formalized with paid staff able to play a stronger role in supporting trail maintenance and stewardship efforts across the state. Learning to effectively leverage stewardship groups to “supplement but not supplant” essential trail work normally done by paid land manager staff will be a key

In FY 2024, USFS provided approximately 11,658 miles of recreational trails in the state of Oregon. Just over one-third (34%) of these trail miles meet current agency maintenance standards. Three-quarters (75%) of USFS trail mileage in Oregon received maintenance in FY 2024. Of the 8,713 miles maintained, over half (52%) were maintained by partners/volunteers not paid by contract or force account. USFS estimates a deferred maintenance backlog of \$18.7 million for trails in Oregon in FY 2025. Deferred maintenance costs are in addition to the estimated annual trails maintenance cost of \$4.2 million and additional costs for trail operations and capital improvements. In FY 2025, the USFS estimates total recreational trail needs in Oregon to be \$32.9 million, a need that greatly exceeds the national USFS trails construction and maintenance budget of \$20 million.

challenge for trail partners to tackle over the next 10 years.

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support land managers and trail partners in addressing maintenance needs:

- [Trails Partnerships: A Guide to Asking the Right Questions](#)
- Trail maintenance and management guidance from USFS and other agencies

ACTIONS

To address maintenance needs over the next 10 years, recreation providers and trail partners should:

- 1.** Prioritize maintaining the existing trail system. Maintenance includes providing routine upkeep; clean, well-maintained facilities; and completing major trail restoration/rehabilitation.
- 2.** Strive to maintain existing operations and maintenance funding levels through the ATV grant program and prioritize major restoration in RTP grant funding evaluations.
- 3.** Acquire trail maintenance and trail grooming equipment to adequately meet maintenance needs. Explore cooperative maintenance and equipment-sharing models that allow multiple groups to benefit from major equipment investments.

CHAPTER 8: STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

- 4.** Expand public-private partnerships and coordination with volunteer and other organizations to promote a culture of stewardship that stretches limited resources to preserve Oregon’s trails legacy.
 - Expand resources (e.g. policies, partnership agreement structures, support staff) to streamline and support stewardship partnerships.
- 5.** Foster the development of “friends” groups to encourage community involvement in trail maintenance and encourage the donation of materials, equipment, and labor by local businesses to relieve maintenance costs.
- 6.** Explore additional funding opportunities to address deferred and annual trail maintenance needs through regular budgetary cycles, grant opportunities, and legislative advocacy.
- 7.** Conduct regular trails assessments to increase understanding of and adequately address trail maintenance and accessibility needs, including trail conditions, use, signage, and structures.
- 8.** Regularly update and promote “Ready, Set, Plan” and the “Trail Partnerships Guide” as educational resources for recreation providers and partner organizations on trail planning and stewardship processes.
- 9.** Facilitate regular coordination meetings between land managers and stewardship partners across regions and the state.
- 10.** Support development of national and/or statewide standards for trail volunteer training (including chain saw requirements), safety and risk management, and partnership/stewardship agreement templates to streamline partnership processes across various land managers and organizations.
- 11.** Increase availability of trail skills training for local trail stewards and field staff who manage volunteers.
- 12.** Develop a statewide trail maintenance handbook including best management practices, design standards for constructing or rehabilitating trails, and maintenance funding alternatives.



CASE STUDY

VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT FREE —FUNDING TRAIL PARTNERSHIPS

Leveraging community volunteers to care for local parks provides tremendous value to agencies managing trails on limited budgets — especially in the aftermath of wildfire. Trailkeepers of Oregon (TKO) was recently awarded a contract through an OregonBuys procurement process with Marion County Public Works. This competitive process required applicants to demonstrate expertise in post-wildfire trail design and construction through the meaningful engagement of the Marion County Parks volunteer community.

This contract provides a template for agencies to partner with nonprofit organizations. TKO's skilled staff and volunteers are now developing design recommendations and leading the restoration of trails and trail structures in County Parks affected by the historic 2020 Labor Day Fires in the Santiam Canyon east of Salem. This work is helping the County rebuild access, restore natural landscapes, and re-energize local stewardship — demonstrating that while volunteers are invaluable, sustaining their work requires investment, training, coordination, and professional expertise.

Photos: Volunteers restoring trail vegetation and structures after wildfire. (TKO)



CASE STUDY

LEVERAGING FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) received an RTP grant to replace a section of boardwalk on the Trillium Lake Loop Trail in the Mt. Hood National Forest. The old, degraded boardwalk was removed by members of Northwest Youth Corps' Tribal Stewards Program, crews from AntFarm, and volunteers from Trailkeepers of Oregon. NFF hired a local contractor to build a new boardwalk that meets accessibility standards. Other funding partners included the Clackamas County's Office of Tourism and Timberline Lodge.

Photos: Trail crew removing old boardwalk and replacing with accessible boardwalk (Northwest Youth Corp (left), OPRD (right))



3: CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS TO COMMUNITIES

Oregon’s recreational trails are a diverse system of dispersed wilderness trails, regional trails connecting communities, and urban neighborhood connectors. Connecting these existing trails to create larger trail systems and improving trail connections to communities and destinations was identified as a top priority for trail partners and users.

Oregonians value dispersed and remote trail experiences and want more options to create loops or extended routes. Trail partners and users shared that increasing trail connectivity could result in better use of existing trail infrastructure and create new opportunities to help spread out demand in areas experiencing crowding.

Trail users also want more “close to home” opportunities that reduce the need to drive or haul family and gear long distances. Improving trail connectivity between the places Oregonians live and the communities and destinations where they work and play makes it easier for more people to enjoy the health and economic benefits of trails. It can also increase return on investment in trails by enabling them to serve double duty as transportation and recreation amenities. Many trail users felt that constructing trails to parks and other destinations would help

reduce barriers to outdoor recreation such as transportation cost, safety concerns, and parking capacity.

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support land managers and trail partners in improving trail connectivity:

- [Ready, Set, Plan: An Introductory Guide to Trail Planning and Development](#)
- [American Trails Planning and Design Hub](#)

ACTIONS

To improve trail connectivity and access to communities over the next 10 years, recreation providers and trail partners should:

1. Improve trail connectivity within and between communities and the destinations where Oregonians live, work, and play. Significant destinations may include facilities such as parks and recreation facilities, schools, libraries, businesses, and open space.
2. Connect, extend, and/or close gaps in existing trails to create larger trail systems that offer a variety of trail opportunities and experiences. Where necessary, identify high-quality on-street connections and directional signage to address gaps and connect systems.
3. Construct new trails and open new ATV riding areas, prioritizing new construction in areas that are currently underserved and/or experiencing crowding.
4. Partner with transportation and transit agencies to provide safe walking/biking routes and public transportation to parks and trails.

CHAPTER 8: STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

- 5.** Create new or expand existing trailheads, parking areas and water access points.
- 6.** Encourage communities to prepare recreational trail system plans and integrate multi-modal trail planning into local transportation, parks, and comprehensive planning efforts. Adapt land use processes as feasible to support trail plan implementation.
- 7.** Recognize and support cooperative regional and statewide trail planning, development, and promotion.
- 8.** Consider updating the Oregon Signature Trails network.
- 9.** Identify areas that are underserved by various trail activities and routes or areas of particularly high value or demand to help guide trail investments.
- 10.** Balance investments in “close to home” and dispersed trail projects.
- 11.** Develop case studies, guidance, or tools for addressing trail connectivity needs through private lands.
- 12.** Expand funding opportunities to address planning, design, and NEPA phases of trail project development.
- 13.** Support the acquisition of corridors (e.g. rail or utility rights-of-way) for use in developing trail systems.
- 14.** Support efforts to improve on-street/ sidewalk trail connections and highway right-of-way crossings.



CASE STUDY

PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS

The Westside Trail is a regional trail following electrical power utility corridors that will eventually link over 25 miles of destinations across Washington County and beyond including: schools, businesses, neighborhoods, parks, recreation centers, natural areas, and transit stations. Build out of the Westside Trail Master Plan has been supported by local system development funds, Washington County transportation funds, federal transportation grants from Metro, and Metro’s Parks and Nature Bond. In 2022, Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District (THPRD) completed a feasibility study for a bridge to complete a major gap in the trail over Highway 26. In 2024, the Westside Trail Bridge was identified as a “shovel ready” project in Metro’s Regional Trail Investment Strategy. In 2025, the project was awarded construction grants from the Metro Regional Flexible Funds and Oregon Community Paths Program. THPRD anticipates construction of the bridge by 2030.

Photo: Artist rendering of the future Westside Trail Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge from Metro’s Regional Trail Investment Strategy. (Toole Design, Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District, 2024)



CASE STUDY

TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS

Century Drive connects Bend to Mt Bachelor and multiple popular trailheads. The Haul Road Trail, jointly managed by Bend Park and Recreation District and USFS, provides a parallel alternative with over six miles of separated paved trail connecting the Deschutes River to the Deschutes National Forest (DNF). During summer months, Cascades East Transit's "Transit to Trails" shuttle also provides service from Bend to Mt Bachelor and with stops at popular trailheads; four trips per day, seven days a week. The shuttle is ADA accessible, provides trailer space for up to 20 bikes, and an app allows riders to book tickets in advance and track buses in real time. Together these services provide valuable transportation options that improve access to trails and reduce congestion in trailhead areas.

Photo: Cascade East Transit Transit to Trails bus stop sign (Cascade East Transit)



4: INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE

Oregonians increasingly expect to have detailed information at their fingertips on demand; trails are no exception. Multiple apps and websites with trail information exist, but the data shared may be incomplete and/or inaccurate. “Trailheads” are often parking areas with limited or no maps, information, or directional signage. The need for more trail signs and information was identified as a top priority in the 2016 Trails Plan and continues to be a top need. Increasing availability of information about trails can also help address other statewide issues by increasing awareness of existing trails, reducing barriers, and encouraging responsible recreation.

Trail users require different types of information and signs to safely and enjoyably pursue trail experiences.

- Online information helps people discover new trail opportunities, plan trips in advance, and can enhance user experiences via QR codes and GPS-enabled mapping.
- Locator signs lead people to trailheads and parking areas.
- Trailhead signs help people discover new trails and make trip decisions on the spur of the moment.
- Regulatory signs explain “dos and don’ts” to support responsible trail use.
- Interpretive signs help users engage with the

natural or cultural history of an area.

- Directional and wayfinding signs along trails keep people on the right path, reducing the impacts of unsanctioned trails, trespassing, and preventable search and rescue calls.

Recreation providers should make information about their trails easily available so users can identify trails that match their skill level and desired experience. Accurate and detailed trail information is especially important for Oregonians who have a disability, are elderly, have young children, or have other accommodation needs when using trails. Information about a trail’s surface, length, average and maximum grade, cross-slope, width, amenities, and obstacles such as stairs or gates can help users determine if a trail is a good fit for them much better than an “accessible” or “ADA” label on a website or trail sign.

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support land managers and trail partners in improving information and signage:

- [Access Recreation Guidelines for Providing Trail Information to People with Disabilities](#)
- Links to example regional and local trail sign guidelines (e.g. [Intertwine](#))

ACTIONS

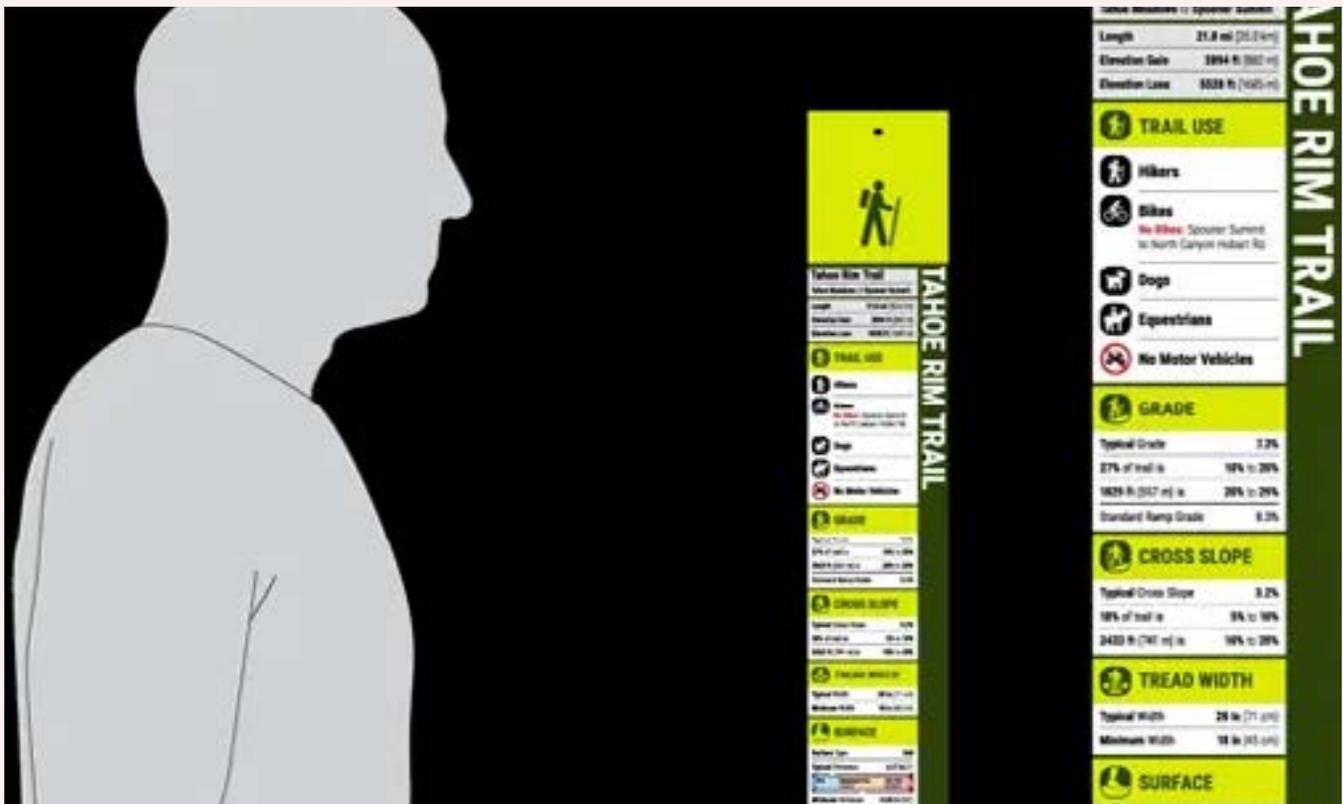
To improve availability of information and signage over the next 10 years, recreation providers and trail partners should:

1. Provide informational signs at trailheads and access points, including maps, trail

CHAPTER 8: STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

accessibility information (e.g. length, surface, width, grade, cross slope, obstacles/barriers) and allowed/prohibited uses. See case study for accessibility requirements and best practices.

- Utilize Access Recreation’s Guidelines for Providing Trail Information to People with Disabilities and OPRD’s Accessibility Design Standards as guidelines for providing trail accessibility information.
2. Provide wayfinding or directional signs along trails (direction, distance, land ownership).
 3. Provide online trail information to support trip planning and decision-making.
 4. Provide digital/GPS maps that include trail accessibility information and public/private land boundaries.
 5. Consider developing a statewide land and water trail sign manual or adapting existing (e.g. USFS, OPRD, OSMB, Intertwine) sign guidance to provide consistency in trail signage and information for trail users across the state.
 6. Develop trail wayfinding and signage plans. Consider developing a generic trail wayfinding plan document for use by small communities in Oregon, including guidance on compliance with FHWA’s Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices where trails intersect with public road rights-of-way.
 7. Consider the installation of distance markers along land and water trails to aid in management and emergency response.
 8. Utilize universal symbols in trail signs and maps to the extent possible.
 9. Consider incorporating tactile (e.g. braille, raised characters, tactile maps) and/or audible elements to improve communication for users with limited vision or cognition.
 10. Consider providing multilingual signage where the local, historic, or visitor demographics indicate it may be appropriate. Use QR codes to provide access to translated and/or audio versions of sign content.
 11. Support the coordination of systems that collect and manage standardized trail data.
 12. Train land managers and user groups to collect land and water trail inventory and accessibility information. Work with trained users/staff to inventory existing trails and regularly update trail inventory and conditions information.



CASE STUDY

TRAIL SIGN AND INFORMATION BEST PRACTICES

The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Standards (F216.13, 703, and 1017.10) require that new trail information signs contain the following information, at a minimum:

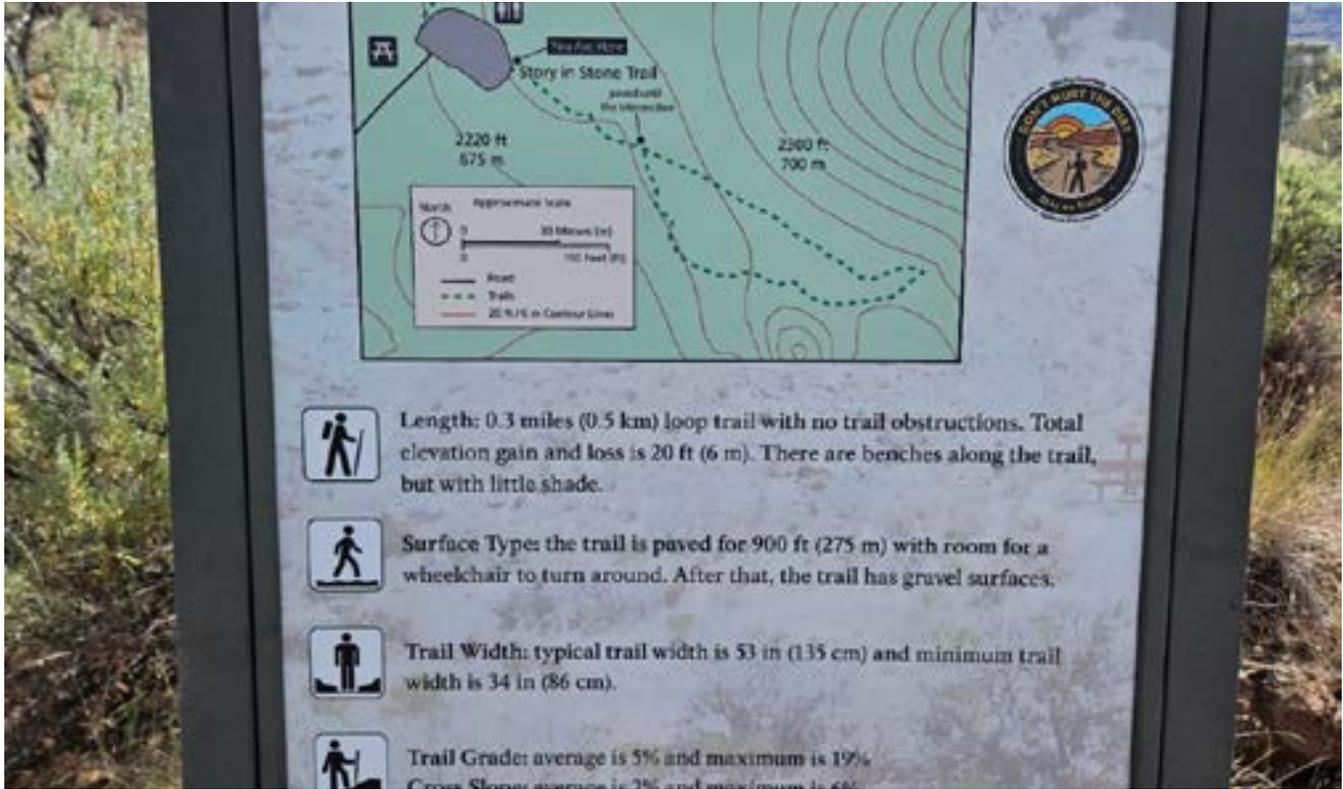
- length of the trail or trail segment,
- type of trail surface,
- typical and minimum trail tread width,
- typical and maximum trail grade, and
- typical and maximum trail cross slope.

These standards apply to trails primarily designed for hiking or pedestrian use but should be considered for all trail types. Where feasible, land and water trail signs should also include maps and additional information on locations of barriers or non-accessible features, amenities, viewpoints, seating areas, and other features.

Making the information above available online along with information such as location, hours, site photos, and other applicable information can help inform prospective visitors on what to expect and which trails best suit their needs or desires.

Image: Beneficial Designs' Trail Access Information Signposts are patterned after a Nutrition Facts label and provide objective trail data that meets or exceeds ABA and USFS guidelines in a simple format that fits on a 4-inch signpost. (Beneficial Designs)

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Photo, top: A trailhead kiosk at the Story in Stone Trail within the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument provides a map with trail features and information on trail length, surface, width, grade, and cross slope. (OPRD)

Photo, bottom: Sign with photos illustrating accessible water ramp and launch features at Millers Landing in Bend, OR. (OPRD)



CASE STUDY

INFORMATION TO MAKE INFORMED ACCESSIBILITY DECISIONS

With support from an RTP grant, Access Recreation developed “Guidelines for Communicating Trail Information to People with Disabilities” to help land managers share information about trails and amenities so that potential trail users can make their own informed decisions. Trailkeepers of Oregon and the Oregon Trails Coalition obtained additional funding from Travel Oregon to have Access Recreation train staff, trail ambassadors, and other volunteers to conduct trail accessibility audits. This work is helping improve information delivery on Oregon Hikers’ Field Guide and to develop a new generation of stewardship leaders with understanding of the diverse accessibility needs of trail users. Access Recreation’s work has also inspired similar efforts and organizations outside of Oregon such as Tucson Access Trails.

Photo: Access Recreation staff train volunteers to conduct trail accessibility audits (Georgena Moran)



5: SAFETY AND USER CONFLICTS

Two major trends identified by trail partners and users contribute to an increased need for emphasis on trail safety and etiquette:

- I. Inadequate trail funding and capacity has led to fewer staff conducting maintenance, education, and enforcement on trails, resulting in more natural hazards and undesirable behaviors on trails going unaddressed.
- II. More Oregonians are using land and water trails with an increasing variety of new devices (e.g. e-bikes, side-by-side ATVs, adaptive mountain bikes, hydrofoils), exacerbating existing concerns about crowding and user conflicts.

Motorized, non-motorized, and water trail users all identified conflicts between different types of users at shared facilities as a major concern. Land managers identified e-mobility and shared-use trail management guidance as a priority need given that it is not feasible to provide purpose-built trails for all users with limited resources. Trends that emerged from outreach with trail partners and users include:

- Hikers and equestrians can generally share space but prefer to be separated from motorized users and fast-moving bikes or e-bikes.
- Side-by-sides and Class II ATVs (4x4s) can

generally share space but should be provided facilities separated from singletrack trails to address safety and environmental concerns shared by off-highway motorcycle riders.

- Separation of trail uses should be prioritized on hills that create significant speed differentials between user groups and curves where sight lines are limited.
- Motorized boat launches can present accessibility and safety challenges for non-motorized boaters, so it is often desirable to provide separate non-motorized launches.
- There is a strong desire, especially among older riders and adaptive bike riders, to open more trails to e-bikes and for land managers to provide clear and consistent information on where and what type of e-bikes are allowed.

In addition to safety concerns related to shared spaces, trail partners and users shared concerns about undesirable behaviors that negatively impact their trail experience and the surrounding environment. Common concerns included trash, vehicle security at trailheads, environmental degradation from unsanctioned trails, vandalism, and unsanctioned camping. Social media is seen as both a driver of some undesirable behaviors and a potential tool for promoting responsible recreation. There is strong demand across all trail user groups for safety and etiquette training - especially for youth and new trail users- and trail signage clarifying allowed uses and yielding etiquette. Lighting, security cameras at parking lots, and trail rangers or ambassadors were suggested as ways to improve security without increasing unwanted attention from law enforcement

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which was identified as a barrier to recreation by some groups in the SCORP.

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support land managers and trail partners in improving safety and addressing user conflicts:

- [People for Bikes' E-Bike Resources for Land Managers Guide](#)
- City of Eugene and Intertwine trail etiquette sign templates
- Trail safety and etiquette training resources

ACTIONS

To improve safety and reduce user conflicts over the next 10 years, recreation providers and trail partners should:

1. Prioritize trail improvements to address safety concerns (e.g. user conflicts, natural hazards).
2. Make improvements for security or crime prevention (e.g. enforcement, lighting and security cameras at trailheads, operational or design changes).
3. Promote responsible trail use through education programs, materials, and signs regarding etiquette, rules, and/or safety.
4. Maintain current law enforcement levels on ATV trails and at trailheads.
5. Develop and apply e-bike management policies that are consistent across land managers.
6. Develop best practices for shared use trail design and management to avoid conflicts and resource degradation.
7. Partner with law enforcement to improve trail patrols and compliance utilizing trail-specific and equity-based enforcement training.
8. Include trail conflict reduction strategies (e.g., zoning, signage) in planning and operations for high-use or shared-use areas.
9. Designate or separate use areas for different types of trail users where space and resources allow or where conflicts arise and terrain and other factors restrict improvements to address those conflicts within an existing trail corridor.
10. Integrate safety audits and hazard mitigation into all trail upgrade projects.
11. Develop and fund statewide trail etiquette campaigns, support localized education initiatives.
12. Consider increasing penalties for violations of travel management rules on federal lands and non-registered vehicle/snowmobile operation.



CASE STUDY

STOP. SPEAK. SMILE. - TEACHING USERS TO SHARE THE TRAIL

The rapid growth of mountain biking in Central Oregon created frequent conflicts between cyclists and equestrians on the trails. The Forest Service got so many complaints that they brought together equestrian and mountain biking groups and challenged them to find a solution. Oregon Equestrian Trails, Central Oregon Trails Alliance, Back Country Horsemen of Oregon, and the Sisters Trails Alliance worked together to identify where and why conflicts were occurring, agree on how best to safely share the trails, and develop materials that would communicate identified best practices to other trail users. The groups developed Share the Trail signs and installed them in high-conflict locations. They also developed a brochure that explained the agreed-upon concepts. With a grant from the Deschutes Trails Coalition, they produced a video to promote the Share the Trail concepts. The groups collaborated on the script, hired a videographer, and supplied the “actors.” The resulting video has been viewed on the internet over 20,000 times. The collaboration brought the previously feuding trail groups together and forged relationships that remain strong today, enabling the groups to work together to resolve minor disputes before they become challenging situations.

Photo: Screenshot of Share the Trails, [youtube.com/watch?v=a-oSMRzu7YU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-oSMRzu7YU) (OET)



CASE STUDY

STRATEGIC BYPASSES HELP USERS SHARE THE TRAIL

With approval and necessary environmental clearances from the Deschutes National Forest, Oregon Equestrian Trails applied to and received a grant from RTP to construct an equestrian bypass trail parallel to a crowded segment of the Metolius-Windigo Trail. Because of sight line and terrain limitations on the main trail, it was determined that separating uses with a bypass trail was the best course of action. Mountain bikers continue to use the main trail and equestrians use the new bypass segment. Hikers can use either segment.

Photo: Equestrian on new bypass trail (OPRD)



6: REDUCING BARRIERS TO THE OUTDOORS

Multiple studies have shown that Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), people with disabilities, and people with low incomes in the United States face higher barriers to participating in outdoor recreation.⁸ These barriers result in lower participation rates in outdoor recreation compared to the overall population and these groups being considered “underserved”. Major barriers include:

- Less access to green space and natural areas close to home
- Cost of participation, including transportation, food, lodging, gear, and access fees
- Social constraints such as lack of knowledge about outdoor recreation, discomfort in spaces a person doesn’t see other people from their community and/or with similar identities, and previous experiences of discrimination.

Multiple SCORPs have confirmed that these trends hold true in Oregon and recommended management actions to mitigate barriers so that all residents can equally enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation. All underserved groups

highlighted the importance of improving accessibility of outdoor recreation for people with disabilities. Many advocated for more free programming, improved communication and information availability about trails, and better access to transportation to recreation areas. These themes overlap significantly with the focus areas and needs identified by trail users in surveys and focus groups conducted for the 2016 and 2026 Trails Plan. Intentional planning and ongoing coordination are needed by recreation providers to address these barriers and ensure trails are available, accessible, and welcoming to all Oregonians.

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support land managers and trail partners in reducing barrier to the outdoors:

- [Empowering Access Accessibility Toolkit for Land Managers](#)
- [OPRD Accessibility Design Standards](#)
- Trail accessibility design resources and inclusion tools

ACTIONS

The SCORP and Trails Plan survey identified the following actions for recreation providers and partners to make trails and recreation areas more welcoming, inclusive, and accessible.⁹ These recommendations

⁸ Taylor et al (2011) National Park Service Comprehensive Survey of the American Public, 2008-2009: Racial and ethnic diversity of National Park System visitors and non-visitors., Outdoor Industry Association (2022) Outdoor Participation Trends Report., Klompmaker et al (2023) Racial, Ethnic, and Socioeconomic Disparities in Multiple Measures of Blue and Green Space in the United States., Mott (2016) Mind the Gap: How to Promote Racial Diversity Among National Park Visitors.

⁹ See Chapter 10, Actions 3-5 of the 2025 SCORP for more details.

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are intended to be relevant to multiple underserved groups, however, recreation providers should engage the specific communities they serve when assessing, planning, designing, and implementing projects, as each community will have unique needs, priorities, and resources.

- 1.** Increase accessible opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g. trails for adaptive eMTBs, handcycles, wheelchairs, or trail chairs).
- 2.** Encourage the design of trails and park amenities for increased accessibility.
 - Use universal design principles when designing trails and park amenities. Universal design is “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (Center for Universal Design, 2006).
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) design standards should be used as a minimum starting point for assessing “accessibility”.
- 3.** Increase engagement of trail users with lived experience of barriers to recreation (low-income residents, households with disabilities, diverse communities, and community partners who specifically serve these communities) in planning, design, implementation, and maintenance processes for trails and trail facilities.
 - Seek out consultants with lived experience and/or compensate community members for the time/experience they contribute.
 - Connect with recreators with disabilities and supportive groups and use their recommendations and guidelines to provide relevant information for people with disabilities, such as those provided by Access Recreation.
- 4.** Assess existing trails for accessibility and universal design improvements. Incorporate accessibility assessments into routine processes for trail development and maintenance or rehabilitation projects.
- 5.** Provide accurate, detailed information online, at visitor centers, in publications, and at trailheads to help users make informed decisions, both when planning ahead and when making spur of the moment trips.
 - Provide detailed information about the accessibility of trailheads and trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, surface, grade, obstacles, facilities) to help users determine how accessible an area is based on their individual needs
- 6.** Provide information about public transportation and safe walking/biking routes to recreation areas.
- 7.** Provide clean and well-maintained facilities. Pay special attention to maintaining firm, level surfaces and transitions at structures (e.g. bridges, docks), doorways, and where surface types change.
- 8.** Provide accessible experiences, not just individual facilities, by focusing on “accessibility triangles” including:
 - Accessible parking and transit stops
 - Accessible restrooms and amenities
 - Accessible destinations (e.g. trail to nature or wildlife viewing area)

CHAPTER 8: STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

- Accessible routes between all the above. (At sno-parks and winter trail accesses, create breaks in large berms to provide accessible routes from parking to recreation areas.)
- 9.** Offer free of charge trail access and provide clear information about free of charge trail opportunities to the public.
 - In areas that require day-use fees, consider providing free access or reduced rates for underserved groups, especially visitors with disabilities who may not be able to take advantage of many inaccessible trails and features.
 - 10.** Provide free or low-cost gear and equipment rental (including adaptive equipment) to reduce barriers to land and water trail activities. Consider partnerships with outdoor retailers.
 - 11.** Offer group activities, events, volunteers/guides who can assist people when recreating, and other social supports to encourage participation by new users and underrepresented groups. Offer programs such as outdoor education and training, guided hikes, nature walks, or other activities.
 - 12.** Promote internal and external organizational diversity to encourage a sense of belonging and safety in the outdoors for all communities.
 - 13.** Promote a sense of belonging and safety for all communities. For instance, recreation providers can make progress toward this goal by incorporating a thorough history of diverse communities' relationships to recreation areas in interpretive materials and memorials, partnering with supportive organizations to host events serving and celebrating diverse communities, and identifying ways to take appropriate action when any residents report harmful encounters with others while using recreation areas.
 - 14.** Train staff and volunteers on accessibility features, how to assess trail accessibility, how to remove barriers and improve accessibility through maintenance, and how to respond to inquiries about accessibility and requests for accommodations.
 - 15.** Fund innovation pilots for welcoming, inclusive, and accessible trails and facilities (e.g., accessible docks, trail furniture).



CASE STUDY

BUILDING OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP AND BELONGING

People of Color Outdoors (POCO) created a comprehensive Hike Leader Handbook to train community members to lead inclusive group hikes for families and individuals new to outdoor recreation. The handbook provides guidance on safety, cultural responsiveness, child-focused activities, and creating welcoming trail experiences for communities historically excluded from outdoor spaces. By empowering peer leaders from within communities of color, POCO demonstrates how grassroots training can expand equitable trail access across Oregon.

Photo: Community members on a hike with support from POCO's Hike Leader Handbook (Pam Slaughter)



CASE STUDY

REDUCING BARRIERS THROUGH TRAIL REHABILITATION AND GEAR LIBRARIES

The Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah received an RTP grant to make accessibility and sustainability improvements to a popular trail in Buford Park, Lane County's largest park. A section of trail that was in an area where it would seasonally flood was realigned to a better location and made accessible. Local wheelchair users contributed to trail assessments as the project was planned and implemented. Mount Pisgah Arboretum partnered with David's Chair, Lane County Parks, McKenzie River Trust, and Travel Lane County to make tracked wheelchairs available for free to park visitors.

Photo: A visitor uses a free tracked wheelchair rental to enjoy nature trails at Mt. Pisgah (OPRD)



7: BALANCING CONSERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Demand for trails and outdoor recreation continues to increase. Oregon State Parks experienced record visitation in 2024 with more than 53.85 million estimated day use visits, a 3% increase from 2023. In general, growth in outdoor recreation and trail use is a positive trend, supporting the goal of making health and economic benefits of trails available to all Oregonians. However, this rise in popularity also means busier trails and trailheads and an increase in wear and tear on trail facilities and the surrounding environment and wildlife.

Trail users shared frustrations that crowding and resource impacts have been exacerbated in some areas by long post-wildfire closures funneling demand to a smaller number of trails. Trail users and partners emphasized the need to identify resources to more rapidly rehabilitate and reopen trails after closures and to proactively adapt trails to be more resilient to wildfires, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events. Promoting trails as resilient infrastructure that can serve as fire breaks, firefighting access, and evacuation routes when needed is a potential means of obtaining additional support for trails and showing greater return on investments.

Trail partners and users strongly value nature experiences and are generally supportive of efforts to reduce negative recreational impacts such as erosion, spread of invasive species, damage to vegetation or wildlife habitat, trash, and fires. Unsanctioned “social” or “demand” trails, deferred trail maintenance, and unauthorized trail uses (e.g. side-by-sides on singletrack trails) were noted as major causes of resource degradation that could be addressed via the strategic actions identified in the maintenance, information, and safety sections of this plan.

Trail users strongly support management strategies that balance conservation and outdoor recreation by expanding opportunities, such as building new trails and riding areas to disperse demand and impacts. This approach can increase negative impacts to wildlife and habitat, however, and can be challenging for recreation providers due to limited funding and maintenance capacity. Recreation providers are encouraged to explore strategies such as targeted marketing campaigns to educate users on sustainable recreation habits and/or direct users to nearby trails that have capacity for more users prior to implementing permits, reservations, and timed entry systems, which can create barriers to recreation. In the most crowded and negatively impacted areas where these treatments are needed, making some same day permits available and ensuring that users with disabilities are given priority for accessible reservable facilities can help mitigate barriers for underserved groups.

CHAPTER 8: STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

The following resources are available in the [Oregon Trails Toolkit](#) to support land managers and trail partners in balancing conservation and outdoor recreation:

- [Trails as resilient infrastructure guidebook and webinar](#)
- [Metro Recreation Ecology Literature Review](#)
- [USDA Sustaining wildlife with recreation on public lands synthesis](#)

ACTIONS

The SCORP and Trails Plan survey identified the following actions for recreation providers and their partners to balance conservation and outdoor recreation over the next 10 years:

- 1.** Adapt trails to respond to climate hazards (e.g. wildfire resilience and recovery).
- 2.** Maintain and protect natural resources (e.g. vegetation, erosion, noxious weeds, invasive species, water resources, wildlife habitat).
- 3.** Maintain and protect cultural/historic resources and strengthen tribal partnerships.
 - Recognize and respect the cultural, historical, and ecological significance of landscapes traversed by Oregon’s trails.
 - Collaborate with Tribal governments to identify, protect, and interpret cultural sites and traditional use areas.
 - Incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) into trail design, maintenance, and educational materials, and pursue co-management opportunities where appropriate.
 - Engage Tribal partners early in planning processes to ensure that recreational

use and conservation goals honor cultural values and sustain these places for future generations.

- 4.** Provide and highlight nature and wildlife viewing areas.
- 5.** Educate trail users on low-impact recreation practices/principles to minimize visitor impacts, particularly reducing trash and minimizing fire risk. Examples could include integrating “Leave No Trace” ethics into public information about trails.
- 6.** Examine ways to adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts. Examples include: seasonal trail closures for habitat preservation, 1-way directional trails or separation of user types in crowded areas, signage and vegetation restoration to address natural degradation from social trails
- 7.** Examine mechanisms to provide funding and technical assistance support for the environmental planning, design, and permitting stages of trail project development.
- 8.** Develop best practices for timber management planning and coordination for areas where trails cross private or leased public timber properties.
- 9.** Use targeted communications, marketing campaigns, and web presence to provide information about crowding and encourage visitors to explore less busy locations, while identifying areas that have the facilities and amenities to support more visitors.

CHAPTER 8: STATEWIDE PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

- 10.** Pursue larger investment projects that can reduce natural resource impacts and perceived crowding. Examples of these projects that are most supported by residents include developing trails to and between different parks, acquiring new land for trails, and expanding trail opportunities in existing areas.
- 11.** Engage with local communities, user groups, tourism entities, and nearby park and transportation authorities to develop collaborative solutions to manage crowds and protect resources. The management actions should be tested with pilot programs, monitored for effectiveness, and assessed with public and stakeholder feedback before long-term application.
- 12.** Quickly repair resource damage caused by off-trail use before more damage occurs. This may include land restoration, revegetation, invasive species treatment, long-term rehabilitation, barriers, route realignments, or closures. In some cases, alternative sustainable routes will need to be built to replace user created trails.
- 13.** Consider implementing timed-entry systems or permits in limited, highly impacted areas. Tailor application with locally identified need and equity in mind to avoid creating barriers for underserved communities.



CASE STUDY

REDUCING HIGH USE VISITATION PRESSURES THROUGH GEOTARGETED MESSAGES

The 'insta-effect' is when large crowds of people flock to a certain area to capture an experience especially for the sake of social media. In 2020, Travel Oregon began creating editorials that highlighted lesser traveled places and stopped advertising certain areas during peak season. During the pandemic, messaging focused on safe travel directives. This led to paid, geotargeted social messaging through Facebook and Instagram to disperse visitors from popular destinations and provide "know before you go" and positive visitor behavior messages. Ads focused on dispersal were triggered by 4 key travel weekends in the summer and focused on a georeferenced area (25-35 miles) surrounding key landmarks. The latest edition of the campaign saw site engagement rates up, indicating that optimization is working.

Photo: Geotargeted messages. (Travel Oregon)



CASE STUDY

TEACHING TRAIL USERS TO TREAD LIGHTLY

Tread Lightly! is a non-profit organization that leads a national initiative to promote the responsible use of motorized vehicles when recreating outdoors. Their goal is to balance the off-road and off-highway vehicle (OHV) users' need for adventure with the need to conserve the places where they ride and explore. With support from the ATV Grant Program, TL!'s Oregon Program Manager partners with land managers alongside OPRD's ATV Program to offer educational outreach, attend OHV rallies and events, design and implement signage, represent motorized recreation within trail coalitions and communities, and sponsor stewardship projects throughout the state.

Photo: Tread Lightly staff teach youth about safe trail use at an ATV event. (OPRD)



9

USER-SPECIFIC PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

Based on outreach to trail users and land managers, OPRD identified priority needs and investment areas for different types of trails (non-motorized, ATV, snowmobile, non-motorized boating/paddling). User-specific needs significantly overlap with the statewide focus areas and also highlight several areas where the managers and users of different trail types have unique needs and priorities (e.g. avalanche education for snowmobile activities). OPRD will prioritize these user needs in their Recreational Trails Program and ATV Grant Program evaluation processes. (Refer to Chapters 10 and 11 for more detailed RTP and ATV Grant Evaluation Criteria. Refer to the Trails Plan Outreach Summary Report for needs of specific types of trail users (e.g.

mountain bikers, side-by-side ATVs).) This chapter outlines investment priorities and actions for recreation providers and partners over the next ten years.



NON-MOTORIZED LAND TRAIL PRIORITY NEEDS

Restoring and connecting existing trail systems to provide a variety of high-quality, sustainable trail experiences serving urban and dispersed destinations is a top priority for non-motorized land trail partners and users. There is also strong desire for trails to be designed and managed to safely accommodate a growing number and diversity of trail users (e.g. hikers, bikers, equestrians).

The following are priority needs for future investment in non-motorized land trails and recommended actions for recreation providers and partners based on outreach conducted for the Trails Plan and SCORP.

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND MAJOR RESTORATION OF EXISTING NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #2, trail partners should:

1. Pursue projects and stewardship partnerships to address deferred maintenance backlogs.
2. Prioritize repairing trail damage after fires, storms, and other major events.

EXPAND AND/OR CONNECT EXISTING NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS INTO LARGER SYSTEMS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #3, trail partners should:

- 3.** Create new soft surface trails for hiking and/or biking.
- 4.** Create opportunities for backpacking and/or bikepacking
 - Fill gaps in long-distance trails.
 - Develop camping opportunities near trails.
 - Provide secure overnight parking.
- 5.** Construct new paved shared-use trails.
- 6.** Improve “town-to-trail” connections (e.g. transit, walking, biking routes to trailheads) and variety of “close to home” trail experiences
- 7.** Create trail systems with a mixture of trail difficulties (e.g. trailheads providing access to short easy loops and longer more difficult trails) to provide opportunities for new trail users and families as well as challenging or technical opportunities for more advanced users.
- 8.** Increase accessible opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g. trails for adaptive MTBs/eMTBs, handcycles, wheelchairs, or trail chairs).
 - Provide multiple and diverse accessible opportunities to reduce instances of users traveling long distances for one short accessible trail.

TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS TO ADDRESS SAFETY CONCERNS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #5, trail partners should:

- 9.** Manage shared use trails and electronic mobility device (e.g. e-bikes, e-scooter) use to improve safety and reduce user conflicts.

ADAPT TRAILS TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND RESPOND TO CLIMATE HAZARDS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #7, trail partners should:

- 10.** Design trails with resiliency against changing climate conditions in mind such as increasing water levels/ flows, wildfire hazard, coastal erosion.
- 11.** Sign and, where necessary, reroute trails to minimize negative impacts to natural resources from poor drainage, unsanctioned trails, etc.



CASE STUDY

CONVERTING ROADS TO MULTI-ABILITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES

With support from an RTP grant, the Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association (RVMBBA), in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, converted a degraded section of Bull Gap Road on Mt. Ashland into a purpose-built downhill mountain bike jump trail with a parallel uphill/multi-use route. The road had long been considered the weakest link in the watershed trail system and was prone to rogue trail use. The new Mt A Line trail is one mile long with over 50 features, including berms and gap jumps up to 40 feet. It offers progressive options for intermediate and advanced riders, with ride-arounds for less experienced users. A parallel uphill/multi-use path provides access for hikers, equestrians, and riders climbing for laps. The trail officially opened in September 2025 and immediately attracted riders from across the West Coast, signaling its regional tourism potential. Mt A Line transforms a problematic road into a premier recreational asset, balancing watershed protection with world-class riding while boosting local tourism and community satisfaction.

Photo: Beginner, advanced, and adaptive mountain bikers enjoy the Mt A Line Trail. (Ryan Hawk, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association)



CASE STUDY

TRAILS FOR ALL SEASONS – IMPROVING NORDIC ACCESS

In partnership with the Umatilla National Forest, the Blue Mountain Land Trust (BMLT) received an RTP grant to expand and improve the Horseshoe Prairie Nordic Ski Area. The project included constructing new trails, some just for snowshoeing, improving existing trails, installing signage, and constructing a warming shelter that is seasonally placed and removed during warmer months. RTP grant funds were partially matched by volunteer labor from BMLT’s Blues Crew.

Photo: Cross country skiers enjoy the expanded Horseshoe Prairie Nordic Ski Area. (OPRD)



ATV/OHV PRIORITY NEEDS

Maintenance and law enforcement are the most urgent needs for trail managers. OHV users in Oregon are looking for greater access and more variety, but they also care about responsible trail use, safety, and trail quality. Increasing education programs and user conflict management in existing riding areas must be balanced with strategic expansion of riding opportunities to meet user needs while promoting responsible recreation.

The following are priority needs for future ATV investment and recommended actions for recreation providers and partners based on outreach conducted for the Trails Plan and SCORP:

MAINTAIN/INCREASE CURRENT OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE LEVELS FOR ATV TRAILS AND FACILITIES.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #2, trail partners should:

1. Stabilize and increase operations and maintenance funding for ATV systems.

CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ATV RIDING, ESPECIALLY CLASS III (OFF-HIGHWAY MOTORCYCLES) AND CLASS IV (SIDE-BY-SIDES).

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #3, trail partners should:

2. Provide more camping opportunities near staging areas and trail systems.

3. Develop ATV systems which include a variety of riding challenge opportunities (easy, more difficult, most difficult) to satisfy diverse user needs. System plans should also develop ATV connectors and networks to create loop trails or provide longer rides.
4. Prioritize development of new ATV routes in underused areas, especially those accessible to side-by-side vehicles.
5. Consider the importance of shared-use roads for ATV use.

INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF ONLINE INFORMATION ABOUT ATV TRAILS AND RIDING AREAS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #4, trail partners should:

6. Increase investment in signage, mapping, and consistent trail grooming to improve rider experience and reduce off-trail damage.
7. Improve communication around closures. Develop more transparent and real-time information systems for fire-season closures and restrictions.

MAINTAIN CURRENT LAW ENFORCEMENT LEVELS ON ATV TRAILS AND AT TRAILHEADS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #5, trail partners should:

8. Pursue a balanced enforcement approach that focuses on behaviors that negatively impact safety and environmental resources while minimizing unnecessary interactions between trail users and enforcement officers.

CHAPTER 9: USER-SPECIFIC PRIORITY TRAIL NEEDS AND ACTIONS

9. Expand law enforcement partnerships and explore ATV-specific enforcement units.
10. Combine increased access with safety campaigns and ranger presence to balance enjoyment with conservation and public safety.

DESIGN AND MAINTAIN TRAILS FOR SAFE RIDING.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #5, trail partners should:

11. Design trails to provide adequate sight lines and other features for safe ATV operation. Consider bypass trails on shared use trails where inadequate sight lines or other conditions warrant them.
12. Launch or strengthen OHV-specific education programs, including etiquette, environmental protection, and safety.
13. Prioritize trail design and conflict reduction strategies (e.g., vehicle class restrictions, rerouting).
14. Improve signage and trailhead design to reduce conflicts.
 - Provide information online and sign where land management boundaries, regulations, or allowed uses change)
 - Provide trail markers to aid navigation and emergency response.”



CASE STUDY

MAKING SPACE FOR SIDE-BY-SIDES

In 2025, Willamette National Forest Recreation crews built a new bridge and reconstructed one-quarter of a mile trail reroute on ATV102a Trail in the Huckleberry Flats OHV area, located on the Middle Fork Ranger District. The new bridge is 52 feet long and 72 inches wide with curved approach ramps made of hand-peeled cedar. The bridge is now wide enough for larger side-by-sides (SxSs) ATVs and replaces a rotted bridge that was previously located at the bottom of a steep, eroded hill. The Forest continues to work on widening trails and bridges in the Huckleberry Flats OHV area to expand access to larger side-by-sides that are popular with families. Improved Forest Service facilities attract visitors and improve visitor satisfaction, contributing to tourism and recreation-related economic activity in communities near national forests.

Photos: Bridge construction and Side-by-side ATV on reconstructed trail bridge (OPRD)



SNOWMOBILE PRIORITY NEEDS

Regular grooming of snowmobile trails and maintenance of facilities is a top priority for snowmobilers and trail providers. Funding for grooming equipment supports this priority and benefits other winter trail users who share space with snowmobilers or have trails groomed through partnerships with snowmobile clubs. Education and enforcement are also important to support safe trail use and reduce user conflicts in winter environments.

The following are priority needs for future snowmobile investment and recommended actions for recreation providers and partners based on outreach conducted for the Trails Plan and SCORP:

MAINTAIN CURRENT TRAIL GROOMING, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE LEVELS FOR SNOWMOBILE TRAILS AND FACILITIES.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #2, trail partners should:

1. Fund equipment for trail grooming and maintenance.
2. Increase funding for operations and maintenance during snow seasons.
3. Collaborate with law enforcement for Sno-Park patrols and compliance.

4. Enhance grooming operations to ensure consistent and safe riding conditions.
5. Increase Sno-Park and access road plowing and maintenance.

PROVIDE AVALANCHE AND SAFETY EDUCATION.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #5, trail partners should:

6. Develop and distribute snowmobile-specific safety and etiquette materials.
7. Develop education and outreach programs that reduce conflicts between winter trail uses and to increase compliance with rules and regulations.
8. Consider the effects of changing climate (E.g. receding snowpack and earlier spring runoff) on future recreation use patterns when conducting on snow vehicle travel management.
9. Undertake proactive and systematic outreach programs to facilitate increased compliance with closures and reduce user conflicts.
10. Implement outreach programs to raise public awareness of winter wildlife habitat, wildlife behavior, and ways to minimize user impacts

PROVIDE TRAIL INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE AT TRAILHEADS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #4, trail partners should:

11. Develop clear signage standards and trail maps for multi-use winter systems.
12. Improve signage, information, and enforcement for shared-use areas to reduce user conflict.

EXPAND AND IMPROVE SNO-PARKS AND AMENITIES.

- 13.** Improve amenities such as restrooms, warming shelters, and trash cans at Sno-Parks.
- 14.** Expand and connect snowmobile trail networks and connect disjointed routes, especially near popular riding areas.
- 15.** Invest in accessible facilities for snowmobilers with disabilities.
- 16.** Expand and improve sno-parks for snowmobile and nordic trail access.
- 17.** Reduce unwarranted snowmobile riding closures through comprehensive review/input/analysis by all stakeholders.



CASE STUDY

EXPANDING SNO-PARKS TO EXPAND WINTER TRAIL ACCESS

The Thousand Springs Sno-Park near Crater Lake provides access to multiple trails that serve snowmobilers in winter and ATV users in summer. Due to increasing use, the parking area was experiencing congestion during winter months. National Forest Foundation partnered with the Rogue-River Siskiyou National Forest and the local snowmobile club, Rogue Snowmobilers, to obtain an RTP grant to expand the Sno-Park.

Photo: The Thousand Springs Sno-Park prior to the expansion. (Rogue Snowmobilers)



WATER TRAIL PRIORITY NEEDS

Water trail providers and users value improving the usability and safety of existing water trails by addressing infrastructure gaps like parking and signage and improving accessibility of water access points for individuals with disabilities. Increasing availability of information about water trail opportunities to promote safe and responsible water recreation is also a priority, especially for longer or overnight trips.

The following are priority needs for future water trail investment and recommended actions for recreation providers and partners based on outreach conducted for the Trails Plan and SCORP.

INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION ONLINE AND VIA SIGNAGE AT ACCESS POINTS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #4, trail partners should:

1. Provide digital and/or GPS maps of water trails that illustrate public/private land boundaries to promote water trail use while reducing conflicts with landowners.
2. Develop guidelines and templates for user-friendly water trail guides and maps to share site-specific water trail information online and at access points. Create water trail and non-motorized boating access point maps and guides for trip planning and safety.

3. Develop geospatial PDF maps of water trail routes to allow on the water wayfinding. Such maps can be uploaded onto mobile devices and then, using an app, use built-in GPS to track the user's location on the map.
4. Standardize signage for easier navigation and access point visibility. Expand collaborative signage efforts across jurisdictions.
5. Develop a statewide website to house general information about non-motorized boating opportunities and water trails in Oregon, including links to partner sites.
6. Collect waterfront property information from land managers to create a database of publicly owned sites along waterways to establish new paddling access points.

IMPROVE FLATWATER AND WHITEWATER PADDLING ACCESS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #3, trail partners should:

7. Improve and expand parking areas at water accesses, with an emphasis on daytime and overnight vehicle security. Consider needs for single vehicle and trailer parking capacity.
8. Develop more and improved flatwater access points, designed to meet needs of non-motorized boaters (e.g. parking close to shore launch area).
 - Make restrooms available and ensure they are clean/maintained.
 - Enforce boating rules and educate non-motorized boaters on rules.
 - Provide life jacket loaner stations at water access points.

- Provide separation between motorized and non-motorized boat launches where possible.
- 9.** Provide aquatic invasive species infrastructure following “Drain. Clean. Dry” practices.
 - 10.** Protect existing non-motorized boating access sites from development and other encroachments.

PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE PARKING, SANITATION, WATER ACCESS, AND ACCESS ROUTES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #6, trail partners should:

- 11.** Provide accessible water access points for people with disabilities, including parking, restrooms, paths, launches, “rest areas” between access points, and overnight trip opportunities featuring accessible camping sites.
- 12.** Use universal design principals in non-motorized boater access design.
- 13.** Provide accessible facilities (parking, sanitation, paths, launches) at multiple points along routes to enable one-way “shuttle” trips.
- 14.** Develop best practices and guidelines for accessible non-motorized boating access.

PURSUE LAND ACQUISITIONS OR EASEMENTS FOR NEW ACCESS POINTS AND/OR PORTAGE TRAILS.

In addition to the actions listed under Statewide Priority Need #3, trail partners should:

- 15.** Encourage coordination across land managers/owners.
- 16.** Educate land managers and non-profit organizations on funding options available for non-motorized boating land acquisition and facility development projects.
- 17.** Disperse demand along priority water routes by acquiring land where public access is currently unavailable or traditional access is in danger of being lost
- 18.** Identify and prioritize where more paddling access is appropriate and needed.
- 19.** Incorporate water access into transportation and other projects and programs that are associated with water bodies (e.g. highway, hydroelectric, local waterfront planning).



CASE STUDY

WATERWAY ACCESS PERMITS FUND WATER TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

In Oregon, non-motorized boaters are required by law to have a life vest, whistle, light, and waterway access permit for watercraft that are 10-feet or longer. Oregon State Marine Board uses waterway access fees to provide grants to improve boating facilities, acquire property for public water access, develop safety education courses, and purchase boating equipment to reduce barriers for underserved communities.

Photo: A sign at a water trail access point educates paddlers on required equipment. (OPRD)



CASE STUDY

CREATING ACCESSIBLE WATER TRAIL EXPERIENCES

The Tualatin River is one of two federally recognized water trails in Oregon. In 2022, with support from the Oregon State Marine Board grant, Tualatin Riverkeepers hosted multiple paddle events and design charrettes, including a multi-day Paddle Tualatin event that brought elected officials and land managers together – in kayaks - to experience the challenges to equitable access in the Tualatin River watershed. Building on this work, City of Tigard and Washington County have secured funding to construct water access points that are accessible for users with disabilities at Cook Park and Eagle Landing. Additional communities in the upper watershed are also exploring new launches and river-fronting amenities to create an accessible water trail experience, rather than a single accessible access point.

Photo: Tualatin Riverkeepers





10

RTP GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Recreational Trails Grant Program (RTP) is a federal-aid assistance program of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is the designated state agency that administers the program for the State of Oregon. Funding represents federal gas tax revenue attributed to snowmobile and off-highway vehicle use. OPRD receives an annual **apportionment**¹⁰ of RTP funds and typically accepts grant applications on an annual basis. As of 2025, Oregon's annual apportionment is approximately \$1.6 million. Per **federal law**¹¹, 30% of funds must be used for motorized trails (snowmobile and off-highway vehicle trails),

30% of funds must be used for non-motorized trails (hiking, biking, equestrian, Nordic, and water trails), and 40% of funds must be used for diverse-use trails (any combination of use type). In Oregon, 30% of funds are set aside for motorized trail projects, the remaining funds are used for nonmotorized trail projects, and the diverse-use requirement is met and typically exceeded through the motorized and nonmotorized funding categories.

Types of projects funded with RTP include restoration and improvement of existing trails, construction of new trails, trailheads and trailside facilities, water trail facilities, purchase of trail maintenance and construction equipment, safety and education, land acquisition, and assessment of trails for accessibility or maintenance improvements.

The annual grant cycle is announced through OPRD press releases, shared with various email lists, shared through partners, and presented at various statewide and regional meetings or conferences. Assistance to applicants is provided in the form of an annual online grant cycle workshop, a grant manual and other instructional tools, and through one-on-one meetings or conversations. RTP proposals are reviewed and scored by members of the RTP Grants Advisory Committee, approved by the OPRD Commission, then approved by FHWA.

Information about RTP and other grant

¹⁰ [fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/funding/apportionments_obligations/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/funding/apportionments_obligations/)

¹¹ 23 U.S. Code 206

CHAPTER 10: RTP GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

programs is available on OPRD’s website: oregon.gov/oprd/GRA/Pages/GRA-overview.aspx.

APPLICATION REVIEW

As part of the RTP grant evaluation process, OPRD staff first conducts a technical review of all grant applications. Submitted grant applications need to include the minimum required materials, as outlined in the grant manual and application, and must be deemed an eligible project under state policy and federal law. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant with an explanation of why their application was returned. For applications that are

incomplete or need corrections, applicants are given a deadline to resubmit the application. For applications that are deemed ineligible, OPRD strives to refer applicants to other grant programs or resources.

PROJECT PRIORITY SCORING SYSTEM

Following staff technical review, qualified applications are reviewed and scored by the Recreational Trails Program Grant Advisory Committee. Committee members score applications according to the application criteria, rating factors, and points shown in the following subsections.

The criteria reflect the RTP program guidelines

Recreational Trail Program Scoring Criteria Summary

CRITERIA TYPE	POSSIBLE POINTS
OPRD TECHNICAL REVIEW	
Technical Review and Compliance	n/a
RTP COMMITTEE MEMBER RATING CRITERIA	
Project Scope, Plan, and Readiness	20
Statewide, User, and Local Needs	20
Maintenance and Stewardship	10
Youth and Conservation Service Corps	5
Reducing Barriers to the Outdoors	5
Balancing Recreation and Conservation	5
Public Support	5
Project Urgency	5
Fiscal Considerations	5
Discretionary	20
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	100

Table 1 Recreational Trail Program Scoring Criteria Summary

CHAPTER 10: RTP GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

and are based on the findings of the current Statewide Trails Plan and SCORP. These criteria have been designed to evaluate and prioritize all RTP proposals submitted under the nonmotorized and motorized funding categories. Adjustments may be made to RTP criteria between Trails Plan updates for reasons such as updated statewide recreation data, functional improvements recommended by committee members and applicants, and agency directives.

Individual applications are scored as an average of the sum of all individual committee member scores. Applications are then ranked in order of their average score.

OPRD TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE REVIEW

As part of the technical review for eligibility and completeness, staff assess the prior performance and compliance of applicants and assess projects for readiness.

GRANT PERFORMANCE AND COMPLIANCE

OPRD is responsible for ensuring that public dollars are spent efficiently, appropriately, and in compliance with applicable grant agreement conditions and timelines, policies, rules, and laws. Additionally, federal grant management laws require oversight, monitoring, and risk assessment. A project applicant's past performance in effectively meeting the administrative guidelines of OPRD's grant programs is an important factor in evaluating compliance and risk. This includes reviewing

active and past grant awards made to the applicant. Serious instances of non-compliance may be reason for application denial. Past non-compliance may also be cause for OPRD to place additional requirements or special conditions on the grant, if awarded, and as allowed by [2 CFR 200.207](#).

PROJECT READINESS

In addition to technical review of application completeness and eligibility, applications are reviewed to determine that the project is ready to proceed if awarded grant funds. OPRD allows final planning and design to be included in project scopes, so readiness is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Staff consider baseline readiness elements such as land use compatibility, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) approval for projects on federal land, permit status, project timeline, and more.

If an application is determined not ready to proceed, it will be denied, and the applicant will be provided with information about what needs to be ready to reapply in a subsequent grant cycle.

RTP GRANTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER SCORING CRITERIA

PROJECT SCOPE, PLAN, AND READINESS (0-20 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to projects with well planned, clear, and realistic scopes that are ready to proceed. This category also considers the site plan and appropriateness or clarity of costs in the

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budget as related to the scope. As relevant to the proposal, applicants are asked questions about what the project deliverables are, why the project is being proposed, how work will be completed, what design standards will be used, accessible features, next steps, and the status of any necessary permits.

STATEWIDE, USER, AND LOCAL NEEDS (0-20 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to projects meeting statewide and/or locally identified needs. This includes issues and needs identified in the Statewide Trails Plan, needs identified through a local planning process, and consideration of needs specific to the intended user group.

The statewide planning process identified a set of top seven needs reported by recreation providers, partners, and trail users. For purposes of this category, applications are asked if/how their proposal meets four of these top needs: Statewide Priority Need #2: Maintenance, Restoration, and Stewardship; Statewide Priority Need #3: Connectivity and Access; Statewide Priority Need #4: Information and Signage; and Statewide Priority Need #5: Safety and User Conflict. See Chapter 8 of the plan for more detail. Note that some recommended investments and actions identified in the plan to address top needs are not eligible for RTP funding (routine maintenance, law enforcement, public transportation, etc.).

The statewide planning process also identified a set of priority needs specific to user groups.

See Chapter 9 of the plan for more details and a list of these needs. Applicants are asked if/how their proposal meets one or more of these top user needs. Note that some top needs are not eligible for RTP funding (routine maintenance, law enforcement, etc.).

Lastly, this category considers local needs. Applicants are asked to describe how the project meets needs identified at the local level. Relevant information includes whether the project or need was identified through a local planning process (examples: comprehensive parks master plan, trail system plan, other land management plans, etc.), or other public input or outreach involved in the project development. As not all project types may trigger a public planning process, relevant information can also include how the proposal meets goals of the land manager or partner's existing development or management plans.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND STEWARDSHIP (0-10 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that demonstrate the land manager's maintenance commitment and capacity, including partnerships that contribute to maintaining trails.

Applicants are asked to describe the land manager's current maintenance capacity, partnerships that assist with or are responsible for maintenance, and how the project will be maintained or otherwise impact maintenance capacity. For new trail construction or new facilities, relevant information includes how existing trails are being maintained

and whether capacity exists to expand. For restoration and improvement projects, relevant information includes how the restored or improved trails will be maintained once invested in. For projects such as equipment purchase or safety and education, relevant information includes how the proposal will lead to, or support better maintained trails.

YOUTH CONSERVATION OR SERVICE CORPS (0-5 POINTS)

FHWA encourages states to award points to proposals that utilize qualified youth conservation or service corps as part of project implementation. Qualified youth conservation or service corps refers to groups that are part of The Corps Network¹². Points may also be awarded for involving similar organizations or groups in project implementation that aren't part of The Corps Network, but engage youth, young adults, and veterans using a similar model¹³. Federal law allows RTP recipients to sole-source contract with a corps that is part of The Corps Network. Grantees proposing to work with organizations outside of The Corps Network must follow procurement law for competitive bidding, as relevant.

It is understood that involving youth conservation or service corps will not be appropriate for all project or proposal types.

REDUCING BARRIERS TO THE OUTDOORS (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points

to applicants demonstrating a commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and fostering welcoming spaces in their work and project planning. These strategies direct recreation providers and partners to address inequity in the community they serve, ensure diverse representation in the planning and decision-making process, lower barriers to accessing the outdoors, and promote welcoming environments. OPRD is committed to serving visitors and Oregonians through grant programs, supporting barrier removal, and providing safe and equitable access to recreation areas statewide.

The Statewide Trails Plan and SCORP identifies recommended actions for recreation providers and their partners to make trails and recreation areas more welcoming, inclusive, and accessible. Applicants are asked how the project proposal and/or related efforts by their organization address these recommended investment priorities. See Chapter 6 (all) and Chapter 8 (Priority Need #6) of the plan for more detail and a list of these recommended actions and investment priorities.

BALANCING CONSERVATION AND RECREATION (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that demonstrate alignment with actions recommended for balancing conservation and recreation. The Statewide Trails Plan and SCORP outline strategies and recommendations for outdoor recreation

¹² corpsnetwork.org/find-a-corps/

¹³ corpsnetwork.org/learn-more/corps-faq/

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providers and partners to balance conservation of natural areas with recreation by visitors. This balance would maximize visitor experience while minimizing environmental degradation in the long term, and as a result, ensure that future generations are able to enjoy the full benefits of outdoor recreation.

Applicants are asked how their proposal or related activities support the recommended strategies and recommendations. Examples of these actions that relate to trail projects include the following. See Chapter 8 (Priority Need #7) of the plan for more detail and list of these recommended actions.

DEMONSTRATION OF PUBLIC SUPPORT (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that demonstrate public and trail user support for the project. Applicants must submit documentation of public support. Letters of support from trail users, community members, or trail user organizations are highly encouraged.

Besides letters, documentation can also include survey results or other forms of public feedback received. In addition, the application includes a question about any public outreach or input process that was conducted as part of the project planning. A local public planning process may not be appropriate or necessary for all project types (example: equipment purchase or restoration project), but public support should still be demonstrated through letters of support or other documentation.

PROJECT URGENCY (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that have an urgent need to be completed. Examples of urgency include addressing safety issues, restoring trail access following a wildfire or natural disaster, threat of closure, and mitigating negative impacts to sensitive natural or cultural resources. Applicants are asked to describe the urgent nature of their proposal, if applicable.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that demonstrate a strong financial need, superior leveraging of funds or partnerships, and a sustainable funding strategy. Applicants are asked questions about how critical RTP funds are to project implementation, to describe the organization's budget vs. need, other funding sources or partnerships sought and contributing to their work, strategies for phased projects, and making a case for nonmotorized trail projects over the recommended maximum grant amount.

DISCRETIONARY COMMITTEE MEMBER CRITERIA (0-20 POINTS)

Consistent with RTP guidance, committee members represent a broad range of motorized and nonmotorized trail users within the state. This assessment allows committee members to bring their knowledge of statewide and local recreation patterns, resources, and needs into consideration. The determination of points awarded is an individual decision, based on informed judgment.

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Committee members may award the project additional points based upon their subjective evaluation of the following: superior design, ADA compliance or universally accessible design, superior leveraging of funding or partnerships, the use of volunteers, enhancement of significant cultural or heritage sites, enhancement of regional or statewide significant trails, context, potential for legacy, exceptional meeting of an unmet need, and the basic intent of federal RTP guidance. These factors are examples and not an exhaustive list of all discretionary criteria to be considered by committee members.



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ATV GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

The All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Grant Program provides funding for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation across Oregon. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is the designated state agency that administers the program. Funding represents ATV user permit sales and state gas tax revenue attributed to ATV use.

OPRD administers most of the ATV grant funding on a biennial basis. As of 2025, Oregon's biennial ATV grant funding is approximately \$15 million. Of this, approximately 60% is set aside for operations and maintenance grants, 30% is set aside for law enforcement grants, and the remaining funds are used for a variety of project types including emergency medical services, land

acquisition, safety education, planning and development of OHV recreation areas. OPRD typically accepts grant applications for OandM and law enforcement on a two-year basis. Another grant cycle is usually held each biennium for the remaining project types.

ATV proposals are reviewed and scored by members of the ATV Grant Subcommittee (ATV-GS) and approved by the OPRD Commission.

Information about ATV and other grant programs is available on OPRD's website: oregon.gov/oprd/GRA/Pages/GRA-overview.aspx.

The annual grant cycle is announced to land managers that manage OHV recreation areas in Oregon and their partners. Assistance to applicants is provided in the form of a grant manual, instructional tools and through one-on-one meetings or conversations.

APPLICATION REVIEW

As part of the ATV grant evaluation process, OPRD staff first conduct a technical review of all grant applications. Submitted grant applications need to include the minimum required materials, as outlined in the grant manual and application, and must be deemed an eligible project under state policies and laws.

Ineligible or incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant with an explanation of why their application was returned. For

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applications that are incomplete or need corrections, applicants are given a deadline to resubmit the application. For applications that are deemed ineligible, OPRD strives to refer applicants to other grant programs or resources.

PROJECT PRIORITY SCORING SYSTEM

Following staff technical review, qualified applications are scored by the ATV-GS for review and scoring. Committee members score applications according to the application criteria, rating factors, and points shown in the following subsections.

The criteria reflect the ATV program

guidelines and are based on the findings of the current SCORP, reflecting priorities identified through trail user surveys, land manager and partner surveys, and an ATV committee workshop held in June 2025. These criteria have been designed to evaluate and prioritize all ATV proposals. Within the time this plan is in effect, adjustments may be made to the criteria for reasons such as updated statewide recreation data, functional improvements recommended by committee members and applicants and agency directives.

Individual applications are scored as an average of the sum of all individual committee member scores. Applications are then ranked in order of their average score. The priority rank of a project will depend on its score

ATV Grant Program Scoring Criteria Summary

CRITERIA TYPE	POSSIBLE POINTS
OPRD TECHNICAL REVIEW	
Technical Review and Compliance	n/a
ATV-GS MEMBER RATING CRITERIA	
Project Scope, Plan, and Readiness	10
Funding and Capacity	5
Maintaining Riding Areas	15
Information and Signage	10
Reducing Barriers to the Outdoors	10
Other Statewide and Local Needs	20
Public Engagement	5
Letters of Support	5
Discretionary	20
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	100

Table 2 ATV Grant Program Scoring Criteria Summary

relative to other projects and in relation to the amount of ATV grant funds available each year. If a grant proposal causes committee member concern, the ATV-GS will have the option to table a project and request staff to obtain additional information as may be necessary.

OPRD TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE REVIEW

As part of the technical review for eligibility and completeness, staff assess the prior performance and compliance of applicants and assess projects for readiness.

GRANT PERFORMANCE AND COMPLIANCE

OPRD is responsible for ensuring that public dollars are spent efficiently, appropriately and in compliance with applicable grant agreement conditions and timelines, policies, rules and laws. An applicant's past performance in effectively meeting the administrative guidelines of OPRD's grant programs is an important factor in evaluating compliance and risk. This includes reviewing active and past grant awards made to the applicant. Serious instances of non-compliance may be reason for application denial. Past non-compliance may also be cause for OPRD to place additional requirements or special conditions on the grant, if awarded.

PROJECT READINESS

In addition to technical review of application completeness and eligibility, applications are reviewed to determine that the proposal

is ready to proceed if awarded grant funds. For development projects OPRD allows final planning and design to be included in project scopes, so readiness is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Staff consider baseline readiness elements such as land use compatibility, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) approval for projects on federal land, permit status, project timeline and more.

If an application is determined not ready to proceed, it will be denied and the applicant will be provided with information about what needs to be ready to reapply in a subsequent grant cycle.

ATV GRANT SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER SCORING CRITERIA

PROJECT SCOPE, PLAN, AND READINESS (0-10 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to projects with well planned, clear, and realistic scopes that are ready to proceed. This category also considers the site plan and appropriateness or clarity of costs in the budget as related to the scope. As relevant to the proposal, applicants are asked questions about what the project deliverables are, why the project is being proposed, how work will be completed, what design standards will be used, accessible features, next steps, and the status of any necessary permits.

FUNDING AND CAPACITY (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that demonstrate a strong

CHAPTER 11: ATV GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

financial need, superior leveraging of funds or partnerships, and a sustainable funding strategy.

Support can be demonstrated in both financial and non-financial ways and varies depending upon the type of proposal. Applicants are asked to describe match included in their proposed budget, such as volunteer labor, other grants, agency budgets, or donations. Applicants are also asked about other grants or funding they've received in recent years which are not included in the proposed budget but relate to OHV use in your program.

MAINTAINING RIDING AREAS (0-15 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that help to maintain existing riding areas in good and sustainable condition. This includes partnerships that contribute to operations of the riding area, such as law enforcement, EMS and education. See the Maintenance, Restoration and Stewardship section of Chapter 8 for more information.

INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE (0-10 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to land managers and partners that provide adequate information about OHV riding areas both online and at the trail system. Information about OHV riding areas was identified as a funding priority by riders through the trail user survey and focus group meeting. There is a need for online information to set expectations such as types of vehicles allowed or type and difficulty of trails. OHV riders also need

information such as driving directions and locations to unload or camp overnight. Riders want digital maps that can be georeferenced and saved on devices when cell coverage is unavailable. Once riders arrive at a riding area, they need information boards, paper maps and well signed trails. See the Information and Signage section of Chapter 8 for more information.

REDUCING BARRIERS TO THE OUTDOORS (0-10 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals and applicants demonstrating a commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and fostering welcoming spaces in their work and project planning.

These strategies direct recreation providers and partners to address inequity in the community they serve, ensure varied representation in the planning and decision-making process, lower barriers to accessing the outdoors, and promote welcoming environments. OPRD is committed to serving visitors and Oregonians through grant programs, supporting barrier removal, and providing safe and equitable access to recreation areas statewide.

The Statewide Trails Plan and SCORP identifies recommended actions for recreation providers and their partners to make trails and recreation areas more welcoming, inclusive, and accessible. Applicants are asked how the project proposal and/or related efforts by their organization address these recommended investment priorities. See Chapter 6 (all) and

CHAPTER 11: ATV GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Chapter 8 (Priority Need #6) of the plan for more detail and a list of these recommended actions and investment priorities.

OTHER STATEWIDE AND LOCAL NEEDS (0-20 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to projects meeting other statewide and/or locally identified needs. This includes needs identified in the Statewide Trails Plan and needs identified through a local planning process.

The statewide planning process identified a set of top needs reported by recreation providers, partners, and trail users. Applicants are asked if/how their proposal meets the following statewide needs: Statewide Priority Need #3: Connectivity and Access; Statewide Priority Need #5: Safety and User Conflict; Statewide Priority Need #7: Balancing Conservation and Outdoor Recreation; ATV/OHV Priority Need #2: Create New Opportunities for Riding, Particularly Class III and IV; and ATV/OHV Priority Need #4: Maintain Law Enforcement Levels at OHV Riding Areas. See Chapter 8 and the ATV/OHV section of Chapter 9 for more detail on each of these needs.

Applicants are also asked to describe how the proposal meets needs identified at the local level. Relevant information includes whether the project was identified through a local planning process (examples: forest management plan, trail system plan, other land management plans, etc.), or other public input or outreach involved in the project development (examples: open house, user

surveys, public workshops, etc.). As not all proposal types will trigger a public planning process, relevant information can also include how the proposal meets goals of the land manager or partner's existing development or management plans.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to applicants that demonstrate strong public engagement in their work. This can include public engagement involved in planning processes and ongoing management decisions and volunteer or educational opportunities. For law enforcement agencies, this includes how often they conduct hands on safety-card evaluations and in-field educational contacts of riders. More information on public engagement can be found in Chapter 8 and the ATV/OHV section of Chapter 9.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT (0-5 POINTS)

The intent of this category is to award points to proposals that include letters of support. Recent letters of support, from a variety of sources, help to demonstrate the need for funding and success of your program. Letters from OHV riders and clubs are highly encouraged. Letters from local businesses, county commissioners, and other interest groups may also be relevant to demonstrate broad support.

DISCRETIONARY COMMITTEE MEMBER CRITERIA (0-20 POINTS)

The ATV-GS membership is representative of state geographic regions, agencies,



communities, and trail user groups. This assessment allows committee members to bring their knowledge of statewide and local recreation patterns, resources, and needs into consideration. The determination of points awarded is an individual decision, based on informed judgment.

ATV-GS members may award the project additional points based upon their subjective evaluation of the following: fiscal and cost considerations, projects that serve multiple classes of ATVs, level of use, exceptional need,

superior leveraging of funding or partnerships, and the basic intent of the program. These factors are examples and not an exhaustive list of all discretionary criteria to be considered by committee members.

Photo: ATV trails near Deschutes National Forest (OPRD)

CHAPTER 11: ATV GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

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