


Acknowledgements

The Capitol State Forest Recreation and Public Access Plan was created through a planning process bringing together users, neighbors, interest groups, citizens, and DNR staff to develop a comprehensive plan to direct the future use of recreation and public access within the Capitol State Forest. The following individuals and organizations contributed to the development of this document.

Citizen Working Group (Rock Candy)

Josh Amos, *Recreational Shooter and Hunter*

Eddie Armstrong, *Equestrian User*

Ed Barber, *Mountain Bike User*

Paul Butler, *Neighbor and Educator*

Alex Callender, *Recreationist*

John Deibert, *Motorized User*

Steve Erwood, *Hiker and Neighbor*

Judy Francis, *Equestrian User and Neighbor*

Clint King, *Equestrian User*

Ronald Knapp, *Neighbor, Recreationist*

Elizabeth Livesay, *Neighbor,*

Non-Motorized User and Educator

Walter Olsen, *Equestrian User*

Norman Rustvold, *Equestrian User*

Rick Schmeling, *Business*

Ben Walters, *Mountain Bike User*

Peter Skowland, *Mountain Bike User*

Steve Tjelde, *Motorized User*

Department of Natural Resources

Doug Sutherland, *Commissioner of Public Lands*

Bonnie Bunning, *Executive Director of Policy and Administration*

Capitol State Forest Public Use Planning Team (Larch Mountain)

Mary Coacher, *Asset Management and Protection Parks Planner*

Scott Robinson, *Pacific Cascade Conservation and Recreation District Manager (former)*

Sarah Thirtyacre, *Pacific Crest District Land Manager*

Cover Photos

Top: Capitol State Forest scenic, from the 2002 Capitol State Forest Map.

Bottom: Hikers at McLane Creek Nature Trail by *Luis Prado/DNR*

Department of Natural Resources

Management Advisory Team (Fuzzy Top)

Vicki Christiansen, *Pacific Cascade Region Manager*

Jim Hotvedt, *Pacific Cascade State Lands Assistant Region Manager*

Tom Poch, *Black Hills District Manager (retired)*

Kit Metlen, *Asset Management and Protection Division Manager*

Pene Speaks, *Assistant Division Manager for Natural Heritage, Conservation and Recreation*

Lisa Anderson, *Recreation Program Manager*

Patty Henson, *Constituent Relations Manager*

Department of Natural Resources-Communications and Product Development

Princess Jackson-Smith, *Editor*

Blanche Sobottke, *Editor*

Nancy Charbonneau, *Graphics Designer*

Dena Scroggie, *Graphics Designer and Webmaster*

Department of Natural Resources-SEPA Center

Jenifer Gitchell, *SEPA Center Manager*

Heather White, *Internal SEPA Project Coordinator/Rules Coordinator*

Other Contributors to the Capitol State Forest Public Use Plan

Charlie Cortleyou, *Olympic Region Manger*

Doug McCelland, *South Puget Sound Region District Manager*

Tacoma Trail Cruisers

Back Country Horseman of Washington

CAPITOL STATE FOREST RECREATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

MANAGEMENT PLAN
January 2005



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

Doug Sutherland - Commissioner of Public Lands

January 2005

Greetings:

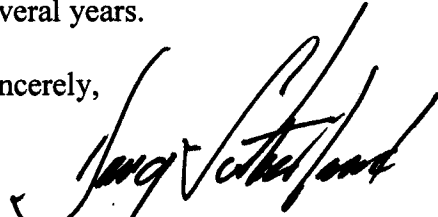
The Capitol State Forest is a unique landscape that provides revenue for our counties and schools, habitat for many species of wildlife, and an opportunity for diverse types of recreation. The Capitol State Forest Recreation Plan was prepared in order to provide guidance for department site managers now and into the future. I deeply appreciate all of the time and energy contributed by the stakeholders who worked on this plan.

Achieving a balance among competing activities and public access needs in such a popular destination is a management challenge that requires a high level of mutual coordination, cooperation, communication and commitment between DNR and the many recreation groups, nearby residents, and the general public. We simply can't do it without the help of those who care the most.

Completion of the Capitol State Forest Recreation and Public Access Plan is the culmination of several years of hard work by a citizens advisory group, local user groups, the public and the Department of Natural Resources. Many of the management recommendations within this plan are contingent upon appropriate funding. We believe that our strong partnerships with volunteers, stakeholder groups and others ensures that the sound recreation management of this forest will continue to evolve and be well supported.

I thank all of you who helped to work on this plan for your time and effort; and I encourage you to stay involved and work with Pacific Cascade Region staff to create a legacy of exemplary recreation stewardship, as this plan is carried out over the next several years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Sutherland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "S".

Doug Sutherland
Commissioner of Public Lands

CAPITOL STATE FOREST RECREATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

MANAGEMENT PLAN
January 2005

Prepared by the
Washington State Department of Natural Resources



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

Doug Sutherland - Commissioner of Public Lands

This publication is available from the
Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

PACIFIC CASCADE REGION

601 Bond Road
P.O. Box 280
Castle Rock, WA 98611-0280

(360) 577-2025 or TTY
Email: pacific-cascade-region@wadnr.gov
www.dnr.wa.gov

*Persons needing this information in an alternate format
may contact the DNR at the listing above.*



*Printed on recycled paper
Printed in the USA*



Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
IAC	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
NAP	Natural Area Preserve
NOVA	Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Account
OFM	Office of Financial Management
ORV	off-road vehicle
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RMAP	Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan
RV	recreational vehicle
SEPA	Statewide Environmental Policy Act
SUV	sport utility vehicle
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WCC	Washington Conservation Corps
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



Table of Contents

Preface

1 Introduction

- 1 A forest with a job to do
- 2 Statewide recreation role
- 2 Capitol State Forest and vicinity
- 3 Statewide recreation funding
- 4 Capitol State Forest recreation funding
- 4 Recreation planning efforts
- 5 Planning process
- 6 Use of the plan

7 Executive Summary

- 7 Part I: Background
- 8 Part II: Recreation management goals and strategies
- 9 Part III: Public participation

11 Part I. Background

- 11 The land
 - 11 I Physical characteristics
 - 12 I Surrounding area
- 14 Recreation opportunities
 - 14 I Road use
 - 18 I Facilities
 - 18 I Trails
 - 21 I Dispersed use
 - 22 I Organized events
- 23 Capitol State Forest volunteer program
 - 23 I Adopt-a-Trail
 - 24 I Campground Host and Gatekeepers

25 Part II. Recreation Management Goals and Strategies

- 25 I Program components
 - 25 I Vision
 - 25 Recreation management goals
 - 26 I Recreation strategies and objectives
 - 26 I Recreation program goals and objectives
 - 28 Facilities management strategies and objectives
 - 28 I Facilities overview
 - 28 I Facilities objectives
 - 32 Trails management strategies and objectives
 - 32 I Trails overview
 - 32 I Recreation trails objectives
 - 38 Organized events management strategies and objectives
 - 41 Dispersed recreation management strategies and objectives
 - 41 I Target shooting management strategies and objectives
 - 44 I Hunting management strategies and objectives
 - 45 I 4x4 vehicles management strategies and objectives
-

47	Part III. Public Participation
47	External information gathering
49	User survey
52	Citizen Working Group
53	I Rock Candy recommendations
55	Incorporating citizen recommendations
57	Appendices
57	A History of recreation in Capitol State Forest
59	B DNR staff inventory of current known issues and challenges
59	I Current recreational activities
60	I Inherent to the land we manage
60	I Undesignated use and misuse
61	I Resources and funding limitations
63	C Sustainable management criteria
63	I Sustainable management criteria for recreation trails and sites
65	D 2003 group volunteer organizations and hours
67	E Public outreach and Citizen Working Group timeline
67	I Begin public outreach
67	I Rock Candy meetings
67	I Public outreach
69	F Planning exercise
71	G Recommendations for recreation facilities and trails from the Citizen Working Group
71	I Rock Candy recommendations
73	I Trail systems
75	H Facilities inventory with management strategies
76	I Facilities inventory
97	I Capitol State Forest trail inventory
97	I Motorized trails
99	I Campground/trailhead and trail access
99	I Non-motorized trails
101	I Hiker trails
103	J Proposed trail projects
107	K Capitol State Forest map/brochure
109	Glossary
	Charts
16	Chart 1: Developed recreation site inventory for the Capitol State Forest block
19	Chart 2: Inventory of Capitol State Forest trails — approximate trail mileage
23	Chart 3: Capitol State Forest event table 2000-2004
24	Chart 4: Capitol State Forest- Reported Volunteer Hours Table 2001-2003
49	Chart 5: Percentage of primary activity
65	Chart 6: 2003 Group Volunteer organizations and hours
	Figures
3	Figure 1: State of Washington map with counties and DNR region boundaries outlined
12	Figure 2: Washington State population growth map 1980-2000
13	Figure 3: Capitol State Forest surrounding area map
15	Figure 4: Map of the Pacific Cascade Region with Capitol State Forest developed facilities
49	Figure 5: Primary use
51	Figure 6: Average length of stay — data from user survey results
107	Figure 7: Capitol State Forest map/brochure



Preface

The Capitol State Forest Recreation and Public Access Plan is intended to guide the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in the management of public use in recreation sites, on trails and across the landscape within Capitol State Forest for the next ten years. This plan will be frequently evaluated, and changes made as needed to ensure compatibility with trust obligations and overall forest management objectives.

In addition to providing guidance for DNR staff, the development of this plan enables DNR to continue to qualify for recreation grants distributed by Washington State's Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC).

Public involvement in this plan included public surveys, a citizen advisory committee, and public meetings and hearings to solicit comments on the plan, including those meetings and hearings held in compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Facility-specific projects may require additional SEPA process as they are implemented.



Introduction

The Capitol State Forest, located southwest of Olympia in the Black Hills, is both a timber-producing forest and a popular recreation destination. Its 91,650 acres draw an estimated 800,000 visitors each year for hiking, horseback riding, camping, mountain bicycling, off-road vehicle use, hunting, nature study, sightseeing and more.

See Appendix A for a description of the history of recreation in Capitol State Forest.

This forest is part of the legacy of public lands managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR manages more than five million acres of state-owned forest, aquatic, agricultural and urban lands for long-term benefits to current and future trust beneficiaries and the people of Washington. As a “working forest”, Capitol State Forest continues to be a place where people work and play outdoors, as planned harvesting and reforestation bring a stream of revenue to schools and county trusts, and where native plants and animals and their habitats thrive.

This plan is intended to guide how DNR manages recreation and public access in Capitol State Forest. It outlines the forest’s recreation goals, the priorities for maintenance of existing recreation facilities, improvements to existing recreation facilities, and the potential development of new recreation opportunities within the forest. Specific action steps to be taken over the next ten years toward achieving the overall vision are also described.

Statewide, since 1970, DNR-managed trust lands have produced more than \$5.7 billion in revenue, reducing the need for taxes to pay for public projects and services.

A forest with a job to do

Like many of the uplands that DNR manages, the lands in Capitol State Forest are trust lands. Some were granted by Congress in 1889 at statehood; others are Forest Board trust lands, purchased or acquired later. By law, state-owned trust lands are managed to produce income for schools, universities, state institutions, county services, and the state General Fund.

Since 1971, state law (Chapter 79.10.100 RCW) directs DNR to allow multiple use (i.e., recreational areas, trails, hunting, fishing, etc.) on trust uplands. The multiple use must be consistent with the applicable trust provisions of the various lands involved, and be in the best interests of the state and the general welfare of the citizens.

In managing Capitol State Forest, DNR works to:

- Protect the long-term health of the forest’s ecosystems, including wildlife habitat and water quality
- Responsibly harvest timber to provide revenue for local services in Thurston and Grays Harbor counties; for construction of kindergarten through 12th grade public schools for Washington State University, University of Washington, Capitol buildings and state charitable institutions

-
- Provide public recreational and educational opportunities
 - Respect forest neighbors and preserve forestland in an area of increasing residential and commercial development

Statewide recreation role



Across the state, DNR's recreation program maintains and operates 143 recreation sites and more than 1100 miles of trails—some motorized and non-motorized, many are multiple use. Forest roads on trust lands provide access to designated recreation sites and access for dispersed recreation, including hunting, fishing, berry and mushroom picking, and sightseeing.

DNR's facilities complement those offered by other agencies across the state. These include federal agencies, such as the USDA Forest Service and National Park Service; state agencies, such as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and State Parks; and quasi-private land managers, such as Tacoma Power and Light. Many of these agencies offer facilities that are more developed, require fees or take reservations. In contrast, DNR's recreation facilities are on a first-come, first-served, no-fee basis. For large group events, consisting of 25 people or more, a permit from the department is required.

Capitol State Forest and vicinity

The recreation opportunities offered in Capitol State Forest are consistent with DNR's authority to construct, operate and maintain primitive outdoor recreation facilities (RCW 79.10.140). In providing facilities of primitive character, DNR offers recreation users a natural experience—no electrical services, sewage dumps, flush toilets or showers are available. Some DNR-managed facilities provide access to drinking or stock use water.

The Capitol State Forest is managed by DNR's Pacific Cascade Region and is located in the southwest portion of Washington State. Recreation and public access in the forest is managed through the region's Pacific Crest Conservation and Recreation District, in conjunction with the Asset Management and Protection Division's recreation program based in Olympia.

As one of the largest blocks of forestland the department manages, Capitol State Forest's intricate forest road system offers access opportunities to citizens by providing over 575 miles of roads. Upon reaching the forest, recreation users can choose from many recreation opportunities and facilities, including seven campgrounds, four trailheads, a self-guided interpretative area, and a trail system with approximately 160 miles of trail.

Figure 1: State of Washington map with counties and DNR region boundaries outlined



Statewide recreation funding

As is the case with other state programs and agencies, the recreation program within the Department of Natural Resources has seen a shrinking budget. During the last ten years, the statewide recreation budget has been reduced by nearly 50 percent (in today's dollars). This reduction in funding resulted in limited recreation site closures, reduced staff, reduced level of service at some facilities, and fewer capital improvement projects. At the same time, there is an increase in visitors on DNR-managed trust lands throughout the state.

The department receives its recreation funding from several different sources. A large portion of the funding comes from the Nonhighway Off-Road Vehicle Account (NOVA). This is revenue collected from the statewide gasoline tax. Every time a driver purchases fuel in Washington State, a small percentage of the fuel tax paid goes toward funding recreation. Another portion of the budget comes from the state's General Fund. These are general tax dollars appropriated by the Legislature to the department to manage recreation. A third source of funding is grants from organizations such as the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC).

DNR applies for several IAC grants each year to help fund recreation facilities maintenance and improvements. This grant funding is not guaranteed. The department competes on a project-by-project basis against other state and federal agencies and private organizations. In order to compete for grants, DNR must have the ability to provide matching funds such as providing staff resources and a portion of the supplies and equipment.

Capitol State Forest recreation funding

Capitol State Forest constitutes the largest portion of the recreational opportunities within the Pacific Cascade Region. As with the statewide funding, recreation funding within the region has decreased by approximately 40 percent since 2001.

As the department manages recreation in Capitol State Forest, it must do so in a sustainable manner. In other words, DNR must have funding in place to maintain current recreation activities in a manner that protect the environment, is compatible with resource management objectives, and provides for safe recreation opportunities. If these criteria are met, DNR will begin considering the expansion of existing facilities and trails or the construction of new sites or different opportunities.

More and more guests continue to visit Capitol State Forest each year. DNR staff has applied for numerous grants from the Interagency Agency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) over the past four years in an attempt to maintain the recreation opportunities in the forest in the wake of budget shortfalls. This grant funding, which is critical for the management of Capitol State Forest, totals more than \$700,000 and has funded projects such as:

- Motorized and non-motorized trail maintenance
- Recreation planning
- Trail improvements such as bridges and culverts
- An Education and Enforcement Officer

Over the last four years DNR has improved over 30 miles of motorized trails in the forest using grant funds from IAC.

These grant-funded projects continue to be supported by many volunteers, recreation clubs and user groups. Volunteer groups support these grants by contributing volunteer hours which are used as matching funds.

If funding continues to be reduced and grants are not available to assist with trail and facility maintenance, recreation and access opportunities in the Capitol State Forest may be limited, in order to meet environmental protection and public safety objectives.

Recreation planning efforts

In 2000, DNR received two grants from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to conduct a recreation planning process in which input from recreation users, neighbors, interest groups and citizens at large was used to create recommendations for this recreation and access plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide direction for a desired future, guide wise use of resources, and support future IAC grant requests.

The planning process builds upon past planning efforts, including the *Capitol Forest Resource Management Guidelines* written in 1981, the *Capitol State Forest Recreation Plan* and the *Capitol State Forest Recreation Plan Addendum* completed in the 1990s.

During the 1990s, the *Capitol State Forest Recreation Plan* and its addendum provided direction on project-specific improvements by identifying the development needs, as recommended by DNR staff, for existing recreation facilities within the forest. The recreation guidelines within this plan addressed the following:

- Direct ORV use to the northern half of the forest and equestrian use to the southern half
- Allow mountain biking and hiking year-around throughout the entire forest
- Allow hunting throughout the entire forest
- Restrict trail use to the dry time of the year
- Allow access year-around, except when public safety is in jeopardy
- Manage identified areas with unique geographical and education values
- Continue to develop a trail system to access frequently sought after destinations

Both the *Capitol State Forest Recreation Plan* and the *Capitol State Forest Recreation Plan Addendum* have outlived their usefulness. The specific improvement projects outlined in these documents have been completed. The guidelines continue to be relevant today; but they need to be revised and expanded upon as recreational use continues to grow and recreation management becomes more complex.

Capitol Forest Resource Management Guidelines estimated 15,000 recreation users visit Capitol State Forest each year. The Recreation Management Goal, as stated in the guidelines is:

Continued current-level recreational opportunities for the public within this block of trust ownership will be provided concurrently with timber harvest and intensive forest management.

The Citizens Working Group met 10 times over a year and came up with several great ideas that were adopted into this plan.

Planning process

The planning process relied on multiple modes to gather information. Public participation was generated by input from a citizen-working group, recreation user surveys and individual contacts. Staff input and archival information provided background information and direction in developing this plan. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process allowed for additional public input on the draft document.

Three core teams—Fuzzy Top, Larch Mountain and Rock Candy—named for the three highest peaks in Capitol State Forest, were developed for the planning effort:

1. The Fuzzy Top Team provided management oversight to the planning process and approval of the plan’s recommendations. The members of this group included recreation clubs:

- Pacific Cascade’s Region and State Lands Managers
- Asset Management and Protection Division’s Assistant Division Manager and Division Manager
- A member of DNR Executive Management
- Black Hills District Manager
- Pacific Cascade Region Conservation and Recreation Manager
- Pacific Cascade Region Volunteer Coordinator
- Recreation Program Manager and Parks Planner

17 citizens were chosen to assist with the development of this plan from more than 42 applications received.

2. The Larch Mountain Team was made up of DNR staff working directly on developing the plan by coordinating citizen input, initiating the SEPA, and overseeing the internal review of the plan in the agency. Team members were:

- Pacific Cascade Region Conservation and Recreation Manager
- Pacific Cascade Region Volunteer Coordinator
- Recreation Program Parks Planner

3. The Rock Candy Team, also known as the Citizen Working Group, included 17 community members representing various interests, such as motorized and non-motorized trail users, campers and area neighbors. The role of this team was to represent the recreation user groups and neighbors of the forest at scheduled meetings, relaying information to the recreation user groups and neighbors, and funneling their feedback to the rest of the citizen working group and DNR staff.

Input from the public included:

- Inviting existing recreation users to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to recreation in Capitol State Forest at the Annual Recreation User Group meeting (January 2002). Common themes developed during this exercise are described in detail in Part III, and Appendix F.
- Surveying the public, including forest recreation users and neighbors, asking them to respond to questions regarding types of activities, patterns of use, concerns about the forest and general demographics. More than 400 surveys were returned between April and December 31, 2002. A summary of the findings can be found in Part III, Public Participation.
- Convening the citizen working group, a.k.a. Rock Candy Team, to explore specific areas of concern and recommend a preferred alternative. Over the course of ten months, the group met to discuss pressing issues and develop recommendations based on three scenarios developed by the Larch Mountain Team. See Appendix E for a timeline of the Rock Candy Meetings.
- Completing the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process for the plan. During the SEPA process, there was an opportunity for public comment regarding the plan.

The plan was approved by the Commissioner of Public Lands in early 2005.

Use of the plan

The use of this Capitol State Forest Recreation and Public Access plan is three-fold:

- Provide a long-term vision of recreation and public access in the forest by detailing recreation management goals,
- Present specific objectives and strategies to DNR staff to guide recreation and access management over the next ten years
- Supplement future IAC grant requests with information from this plan.



Executive Summary

The Washington State department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages the 91,560-acre Capitol State Forest, which is located in Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties, minutes from the state's capitol in Olympia. The forest lies within the DNR's Pacific Cascade Region, which extends from Olympia south to the Columbia River, from the crest of the Cascades west to the Pacific Ocean. Capitol State Forest is a working landscape, managed for timber production, wildlife habitat, recreation and public access. However, public access and recreation opportunities must be compatible with overall forest management objectives to be permitted within the forest landscape.

In 2000, DNR received two NOVA grants from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to assist the department in conducting a planning effort for the recreation aspects of Capitol State Forest. The purpose of the planning effort was to evaluate the current recreation use, provide direction for a desired future, and guide the wise use of limited resources. In addition, the completion of this plan is required to support the department's ability to compete for future IAC grant funds.

The planning process, which was conducted from January 2001 through August 2004, was undertaken by DNR staff and a 17-member citizen-working group. The Citizen Working Group's recommendations were used to help develop the recreation management strategies and objectives outlined in Part II. The plan is divided into three parts:

Part I: Background

- The Land
- Recreation opportunities
- Capitol State Forest volunteer program

Part II: Recreation management goals and strategies

Part III: Public participation

Part I: Background

This section of the plan outlines the background for managing recreation in the Capitol State Forest. It describes the characteristics of the land, the current recreation issues and challenges, future recreation opportunities, and volunteer involvement.

The Capitol State Forest, with its diverse recreational opportunities, is an area where multiple-use flourishes and public interest is reflected in the thousands of volunteer hours contributed each year by recreation clubs, organizations and individuals.

DNR manages the Capitol State Forest as a "working forest." The department, by law, has a responsibility as manager of the land to produce

revenue for trust beneficiaries, such as schools and counties, while protecting natural resources. DNR must balance this responsibility with the public interest, which includes providing recreational opportunities and access, where appropriate.

The growth in population in Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties, as well as throughout the state, has put pressure on agencies that manage public lands to provide increased access for recreational use. Public access is also heightened as many private landowners restrict access of their land to the general public because of increased damage caused by inappropriate use.

Part II: Recreation management goals and strategies

The Capitol State Forest's recreation management emphasis is to provide connectivity throughout the landscape via its motorized and non-motorized trail systems. Capitol State Forest also provides trailheads, primitive camping opportunities, day-use, and picnicking areas. The recreation program in DNR's Pacific Cascade Region provides: maintenance of facilities and trails, securing of grant funding and administration, volunteer activities coordination, oversight of organized group events, campground host recruitment and training, and education and enforcement.

The vision of Capitol State Forest's recreation program is to provide a safe environment where people can enjoy a primitive recreation experience in a natural forest setting, while protecting natural resources and trust assets.

Four goals for the management of recreation and public access in Capitol State Forest were developed through the planning process:

- Goal 1: Provide a diverse spectrum and sustainable level of landscape uses
- Goal 2: Ensure recreation is consistent with trust and ecological goals
- Goal 3: Support safe recreation opportunities
- Goal 4: Pursue sustainable funding resources and staff for managing recreation and public access in Capitol State Forest

These four goals are the backbone of the strategies and objectives listed below and found in detail in Part II. Management strategies for each facility is outlined in Appendix H.

- Recreation facilities management strategies and objectives
- Recreation trails management strategies and objectives
- Dispersed recreation management objectives
- Target shooting management strategies and objectives
- Hunting management strategies and objectives
- Organized events management strategies and objectives
- 4x4 vehicles management objectives

Part III: Public participation

Public participation in the planning process was an integral part of creating this plan. Public outreach methods included:

- External information gathering from a variety of sources
- Distribution of recreation user surveys
- Formation of a Citizen Working Group

The Citizen Working Group, known as the Rock Candy Team, was composed of 17 individuals with varying levels of recreation involvement within the Capitol State Forest. The role of the working group was to provide information and recommendations regarding recreation in Capitol State Forest. Working closely with DNR staff, this group worked extensively to understand the scope of the current program—DNR’s trust obligations and the intricacies that exist in managing a “working forest.”

The management strategies outlined in this plan merge the recommendations of this citizen team, feedback from the survey and other outreach, and direction from agency management. This broad spectrum of participation assures that the needs and interests of recreation users, neighbors and the department are represented in this plan.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information about the history of the Capitol State Forest, detailed public outreach information, site and trail inventories and sustainable management criteria are included in the appendices.



Part I. Background

This section of the plan describes the background for managing recreation in Capitol State Forest—the nature of the land; recreation issues and challenges, recreation opportunities, use and demand; and the Capitol State Forest Volunteer Program.

The land

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Capitol State Forest is nestled near the southern population centers of the Puget Sound and is a popular destination for many outdoor enthusiasts. The forest is located only 15 miles southwest of Olympia, Washington and easily accessed off of Interstate 5 and Highway 101.

Capitol State Forest is part of a range known as the Black Hills, which includes Capitol Peak, Fuzzy Top, Rock Candy and Larch Mountains. Capitol State Forest is one of the largest contiguous blocks of DNR managed trust land in the state covering 91,650 acres spanning across western Thurston and eastern Grays Harbor counties. There are two small areas within the forest that are of private ownership. Weyerhaeuser company owns approximately 120 acres on Larch Mountain and 120 acres near the Noschka (county road) are currently broken into large-lot single-family residences. The forest boundaries include Highway 8 to the north, the Black River to the east, and Highway 12 to the south and west.

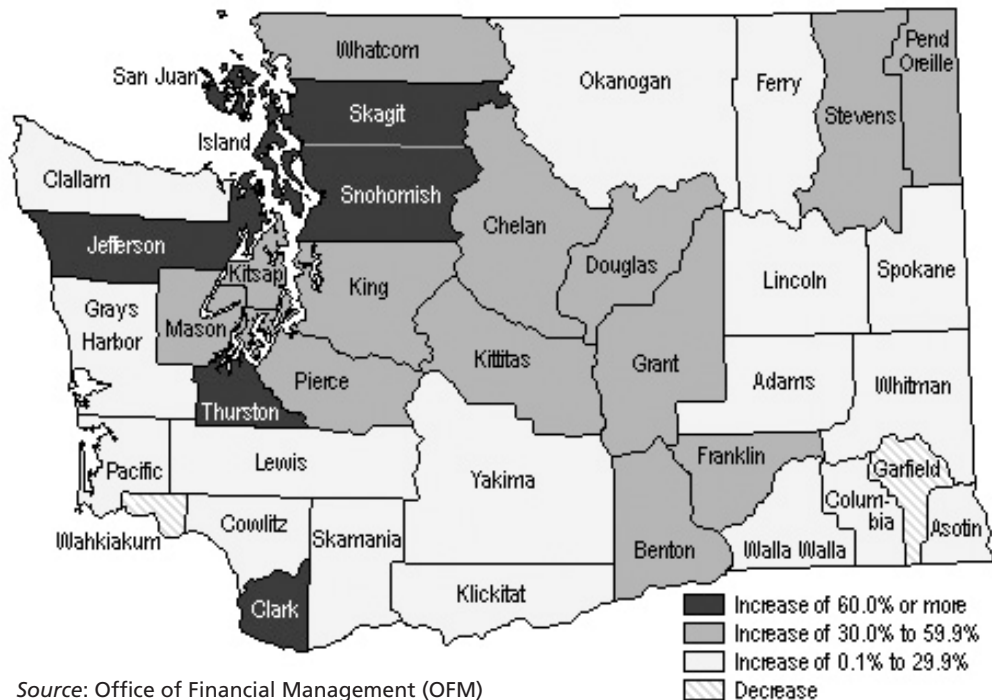
The natural setting of Douglas-fir, western hemlock, red alder and red cedar overstory, combined with an understory of salal, huckleberry, salmon-berry, blackberry, Oregon grape and various fern species make for a lush, rich in color, forested environment.

The elevation of the forest spans from approximately 200 feet along the Chehalis River up to its highest point atop Larch Mountain at 2,660 feet. This diverse terrain offers recreation experiences at various levels of difficulty.

Many existing recreation sites are situated near the major streams, such as Waddell Creek, Sherman Creek, Cedar Creek and Porter Creek. These streams, as well as hundreds of smaller streams, provide the drainage for the forest, where precipitation in the area averages 50 to 70 inches each year. Camping and picnicking at facilities near streams is very popular among recreational users.

The clay-based soils inherent in the area retain water, requiring time to dry during the winter season. Some forests, such as the Tayuha State Forest, have different soils types that can withstand year-round use. The soils in Capitol State Forest cannot withstand winter trail use, resulting in winter seasonal closures for most recreation users except mountain bikers and hikers.

Figure 2: Washington State population growth map 1980-2000



Source: Office of Financial Management (OFM)

Approximately 40,250 acres of the Capitol State Forest lie within Grays Harbor County, and approximately 51,400 acres lie within Thurston County.

SURROUNDING AREA

The western part of Capitol State Forest, situated in rural Grays Harbor County, is frequently accessed by local residents and neighbors, and is popular with hunters via State Highways 8 and 12. The eastside of the forest is located close to urban areas of Thurston and Pierce Counties, with easy access from Interstate 5.

Grays Harbor is the second slowest-growing county in the state. In 2003, the county’s estimated population of 68,800 was up by 3.46 percent over the last ten years. Thurston County’s population in 2003 was estimated at 214,800, an increase of 19 percent over the last ten years and more than 60 percent in the last 20 years. Thurston County is ranked as the twelfth fastest-growing county in the state. (Source: OFM)

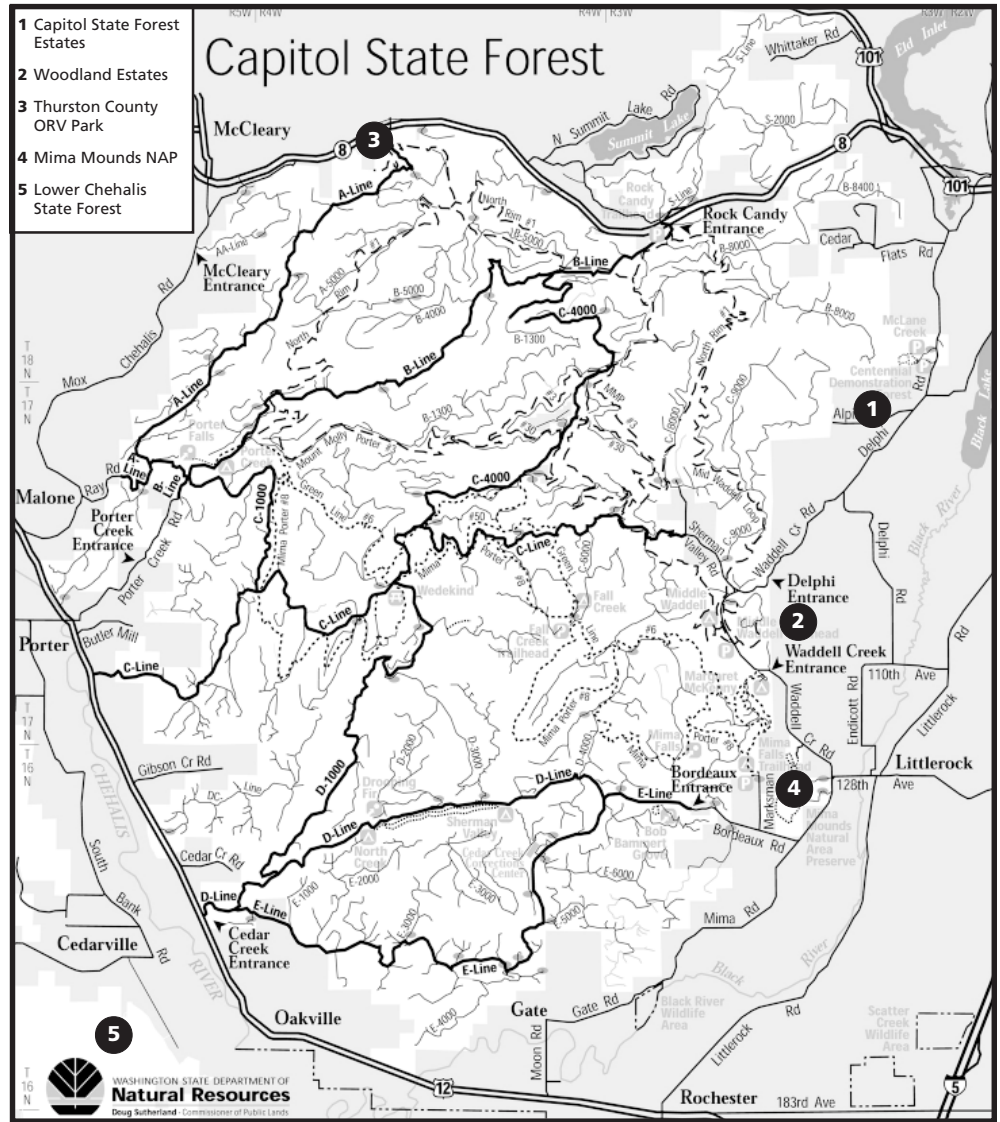
These two counties vary in population growth and dependence on the revenue generated by timber harvesting for its local economy. Grays Harbor County generates more of its total economy from timber resources than Thurston County. (Source: Grays Harbor and Thurston County Profiles 2002)

The surrounding area map (on next page) identifies the areas detailed below:

- 1. and 2. Residential development** in the area adjacent to Capitol State Forest, primarily in Thurston County, several communities—many new, such as Woodland Estates and Capitol State Forest Estates—exist and are neighbors to the forest.
- 3. Thurston County ORV Park** is located along the northern edge of Capitol State Forest, immediately adjacent to State Highway 8. This facility was closed in 2002 due to county budget challenges. The 155-acre site opened in 1979 and provided 5 miles of trail open to ORV and 4x4 use, a racetrack, grand stands, camping facilities and a

Figure 3: Capitol State Forest surrounding area map

Below: This black and white map is available on DNR’s website: www.dnr.wa.gov to download.



caretaker’s residence. This park received hundreds of visitors each year and many organized riding events were held there.

4. **Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve (NAP)** consists of 624 acres of prairie and lies just east of Capitol State Forest near the town of Littlerock. This site is one of the best remaining examples of the unique “mounded” landscape, and was designated as a National Natural Landmark in 1968 by the National Park Service. Mima Mounds has a 3.3 miles of self-guided nature trail and an interpretative center describing many of the myths about the mysterious mounds.
5. **The Lower Chehalis State Forest** is west of Capitol State Forest just across Highway 12 and the Chehalis River. This block of DNR managed trust land is approximately 21,000 acres. The timber harvested from this block is similar to Capitol State Forest’s, with areas of very steep terrain. There are no developed recreational areas in this block. The area is used for hunting, informal hiking, and equestrian use.

Recreation Opportunities

Capitol State Forest opened to the public in 1955 and continues to attract equestrians, off-road vehicle users, mountain bikers, hikers, hunters, and campers, as well as a variety of other dispersed recreation users. Capitol State Forest, commonly seen as “my backyard” to many of its recreational users, is a popular place to get away and recreate after work, during the weekend, or for a longer vacation.

Recreation opportunities range from developed primitive facilities, including campgrounds and day use areas and trails to dispersed uses such as hunting, fishing, target shooting and sightseeing. Permitted organized group events also take place across the landscape. Recreation opportunities are divided into five categories:

- Road Use
- Facilities
- Trails
- Dispersed Use
- Organized Events

The department considers new requests for recreation activities within Capitol State Forest and decisions are based upon whether the activity fits appropriately within the landscape and is compatible with current resource and recreational management objectives. In addition, current uses are increasing in the number of individual recreation users and the frequency of their visits to the forest.

ROAD USE

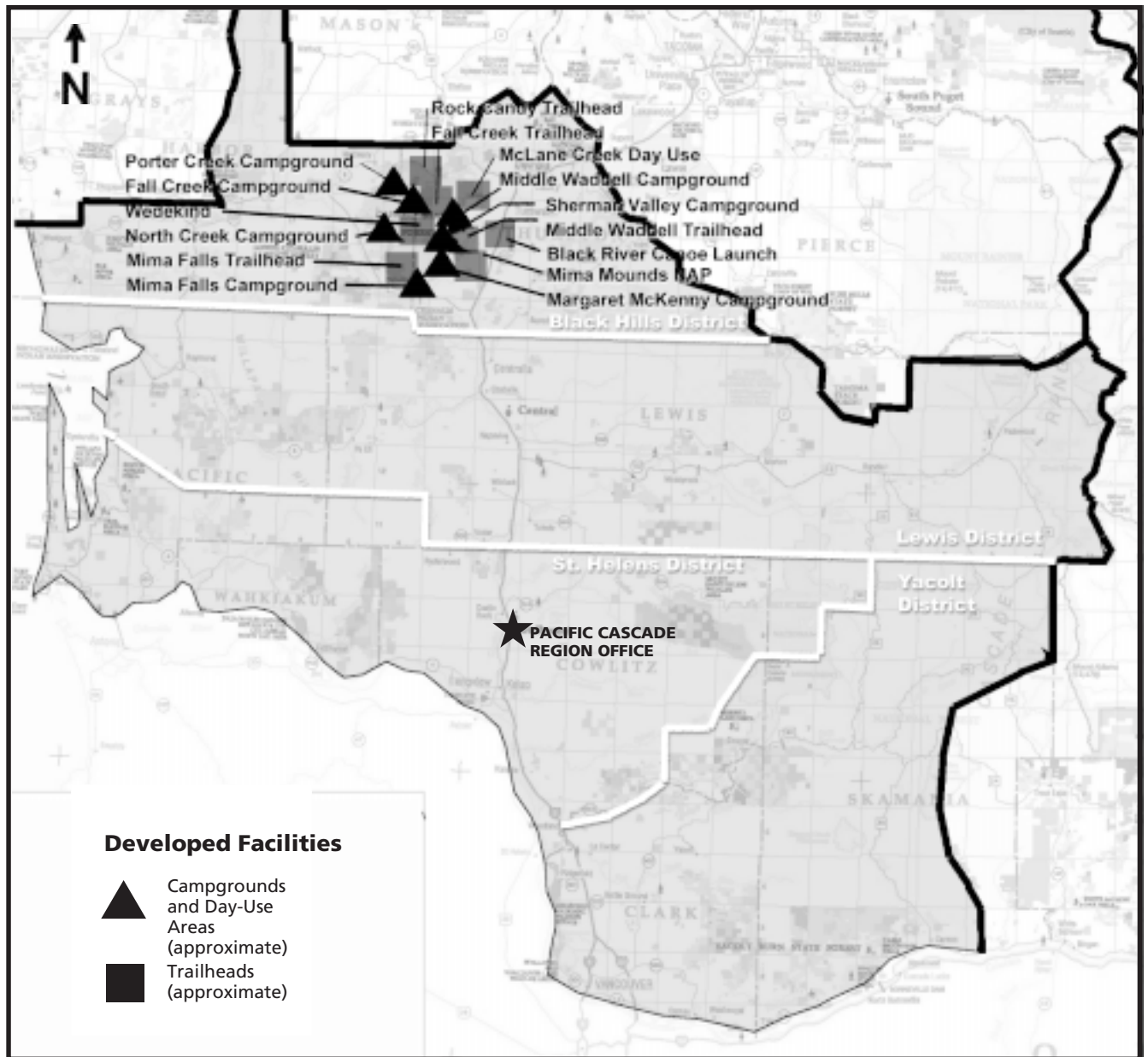
Approximately 575 miles of forest road wind through the Capitol State Forest. These roads were constructed for and are maintained primarily by the various trust management activities that take place within the forest. These roads exist to facilitate the management of the “working forest”; public access via this vast road network is considered a secondary use. At times the department restricts public access by posting roads closed or gating them.

All recreation activities are allowed on forest management roads year-round unless posted otherwise. It is important for the public to be aware that the roads are primarily used for timber management activities; and that recreational users of the road system are secondary users, and must share the roads year-round. Riding on road embankments or in streams is not allowed. Road users need to watch out for unmarked hazards. All off-road (ORV) vehicles must have a vehicle license or ORV permit tag and a Forest Service-approved spark arrestor. Any vehicular travel off designated roads or on deactivated or abandoned roads by the public is prohibited.

The forest’s facilities are considered primitive, providing no electrical hook-ups, sewer hookups or running water. Recent Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements have been made to a majority of facilities in the Capitol State Forest. These improvements include ADA toilets, equestrian loading ramps and campsite amenities.

All facilities in the forest are open annually from April 1 through October 31, with the exception of three day-use/trailhead facilities which are open

Figure 4: Map of the Pacific Cascade Region with Capitol State Forest developed facilities



year-round: Rock Candy Trailhead, McLane Creek Nature Center and Mima Mounds Natural Area. Use of the facilities is free of charge and offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Facilities in the forest include:

- Seven campgrounds
- Five day-use areas which include interpretative facilities and trailheads

Chart 1: Developed recreation site inventory for the Capitol State Forest block

Site	Details	Allowed Uses
Fall Creek Campground S24-T17-R4W Lease #59-061001	11 campsites, water, 5 vault toilets, 1 horse mounting ramp, horse corrals and stalls	general camping, horse camping, hiking, mountain biking
Fall Creek Trailhead S25-T17-R4W Lease #59-069838	vault toilet, horse mounting ramp, hitching rails, information board	hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking
Margaret McKenny Campground S28,33-T17N-R3W Lease #59-058149	25 campsites, 1 picnic site, 1 host site, 8 vault toilets, horse mounting ramp, horse stalls	general camping, horse camping and riding, day-use picnicking, hiking, mountain biking
McLane Creek Day-Use Area S36-T18N-R3W Lease #59-061088	2 vault toilets, 3 viewing platforms, bench areas	open dawn to dusk for day-use hiking only
Middle Waddell Campground S(s)20&21-T17N-R3W Lease #59-069839	24 campsites (ADA), potable water, 4 vault toilets, host site	general camping, motorcycle riding, ATV riding, mountain biking
Middle Waddell Trailhead S28-T17N-R3W Lease #59-069839	parking, 2 vault toilets	day-use, motorcycle riding, ATV riding, mountain biking
Mima Falls Campground S4-T16N-R3W Lease #59-062347	5 campsites, 1 vault toilet; stalls, horse corrals, water	General camping, horse riding and camping, hiking, mountain biking
Mima Falls Trailhead S4-T16N-R3W Lease #59-061073	3 picnic sites, 1 vault toilet, a horse mounting ramp, hitching rails	Day-use picnicking, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking

Chart 1: Developed recreation site inventory for the Capitol State Forest block *(continued)*

Site	Details	Allowed Uses
Mima Mounds Day-Use Area - Natural Area Preserve S3-T16N-R3W	5 picnic sites, 2 vault toilets, an interpretive trail (2 miles, paved trail), kiosk	day-use barrier-free interpretive hiking, picnicking
North Creek Campground S8-T16N-R4W Lease #59-058130	2 vault toilets, potable water; no host	general camping
Porter Creek Campground S12-T17N-R5W Lease #59-058133	16 campsites (one ADA), host site, 4 vault toilets (2 are barrier free)	general camping, day-use motorcycle riding, ATV riding, mountain biking
Rock Candy Trailhead S19,20-T18N-R3W No Lease	Large parking area with 2 vault toilets	day-use picnicking, motorcycle riding, ATV riding, mountain biking
Sherman Valley Campground S11,12-T16N-R4W Lease #59-058151	7 campsites, 2 vault toilets, potable water; no host	general camping, hiking, mountain biking, mountain biking
Wedekind Trailhead (closed due to abuse) S21-T17N-R4W Lease #59-058129	1 picnic site, 1 vault toilet, 1 picnic shelter	day-use trailhead, non-motorized, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking

FACILITIES

Campgrounds

Several of the forest's first campgrounds were originally opened to the public in the late 1950s. These camping sites were built adjacent to streams where the risk of having a forest fire was greatly reduced.

Currently, campgrounds in Capitol State Forest are located in a wooded setting, with many situated near a stream. Campgrounds vary in size from five to 25 campsites. Smaller campgrounds facilitate tent camping and small RVs, while the larger facilities have pull-through RV parking. Campground amenities include hand-pump wells, fire pits, picnic tables and vault toilets. Guests are invited to stay up to seven days per calendar year in the forest's campgrounds.

Day-use areas/trailheads

There are five day-use areas within the forest. Four of them serve as trailheads, which allow recreation users to park their vehicles and access the forest's trail systems. These trailheads provide vault toilets, garbage cans and signboards with information about the forest. Camping is prohibited in these areas. These trailheads are often used to stage permitted group events during the use season.

The McLane Creek Nature Center is an interpretative day-use area located in the eastern portion of the forest. This area provides 1.5 miles of non-motorized hiking trail that loops around a forest pond and creek used for salmon spawning. This area is closed at night, and has amenities such as vault toilets and interpretive signs.

TRAILS

The recreation trails are divided into two separate systems—motorized and non-motorized. The northern portion of the forest has 89 miles of motorized trails used by motorcycles, ATVs, hikers and mountain bikes. The southern part of the forest has 62 miles of trail for non-motorized use, such as horseback riding, hiking and mountain biking. In addition, there are ten miles of hiker-only trails.

Annual seasonal trail restrictions apply to motorized use and to horseback riding from November 1 to March 31. Mountain bikes and hikers may use either system, year-round. Currently, trail use in the forest follows the guidelines below:

- Unsigned trails are closed
- Riders need to respect the rights of others on the trail
- Travel off designated trails is prohibited
- Riding in streams or flowing water is prohibited
- Motorcycles and ATVs must have a vehicle license or an ORV tag and a US Forest Service-approved spark arrestor

Chart 2: Inventory of Capitol State Forest trails - approximate trail mileage

MOTORIZED

Trail Name	Approximate Mileage
Rock Candy East	2.25
Rock Candy West	2.25
North Rim #1	25.50
Mt. Molly Porter #3	20.90
Middle Waddell Loop	8.00
Lokkie Trail	8.00
Mt. Molly Loop	7.70
Trail #51	0.40
Trail #50	2.00
Trail #40	5.10
Trail #30	4.50
Trail #20	2.10
	Total 88.70

Chart 2: Inventory of Capitol State Forest Trails - approximate trail mileage *(continued)*

NON-MOTORIZED

Trail Name	Approximate Mileage
Mima Porter #8	31.90
Green Line 6	21.00
Waddell Loop	3.00
Trail #50	1.00
Trail #40	1.30
Trail #30	0.70
Trail #6A	2.25
Trail #20	0.5
Trail #10	0.70
Subtotal 62.35	

NON-MOTORIZED (HIKER-ONLY)

Trail Name	Approximate Mileage
McLane Creek	1.50
Fuzzy Top	0.40
North Creek/Sherman Valley	1.60
Cedar Creek	2.80
Porter Creek	0.70
Bob Bammert	1.00
Drooping Fir	2.50
Subtotal 10.50	

Non-Motorized and Hiker Only Total 72.85

DISPERSED USE

Dispersed recreational activities occur throughout Capitol State Forest. These types of activities are often conducted by individuals or small groups, and are usually done outside of the constructed recreation facilities and trails. Some of these activities, such as hunting, have occurred for several decades within the Black Hills. Dispersed recreational activities include:

Hunting

Hunting occurs throughout the forest from August through April. Currently, the various hunting seasons are:

- Turkey season in March and April
- Bear hunting from April to December
- Deer and elk archery hunting in September
- Deer and elk muzzle loader season in the first week of October
- Deer and elk modern firearm season from the latter half of October to mid-November
- Elk rifle season in the first half of November
- Grouse hunting from September through December

Fishing

Fishing opportunities extend up the Sherman Creek tributary past Fall Creek Campground. Fishing also occurs along Porter Creek, upstream from the developed campground.

Target shooting

Recreational target shooting occurs throughout the block, with the majority of it occurring along the C-Line Road. Target shooting on the C-Line extends from the C-Line Road junction with the county's Sherman Road, all the way to Camp Wedekind. Triangle Rock Pit, a gravel pit near the intersection of the Sherman and Waddell Creek county roads, is also a popular shooting area.

Sightseeing and hang-gliding

A popular area for people to go sightseeing is along the southeast portion of the E-Line Road, an area featuring vistas across the landscape of the Chehalis River Valley. People have been known to hang-glide along this same route, due to the high elevation.

Firewood cutting

Firewood cutting is allowed year-round outside of extreme fire weather closures. People cut firewood throughout the forest in areas that have been recently harvested. Firewood cutting requires a permit from the Pacific Cascade Region office in Castle Rock.

Recreational berry and mushroom gathering

Berry gathering occurs usually in the late summer months. Recreational berry pickers have their choice of many varieties of berries. The most sought after berries are blackberries, black caps, huckleberries, salmon berries and thimbleberries. Many people also enjoy gathering mushrooms. Morrell mushrooms are gathered in the spring and Chanterelle mushrooms during the fall. Gathering of berries and mushrooms are for recreational use only, and not for commercial activities.

ORGANIZED EVENTS

The department allows recreation clubs and general recreation users to apply for a land use license to hold an organized activity within the forest. There are requirements that applicants must meet and not all activities may be appropriate in Capitol State Forest. The majority of the permitted events that do occur within the forest use the forests' vast trail system.

Organized events, defined as having 25 or more participants, range from 25 to 600 participants. Over the past five years, approximately 17 events per year have been permitted. Together these events can draw as many as 5,000 participants. Most of the recreation clubs sponsoring these events complete volunteer trail work before and after the event. The recreation club sponsoring the event must apply for a land use license and provide proof of insurance. In 2004, the following events occurred:

- Six mountain bike events
- Six motorized events
- Five horse events
- One mountain running event

**Chart 3: Capitol State Forest organized event table
2000-2004**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004*
Equestrian	4	4	5	7	5
Mountain biking	4	7	4	4	6
ORV	5	6	7	7	6
Hike/Running	0	0	0	1	2
Total Event Per Year	13	17	16	19	19

**As of 10/2004*

Permitted activities that do not use the trail systems include Boy Scout camp-outs, guided forest tours, and plant identification events.

*Volunteers
donated 3,500
hours in 2003.
On an average,
volunteers
donate over
3,000 recorded
hours per year in
the forest.*

Capitol State Forest Volunteer Program

Capitol State Forest relies heavily on the work done by volunteers to help build and maintain trails and recreation facilities. Volunteers of all ages and walks of life work together to meet DNR’s multiple use mission. Volunteers routinely contribute by picking up garbage, conducting trail and facility maintenance, or providing information to visitors. Most people volunteer with an organized recreation group. Currently, there are 17 active recreation clubs volunteering within the forest. Over the years, many younger individuals have donated their time and improved the forest facilities and trails while completing a service or class project.

The department regularly uses volunteer labor to assist in the completion of projects that are funded by grants from the Interagency Agency Committee for Outdoor Recreation.

ADOPT-A -TRAIL

Many recreation user groups volunteer through DNR’s Adopt-a-Trail Program. Recreation clubs adopt sections of trail for maintenance work and light improvements. Seven recreation user groups/recreation clubs have adopted more than 60 miles of horse trail and over 40 miles of ORV trail.

Those recreation clubs that don’t have an official “adopt-a-trail” agreement participate in other organized volunteer projects, such as:

- Early trail clearing and response to large storm events
- Emergency trail assessments following an earthquake or other natural disaster
- Large forest-wide clean-ups in the spring
- Large collaborative group projects year-round

Additionally, Boy Scouts and Eagle Scouts volunteer by doing projects in our campgrounds each year.

CAMPGROUND HOSTS AND GATEKEEPERS

Campground hosts and gatekeepers act as the “eyes and ears” of the forest, providing visitors with information, and reporting inappropriate activities to department staff. Volunteer hosts and gatekeepers are provided the tools and training necessary to safely conduct their duties.

There are two campground host sites, one each at Margaret McKenny and Middle Waddell Campgrounds. These sites provide volunteers with electricity, phone service, a septic tank and a holding tank for potable water. The department plans to continue and if possible enhance the volunteer campground host program within the forest.

Currently, two volunteer gatekeepers donate their services to DNR: one at McLane Creek Nature Center, and one monitoring the gate to the DC line road, which is used by the Disabled Hunter Program. These volunteers ensure the gates are opened and shut as appropriate, that the locks and gates are functioning properly and that the signage in the area is adequate.

Chart 4. Capitol State Forest- Reported Volunteer Hours Table 2001-2003

	2001	2002	2003	Total Hours by Recreation User
Equestrian	133	599	1090.5	1822.5
Mt. Bike	99	40	0	139
ORV	1768	907	1884	4559
Gatekeepers	606	688	484	1778
Misc. Volunteers	420	119	112	651
Jeep Patrol*	500	562	0	1062
Total Hours by Hours	3526	2915	3570.5	10,011.5

**Jeep Patrol- This program was managed by the Thurston County Sheriff's Office and was disbanded in 2002*



Part II. Recreation Management Goals and Strategies

This section describes the key recreation and public access goals for the Capitol State Forest. It describes specific activities and issues that currently occur across the forest landscape, and discusses potential objectives and strategies to be implemented over time.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Capitol State Forest’s recreation management niche is to provide trails, trailheads, camping, day-use and picnicking areas. Key elements of the program are:

- Facilities and trails maintenance
- Grant funding and administration
- Volunteer activities coordination
- Oversight for group events
- Volunteer hosts recruitment and training
- Education and enforcement

VISION

The vision of Capitol State Forest’s recreation program is to provide a safe environment where people can enjoy a primitive recreation experience in a “working forest” setting while protecting natural resources and trust assets.

Recreation management goals

The four recreation and public access goals for the management of Capitol State Forest developed through the planning process are:

- Goal 1: Provide a diverse spectrum and sustainable level of landscape uses
- Goal 2: Ensure recreation and public access is consistent with trust and ecological goals
- Goal 3: Support safe recreation opportunities
- Goal 4: Pursue sustainable funding resources and staff for managing recreation and public access in Capitol State Forest

RECREATION STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

These four goals are the backbone of the strategies and objectives listed below and found in detail in this section. Management strategies for each facility are outlined in Appendix H.

- Recreation facilities management strategies and objectives
- Recreation trails management strategies and objectives
- Organized events management strategies and objectives
- Dispersed recreation management objectives
 - Target Shooting management strategies and objectives
 - Hunting management strategies and objectives
 - 4x4 vehicles management objectives

RECREATION PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1

Provide a diverse spectrum and sustainable level of landscape uses

Objectives

- A. Provide access and recreation opportunities for a variety of uses by experiences they desire
- B. Balance recreation opportunities between permitted group events and individual use
- C. Manage uses for compatibility between user groups
- D. Address overuse/overcrowding issues

Goal 2

Ensure recreation is consistent with trust and ecological goals

Objectives

- A. Strengthen the link between DNR's trust obligation and recreation by:
 - Providing site specific information on resource management as it affects recreation
 - Managing access and providing information of road closures and relocations
 - Mitigating disruptions in recreation areas
 - Providing forest-wide outreach/education about land management activities

-
- B. Address environmental concerns resulting from public access and recreation by:
 - I Identifying recreation activities based on land suitability, such as drainage, terrain and soil types. For example, a specific action may include restricting trail use during rainy seasons
 - I Restoring and minimizing recreation impacts on resources/ecosystems
 - I Monitoring and correcting the effects of overuse on facilities, specific areas and the forest landscape

Goal 3

Support safe recreation opportunities

Objectives

- A. Increase public awareness of forest vision and expected behaviors through volunteer work parties, a citizen advisory group, neighbor outreach and user education
- B. Enhance safety through facility design and engineering
- C. Enforce department polices and state regulations while promoting safe recreation opportunities

Goal 4

Pursue sustainable funding resources and staff for managing recreation and public access in Capitol State Forest

Objectives

- A. Implement sustainable recreation management criteria (see Appendix C)
- B. Ensure management activities do not exceed current funding levels.
- C. Actively participate as a catalyst in pursuing alternative funding (i.e., donations)

Balancing the recreation, public access, and forest management activities in Capitol State Forest is challenging. The department will monitor the success of these recreation and public access goals and objectives and make changes as necessary.

Facilities management strategies and objectives

FACILITIES OVERVIEW

The campgrounds and day-use facilities within Capitol State Forest provide a much-needed recreation opportunity for nearby residents, as well as visitors that travel from all over the state of Washington. Recreationist are drawn to the forest to experience the recreation trails winding through the Douglas-fir woodland, and forest's campgrounds and day-use areas. As similar camping and day-use opportunities on other lands become increasingly scarce, the facilities in Capitol State Forest continue to play an important recreation role in Washington.

Capitol State Forest has seven campgrounds and a total of 96 camping spots.

ADA camping opportunities are provided at six of the seven campgrounds.

Campgrounds remain at nearly full capacity all summer long.

FACILITIES OBJECTIVES

Outlined below are objectives regarding management of Capitol State Forest recreation facilities.

I. Objective

Maintain primitive camping and day-use opportunities in Capitol State Forest.

Discussion

The campgrounds and day-use facilities provide an unique recreation experience within Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties. During the public input process, it was clear camping is considered a very important feature of the forest's recreation program. In managing Capitol State Forest, the department continues to provide these opportunities while balancing its financial resources. DNR strives to fund facilities maintenance in a sustainable manner, before considering large-scale expansions or improvements.

Management strategies

- Look for creative ways allowing DNR to continue to provide primitive camping and day-use facilities in Capitol State Forest. These include:
 - Applying for available grant funding
 - Partnering with recreation clubs, organizations and volunteers
 - Consolidating facilities to reduce maintenance costs
 - Seeking a process to accept donations
 - Seeking sustainable funding sources

II. Objective

Maintain campgrounds and day-use facilities that are safe and enjoyable for public use, while providing for protection of the natural environment.

Management strategies

- Monitor impacts on the environment and mitigate identified problems as soon as possible, or discontinue use

-
- Conduct routine facilities maintenance as often as necessary based on occupancy
 - Display facilities rules and regulations in an area visible to the public
 - Provide adequate education and enforcement

III. Objective

Minimize environmental impacts and provide for routine maintenance opportunities by shutting down campgrounds and trailheads during the winter months.

Discussion

The department closes all of the campgrounds and most of the trailheads within Capitol State Forest from November 1 to March 31. Closure discourages homesteading, reduces the potential impact of campers during the wet months, and allows DNR the opportunity to “catch-up” on routine maintenance projects. It reduces the need to close sites and inconvenience campers during the summer months to do maintenance. In an effort to prevent vandalism during the off-season, patrols of facilities are required during the winter months.

Management strategies

- Clearly post the closure of facilities
- Use local media to relay the annual closure and re-opening message
- Use education and enforcement for compliance
- Educate users on site closures through publications

IV. Objective

Utilize an adopt-a-site program to foster partnerships with individuals, local recreation clubs and organizations.

Discussion

Budget challenges making facility maintenance and operations increasingly difficult, a mechanism that allows recreation volunteers, recreation clubs and organizations the opportunity to assist with site maintenance is needed.

Management strategies

- Maintain an adopt-a-site agreement clearly defining the expectations and roles of the adopting party and the department
- Solicit individuals, recreation clubs and organizations to adopt sites
- Create signs indicating the site has been adopted
- Monitor agreements to ensure compliance

V. Objective

Further develop and enhance the volunteer campground host program within the forest.

Discussion

Well-trained volunteer campground hosts play an integral part in keeping facilities maintained and assist in reducing the amount of vandalism and misuse. Hosts also help to educate users on the proper use of the facilities and trails, and forest-wide rules.

Management strategies

- Implement a host program at campgrounds and larger trailheads
- Recruit and retain qualified individuals as hosts
- Conduct annual campground host training
- Provide hosts with equipment and supplies
- Explore options to fund campground hosts based on the size of the campground and the activity within the site

In 2004 the Backcountry Horsemen, Capitol Riders, adopted the Mima Falls Campground. Hundreds of volunteer hours were donated by the Capitol Riders, which helped DNR maintain this facility for all visitors.

Volunteer hosts and Middle Waddell and Margaret McKenny Campgrounds act as eyes and ears for DNR.

VI. Objective

As funding allows, relocate campgrounds and trailheads adjacent to streams and/or within areas seen as important to riparian species. These identified sites include:

- Porter Creek Campground and Trailhead
- North Creek Campground
- The “B” loop of Fall Creek Campground
- Sherman Valley Campground
- Three walk-in campsites in Margaret McKenny Campground loop “C”

Discussion

The Department of Natural Resources adopted a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), in 1997 to address the management of state trust land to comply with the Federal Endangered Species Act.

One of the primary functions of the HCP is to provide for the protection of streamside habitat. Several of the forest’s recreation facilities are adjacent to fish bearing streams and within riparian management zones. According to the HCP, “any future development of recreation sites would adhere to the riparian conservation strategy” (*DNR HCP Chapter IV.D.*). This strategy calls for the buffering of streams to protect streamside habitat and not allow site construction or expansion adjacent to or within an average of 180 feet of fish-bearing streams.

The department committed to explore over time the opportunity of moving existing sites away from streams to locations where there would be less human impact upon these sensitive areas. Newly

constructed or relocated sites are required to be built away from streams in locations where their impact to riparian habitat and function is not a concern.

Management strategies

- Identify possible places to move facilities currently adjacent to streams
- Monitor and seek available funding opportunities for relocation of facilities, keeping in mind that facilities located along the edges of the forest are easier to operate and maintain
- Ensure any relocated facility would have maintenance funding available
- Work with recreation clubs and forest users to assist in relocation strategies and implementation

VII. Objective

Strive to distribute recreation use more evenly throughout the forest

Discussion

Recreational use of the forest tends to be centered near the Waddell Creek Road in Thurston County, due to the expanded campground and trailhead facilities in the area. To reduce the impact and congestion an attempt to distribute some of this recreation use to other areas in the forest should be explored.

Management strategies

- Consider locating any new facilities in the western or northern half of the forest, concentrating facility locations along the edges of the forest
- Encourage staging events from sites outside of the Waddell Creek Corridor
- Upgrade current facilities located away from the Waddell Creek Road to draw users to other locations
- As existing facilities need major renovations, consider relocating sites to distribute use more evenly around the forest perimeter

Trails management strategies and objectives

TRAILS OVERVIEW

Through this public input process and in speaking with users, it is clear the trail system is perhaps the biggest draw of the forest's recreation program. As mentioned previously, the department manages its forest landscapes, such as Capitol State Forest, under the guidance of an HCP. The trail system must be managed to adequately protect wildlife habitats, including riparian species. New trail segments are designed to cross as few streams as possible, and existing trails are maintained in a manner which does not contribute sediment to flowing waters.

Using input from the citizens working group, the department created a future condition of the forest's trail system. It is the department's intent to follow suggested improvements to trails in this plan as funding allows. (See Appendix J for a list of proposed trail projects.) Prior to large-scale trail upgrades and/or constructing new trail segments, the department must have funding in place to maintain current trails and future maintenance and ensure new additions are compatible with the "working forest" concept and DNR goals and policies.

RECREATION TRAILS OBJECTIVES

Outlined below are objectives regarding management of Capitol State Forest Trails.

I. Objective

Provide recreation trails that are safe and enjoyable for public use while providing for the protection of the natural resources.

Discussion

Many components working together make the trails in Capitol State Forest a safe, enjoyable place for folks to recreate.

Capitol State Forest is closed during the winter season. Each year, trails are closed to motorized and equestrian use from November 1 to March 31. This downtime protects the clay-based soils the trails are built on during the wet winter months, allowing the department the opportunity to catch-up on routine maintenance projects, and reduces the need to close trail segments and inconvenience riders during the summer months.

Continuous trail assessments and an active on-the-ground maintenance program is the key to DNR's success in meeting this goal over the past several years. Permanent and seasonal staff, volunteers, Washington Conservation Corps crews and inmate crews from the Cedar Creek Correction Center carry out this work. Capitol State Forest is fortunate to have received grant funding from the Inter-agency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to assist in these efforts.

Volunteers donate thousands of hours each year to the trail maintenance program, providing eyes and ears, as well as muscle, to assist in trail work.

The forest's Education and Enforcement Officer also plays a major role in reducing trail maintenance costs by educating riders on the

proper use of the forest trails, curtailing abuse, and enforcing the forest's shutdown season.

Over the past several years, trail riders have requested the department create single-tracked motorcycle trails within Capitol State Forest. This idea was evaluated by considering the following:

- Clay-based soils found in the forest require regular, and often extensive, maintenance in the form of trail shaping and hardening
- Single-track trails do not allow access to the department's current motorized maintenance equipment. DNR found the single-track trail concept not to be feasible at this time

Management strategies

- Continue to apply for available grants to fund trail maintenance and capital improvements
- Continue to seek partnerships and volunteer efforts to assist in trail maintenance and improvements
- Strive to assess/evaluate trails on a periodic basis, such as every four to six months, to improve safety of riding conditions, resource protection, and to identify problem trail segments
- Conduct general trail maintenance including trail shaping, cutting encroaching vegetation, hardening short sections (less than 100 feet in length) of failing trail segments, replacing and repairing damaged signs, cleaning drain dips and ditches, and cleaning and replacing culverts
- Document and prioritize needed trail maintenance or improvement projects based on the following criteria in order of importance:
 - Priority 1: Public safety and environmental concerns
 - Priority 2: Available funding
 - Priority 3: Frequency of trail use
 - Priority 4: Accessibility of project site along the trail system
 - Priority 5: Current workload and volunteer availability
- Inspect all trail bridges annually and after major storm events; document bridge conditions and future maintenance
- Conduct bridge maintenance, such as: hardening approaches; painting chipped surfaces; replacing damaged planking, handrails, and bolts and screws; sweeping the bridge deck; and repairing washed-out footings
- Harden sections of trail longer than 100 feet which are having a negative impact upon the environment or are considered a safety hazard
- Attempt to keep trail widths at 48 to 50 inches, and reroute existing trail segments that are long and straight, to reduce the speed of riders
- Design new trail segments in a manner that limits excessive speed and provides for varying levels of difficulty

II. Objective

Identify and repair or replace all trail culverts found to be impediments to fish passage.

Management strategies

- Work cooperatively with region engineers and biologists to evaluate stream-crossing culverts and prioritize future work
- Develop a timeline for culvert upgrades and replacements
- Acquire funding for culvert replacements

III. Trail Objective

As funding allows, examine the possibility of relocating trail segments directly adjacent to streams seen as important to riparian species.

Discussion

The Department of Natural Resources adopted a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) in 1997 to address the management of state trust land to comply with the federal Endangered Species Act.

One of the primary functions of the HCP is to provide for the protection of streamside habitat while carrying out management activities. Several of the forest's recreation facilities lie directly adjacent to fish-bearing streams and within riparian management zones. According to the HCP, "any future development of recreation sites would adhere to the riparian conservation strategy" (*DNR HCP Chapter IV.D.*). This strategy calls for the buffering of streams to protect streamside habitat and not allow sites to be constructed or expanded adjacent to or within an average of 180 feet of fish-bearing streams.

The department made the commitment to seek opportunities of moving existing trails away from streams to locations where there would be less human impact upon these sensitive areas. Newly constructed or relocated trails are built away from streams in locations where their impact to riparian habitat and function is not a concern.

Management strategies

- Develop criteria to help DNR determine which trail segments, if relocated, would potentially benefit streams and riparian function
- Prior to conducting major improvement on trails adjacent to streams, consider relocating the trail to a more suitable location
- Work with recreation clubs and forest users to assist in relocation strategies and implementation
- Seek funding sources for identified trail relocation needs

IV. Objective

Work with DNR staff and timber purchasers to reduce the impact on trail users during active forest management activities.

Discussion - *signage*

It is important the department notify the public of trail closures as soon as possible. This will help to protect the recreation users and the contractors. During harvest operations and road construction, closed sections of trail should be clearly identified and, if possible, blocked to limit access. Also, when trail reroutes are available, they should be clearly identified.

Management strategies - *signage*

- Work with foresters and purchasers to place and monitor signs warning of the trail closures and reroutes
- Work toward providing trail closure information on trailhead signboards and on the department website

Discussion - *closures*

During harvest operations and road construction, large sections of trail are frequently closed, even though the management activity is affecting only a short segment.

Management strategies - *closures*

- Look for strategic locations to place connector trails that would provide alternatives to long trail loops and reduce closures due to forest management activities
- Evaluate the feasibility of building temporary trail reroutes when permanent trail segments are scheduled for closure over extended periods of time

Discussion - *mitigation/reconstruction*

At times trails are damaged during forest management activities. Working cooperatively with others helps to limit the impact of scheduled forest management activities on the trail systems. The following strategies should be implemented in a manner that does not reduce or inhibit trust revenue.

Management strategies - *mitigation/reconstruction*

- Work with DNR staff during the design of forest management activities in an effort to reduce the potential impact to the trail systems
- Collaborate with timber sale purchasers and other business partners in an attempt to limit potential impacts of forest management activities on the trail systems
- Use language within forest management contracts to protect trail opportunities and mitigate and/or limit potential impacts
- Enlist volunteers to assist in trail reconstruction/reestablishment upon completion of management activities

V. Objective

Disperse the use of the motorized and the non-motorized trail systems more evenly throughout the established trail network.

Discussion - *motorized trail system*

Of the 89 miles of motorized trail located within Capitol State Forest, the trails in the northeast quarter (Waddell Creek area) receives proportionately more use and requires more frequent maintenance. Reasons for this situation include:

- Frequent use of the Middle Waddell Trailhead for day-use parking and as a staging area for permitted events
- ORV use originating out of the Middle Waddell ORV Campground
- ORV use originating out of the Tacoma Trail Cruisers private property located along the Sherman County Road
- Fewer short loop rides originating out of the Rock Candy Trailhead

Management strategies - *motorized trail system*

- Upgrade and/or expand the Rock Candy Trailhead to create a more structured place from which to ride and hold mid-sized permitted ORV events (150-200 people)
- Explore the possibility of establishing a formal trailhead in the area of the Porter Creek Campground, providing riders from west Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties a closer access point to the system
- Construct one or two connectors to the motorized trail system in the northwest section of the forest to create shorter loop rides

Discussion - *non-motorized trail system*

Of the 72 miles of non-motorized trail (which includes the hiker-only trails) located within Capitol State Forest, the trails in the eastern portion (Waddell Creek area) receive proportionately more use and require more frequent maintenance. The lack of use of the trails in the west half of the forest result in these trails becoming overgrown at a faster rate. Reasons for this situation include:

- Frequent use of the Margaret McKenny Trailhead for day-use parking
- Equestrian use originating from Margaret McKenny Campground
- No established trailhead in the eastern (Grays Harbor) side of the forest
- No short loop rides in the eastern portion of the forest

Management strategies - *non-motorized trail system*

- Explore the possibility of establishing a formal trailhead in the area of the Porter Creek Campground, providing

riders from west Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties a better access point to the system

- Look for an opportunity to create a shorter loop ride in the western portion of the forest

VI. Objective

Expand the opportunities for hikers and those who like to observe nature by creating more hiker-only trails.

Discussion

While collecting information from our citizens working group and in talking with recreation users over the years, it is apparent individuals want more trails dedicated as hiker-only. Hikers commented that they may be at risk when they are sharing trails with motorized recreation users, horses and mountain bikes. Currently the forest has approximately 10.5 miles of hiker-only trail located at 7 different sites within the forest.

Hiker-only trails are easier to construct than motorized, horse or mountain bike trails, because they are narrower, can maneuver more easily up steep hills, and require minimal hardening. Inmates or volunteers using hand tools can often construct these trails. Expensive structures such as steel bridges are often not needed. Hiker-only trails afford DNR the opportunity to educate the public by placing signage about forest development, wildlife and tree identification, the practices of a “working forest,” and the history of Capitol State Forest along the trail.

Hiking trails represent a good opportunity to get Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and new recreation clubs involved in the Adopt-A-Trail program. Trail adoption is an important tool to have in place prior to construction, to help meet the project objectives.

Management strategies

- Continue to maintain the current hiker-only opportunities within the forest
- Explore ways of expanding current hiker-only trails to offer more of an educational focus piece (i.e., educational signage along current trails)
- Look for opportunities and work with recreation clubs, organizations and other DNR staff to create new hiker-only trails

VII. Objective

Discourage and decommission all undesignated trail segments as soon as possible.

Discussion

At times, the department finds trail segments constructed by individuals without permission from the state. The trails are often carved into the landscape with little consideration for protecting natural resources or rider safety. Often these trails lead to adjacent

landowner properties and subdivisions providing personalized access to the forest.

Management strategies

- Identify, decommission and block undesignated trail segments
- Post proper signage at undesignated trail segments
- Use education and enforcement to curtail the use of undesignated trail segments

VIII. Objective

Design future trail segments that are mindful of the environment, forest management activities, and neighbors.

Discussion

All future trails should be designed in a manner that takes into account the potential impacts trail have upon the natural environment, other recreation experiences, and neighbors. Trails should be located away from property lines, fish-bearing streams, and out of riparian areas, if at all possible. Trails should also be constructed in a manner that reduces the impact to soils and other wildlife habitats.

Management strategies

- Work with DNR foresters and biologists to place future trails in locations that reduce the potential impact to riparian and other habitats and ensure compatibility with forest management objectives
- Meet with neighbors, recreation clubs and general recreational users when considering major trail addition projects to ensure that all potential concerns are addressed

Organized events management strategies and objectives

Background

There is a great demand by recreational clubs and organizations to host organized events in the forest. It is the goal of the department to continue to provide recreational clubs, organizations, and the public at large the opportunity to hold organized events within Capitol State Forest for non-commercial purposes.

Organized events, which are defined by the department staff as events with 25 or more participants and/or are advertised to the general public, are allowed upon approval of a permit/land use license. For each proposed event, a recreation club/organization must apply for a permit and provide proof of insurance in the term limits outlined in the permit application. As of 2004, the permits are offered free of charge to recreation clubs, organizations, and the general public. The permits are restricted to non-commercial activities and approval is at DNR's discretion.

Over the past five years, the number of permitted events has steadily increased. Approximately 20 events are held in Capitol State Forest each year, ranging from 25 to 600 participants.

Large-scale, organized events of 300 to 500 people have a substantial impact upon the developed sites, trails, environment and other individual recreation opportunities. Large-scale events are normally staged on properties adjacent to Capitol State Forest and use the forest trail system. Facilities in Capitol State Forest are best suited to handle small (25-125 people) and medium (125-300 people) events. As the size and frequency of events increases, more intensive management is required.

A majority of the groups that host organized events in the forest, conduct volunteer work prior to and/or after their event. Volunteer hours are currently not a requirement of the permit, but most recreation clubs see the value of helping with trail maintenance and provide volunteer labor. Developing a system of requiring volunteer work in order to sponsor an organized event is an option to consider as more recreation clubs are requesting event dates.

I. Objective

Provide for the opportunity for recreation clubs and organizations to host organized events, while balancing the need for individual recreational opportunities.

Discussion

Locations to hold organized events within the state are diminishing. An increasing number of recreation clubs and organizations are discovering Capitol State Forest as a prime location to host non-commercial events. Recreation clubs that have traditionally hosted events are asking to hold more than one per year. In addition, the size of these events are increasing. This increase in events and number of participants often brings about a greater amount of volunteer hours. It also creates an impact, such as full campsites, no parking, and crowded trail conditions to those individual recreation users who come to the forest to recreate.

Management strategies

- Allow permitted events on only certain weekends each month during the use season
- Explore a mechanism for charging permit fees for events or require volunteer hours in lieu of fees
- Disperse the staging of permitted events more evenly throughout the forest
- Enforce the use of facilities to not exceed the allowed maximum capacity

II. Objective

Minimize the impact from permitted events on the trail system, facilities and natural environment.

Discussion

As the number of permitted events continues to increase and the number of participants per event becomes greater, there is a greater impact upon the environment, facilities and trails supporting those events. Events early and late in the use season have a potential to cause trail and facility damage during wet years.

Management strategies

- Allow permitted events on only certain weekends each month during the use season
- Restrict permitted events to the drier months of the use season only
- Require recreation clubs to provide for environmental and site protection during events
- Require recreation clubs to conduct trail maintenance after their event to correct any problems caused by their event
- Attempt to determine the maximum number of participants per event that the forest's facilities and trails can sustain by monitoring the impacts from different sized events during a season
- Enforce the use of facilities to not exceed the allowed maximum capacity

III. Objective

Strive to allow permitted events that provide a safe and enjoyable recreational experience.

Discussion

As events and participant numbers increase, there is a rise in safety-related issues. More people means more cars and trucks at the trailheads and in the campgrounds and more horses and vehicles on the trails. This congestion diminishes user experience.

Management strategies

- Attempt to determine the maximum number of participants per event the forest's facilities and trails can sustain by monitoring the impacts from different sized events within a season
- Restrict permitted events to the drier months of the use season or when the trails are not as wet
- Continue to stress safety in department-issued permits and at pre-ride meetings

Dispersed recreation management strategies and objectives

Dispersed recreational opportunities in Capitol State Forest, such as hunting and sightseeing, are important to many who use the forest. Capitol State Forest provides one of the few remaining landscapes near the I-5 corridor available for certain types of dispersed recreational uses.

Most dispersed recreational activities do not require intensive management, as long as they are not in conflict with other uses of the forest. This is because these activities occur away from developed facilities, are not organized into recreation clubs or large groups, and have a limited impact upon the environment. Some dispersed activities, such as recreational target shooting, are becoming increasingly popular, requiring more intensive management attention to address the impact to other recreation users and neighboring forest residents.

I. Objective

Continue to allow dispersed recreational opportunities which fit within the context of the forest's overall management objectives.

Discussion

Capitol State Forest has finite capacity to provide locations for the many dispersed recreational activities that occur there. These activities must not inhibit the department from reaching its forest-wide resource management objectives, and they must not have a negative impact upon established recreation sites and trails, or the safety of others working, living next to, or recreating in the forest.

Management objectives

- Monitor dispersed recreational activities to ensure compatibility with resource management and other recreational objectives, and the safety of those working or recreating in the forest
- Keep apprised of new, dispersed recreation uses that come into the forest, and determine the potential future impact of these uses

TARGET SHOOTING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

Shooting Background

Shooting has taken place at different levels within the boundaries of Capitol State Forest since its establishment as a state forest in the early 1930s. In the early years, one could wander into the woods and shoot without encountering others. The rules stated you could not shoot in or across established recreation facilities (*WAC 332-52-040*) or across or adjacent to forest roads. Typical shooting can range from the hunting of game, target shooting, or shooting skeet off roads and old logging landings.

Discussion

Responsible target shooting is a recognized activity within the boundaries of Capitol State Forest, and, where possible, should be managed to coexist with

forest management activities, other established recreation uses, and neighbors. This premise may not be true in other landscapes managed by the department.

There are three types of non-hunting shooting activities found within Capitol State Forest: responsible target shooting, irresponsible target shooting, and the illegal use of firearms.

Responsible target shooting, which is practiced by a large portion of the shooting population in the Capitol State Forest, is done by those who come to the forest, obey the rules, are aware of their surroundings, pick up their targets and shell casings, and go home. Responsible target shooting is conducted by those who are advocates for their sport. Irresponsible target shooters tend to be those who shoot wherever they please, disregard safety, and leave shells, targets and other objects in the woods. There are others who are reckless and completely misuse firearms. These individuals drive down forest roads shooting signs, shooting at trees, cars, restrooms and other facilities. This is considered vandalism and is very dangerous. The actions of those who shoot irresponsibly and of those who completely misuse firearms are quite visible and, unfortunately, create a negative impression of target shooting.

Misuse of the forest by other user types, such as ORV or horse riders, can more easily be solved or mitigated by working in cooperation with local recreation clubs and organizations using the forest. There is currently no known organized group that target shoots in Capitol State Forest. Therefore, the collective pressure of positive users cannot easily be brought to bear on those who are less responsible.

During the early 1990s the Capitol State Forest became more widely used by individuals for recreation and leisure. During that same time period, neighborhoods and homes were built adjacent to the forest's boundaries. This surge of residential use and neighbors has increased the need for target shooters to be more cautious and responsible conducting their sport, and has made target shooting an activity that demands closer management and direction by the department within Capitol State Forest.

Dispersed target shooting takes place throughout the forest and carries with it many management challenges. These challenges include shooting without a proper backdrop, shooting near or towards neighbors or recreation sites, across trails and roads, use of discarded appliances as shooting targets, and the growing problem of garbage dumping throughout the forest.

Over the years, target shooting has become concentrated in a few gravel pits around the forest. These areas have easy access, room for several folks to shoot at one time, and provide for better visibility. While it is a bit easier to contain the activity, this type of concentrated use also brings about several management issues, such as the safety of others using the area, increased noise levels or excessive noise during morning and evening hours, and the accumulation of garbage.

The issues of managing both concentrated use and dispersed use for target shooting are complex. Both activities have benefits and drawbacks. The benefit of dispersed shooting is less noise and less destructive impact to a specific area. Concentrating shooters in one area allows staff to monitor for potential problems, such as safety concerns and garbage dumping.

An example of this complexity arose during the 2004 closure of a gravel pit heavily used by target shooters. The closure of the pit resolved noise complaints from adjacent landowners and reduced the amount of garbage dumping at the site. But, shortly thereafter, other landowners complained

to the department that the now-dispersed target shooters were inadvertently shooting directly towards their homes. Dispersed garbage dumping throughout the forest also increased.

Finding the correct balance between dispersed and concentrated use, as well as public and shooter education, is a key component to managing responsible target shooting.

In an attempt to reduce improper shooting and misuse while providing an opportunity for responsible target shooting within Capitol State Forest, DNR will strive to manage this use and control the inappropriate impacts that sometimes follow. If it is found that responsible target shooting cannot exist safely with current recreation uses and forest management objectives, the use may be disallowed.

I. Objective

Seek budget resources to manage target shooting in Capitol State Forest to provide for opportunity while striving to ensure compatibility with resource management objectives, other recreation uses, and surrounding neighbors.

Management strategies

- Develop a responsible target shooting campaign within Capitol State Forest
 - Educate target shooters to be aware of their surroundings, reminding them about neighbors, camp grounds, trails and other recreation activities taking place
 - Educate target shooters on the proper guidelines to follow when target shooting within the forest
- Partner with recreation clubs, neighbors and volunteers to teach srecreation use compatibility to visitors
- Use appropriate engineering techniques to restrict access to areas where shooting cannot occur in a safe manner
- Enforce shooting rules and regulations as current RCW's and WAC's allow; consider new rules needed to further improve safety and resource protection.
- Consider designating an area (zone an area) of the forest for responsible target shooting
- If attempts at allowing responsible target shooting continually fail, disallow the use

II. Objective

Seek to manage the target shooting pilot program in Capitol State Forest in a manner that provides for public and employee safety.

Management strategies

- Develop a responsible target shooting campaign within Capitol State Forest.

-
- Educate target shooters to be aware of their surroundings, reminding them about neighbors, campgrounds, trails and other recreation activities taking place.
 - Educate target shooters on the proper guidelines to follow when target shooting within the forest
 - Encourage DNR staff and contractors to post signs when they are working in an area where target shooting is a known use

HUNTING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

Hunting has occurred within the boundaries of the Capitol State Forest for decades. From the Native American tribes that lived in the area and the early settlers to citizens today, the forest provides a place of opportunity for hunting. Each year, hundreds of visitors hunt deer, elk, bear, grouse and even turkey using modern firearms, bow and arrow and black powder rifles.

Access for hunting is provided forest-wide via the management road network that spans the forest. There are a few game management road networks, which are gated and allow for walk-in access only. All hunting in Capitol State Forest is regulated by the Washington department of Fish and Wildlife.

I. Objective

Provide access for responsible hunting when seen as compatible with resource management and other recreational objectives.

Management strategies

- When appropriate, such as when the fire danger is low and no forest management activities are taking place, coordinate with WDFW to open gated roads during hunting season to allow for public access
- Work in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and local authorities to enforce and regulate hunting activities

II. Objective

Manage hunting in Capitol State Forest in a manner that provides for public and employee safety.

Management strategies

- Make hunters aware of the other types of recreation activities occurring within the Capitol State Forest during hunting season
- Encourage DNR staff and contractors to post signs when working in the woods during hunting season
- Educate the public and other forest recreation users to the fact that hunting takes place across the forest landscape during the fall and winter months

4X4 VEHICLES MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

Background

4x4 trails are found in the Tahuya State Forest outside of Belfair and the Elbe Hills area, near Eatonville.

History

Prior to the late 1970s, the number of logging roads leading into Capitol State Forest was not as numerous as they are today. Many of the early access roads were old logging railroad grades or primitively built dirt roads. DNR employees, contractors and individuals often needed four-wheel drive vehicles just to gain access into the forest. By default, a recreational opportunity was created, as the designated forest roads of the time, provided a place for four-wheel drive enthusiasts to recreate. As the timber became more mature, the number of forest management activities increased. This increase in management activities, along with more stringent Forest Practice road standards, brought around an era of improved forest roads. Today an individual wanting to access Capitol State Forest does not need a four-wheel drive vehicle. Some forest roads, such as the D-Line, are paved to help protect riparian habitats.

Current

Four-wheel drive vehicles frequent Capitol State Forest after the first snowfall, driving up towards the higher elevations on designated forest roads. Most do stay on the designated road system. However, there are some who cause severe damage and become stuck by driving up road cut banks, spinning around on soft road shoulders, and tearing up power line access roads and open spaces, such as the grassy area at Camp Wedekind (closed).

For many years the Thurston County ORV Park, located adjacent to the Capitol State Forest to the north, provided a location for 4x4 enthusiasts to drive. After the park shut down in 2002, many displaced 4x4 enthusiasts looked to Capitol State Forest to provide a similar experience, often times driving off of designated roads, causing damage.

Due to the loamy, clay-based soils, which can be found throughout the forest, the moderately steep topography, the frequency of streams, and the potentially high costs to maintain a four-wheel drive trail system, Capitol State Forest is not seen as an optimal place for this type of use.

Management strategies

- Continue to provide access to Capitol State Forest for four-wheel drive vehicles via the designated forest road network
- Discourage four-wheel drive vehicle misuse through education, signing, engineering and enforcement
- Continue to repair areas that are severely damage by four-wheel drive misuse



Part III. Public Participation

Public input during DNR's Capitol State Forest planning process helped DNR staff learn about the concerns, issues, expectations and values of recreation users and forest neighbors. Three types of public involvement occurred:

- **External information gathering** from a variety of sources such as individuals at the Capitol State Forest Annual Recreation User Group and Tumwater High School students
- Distribution of **user surveys** to assess user patterns, concerns and overall impressions of Capitol State Forest
- Formation of a **Citizen Working Group**, known as the Rock Candy Team, to discuss challenges and recommend improvement within the forest

The plan was combined with the Statewide Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process, to analyze the effects of implementing the management goals and objectives. The SEPA process requires a public review and comment period.

External information gathering

The planning team began gathering citizen input at the Capitol State Forest Annual Recreation User Group meeting held on January 23, 2002. The participants were divided into three smaller groups of 15 to 20 people and asked to list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of recreation in Capitol State Forest.

The following common themes represent participants' views and concerns:

Trail management needs

- Materials used: amount and type (i.e., gravel, bricks, etc.)
- Evaluate trail standards used in Capitol State Forest
- Limited types of maintenance provided
- Maintain to a higher level of use
- Obtain recreation user input on trails reconstructed after logging

Trail support facilities

- Camping sites: increased opportunities needed
- Trail signs: more warning and mileage signs needed
- Parking: not enough parking for trailers

Access

- Currently too many access points available to the forest
- Continued road closures decreases access to key facilities

Illegal and inappropriate activities

- Uncontrolled shooting
- Dumping
- Vandalism
- Increased enforcement needed
- Enable recreation users to assist with enforcement

Recreation user groups/volunteers

- In the forest, we do not take the time to talk to one another
- Inability to relate to other recreation user groups
- Limits to what volunteers can do
- Groups can work well together and communicate amongst each other
- Cross-event education: educate recreation users and recreation users get to talk to each other
- Website needed to let citizens know about volunteer opportunities

Alternative funding

- Charge a fee, if funds go to recreation
- Develop a trust for recreation

User survey

The Capitol State Forest Public Use Survey was conducted to gather information from a broader base of recreational users in Capitol State Forest. Surveys were distributed at recreational facilities and trails and at events organized by DNR staff, the Capitol State Forest Working Group, and other DNR volunteers. DNR's website also provided the survey to users remotely. We received 407 completed surveys by the deadline of December 31, 2002.

The following information shows some of the themes that emerged from the survey results. This survey is not randomly sampled and is not scientifically representative of a larger population.

Figure 5: Primary use

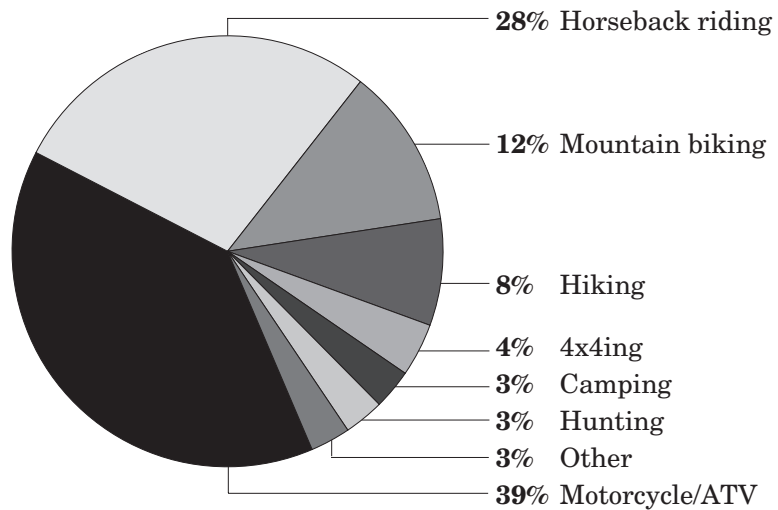


Chart 5: Percentage of primary activity

Primary Activity in the Forest	Number	Percent
Motorcycling/ATVing	154	39%
Equestrian	112	28%
Mountain biking	50	12%
Hiking	34	8%
4x4ing	18	4%
Camping	13	3%
Hunting	13	3%
Other	13	3%
Total	407	100%

The pie (above) and the chart (right) distinguish the percentage of total survey respondents (407) by primary recreation type.

Survey results

The survey results are summarized into two areas: information related to an individual's forest visit, and information related to the respondents' overall impression of the forest.

The respondents answered questions related to their forest visits including: frequency of use, length of visit, who visits the forest, average driving distance, use of the forest roads and facilities, and type of camping equipment. Below are the highlights from these responses:

Frequency of use

- Over half of all respondents visit Capitol State Forest several times (2 to 11 times) a year
- A quarter of all respondents visit the forest at least once a month

Time of visit

- Weekends are the most popular time for all users to visit the forest
- Eighty-five percent of the respondents stated weekend mornings and weekend afternoons as the time when they visit the forest

Who visits the forest

- Approximately 90 percent of all users visit the forest with a group, either with a small group of family and friends or as a participant in an organized event
- Less than eight percent visit the forest alone

Average driving time

- Motorcycle/ATV users travel one to two hours each way to visit Capitol State Forest
- Equestrian users travel 30 to 44 minutes each way
- Mountain bikers on average travel 16 to 29 minutes
- Hikers travel less than 15 minutes to the forest

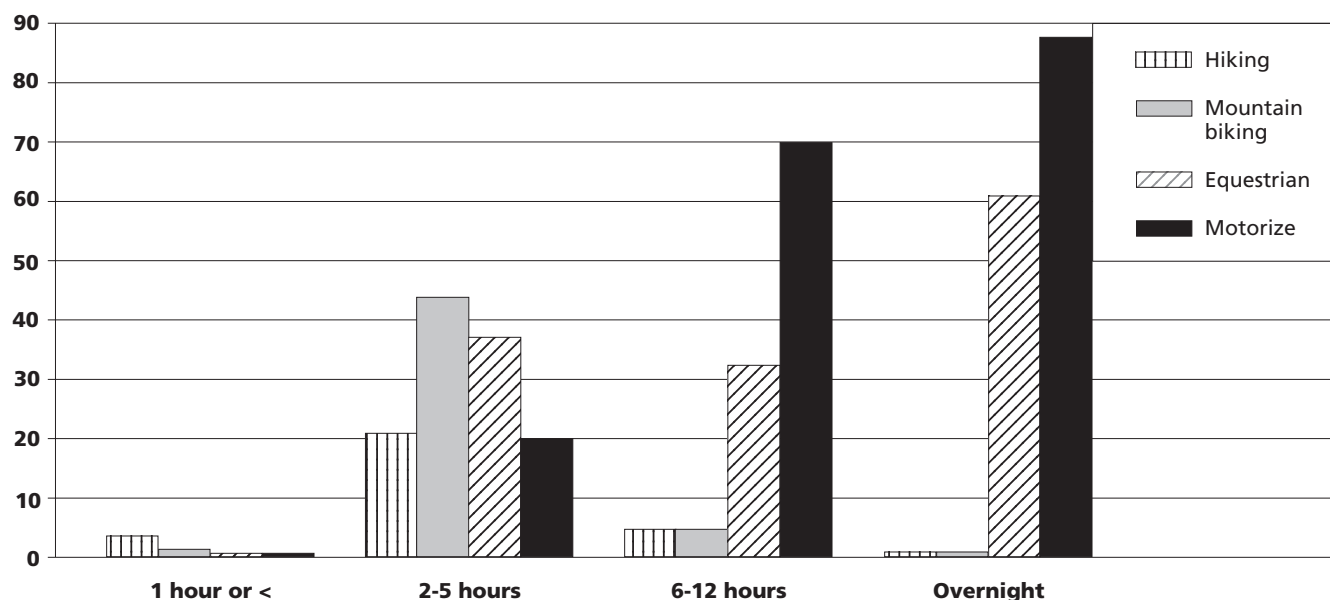
Length of visit

- Most of the motorcycle/ATV and equestrian users visit the forest from a six to twelve hour visit, or even overnight
- Mountain bikers and hikers visit Capitol State Forest for shorter periods of time, ranging from two to five hours per visit

Use of forest roads and facilities

- Trail use is the primary reason most users visit the forest
- Hunters stated they used gravel roads most when visiting the forest

Figure 6: Average length of stay - data from user survey results



- Motorcycle/ATV and equestrian riders stated trailheads and campgrounds as their second and third most popular place when visiting the forest
- Mountain bikers and hikers stated they use gravel (second most popular place) and paved roads (third most popular place) more often than trailheads and campgrounds

Type of camping equipment

- Motorcycle/ATV users preferred to use fifth-wheels/trailers or motor homes when camping
- Equestrian users most commonly use campers and tents
- Mountain bikers and hikers overwhelmingly use tents as their preferred camping equipment

Next, the respondents' overall impression of the forest is detailed with such questions as: what is their greatest concern in the forest; overall satisfaction with DNR maintenance, signage and feeling of safety; each respondent's willingness to pay a fee and general demographic information. Below is a summary of the responses.

Greatest concern

The top three concerns in order of priority for each user type are provided below:

- Motorcycle/ATV users are most concerned about garbage dumping, maintenance of trails, and overcrowding
- Equestrian users are most concerned about conflicts between users, maintenance of trails and garbage dumping

-
- Mountain bikers are most concerned about maintenance of trails, environmental damage, and garbage dumping
 - Hikers top three areas of concern are garbage dumping, environmental damage, and conflicts between users

Users satisfaction

- Roads and trails signage: more than two-thirds of all respondents agree DNR roads and trails are well-marked
- Facility and trail maintenance: more than two-thirds of all respondents agree DNR's facilities and trails are maintained adequately
- Hikers did not agree that facilities are adequately maintained
- All users, except hikers, feel safe in the forest

A general timeline of the public outreach component and the Rock Candy Team Meetings is provided in Appendix E.

Willingness to pay a fee

- Sixty-eight percent of all users are willing to pay a fee to visit the forest

Demographic information

- Over 90 percent of the respondents are recreation users, with the remaining 10 percent of respondents being neighbors
- Most of the respondents who are motorcycle/ATV and mountain bike riders are between the ages of 36 and 49; equestrian riders age range between 36 and 65 years of age; hikers are most commonly 50 to 65 years old
- Male respondents dominate motorcycle/ATV use, mountain biking, hiking and hunting. Female respondents dominate equestrian and camping
- Less than five percent of all respondents were disabled. The largest percentage of disabled recreation users are equestrian riders, with 10 percent of this community stating they have a disability

Citizen Working Group

The role of the working group was to provide information and recommendations regarding recreation in Capitol State Forest. Each member represented a larger group of recreation users, local business representatives and/or neighbors, and actively gathered input from their respective group(s) throughout the process.

Upon receiving 42 applications from interested individuals, 17 citizens were selected. Selection criteria gave greater weight to those individuals who cross multiple interest groups (i.e., user, neighbor, etc.); are affiliated with groups associated with Capitol State Forest; and exhibit an ability to share information with others. The goal was to obtain a representative sample of user types who use various geographical areas within the forest.

Representation on the Citizen Working Group included:

- Motorized users - motorcycle/ORV riders (3)
- Non-motorized users - horse riders (4), mountain bikers (3), hikers (3)
- Other - shooting/archery (1), private sector/business (1), multiple use, including: hiking, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, nature observation, pleasure driving, camping, picnicking, target shooting and mushroom gathering (2)

The Citizen Working Group (Rock Candy Team) members were:

Josh Amos	Eddie Armstrong	Ed Barber
Paul Butler	Alex Callender	John Deibert
Steve Erwood	Judy Francis	Clint King
Ronald Knapp	Elizabeth Livesay	Walter Olsen
Norman Rustvold	Rick Schmeling	Ben Walters
Peter Skowland	Steve Tjelde	

ROCK CANDY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Citizen Working Group concentrated its efforts on developing strategies around three general areas:

- Program-related strategies or initiatives
- Methods to address public abuse
- Future development or maintenance of recreation facilities and trails

Program-related strategies or initiatives

- Increase signage at entrances and on trails regarding the rules, personal responsibility, and how to contact the DNR
- Increase volunteer visibility via volunteer business cards or vests
- Distribute trail information pamphlets, consolidated messages through other written materials, as well as describe the rules and responsibilities
- Continue to develop the Capitol State Forest websites
- Develop a presentation that volunteers could give to community groups
- Increase on-the-ground presence through the volunteer-driven program, such as Forest Watch
- Develop a mechanism for citizens to directly contact a law officer about a crime and serve as a tool, such as the Crime Stoppers Program, to diminish abuse

-
- Communicate etiquette standards, such as on signs and other written materials, similar to the Leave No Trace program

Methods to address public abuse

The Citizen Working Group prioritized its top three areas of concern related to the methods of how best to address or manage public abuse. The methods were separated into three areas: education, engineering, and enforcement. The following list illustrates some of the recommendations the group developed. Some of these recommendations have been implemented, while others may be implemented over time.

Education

- Create a brochure of allowed uses with rules
- Work with event organizers to educate them on regulations, procedures, etc.
- Educate the public using multimedia presentations and/or pictures

Engineering

- Limit access (i.e., gates and other devices)
- Use overlapping trenches to limit dumping
- Ban shooting except in isolated, designated spots

Enforcement

- Develop a Crime Stoppers program
- Increase fines and give proceeds directly to enforce rules
- Place signs at forest entrances stating rules

Future development or maintenance of recreation facilities and trails

After reviewing the forest issues with region staff members, the Citizen Working Group developed recommendations for the facilities and trails within the Capitol State Forest. In developing these recommendations, the group was asked to look at the entire forest and provide recommendations for the future of the facilities and trails, while keeping in mind, the forest management activities that occur, the type of current use the forest receives, long-term funding needs, and the impact of the use upon the environment. These recommendations can be found in Appendix G.

Incorporating citizen recommendations

The recommendations developed by the Citizens Work Group concerning program strategies and initiatives and how to address public abuse have been incorporated in various sections throughout the plan. These include items such as:

- Increase signage at entrances and on trails regarding forest-wide rules, personal responsibility, etiquette standards and DNR contact information
- Increase volunteer visibility by issuing ID cards, vests or caps
- Distribute information pamphlets that convey rules and regulations of the forest and trail systems
- Continue to develop the Capitol State Forest website
- Increase on-the-ground presence through the volunteer driven program, such as Forest Watch

The recommendations developed by the Citizens Work Group concerning future development and maintenance of facilities and trails were compiled and presented to the Management Advisory Team (Fuzzy Top). Next, facility and trail management strategies were developed by merging several of the recommendations from the citizens working group, feedback from the surveys, and direction from the management team. Final incorporated management strategies for facilities and trails can be found in Part II, Recreation Management. Strategies for each facility can be found in Appendix H and possible future trail additions in Appendix J.



Appendices

Appendix A

History of recreation in Capitol State Forest

The recreation history within Capitol State Forest dates back to the late 1930s. At that time, with threat of forest fires fresh in people's minds, public access to the forest was restricted to help protect the recently planted seedlings. Fall hunting was permitted—in fact the state would ferry people into the forest and out again at night. Also during this time, some of the old railroad grades were beginning to be used as recreation trails.

In 1957 Capitol State Forest was opened up to the public and some fire control camps—authorized camping sites, mostly near streams—were established in order to direct people to safe places to camp and have their campfires.

In 1964, General Fund money had been obtained from the legislature, and Hollywood Camp (closed years ago), Camp Wedekind (closed), Sherman Valley Campground, Bordeaux Campground, North Creek Camp and Porter Creek Camp were developed. In addition, a recreation trail system extending across the entire forest was constructed, with the primary recreation user being horse riders.

In 1973, Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) money became available, and with that money came the development of educational sites such as the McLane Creek Nature Center and Mima Mounds Interpretive Center as well as the trailhead near Mima Falls. Also the former green-line trail system was expanded using early IAC funding.

In 1974, ORV funds became available and 23 miles of trail were added to the North Rim #1 trail system. In addition, a new trailhead, the Rock Candy Trailhead, was developed in the northern portion of the forest, and the Mt. Molly Campground was constructed along the eastern edge.

In 1975, after much debate, the recreation trail system was divided into motorized and non-motorized use, and a seasonal closure was implemented to help protect the trail system.

In the mid-1980s, Mt. Molly and Bordeaux Campgrounds were combined and moved to what is known today as the Middle Waddell Campground. During this time period, mountain biking use also became popular.

From the early 1990s to the present day, recreation funding continues to be scarce. Efforts have, therefore, been put forward to improve the quality of existing sites by improving signage, installing recreation bridges, making sites ADA accessible, and addressing environmental problems being caused by recreation sites and trails.

Appendix B

DNR staff inventory of current known issues and challenges

The following is a list of known issues and challenges that confront those who manage recreation in the Capitol State Forest on a daily basis. Several of these items will be covered within this plan, outlining goals and strategies to help alleviate/mitigate them. Others may need to be addressed with over time. New and different issues and challenges will continue to appear in the future as new activities are introduced to the area, use patterns change, and the population continues to increase.

The issues and challenges have been divided into the following four categories:

- **Current recreational activities**
Legitimate activities that are a component of our current recreational program
- **Inherent to the land we manage**
Issues and challenges that are related to managing our large land base within a “working forest”
- **Undesignated use and misuse**
Issues and challenges that are related to uses that are not legitimate recreational activities
- **Resources and funding limitations**
Obstacles that the recreation program encounters due to funding limitations

CURRENT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Disproportionate motorized trail use

The motorized trails in the northeast quarter of the forest receive more intense use and, therefore, are in need of more frequent maintenance.

Disproportionate non-motorized trail use

The non-motorized trails in the eastern portion of the forest receive more intense use and, therefore, are in need, of more frequent maintenance.

Commercial events

Permitted events have taken place in the forest in which the sponsor is a business—not a recreation club or nonprofit group—and, supposedly, only event costs are covered; no profit is made.

Shooting concerns

Neighbors are concerned about target shooting which takes place within Middle Waddell Rock Pit (Triangle Pit). They fear that shooters could be aiming in their direction and the garbage dumping.

Trail noise

The noise from motorcycles and quads riding the Middle Waddell Loop Trail in S16 T17N R3W, especially during events, has brought forth complaints from adjacent landowners.

Capacity

Overuse or crowded conditions occur in certain areas of the forest. The areas of concern are the Waddell corridor, (near Margaret McKenny and Middle Waddell Campgrounds), and the McLane Creek Nature Center.

INHERENT TO THE LAND WE MANAGE

Dumping

The illegal dumping of household garbage, large appliances and old vehicles is commonplace, especially on dirt forest spur roads near the outskirts of the forest.

Trail closures due to management activities

During harvest operations and road construction large sections of trail and loop rides are often closed even though only a small stretch of trail is affected by the operation.

UNDESIGNATED USE AND MISUSE

Undesignated trail development

Undesignated trails have been found carved into various places within the forest landscape. Structures such as wooden ramps and obstacles have been found on trails. Such trails are most often frequented by “extreme” mountain bike riders. These are especially dangerous if a rider on a motorcycle or ATV happened upon them.

Neighbors building connector trails to the forest

Undesignated user-built trails connecting private residences to the forest are commonplace and sometimes cross through streams. These trails provide access by foot, motorcycle, ATV and horseback. At times these trails provide access for others to dump garbage.

Misuse of the Waddell Creek Rock Pit

Triangle Rock Pit has been the site of more frequent misuse over the past several years. Large appliances, as well as computer monitors and household garbage, are often dumped here. DNR has spent up to \$4,000 per year to clean up the area. In addition, late night shooting and alcohol-related activities disturb nearby neighbors.

Shooting of road signs

The shooting of roadside signs is a common occurrence, especially during and just prior to hunting season.

Homesteading

Homesteading is defined by staying past the seven-day limit in campgrounds. Homesteading is prevalent in those campgrounds without volunteer hosts or in sites in more remote areas.

Non-permitted events

Businesses host guided tours and other events or activities within Capitol State Forest and charge a fee. These businesses have not received permission from DNR to use the forest.

Inappropriate parties

Parties are common in the Porter Creek Campground and Camp Wedekind (closed), especially during graduation time. These parties are often alcohol-related and result in vandalism to the facility.

Occasional destruction of facilities

From time to time structures in our campgrounds and trailheads are completely destroyed. These occurrences often appear to be linked to parties with alcohol.

Occasional wood and brush theft

The theft of firewood, cedar shakes and brush such as salal is removed from the forest without permit. This occurs throughout the forest.

4x4 misuse

After in first snow in winter local individuals with 4x4 trucks, SUVs and jeeps drive up into the forest, at times leaving the forest roads and damaging vegetation and streams. This occurs most often on and around the C-line, all the way through the forest.

Reckless shooting

At times individuals shoot in areas not appropriate for that use. Most often this occurs near the exterior of the forest near private homes or across or over trails.

RESOURCES AND FUNDING LIMITATIONS

Budgetary limitations

DNR's budget for recreation maintenance has declined steadily over the past several biennia. In addition, the budgets for inmate crews and the WCC program have been reduced, resulting in:

- Less money and less workforce for facilities and trail maintenance
- Lack of money for rehabilitation of older facilities
- Lack of money for needed capital improvements (i.e., recreation bridge replacements)
- Lack of money for campground host stipends

Limited enforcement officers

The Capitol State Forest has one fully commissioned Education and Enforcement Officer. The officer is responsible not only for the 91,650 acre Capitol State Forest, but for an additional 200,000 across Western Washington. The officer also assists on investigations and emphasis patrols all over the state. Our enforcement officer receives backup from local county sheriffs and the State Patrol, as their resources permit.

Little funding for maintenance and garbage pick-up

In the past, crews from Cedar Creek Correction Center have performed routine maintenance in campgrounds and on trails. Inmate crews also gathered and disposed of garbage in the campgrounds, and cleaned and repaired toilet facilities. These services were paid for by the camps program with its General Fund budget allotment. The 2004-2005 budget has reduced this General Fund money; therefore crews are not able to continue these services on a regular basis.

Appendix C

Sustainable management criteria

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT CRITERIA FOR RECREATION TRAILS AND SITES

Below is a two-step process to determine if the management of recreation facilities (existing or proposed) exercises sustainable management practices.

Step 1

- Identify reliable funding source
- Ensure length of lease/easement meets funding requirement
- Determine staff availability to manage the project

If all of the above items are met, continue below:

Step 2

- Ability to manage facility long term:
 - Maintenance dollars
 - Labor crews (i.e., WCC, camps, fire crews)
 - Staff time to oversee the maintenance and management
- Commitment by volunteers (i.e., labor contribution)
- Ability to mitigate or manage potential resource impacts
- Consistent with DNR policy, procedures and regulations
 - RCW, WAC, Proviso language
 - HCP
 - RMAP process
 - Forest Practices
 - Sustainable Harvest Calculation
 - Other _____
- Priority given by Fuzzy Top and Larch Mountain teams
- Support by external stakeholders (i.e., citizen working group, neighbors, county or city government, etc.)
- Support primary objectives of the forest (i.e., dispersed trail system allows timber management across landscape)

Appendix D

Chart 6: 2003 Group volunteer organizations and hours

Equestrian organizations

Backcountry Horsemen - Grays Harbor Chapter	572
Backcountry Horsemen - Capitol Riders Chapter	118
Backcountry Horsemen - Scatter Creek Riders	117.5
Backcountry Horsemen - Nisqually Chapter	65
McCleary Riders	40
Grays Harbor Saddle Club	48
National Association of Competitive Mounted Orienteering	27

Total Equestrian Hours: 987.5

Motorized organizations

Cascade Family Motorcycle Club	205
East Grays Harbor Search and Rescue	113
River City Motorcycle Club	104
Tacoma Trail Cruisers	1202
Washington ATV Association	260

Total Motorized Hours: 1884

Gatekeepers

ADA Hunter Program	120
McLane Creek Nature Center Gatekeeper	364

Total Hours: 484

Miscellaneous volunteer groups

Boy Scout Troop 208	24
Olympia Trail Running Group	32

Total Hours: 56

2003 Volunteer Hours Total: 3,411.5

Appendix E

Below is a general timeline, provided to outline the major planning steps of the public input component. More detail of this process can be found in Part III.

Public outreach and Citizen Working Group timeline

BEGIN PUBLIC OUTREACH

- 1/23/02 Introduce Plan at Annual Recreation User Group Meeting and facilitate a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise
- 3/20/02 Public kick-off meeting
- 4/01/02 Survey process begins

ROCK CANDY MEETINGS

- 5/8/02 First Rock Candy Meeting; introduce sideboards
- 5/29/02 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Identify concerns
- 6/19/02 Prioritize solutions
Education, enforcement, engineering
- 7/24/02 Vandalism, Design-a-Forest
Guest speaker: Crime Stoppers, Dusty Pierpoint of the Lacey Police Department
- 9/25/02 Review proposed initiatives
Guest speaker: Leave-No-Trace
- 10/23/02 Facilities: Part I
Introduce management principles
- 11/20/02 Facilities: Part II
- 12/1/02 Focus on trails
Guest: Bob Yandle, Capitol State Forest Recreation Forester
- 1/22/03 Introduce three scenarios
Shooting discussion
Guest: Vicki Christiansen, Pacific Cascade Region Manager
- 4/30/03 Discuss scenarios, recognize members

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- 5/13/03 Mail out preferred alternative
- 5/21/03 Receive feedback from Rock Candy
- June/03 Refine preferred alternative and distribute to Rock Candy

Appendix F

Planning exercise

The planning exercise, also known as a SWOT exercise, asks participants to list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to recreation in Capitol State Forest. These recommendations helped guide DNR in developing the final management strategies for the recreation trails and facilities in the Capitol State Forest. The final management strategies for sites and facilities can be found in *Part II, Recreation Management*, and more detail of the Citizen Working Group's process can be found in *Part III, Public Participation*.

The planning exercise was conducted at three different times. Each time forest trails and their locations were listed as strengths. Weaknesses at each meeting include the lack of money to maintain recreation areas and illegal dumping occurring within the forest. When asked to list the opportunities, each group mentioned the possibility of increasing penalties and charging fees. Mention penalties and fees might be applied those who damage resources and diminished public safety. Below is the list of the three groups that participated in the SWOT exercise and a brief description of each.

Group 1:

Capitol State Forest Annual Recreation User Group meeting SWOT exercise

At the Capitol State Forest Annual Recreation User Group meeting held on January 23, 2002, users were divided into three groups: green, gold and silver. Each group was asked to list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities of public use and threats (SWOT) in Capitol State Forest. Similar strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were identified across all groups.

Group 2

Rock Candy Citizen Working Group SWOT exercise

The SWOT exercise began with the group breaking into small groups consisting of two or three individuals. Each group was asked to generate a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to recreation in Capitol State Forest. Each group consisted of different types of recreational users and neighbors. This exercise served as a means to obtain data, as well as to educate the members of the issues the different recreational users and neighbors faced.

Group 3

Tumwater High School SWOT exercise

A leadership class at Tumwater High School listed the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of recreation in Capitol State Forest. Four groups consisting of three students each developed a comprehensive list of positive and negative attributes related to recreating in Capitol State Forest. Similar strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were identified across all groups.

Appendix G

Recommendations for recreation facilities and trails from the Citizen Working Group

Below is a summary of the recommendations given by the citizen's working group (Rock Candy Group). These recommendations were meant to help guide DNR in developing the final management strategies for the recreation trails and facilities in the Capitol State Forest. The final management strategies for sites and facilities can be found in *Part II, Recreation Management Goals and Strategies* and more detail of the Citizen Working Group's process can be found in *Part III, Public Participation*. In addition, detailed descriptions of each facility and associated recommendations can be found in *Appendix H*.

ROCK CANDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recreation Areas

1. Porter Creek

Relocate current facilities and expand in an area away from Porter Creek to mitigate damages and allow for conversion back to a natural stream setting.

Campground

- Relocate
- Add host spot
- Enlarge to a total of 20 spots. Currently there are 16 spots.
- Accommodate motorized and non-motorized use

Trailhead

- Mid-sized expansion
- Develop new connector to the NM Trail system (eliminate need for a new bridge over Porter Creek)
- Used to access the motorized trail system
- Provide larger parking area to accommodate vehicles (approximately half the size of Middle Waddle parking area)
- Separate use within the area
- Add a day-use pavilion

2. North Creek Campground

Use existing site as a trailhead only—no camping

- Serves as trailhead for new Triangle Trail

3. Sherman Valley Campground

- Eliminate campground completely

4. Fall Creek

Campground

- Retain Loop “A” camping; relocate Loop “B” away from stream

Trailhead

- Cosmetic site improvements

5. Middle Waddell

Campground

- Same as existing

Trailhead

- Repave
- Construct loading ramps for motorcycles
- Construct a two-way entrance
- Construct a pavilion to use staging events

6. Margaret McKenny

Campground

- Eliminate three walk-in sites adjacent to Waddell Creek and replace strategically
- Cosmetic site improvements

7. Mima Falls

Campground

- Eliminate upper camping area, five sites
- Possibly convert to group permitted use only

Trailhead

- Retain as is

8. Bob Bammert Grove Loop Trail

One of three corners of the Triangle Trail, retain as is

Trailhead

- Retain as is

9. Rock Candy Trailhead

- Pave area
- Improve/new signage
- Install fencing to better define area
- Improve parking

10. McLane Creek Nature Center and Demonstration Forest

- Expand hiking trail by adding two to three miles on new trail (B-8000 area)
- Expand parking, if possible
- Improvements to demonstration forest trails

11. Camp Wedekind (closed due to abuse)

- Convert to small rest stops/picnic areas off of non-motorized trail system
- Use existing lease to create two to three small rest stops on non-motorized trails

12. Fuzzy Top Trail

- Create a small picnic area that serves the new Triangle Trail

TRAIL SYSTEMS

Hiking

- McLane Loop-approximately two to three miles trail off of the existing McLane Creek Trail that extends into Capitol State Forest (possibly in the B-8000 area)
- Triangle Trail- approximately 10 miles, hiker-only trail attaching North Creek Area, Fuzzy Top and Bob Bammert Grove

Non-Motorized

- Non-motorized Connector - construct an approximately two mile shortcut from Fall Creek to Mima Falls

Motorized

- Northwest Motorized Connector: Creates a connection from North Rim #1 to Mount Molly Porter #3

-
- Northeast Motorized Connector: Creates a connection from North Rim #1 to Mount Molly Porter #3

Mountain biking/hiking

- Construct a single-track and small trailhead area located on the south end of the forest (E-Line area). Cooperative DNR/user-built and maintained trail system

Additional Rock Candy recommendations

Motorized

- Reopen the abandoned Al Davis Road (D-4800) as a trail
- Rock Candy Trailhead expansion with signage

Horse

- Concern of intersecting Triangle Trail with existing non-motorized trail
- Keep Fall Creek Campground open

Mountain biking

- Keep Porter Creek primitive
- Upgrade Rock Candy, Middle Waddle

Hiking

- Restrict Mountain biking use during winter months
- Stress the importance of signage
- Resolve “shooting gallery” controversy

Appendix H

Facilities inventory with management strategies

Capitol State Forest, commonly seen as “in my backyard” to many of its recreation users, is a popular place to get away and recreate after work, during the weekend, or for a week-long vacation. The westside of the forest, situated in rural Grays Harbor County, is frequently accessed by locals and is popular with hunters via State Highways 8 and 12. The east side of the forest, located close to urban areas in Thurston and Pierce Counties, allows easy access from Interstate-5.

Capitol State Forest recreation opportunities range from developed facilities, including campgrounds, day use areas/trailheads and trails, to dispersed uses, such as hunting, fishing, target shooting and sightseeing. Several of the forest’s first campgrounds were originally opened up to the public in the late 1950s. With the forest then much younger in age and the threat of major disaster caused by a campfire more probable, these camping sites were built adjacent to streams where the risk of having a forest fire was greatly reduced.

All facilities in the forest are open annually from April 1st through October 31st, with the exception of three day-use/trailhead facilities which are open year-round: Rock Candy Trailhead, McLane Creek Nature Center and Mima Mounds Natural Area. Facilities are free of charge and offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Facilities in the forest include:

- Seven campgrounds
- Five day-use areas/trailheads
- 160 miles of trails

The forest’s facilities are considered primitive, providing no electrical hookups, sewer hookups or running water. Recent ADA improvements have been made to a majority of facilities in the Capitol State Forest. These improvements include ADA toilets, loading ramps and campsites amenities.

Campgrounds are located in a wooded setting, with many situated near a stream. Campgrounds vary in size from 5 campsites to 25 sites. Smaller campgrounds facilitate tent camping and small RVs, while the larger facilities have pull-through RV parking. Campground amenities include hand-pump wells, fire pits, picnic tables and vault toilets. Guests are invited to stay up to seven days per calendar year in the forest’s campgrounds.

FACILITIES INVENTORY

Fall Creek Campground

Location: Thurston County, off of the C-6000 road

Legal Description: S24, T17N, R4W

Lease: #61001

History/evolution

During the early to mid 1970s, the most popular site in this area was the Maple Flats campground. However, it was built directly adjacent to Fall Creek, which was eroding and the site was abandoned in 1976. To take its place, Fall Creek Campground was constructed. Originally this new site was eight acres and offered eight campsites, one well, toilets, and horse corrals. The campground was upgraded in the mid 1990s, using a grant obtained from IAC. Some of the improvements allowed the site to become ADA accessible.

Recreation in the Fall Creek Area has taken place for many years, from camping to trail riding, thousands visit the area each year. The primary access route to the area was via the C-3000 road (commonly known as the Sherman Valley Road). In the year 2000 a new road, the C-6000, was constructed north of the Fall Creek area for forest management purposes. This road also provided access to the campground and the Fall Creek trailhead. In 2001 the C-3000 road was abandoned due to its streamside adjacency and high maintenance costs. Thus, leaving the C-6000 as the only available road left to access the area. This new road proved to be narrow and steep for those pulling horse trailers as well as log trucks, and, consequently was upgraded in 2003 to help facilitate access for all vehicle types.

Current

This is a general use campground with horse facilities and is considered a favorite among local equestrian groups. There are eight campsites, one well, four vault toilets, one horse mounting ramp, horse corrals, and stalls. The site has two main areas. The northernmost area (Loop B) of the site is largely adjacent to Fall Creek, a fish-bearing stream. The southern portion (Loop A) has more of a buffer between the stream and the site. The site is linked to the non-motorized trail network via Green Line #6 and Mima Porter #8.

Management recommendation

- Continue to maintain Loop A of the Fall Creek Campground in its current location, following DNR facility maintenance standards.
- The campground should be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the use of the sites in Loop B are not having a detrimental effect upon Fall Creek. Any indication of degradation of the streamside area should be corrected as soon as possible. This includes controlling foot access to prevent the bank from being trampled and denuded of vegetation.
- Monitor funding opportunities and look to formally abandon Loop B and relocate it directly to the west of Loop A.

-
- Continue to have a seasonal closure of the site due to its close proximity to Fall Creek, and to allow DNR the opportunity perform needed maintenance projects.

Fall Creek Trailhead

Location: Thurston County, off of the C-6000 road

Legal Description: S25, T17N, R4W

Lease: #69838

History/evolution

Built in the mid 1990s using funds from IAC, this approximately one acre trailhead was constructed to provide equestrian users and hikers a place to park and enjoy the non-motorized trail system. Since the trailhead's construction, mountain biking has become a very popular activity within the forest, and this trailhead is now seen as an important trail access point for this recreation user group as well.

Current

The Fall Creek Trailhead includes a vault toilet, a horse mounting ramp, information board, and hitching rails. The trailhead is located just south of the Fall Creek Campground and is approximately 160 feet from Fall Creek itself. The site is linked to the non-motorized trail system via Green Line #6 and Mima Porter #8.

Road access to this site is from the C-6000 road. See History/evolution of the Fall Creek Campground for more information.

Management recommendations

- Continue to maintain the Fall Creek Trailhead in its current location, following DNR facility maintenance standards
- Make cosmetic improvements to the site and improve overall signage
- Regularly monitor the trailhead and associated access road to ensure that the use is not detrimental to Fall Creek
- Encourage groups to hold small-scale organized events from this site

Sherman Valley Campground

Location: Thurston County, off of the D-Line road

Legal Description: S11,12, T16N, R4W

Lease: #58151

History/evolution

The Sherman Valley site was originally a logging camp of the Mason County Logging Company. Sherman Valley was established as a campground in the early 1960s when the Legislature provided General Fund money for its construction. Fishing, hunting and hiking were popular activities of those who frequented the site early on. In 1998, Health and Safety Funds were used to upgrade and improve the site. Improvements included the construction of an ADA-accessible toilet near the walk-in sites, the addition of rock to some campsites, and crushed rock surfacing on a short trail that provides access to a well.

Current

Sherman Valley is a small campground that offer seven campsites (three of which are walk-in) on two separate loops, three vault toilets and a well. The site sits adjacent to Cedar Creek and is located directly off of the paved D-Line road. Local campers and hunters frequent the site during the summer and fall months. Sherman Valley is primarily a tent-camping site, but it can accommodate conversion vans and small RVs.

Management issues with Sherman Valley Campground

- Repeated site erosion caused by Cedar Creek during periods of high flow. Over the past several years, this has weakened several alder and fir trees, which have then blown down, displacing soil and shrinking the size of some campsites
- Difficulty mitigating the impact from visitors. Campsites are close to the water and nearly at water level. Location of campsites provides visitors easy access to the stream, thus impacting the stream bank
- Repeated vandalism and frequent, extended use by homeless individuals. It is also difficult to keep individuals out during the winter/closed season because there is no gate to control access
- Restroom facilities. Those in the upper loop are not ADA accessible and are old and becoming expensive to fix. One ADA accessible restroom was removed from the lower walk-in loop in 2002 after vandals knocked it over, destroying the walls and roof

Management recommendations

- Maintain the campground over the next 2 to 3 years in its current location as a primary tent camping/small vehicle facility, following DNR facility maintenance standards
- Develop a plan to eliminate or relocate the Sherman Valley campground

-
- Remove all structures and revegetate the area, restoring the streamside habitat to near natural conditions
 - Determine the lease implications related to abandoning this site

Porter Creek Campground

Location: Grays Harbor County, off of the B-Line road

Legal Description: S12, T17N, R5W

Lease: #58133

History/evolution

Porter Creek Campground is a longtime favorite of the citizens living in or near Grays Harbor County. Dating back to the early 1960s, this campground was built with General Fund money and was originally constructed near Porter Creek to reduce the risk of a human-caused fire. In 1995, ADA upgrades were completed to the site. These upgrades included the installation of an ADA accessible toilet and the establishment of a campsite with an ADA table, fireplace and trail leading to the toilet. The B-Line, which provides road access to the site, was paved in the mid 1990s. This significantly reduced the road's impact on Porter Creek and improved access to the site. A camp host site was constructed near the restroom facilities in 2000.

Current

This campground has 13 campsites (in 2 separate loops), 2 picnic sites, a host site, and 4 vault toilets, and a corral for horses. The campground is adjacent to Porter Creek and surrounded by large Douglas-fir trees, providing visitors with a calm, forested experience and a cool place to escape from the summer heat. The campground does have a host site; however, it has lack of phone lines and minimal cell coverage in the area, which could limit response time in case of emergency, which makes having a host at the site not feasible at this time. Access to the campground is via the B-Line road, which is a narrow, single lane, partially paved road. The campground currently links to Mount Molly Porter #3 of the motorized trail system and Green Line #6 of the non-motorized trail system. Also, a 0.70-mile hiking trail leads from the campground to Porter Falls.

Historically, the Porter Creek Campground has sustained much public misuse and abuse. Large parties, homeless individuals occupying sites for an extended period of time, and illegal activities are common, mostly due to the site's somewhat remote location. Porter Creek Campground is not close to other recreation sites and, therefore, is not patrolled as frequently. In 2001, DNR established a camp host site and found an individual to act as the site host. The program was very successful, and misuse was substantially reduced. However, the lack of a telephone and minimal cell phone coverage resulted in no guaranteed way to contact emergency (911) services. This lack of reliable communications was the deciding factor in DNR's decision not to continue the host program after the 2002 season.

Management recommendations

- Continue to maintain Porter Creek Campground in its current location, following DNR facility maintenance standards
- Regularly monitor the campground to ensure that the use of the site is not having a detrimental effect on Porter Creek. Correct any indication of misuse, such as vehicles in the stream, as soon as possible. Monitor the streamside area and control foot access when possible to prevent the bank from being trampled and denuded of vegetation

-
- Continue seasonal closure of the site due to its close proximity to Porter Creek, and allow DNR the opportunity to perform needed maintenance
 - Monitor funding opportunities and reevaluate the possibility of moving the site over time. A possible future location would be located north of the C-1000 road on the west side of Porter Creek, the NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 12, Township 17 North, Range 5 West. The new design should consider an expansion with additional campsites, a day-use pavilion and trailhead facility. Prior to any expansion, the goal of managing abuse/misuse problems associated with the site should be accomplished to prevent building a new facility that may be an easy target for abuse and possibly destroyed
 - Manage abuse/misuse problems associated with the site by:
 - Increasing DNR scheduled patrols of the site
 - Establishing a new signing program to help educate campers and enforce the seven-day stay limit
 - Develop partnerships with ORV and equestrian clubs and/or the local community to assist in patrolling the Porter Creek Campground
 - Examine the possibility of obtaining better communications to the site, which will allow DNR the possibility of reestablishing its host program

Porter Creek Trailhead

Location: Grays Harbor County, off of the B-Line road

Legal Description: S12, T17N, R5W

Lease: #58133

Current

There is a small, informal trailhead at the Porter Creek Campground that allows access to the non-motorized and the motorized trail systems. The trailhead allows parking for three to four vehicles with trailers, and sits directly adjacent to Porter Creek.

Management recommendations

- Pursue the opportunity to formally establish a trailhead in the abandoned rock quarry east of the Porter Creek Campground to help distribute both motorized and non-motorized use away from the Waddell Creek area
- Explore the possibility of transferring the lease from Camp Wedekind (closed) to the area. A lease will also aid the department in seeking outside funding, if it should necessary
- Conduct some minor work in the area (i.e., add rock) to smooth the transition into the parking area(s)
- Create signboards and post signs explaining trail locations and rules of the forest
- Find a user group or club to adopt the trailhead to help the department with its upkeep and in patrolling the site
- Monitor funding opportunities and evaluate the possibility of moving the trailhead if and when the campground is relocated. A possible future location would be the NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 12, Township 17 North, Range 5 West, to the north of the C-1000 road. Prior to any expansion, the goal of managing abuse/misuse problems associated with the area should be remedied to prevent building a new facility that will just be abused and destroyed

Discussion

There is the potential to establish a primitive trailhead in the abandoned rock quarry just south of the North Fork of Porter Creek in Section 12, Township 17 North, Range 5 West, adjacent to the B-1000 road. There are actually two wide spots directly off of the B-1000. The first is an old rock stockpile area and the second being the actual quarry itself. Both could potentially be utilized: the first area for a motorized trailhead and the second for a non-motorized trailhead. In fact, people are already using these areas to park. Both areas are essentially rocked and due to their past uses appear to provide no future opportunity for reforestation. The one issue to be addressed would be that both sites are within close proximity to fish-bearing streams, which would mean the riparian conservation strategies of the HCP issues would need to be addressed. So the question to be researched is, "Would a trailhead facility be the appropriate use of these sites given the fact that neither appear to have a real potential for reforestation or contributing to the streamside habitat, as they currently exist?"

The concept behind an expanded, formalized trailhead in the area has many purposes:

- If large enough, a formalized trailhead could help transfer some of the use from the Waddell Creek Corridor to the west side of the forest, thus reducing pressure on the motorized and non-motorized trails in the south
- A formalized trailhead would provide an area where smaller permitted events could be held. Such events tend to draw in campers, filling the campground with legitimate campers and reducing inappropriate use
- A trailhead would draw more legitimate use to the area, reducing vandalism and inappropriate use of the campground
- This would provide for the only trailhead facility in Capitol State Forest located in Grays Harbor County

North Creek Campground

Location: Grays Harbor County, off of the D-line road

Legal Description: S8, T16N, R4W

Lease: #58130

History/evolution

The North Creek site was originally a logging camp of the Mason County Logging Company. North Creek was established as a campground in the early 1960s, when the Legislature provided General Fund money for its construction. Fishing, hunting and hiking were popular activities of those who frequented the site in the early years. In 1998, Health and Safety Funds were used to upgrade and improve the site to make it ADA accessible to the site.

Current

This is a small campground with five campsites; two vault toilets and a hand well. The campground is located directly adjacent to Cedar Creek. The site's proximity and setting make it a very popular location for locals to come to camp, fish and hunt. This is primarily a tent-camping site, but it can accommodate small RVs and conversion vans. Although the site does not provide formal access to the motorized or non-motorized trail system, a short hiking trail does begin from this site. The trail runs east approximately 2.5 miles to Drooping Fir, an old Douglas-fir tree that is has a very narrow crown with limbs that do not extend more than four feet from its trunk.

Currently, the area just outside of the North Creek Campground's main loop provides parking to allow access to the Drooping Fir Trail. A concept was developed during the public use planning process to create a 10+ mile hiking-only trail (a.k.a. The Triangle Trail), connecting Bob Bammert Grove, Fuzzy Top and Drooping Fir to each other and into a triangle. This proposed concept would utilize North Creek Campground for parking to access this trail. (See Appendix J.)

Management recommendations

- Continue to maintain the North Creek Campground in its current location as a primary tent camping/small vehicle facility, following DNR facility maintenance standards
- Monitor the campground on a regular basis to ensure that the use of the site is not having a detrimental effect on Cedar Creek. Correct any degradation of the streamside area as soon as possible. Control foot access to prevent the bank from being trampled and denuded of vegetation
- Continue the seasonal closure of the site, due to its close proximity to Cedar Creek, and allow DNR the opportunity to perform needed maintenance
- Monitor funding opportunities, and reevaluate the possibility of moving the site over time due to its close proximity to Cedar Creek, keeping in mind that camping-only sites are used frequently

Mima Falls Campground and Trailhead

Location: Thurston County, off of the Marksman County Road

Legal Description: S4, T16N, R3W

Leases: Campground #62347; Trailhead #61073

History/evolution

Constructed in the mid 1970s, this site was originally a trailhead that provided access to the non-motorized trail system. It included garbage cans, picnic tables and two toilets. In 1983, an upper loop was constructed, adding five campsites with corrals, two restrooms, and a well. In 1998, with ADA funds and Health and Safety funds, the site was upgraded further and accessibility improvements were made. These two improvements included adding an ADA accessible horse mounting ramp in the lower day-use area, replacing the existing toilets with ADA accessible toilets, and surfacing five campsites with crushed rock.

Current

This is a small trailhead and campground facility able to support equestrian use. The parking area provides enough space to park six to seven vehicles with trailers. There is also a picnic spot with three tables, one toilet, ADA accessible horse mounting ramp, hitching posts and an information board. In the upper loop there are five campsites, two restrooms, horse corrals and a well. This facility is located directly adjacent to private residences to the south and the Evergreen Gun Club to the east. Currently no garbage pick-up is provided to this site and a local chapter of the Backcountry Horseman has adopted the site and assists the department with maintenance and repair. A gate at the entrance to the site allows the department to have access control during the seasonal closure. This site provides access to the forest's non-motorized trail network via the Mima Porter #8 trail.

Over the past two years, homeless individuals have frequented this site more often. In addition, the area does not appear to receive a substantial amount of day-use. The site was temporarily closed for three months in the summer of 2003, due to lack of funding. There may be a benefit to altering the use of Mima Falls if a savings can be realized and that savings applied to another facility in the area that might provide more useful services to our recreation users.

Management recommendations

- Retain the Mima Falls Campground and Trailhead as is for the next five years. During this time, begin an assessment of the site, exploring the possibility of:
 - Retaining it as is
 - Retaining it as is with a partnership agreement in place to assist with maintenance and repair
 - Converting it to a day-use picnic site or a reservation-only campground
 - Converting the area to more parking to allow for a larger trailhead in which to hold small, permitted events
 - Conduct use tallies and work with local recreation clubs and the public to evaluate the need and implications of changing the site's use

-
- Provide better signage and advertise the facility along the Bordeaux county road
 - Promote Mima Falls for small-sized events

Margaret McKenny Campground

Location: Thurston County, off the Waddell Creek County Road 2.0 miles northwest of Littlerock, WA

Legal Description: S28,33, T17N, R3W

Lease: #58149

History/evolution

Margaret McKenny Campground is named for a local naturalist, Miss Margaret McKenny, whose books on native birds and plants are widely known throughout the northwest.

In the 1960s the site was an old jeep road that led to a small apple orchard, in what is now the grassy area in Loop “C”. The formal campground was constructed and dedicated in 1967. It consisted of one loop with seven sites that had picnic tables and campfire rings. There were also toilets and access to Waddell Creek. The center point of the facility was the grassy area where the apple orchard once sat. In the late 1970s the site was expanded for the first time, adding six walk-in campsites, three campsites with horse corrals, five toilets, a well with hand pump and a parking area. The site then had a total of 16 campsites—10 standard and 6 walk-in.

In 1992 Margaret McKenny Campground went through its second expansion, funded by the IAC. Two new loops were constructed, Loop “A” and Loop “B”. Construction of Loop “A” added five traditional campsites and one toilet, and Loop “B” added six campsites with horse corrals and one toilet. Also, during this expansion, the three horse campsites built in the 1970s were removed, and roads within the site were paved.

In the mid 1990s, ADA upgrades were made to the facility. This included retrofitting one campsite to be ADA accessible and constructing a horse mounting ramp. In addition, a camp host site was constructed near the entrance which has sewer hookup, electricity and phone service, and a second well was installed, thus, upgrading the site to its current state.

Current

Margaret McKenny is a campground with three loops. Loop “A” has five sites that accommodate tent and small RV camping. Loop “B” has six campsites with horse corrals. Loop “C” has seven campsites that accommodate tent and small RV camping, six walk-in tent campsites, and a large grassy picnic area. Combined, there are 24 campsites (one of which is a larger group site), 1 camp host site, 6 vault toilets, an ADA accessible horse mounting ramp, and horse stalls. Three of the walk-in campsites are located directly adjacent to Waddell Creek. Due to the lack of visibility from the main campground, these walk-in sites often have an increased rate of vandalism and misuse. In addition, ongoing misuse such as removing border wood, expanding campsites, and dumping garbage has the potential to impact the adjacent stream. Another issue that arises at times within Margaret McKenny Campground is that of individuals without horses occupying one of the campsites that can accommodate horses. This becomes a big issue on busy summer weekends. The campground is run on a first-come, first-served basis, and aside from asking politely, there is no legal mechanism DNR has to make non-equestrian users change campsites.

The site also has a day-use parking area that can accommodate approximately eight to ten vehicles with trailers.

DNR has had a successful camp host program within this heavily used site for several years. The site provides walk-in access to Waddell Creek and links to the non-motorized trail system via Green Line #6A. A temporary three-month closure took place in summer of 2003 due to lack of funding.

Management recommendations

- Eliminate the three walk-in campsites near Waddell Creek and move them to another area within the lease boundary, resulting in no net loss of campsites
- Recognize the day-use parking area within Margaret McKenny Campground as a formal trailhead
- Conduct cosmetic site improvements to the entire facility
- Conduct moderate upgrades, replacing older toilets and establishing seating in the grassy area to accommodate educational talks and informal gatherings
- Maintain a strong volunteer camp host presence at this site
- Continue the seasonal closure of the site to allow DNR the opportunity to perform needed maintenance and to discourage homesteading during the winter months

Middle Waddell ORV Campground

Location: Thurston County, off the Waddell Creek County Road, 3.0 miles northwest of Littlerock, WA

Legal Description: S20,21, T17N, R3W

Lease: #69839

History/evolution

In the late 1950s, when the site was first established, it consisted of a small dirt spur with three picnic tables and two vault toilets and had no formalized lease. At that time, it was an unadvertised site. In a two-step process beginning in 1992, DNR began a formal expansion of the Middle Waddell Campground. This first phase was funded by IAC at a cost of \$146,800 and consisted of acquiring a legitimate lease and upgrading the facility to eight campsites. During the same time frame, the Yew Tree Campground, located off Waddell Creek Road, 0.5 miles north of Middle Waddell Campground, was abandoned due to misuse and environmental concerns.

In the mid 1990s, two other popular campgrounds nearby, the Bordeaux Campground and Mt. Molly Campground, were being heavily used and, unfortunately, were sustaining excessive amounts of vandalism and environmental damage. Therefore, it was decided to abandon these two sites and to further expand Middle Waddell Campground. This second expansion, done in 1996, took the facility from 8 campsites to the current 24 campsites. In doing so, two vault toilets and a host site with electricity and phone service were added and the campground was made ADA accessible. A DNR Washington Conservation Corps Crew did the majority of the work in phase two. In addition, the Middle Waddell day-use facility was constructed south of the campground.

Current

Middle Waddell ORV Campground offers a forested environment with campsites accessible for recreational vehicles under 24 feet in length. This facility has three loops. Loop “A” has 8 campsites; loop “B” has 7 campsites and loop “C” has 9 campsites, for a total of 24 campsites. In addition there are four vault toilets, a well and a camp host site. Middle Waddell Campground is one of the most highly used sites in the forest and is often fully occupied during the summer months. In past summers, DNR has successfully implemented a volunteer campground host program within Middle Waddell. These hosts have educated recreation users on the forests rules and regulations, done minor repair and maintenance work, and their presence reduces calls to DNR and law enforcement officers. In return, DNR provides hosts with a camp spot to locate an RV or trailer, power, phone and sewer hookup.

From the campground, ORV riders can access the Middle Waddell day-use facility and the motorized trail system, via trail #40. A temporary three-month closure of the site took place in the summer of 2003 due to lack of funding. However, in the 2004 Legislative session a bill was passed that allows the department to fund the site using NOVA money.

Management recommendations

- Continue to maintain a strong camp host presence at this site
- Maintain this site as the principle ORV campground within Capitol State Forest
- Continue the seasonal closure of the site to allow DNR the opportunity to perform needed maintenance and to discourage homesteading during the winter months

Middle Waddell Trailhead

Location: Thurston County, off the Waddell Creek County Road 2.8 miles northwest of Littlerock, WA

Legal Description: S28, T17N, R3W

Lease: #69839

History/evolution

Established in 1996, this site was constructed as part of the second Middle Waddell Campground expansion. The funding was provided by IAC. The main purpose of the site is to provide a trailhead for access to the motorized trail system. The site was also designed to act as a staging area from which organized recreation clubs can hold permitted, organized events.

Current

This site offers two ADA, accessible vault toilets, an information board and picnic tables. The site can accommodate approximately 80 vehicles, depending upon their size. No fires are allowed and overnight camping is prohibited. Access to ORV Trail #40 and the Middle Waddell Campground is available. Since this site was established, Middle Waddell has become the primary ORV staging area in the Capitol State Forest. This use has had significant impact upon the trails that originate here. One of the shortcomings of this site is the one access road for both egress and ingress. If two vehicles meet head-to-head, and if they both have trailers, it is difficult for them to maneuver.

Management recommendations

- Make needed site improvements to the facility, such as repaving and striping the parking area, constructing a covered pavilion, and constructing a second access road
- Continue to use this facility as a staging site for large, permitted events
- Continue to close this site during the winter months in order to discourage illegal trail riding

Rock Candy Trailhead

Location: Thurston County, off of the B-line road near State Hwy 8

Legal Description: S19,20, R18N, T3W

Lease: Right-of-way under BPA Power Lines

History/evolution

Built in the early 1990s this site was created as a trailhead for the motorized trail system. Located at the north edge of the forest, the site lies under BPA power lines and approximately 0.5 miles from private residences. The original construction included two toilets, an information board, and a rocked parking area defined with concrete Jersey barriers. In 2002, the Washington Conservation Corps constructed a new ADA accessible parking area, installed a new information board, and added an ADA accessible path to both toilet facilities.

Current

This two-acre site is a trailhead for the motorized trail system. Riders can access the Rock Candy west trail, which provides access to North Rim #1, heading west towards Porter Creek Campground and the Rock Candy east trail, which heads south towards Middle Waddell Trailhead and Campground. As a result, the site is a convenient place to park. The site is relatively small, with no camping facilities nearby; it does not easily facilitate the staging of large, permitted organized events.

This site was heavily used for access to the motorized trails when it was first constructed. Over the past 10 to 12 years, the Middle Waddell Trailhead has become the primary location for permitted ORV and Mountain biking events, as well as for day-use parking for access to the motorized trail system. Consequently, the motorized trails in the northeast quarter of the forest receive heavy use and need more frequent maintenance. There is a need to disperse this heavy use of the ORV trail system more evenly throughout the forest. In addition, without regular use of the Rock Candy Trailhead, vandalism to the site has become more of a problem. Recreation users have suggested that, if the site were upgraded, it would receive more riders. This would help meet our needs of spreading out the use on the ORV trails. Also, more frequent legitimate riders using a site often results in less vandalism.

Management recommendations

- Retain this facility as the primary trailhead in the northern half of the forest
- Conduct major site improvements/upgrades to this facility in an attempt to transfer more use from the Middle Waddell Trailhead to this site. Improvements may include enlarging the site, paving the parking area, better defining the site, improved signage and new restrooms
- Attempt to manage abuse/misuse problems associated with the site
- Develop partnerships with local ORV and mountain-biking clubs to assist in patrolling the trailhead and/or formal adoption of the site

Wedekind Trailhead (closed)

Location: Grays Harbor County, at the intersection of the C-Line and D-1000 roads

Legal Description: S21, T17N, R4W

Lease: #58129

History/evolution

This recreation facility was opened to the public on August 13th, 1967, on what was originally the site of the primary planting camp for early reforestation workers in Capitol State Forest. An attractive rustic shelter with a fire place, restroom facilities, corrals, a group campfire circle and several picnic tables were constructed throughout the years with General Fund money allotted from the Legislature. A large, grassy area also created a perfect setting for a picnic. The camp is located on one of the highest ridges in the forest and at one time, before the surrounding trees grew up, provided an unexcelled view of Mt. Rainier, Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams and Mt. St. Helens. Camp Wedekind was named for Mr. "O.B" Wedekind, who ran the planting camp and whose dedication and efforts "greened-up" Capitol State Forest.

Current

This is a small trailhead facility with one picnic site and a picnic shelter. It is located at the intersection of two main line roads, so vehicle access is easy, even though the site is remote. Camp Wedekind is a constant source of vandalism. From parties to 4x4 vehicles, this site is destroyed on a regular basis. Over the past several years, most of the primary structures have been destroyed. The two vault toilets were removed due to vandalism in 2002. In addition, the picnic shelter and corrals were heavily vandalized in 2004 and removed, and illegal 4x4 activity has destroyed the grassy picnic area. The area receives limited legitimate use as a trailhead. Camp Wedekind is difficult to patrol effectively due to its location and controlling access is difficult because there are three separate access roads to the site. Wedekind trailhead provides access to the non-motorized trail system via Mima Porter #8 and Trail #30. In 2004, continued vandalism of Wedekind Trailhead caused DNR to close the site and remove all of the structures for user safety.

Management recommendations

- In the short term, continue to remove the garbage and patrol the area as best as possible to allow for use as a trailhead
- Remove all structures from the site and eliminate this facility, moving its current lease elsewhere within the forest. (Potentially move the lease to the proposed Porter Creek Trailhead or maybe provide small rest stops with limited amenities, such as picnic tables, along the non-motorized trail system)
- Create a formal abandonment plan that revegetates the site and controls access and illegal activities

McLane Creek Nature Trail and Centennial Demonstration Forest

Location: Thurston County, off of the Delphi Road near Black Lake

Legal Description: S36, T18N, R3W

Lease: #61088 (nature trail only)

History/evolution

In 1976, a 1.5-mile trail was built around a portion of McLane Creek and its surrounding beaver ponds. The intention was to provide visitors with an interpretative hike whereby they could learn about the dynamics associated with this complex ecosystem and about the wildlife that call McLane Creek their home.

To further provide an educational experience, a trail winding through nearby forested trust land, named the Centennial Demonstration Forest, was established just east of McLane Creek. This trail runs through a mature Douglas-fir forest. Small areas are harvested in this forest at 10 to 15-year intervals, with the intent of teaching visitors about forest ecology and timber management practices. The McLane Creek area is a portion of the working forest, and is not a recreation site.

In 1994 improvements were made to the McLane Creek Nature Center, which included the addition of an ADA toilet and the reconstruction of most of the wooden boardwalk and platforms. In addition, an ADA accessible portion of trail, which originated from the parking lot, was built to bypass a steep trail segment. Lastly, at the far north end of the trail, an old puncheon structure was removed, and a wooden log stringer-bridge was replaced with an aluminum bridge.

Current

The McLane Creek Nature Center features a double loop interpretive trail, totaling approximately 1.7 miles. There are two restrooms, three viewing platforms, and several seating areas scattered throughout the site. The platforms and benches have views of the pond, the forest and associated vegetation. McLane Creek also provides a home for many species of birds and animals. The site's somewhat suburban location makes access very reasonable. This is a facility loved by thousands and very heavily used by the general public. Schools as far away as Fife, Washington, bring students to McLane Creek to educate them on this unique environment. Each year in the fall, salmon return to McLane Creek to spawn, which in itself attracts thousands of interested visitors. DNR had also partnered with the Thurston County Stream team, which provides on-site experts during the spawning season.

The trail through the Centennial Demonstration Forest is used at a less frequent rate, as compared to the trails within the McLane Creek Nature Center. The Centennial Trail system has signage, which is far outdated, and improvements need to be made to the trail surface.

The McLane Creek Nature Center and Centennial Demonstration Forest are showcase areas, which allow the department the opportunity to provide natural resource education to the public. However, the facility is near capacity during the summer and fall months and is quickly becoming run down. Boardwalk is in need of replacement, some informational signs can no longer be read because of sun damage, and areas of streamside vegetation have become trampled from the intense use. In addition, the site is funded with the state's General Fund, which has proved to be an unstable,

shrinking funding source. The demographics of the surrounding area is also changing. Development over the past 10 to 15 years has encroached upon the area, and harvesting in the Demonstration Forest is and will continue to become, more of an issue to neighbors.

Over the next several years, the department should strive to determine a long-term vision for the entire McLane Creek area and reevaluate its role in natural resource education. A more stable funding source needs to be identified and/or partnerships with other agencies and organizations sought. Once a clear vision and direction is known, an all-inclusive site-specific management plan for the area may be created.

Management recommendations

- Continue to maintain this site, as funding allows, providing for an outdoor educational experience
- Engineer and design a new south end crossing over McLane Creek to replace an aging log bridge
- Better control user access off of the long loop trail near McLane Creek
- Revegetate the streamside areas that have been trampled and denuded of vegetation by visitors
- Educate visitors and teachers on the appropriate use of the area and direct them to appropriate areas to view the salmon during spawning
- Train volunteers to lead tours and educate visitors
- Upgrade and update the current signage along the trail systems within McLane Creek and the Centennial Demonstration Forest
- Develop a new hiker-only nature trail off of the current long loop trail section that winds through the Capitol State Forest B-8000 area. (See trail section.)
- Partner with other agencies, organizations and volunteers to educate the public and assist with site maintenance

Appendix I

Capitol State Forest trail inventory

MOTORIZED TRAILS

Total miles = 88.70

North Rim #1 Trail (25.50 miles)

Access is from the Sherman Valley Road to the Noschka Road to the C-8000 and 100 feet up the C-8200 road. North Rim #1 begins in NW 1/4, SE 1/4, Section 7, T17N, R3W, just off of the C-8200 Road about 3200 feet. The trail goes to the east and then to the north, then west and southwest in a counter clockwise direction towards Porter Creek campground. It is about 24.25 miles long and crosses logging roads at 14 locations along its length to Porter Creek campground. There are seven streams that have bridges. There are as many as 50 to 60 other smaller crossings that have culverts. The trail ends in NW 1/4, NE 1/4, Section 12, T17N, R5W, just off of the B-1000 road about 1 mile east of Porter Creek campground.

Mount Molly Porter #3 Trail (20.90 miles)

Access to Mount Molly Porter #3 is Sherman Valley road to the C-Line, and up the C-Line about 2 miles. This trail begins right off of the C-Line in NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 18, T17N, R3W. This trail goes to the north and then in a westerly direction towards Porter Creek Campground. This trail is 20.9 miles long and crosses logging roads at 8 locations along its length to where it terminates on the North Rim #1. There about 50 stream crossings most of which are culvert crossings. There are four crossings that are bridges. Mount Molly Porter #3 trail ends at the NR #1 trail, in NW 1/4, SE 1/4, Section 6, T17N, R4W.

Rock Candy East Trail (2.25 miles)

Access to Rock Candy East Trail is from the Rock Candy Trailhead at the north end of the forest. The trail begins in the SW 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 20, T18N, R3W it goes 2.25 miles in a easterly and then southerly direction where it terminates on the North Rim #1 Trail at MP 6.4 in NW 1/4, NE 1/4, Section 29, T18N, R3W. This trail crosses logging rods only once along its length. There are eight stream crossings all of them are culverts. There are no bridges on this trail.

Rock Candy West Trail (2.25 miles)

Access to Rock Candy West Trail is from the Rock Candy Trailhead at the North end of the forest. The trail begins in the SW 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 20, T18N, R3W it goes south and then in a southwest direction for about 1.0 miles and terminates on the North Rim #1 Trail at mile point 8.8 in NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 30, T18N, R3W. This trail crosses logging roads 3 times. There are seven stream crossings all of them are culverts. There are no bridges on this trail.

Mt. Molly Loop Trail (7.70 miles)

Access to Mt. Molly Loop is Sherman Valley road to the C-Line, and up the C-Line about 2 miles. This trail begins off of Mt. Molly Porter #3 about 500 feet up the trail off of the C-Line in NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 18, T17N,

R3W. This trail goes for 6.70 miles to the north and then in a westerly and northerly direction where it terminates on Mount Molly Porter#3 trail at MP 7.55 in NW 1/4, SW 1/4, Section 31, T18N, R3W. This trail crosses logging roads 3 times. There are 9 stream crossings, 7 of them are culverts. There are 2 small bridges on this trail.

Middle Waddell Loop Trail (8.00 miles)

Access to Middle Waddell Loop Trail is from the day use facility at Middle Waddell Day use. Access is via the Delphi road to Waddell Creek road to the day use parking area. This trail begins in SE 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 28, T17N, R3W. Middle Waddell Loop Trail goes in a northerly direction for about 8.0 miles where it terminate on the North Rim #1 Trail at MP 4.0 in NE 1/4, SE 1/4, Section 32, T18N, R3W. This trail crosses logging roads 6 times. There are about 23 stream crossings that are culvert crossings. This trail has three bridges.

Lokki Trail (8.00 miles)

Access to Lokki Trail is from Rock Candy Day use up the B -Line. This trail begins right at the junction of the B-Line and the B-5000 in the NW 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 25, T18N, R4W. This trail goes in a north and westerly direction for 8.00 miles where it terminates on NR #1 at MP 15.4 in NW 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 22, T18N, R4W. There are no stream crossings on this trail. This trail crosses logging roads 5 times.

Trail #20 (2.1 miles)

Access to Trail # 20 is from the Delphi road to Waddell creek road north on Noschka to the end of the county road and then north on the C-8000. Trail #20 starts off Mt. Molly Porter #3 trail near the junction of the C-8000 and C-4700 roads in the SE 1/4, NW 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 31, T17N, R3W. It crosses three roads and terminates on the B-8500 road and ties into the North Rim #1 trail in the SW 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 30, T18N, R3W. There are no stream crossings on this trail.

Trail #30 (4.50 miles)

Access to Trail # 30 is from the Delphi road to Waddell Creek Road north on Noschka to the end of the county road and then north on the C-8200. Trail #30 starts off Mt. Molly Porter #3 trail near the C-8200 in the SW 1/4, SW 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 6, T17N, R3W. It crosses three roads and terminates back onto the Mt. Molly Porter #3 in the SW 1/4, SW 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 2, T18N, R3W. There is one stream crossing on this trail.

Trail #40 (5.10 miles)

Access to Trail # 40 is from the Delphi road to Waddell Creek Road south to the Middle Waddell Day Use facility. Trail # 40 starts off Middle Waddell day use in the north end of the parking area trail near the C-8200 in the NE 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 28, T17N, R3W. This trail goes in a westerly and north direction and then in north westerly direction this trail crosses three roads and terminates at the C-Line right where Mt. Molly Porter #3 begins in the NE 1/4, SW 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 18, T17N, R3W. There is one stream crossing on this trail.

Trail #50 (2.00 miles)

Access to Trail #50 is from the A Line off of State Hwy #8 in the north end of the forest. Trail #50 starts south of the Thurston County ORV Park just outside of the Park's border in the NW 1/4, NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 6, T18N,

R4W. This trail goes in an easterly and then in southerly direction. It does not cross any roads. There are two streams one is a bridge crossing and the other is a culvert. This trail terminates on the North Rim #1 trail in the NE 1/4, NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 22, T18N, R4W.

Trail #51 (.40 miles)

Access to Trail # 51 is from the A Line off of State Hwy #8 in the north end of the forest. Trail # 51 starts south of the Thurston County ORV Park just outside of the Park's border in the NW 1/4, NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 6, T18N, R4W. This trail goes in an easterly and then in westerly direction. It does not cross any roads. There are two streams one is a bridge crossing and the other is a culvert. This trail terminates on the A-Line in the NW 1/4, NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 6, T18N, R4W.

CAMPGROUND/TRAILHEAD AND TRAIL ACCESS

Rock Candy trailhead gives you access to Rock Candy East (2.25 miles), and Rock Candy West (1.0 miles). These two trails give you access to North Rim #1 Trail at different points (5.4 and 8.4).

NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

Total miles = 61.90

Mima Porter #8 (31.9 miles)

You gain access to Mima Porter #8 from Mima Falls Trailhead. Access is via Little Rock, west on 128th street, then south on Mima road to the Bordeaux road and then north on the Bordeaux road to Mima Falls trailhead. This trail begins right out of this facility in SE 1/4, SE 1/4, NE 1/4, T16N, R3W. Mima Porter #8 leaves the facility in a northerly direction and generally goes in a north and westerly direction towards Porter creek campground. This trail is 31.9 miles long and crosses logging roads 13 times. There are at least 41 stream crossings, 11 of these crossings have bridges over the streams. This trail terminates on the Green Line #6 trail in SE 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 7, T7N, R4W, about one mile directly east of Porter Creek Campground.

Green line 6 (21.0 miles)

You gain access to Green Line #6 from Mima Falls Trailhead. Access is via Little Rock, west on 128th street, then south on Mima road to the Bordeaux road and then north on the Bordeaux road to Mima Falls Trailhead. This trail begins out of the trailhead, in SE 1/4, SE 1/4, NE 1/4, T16N, R3W. Green Line #6 leaves the trailhead in a northerly direction and generally goes in a north and westerly direction towards Porter Creek Campground. This trail is 21.0 miles long and crosses logging roads 13 times. There are at least 29 stream crossings, 4 of these crossings have bridges over the streams. This trail terminates on the B-1000 in NE 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 12, T7N, R5W, about 1/2 mile north of Porter Creek Campground.

Waddell Loop (3.0 miles)

Access to the Waddell Loop is off of Green Line #6 in SW 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 33, T17N, R3W. This trail is three mile long and loops back to itself and ends very near where it starts. You can also access this trail from

Margaret McKenny Campground and from the Evergreen Gun Club, which has a short access trail on the south end of this loop. This trail crosses logging roads six times and has five stream crossings, only one of these crossings has a bridge the rest are culvert crossings.

Trail #6A (2.25 miles)

Access to Green Line #6A is from Margaret McKenny campground. Access is via Little Rock, west on 128th street then north on Waddell Creek road to Margaret McKenny campground. This trail begins in NW 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 33, T17N, R3W. This a short 2.25 mile long trail that gives you access to Waddell Loop and Green Line #6. This trail does not cross any roads and only has two stream crossings. There are no bridges. This trail ends at the SE 1/4, SE 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 28, T17N, R3W.

Trail #10 (0.70 miles)

To get to south end of trail #10, which is in the NW 1/4, NW 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 32, T17N, R3W, you have to take Mima Porter #8 trail and go up this trail to mileage point 2.0. From here this trail goes in a north and easterly direction and is 0.7 miles long. It does not cross any roads and there are no stream crossings. This trail ends at the junction that is the E-9000 road and Green Line #6 and trail #10 in the NW 1/4, NW 1/4, N/W 1/4, Sec. 33, T17N, R3W.

Trail #20 (0.50 miles)

To gain access to trail #20, start from Littlerock, go west on 128th street, south on Mima road, west on Bordeaux road, take the E-Line and then go north on the D-4000 to the junction of the D-4400 road. Mima Porter #8 crosses this road at this location. Access to trail #20 then is north on the Mima Porter #8 for about 0.5 miles. This will get you to the south end of trail #20 which is in the NW 1/4, SE 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 30, T17N, R3W. From here this trail goes in a northerly direction and is 1.3 miles long. It does not cross any roads and there are two stream crossings. The two stream crossings both have bridges. This trail ends at the junction that is Green Line #6 and trail #20 in the NE 1/4, SW 1/4, N/W 1/4, Sec. 30, T17N, R3W.

Trail #30 (0.70 miles)

To gain access to the south end of trail #30 start from Littlerock go west on 128th street, north on Waddell Creek road, west on the Sherman Valley road, west on the C-Line to camp Wedekind (closed). Trail #30 starts at Camp Wedekind (closed) in the SW 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 21, T17N, R4W. From here this trail goes in a northerly direction and is 0.7 miles long. It crosses one road the C-Line. There are no stream crossings. This trail ends at the junction that is Green Line #6 and trail #30 in the SW 1/4, NE 1/4, N/W 1/4, Sec. 30, T17N, R4W.

Trail #40 (1.3 miles)

To gain access to the south end of trail #40 start from Littlerock go west on 128th street, north on Waddell Creek road, west on the Sherman Valley road, west on the C-Line to camp Wedekind (closed) west on the C-Line about 1 mile to where Trail #40 begins in NW 1/4, NW 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 21, T17N, R4W. From here this trail goes in a southerly direction and is 1.3 miles long. It crosses several roads and is on rebuilt logging road for some distance. There are two stream crossings. This trail ends at the junction that is Mima Porter #8 and trail #40 in the NE 1/4, SW 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 28, T17N, R4W.

Trail #50 (1.0 miles)

To gain access to the east end of trail #50 start from Littlerock go west on 128th street, north on Waddell Creek road, west on the Sherman Valley road, west on the C-Line to where Green Line #6 crosses the C-Line. Go north and west on Green Line #6 for about 11/4 mile. Trail #50 begins in the SW 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 14, T17N, R4W. From here the trail goes in a westerly and then to the south and is 1.0 mile long. There are three stream crossings and no bridges. This trail ends at the junction that is Mima Porter #8 and trail #50 and the C-Line, in the NW 1/4, SW 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 28, T17N, R4W.

HIKER TRAILS**Mima Mounds** (3.3 miles)

Access to Mima Mounds Natural Area is off the Waddell Creek road, just west of Littlerock.

McLane Creek (1.5 miles)

Access to McLane Creek Nature Center is from the Delphi Road in Thurston County.

Fuzzy Top (0.4 miles)

Access to this trail is off the Capitol Forest D-1000 and D-1500 roads, in the center of the forest.

North Creek/Sherman Valley (1.60 miles)

Access to the trail is from either North Creek Campground or Sherman Valley Campground of the Capitol Forest D-Line.

Cedar Creek (2.80 miles)

Access to the trail is from either North Creek Campground or Sherman Valley Campground of the Capitol Forest D-Line.

Porter Creek (0.7 miles)

Access to this trail is from the Capitol Forest C-Line. adjacent to the Porter Creek Campground.

Bob Bammert (1.0 miles)

Access to this trail is off the east end of the Capitol Forest E-Line, at the Bordeaux Entrance to the forest.

Drooping Fir (2.5 miles)

Access to Drooping Fir Trail is off the west end of the Capitol Forest D-Line, across from the North Creek Campground.

Appendix J

Proposed trail projects

Trail Project A

Objective

Evaluate the possibility of relocating the Middle Waddell Loop Trail in S16, T17N, R3W, to respond to noise complaints from the adjacent property owner.

Discussion

The private property owner in S15, T17N, R3W, has met with DNR staff to discuss the possibility of DNR moving a portion of the Middle Waddell Loop Trail. This neighbor would like to develop his property in the future, but claims the noise from the trail is excessive during summer months and ORV events. DNR did run a test in 2002 whereby we had quads run up and down the trail system. The noise from the trail could be clearly heard on the site of the private property and we would assume during a large-scale event that the noise would be quite loud.

Management strategy

- Engineer and design a cost effective trail reroute moving the trail segment in question further to the west away from the property line

Trail Project B

Objective

Explore the possibility of creating a single-track, multiple-use hiker and Mountain biking trail within the next 12 to 15 years.

Discussion

One of the outcomes of the public participation process was the concept of constructing a new trailhead and a 10 to 12 mile single track multiple use hiker and Mountain biking trail. The best location, at this time, for such an endeavor would be in the south end of the forest with the trailhead located somewhere off of the E-line. The motorized community was also interested in the possibility of using such a trail for motorcycles, maybe on a rotating basis with hikers and Mountain biking.

DNR staff researched the suggestion and thought the idea was valid, but that the development costs associated with a new trailhead and trail, such as restrooms, signs and cost of leasing the land would not fit into the 10-year time frame of this plan. It was also thought that a single-track trail used by motorcycles would be more difficult to get equipment and supplies into, to maintain. This type of trail would also give the department another type of use combination to manage and thus the ramifications of that would need to be considered.

The final recommendation is to keep the concept for a single track multiple use hiker and Mountain biking (and potentially motorcycle)

trail in the plan and revisit implementation again in approximately year 2014. However, if funding were available prior to 2014, earlier implementation would be considered if the project fit within the current management priorities.

Trail Project C

Objective

Explore the possibility of rerouting small sections of the ORV trail system in different locations throughout the forest where the trail is currently straight with little to no elevation gain.

Discussion

Since 2003 riders of the ORV trail system in Capitol State Forest have approached DNR requesting the department look into the possibility of rerouting some of the straight/flat sections of trail. The idea behind the request is to slow down expert riders and add a degree of difficulty to these sections. The sections in question are segments where the ORV trail is located on old railroad grades, which are flat and straight.

Management strategy

- Work with recreation user groups and riders to select a few locations that would be beneficial to reroute and make more difficult while taking into consideration those trail segments that if moved could benefit fish bearing streams
- Engineer and design relatively short ORV trail reroutes whereby small sections of flat/straight trail are abandoned and new sections constructed that incorporate tighter turns and some elevation gain if possible

Trail Project D

Objective

Expand the opportunities for hikers and those who like to observe nature by creating more hiker only trails.

Discussion

While collecting information from our Citizens Working Group and in talking with recreation users over the years it has become apparent that individuals would like to have more trail dedicated to hiking only. Currently the forest has approximately 10.5 miles of hiker only trail located at seven different sites within the forest.

Hiker-only trails are somewhat easier to construct as compared to motorized, horse or Mountain biking trails because they are narrower in width, can maneuver more easily up steep hills and require minimal hardening. Inmates crews or volunteers using hand tools can often construct these trails. Expensive structures such as steel bridges are not needed in most cases. Hiker-only trails afford DNR the opportunity to educate the public by placing signage about such topics as forest development, wildlife and tree identification, the practices of a “working forest,” and the history of Capitol State

Forest. Hiker-only trails also represent a good opportunity to involve Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and new clubs in the adopt-a-trail program. Trail adoption might be considered a critical piece to have in place prior to bring this project forward.

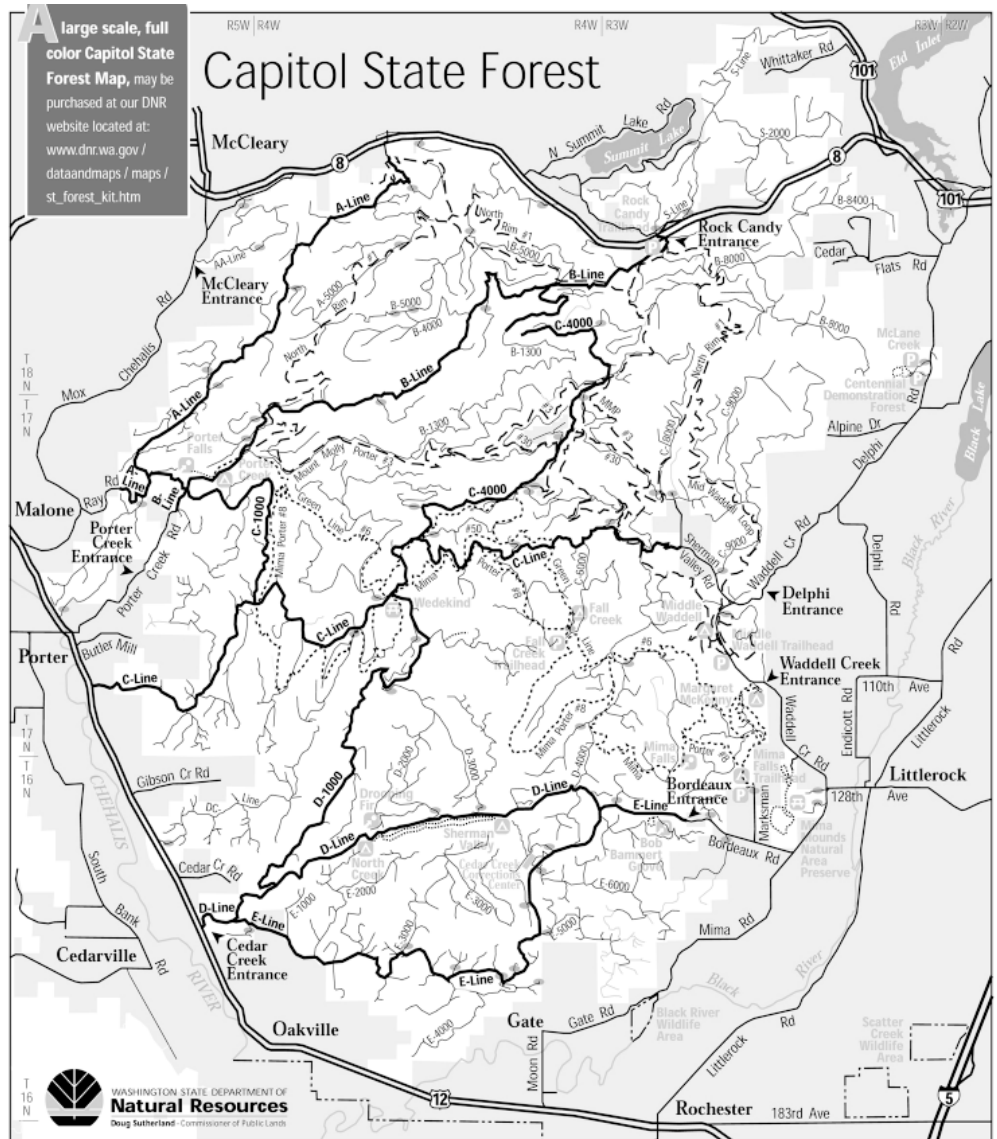
New hiker-only trails would be posted closed during management activities. Volunteers who have adopted trail segments could easily reconstruct or renovate these types of trails.

Possible management strategies

- Create a two to three mile hiking only loop off of the existing long loop trail at the McLane Creek Nature Center
- Create a 10 to 20 mile hiking only loop trail (The Triangle Trail) that connects the unique features of the Bob Bammert Grove to Fuzzy Top's old growth tree grove to the single Drooping Fir tree

Appendix K

Figure 7: Capitol State Forest map/brochure



LEGEND

0 1 2 3 miles

- Major Highway
- County or City Rd
- Primary Forest Rd
- Secondary Forest Rd
- Motorbike/ Mtn Bike/Hiker Trail
- Horse/Mtn Bike/ Hiker Trail
- Hiker Only Trail
- Campground
- Picnic Site
- Parking or Trailhead
- Point of Interest
- Gate

Rules to remember

On the Roads

- || CAUTION: Few roads are paved and all have soft shoulders.
- || Logging trucks, heavy equipment, and other vehicles use these roads. Be ready to yield the right-of-way.
- || DRIVE WITH CAUTION: On forest management roads, keep speed under 25 mph.
- || Speed limit in camp and picnic sites is 5 mph.
- || Please do not litter.
- || Motorcycles, horses, and mountain bikes are allowed behind gated roads shown on this map unless roads are posted or abandoned.

On the Trails

- || Stay on signed, approved trails.
- || Unsigned trails are CLOSED.

|| Respect the rights of others on trails.

- || Do not ride in streams or on road berms.
- || Watch for unmarked hazards on trails.
- || Off-road vehicles (ORV) must have vehicle license or ORV permit tag, and U.S. Forest Service-approved spark arrestor.
- || Trails are closed to ORVs and horses, Nov. 1 to March 31.

In the Campsites

- || Respect sites designed for people with disabilities.

- || Camp only in designated campgrounds and campsites open April 1 - Oct. 31.
- || Do not alter or remove vegetation.
- || Limit fires to campsite fireplaces.
- || Do not burn pallets or treated wood.
- || Maintain quiet from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- || Do not shoot in or near recreation sites, trails, or roads. Check for hikers or other quiet users.
- || ORV use not permitted in campgrounds.
- || Use of fireworks is strictly prohibited.
- || Campsites are available first-come, first-served. No reservations.
- || Limit stay to 7 days per calendar year.



Above: This black and white map is available on DNR's website: www.dnr.wa.gov to download. A large-scale, full-color Capitol State Forest map is available for purchase at DNR's website.



Glossary

Campground - A developed recreation facility where the public is permitted to spend the night.

Camping - Erecting a tent or shelter or arranging bedding, or both, or parking a recreation vehicle or other vehicle for the purpose of remaining overnight.

Commercial Event/Venture - An event/endeavor whereby a group, individual, business or organization is profiting by providing a service (i.e., tour company), that takes place on or over department-managed lands.

Day-Use Facility - A developed recreation facility where the public is permitted to occupy the site during daylight hours only. Such facilities include educational sites such as McLane Creek Nature Center and trailheads where parking is provided to allow access to forest trails.

Designated Recreation - Recreation that the department has authorized on public lands, including both dispersed and developed recreation.

Designated Trail - A trail designated by the department for recreation use.

Developed Recreation - Recreation occurring on any DNR built sites, trails or structures on public land for recreational purposes, including but not limited to trails, trailheads, campgrounds, picnic areas, marine sites and ski huts.

Dispersed Recreation - Recreation that occurs on department-managed public lands that are outside the boundaries of developed recreation facilities and/or on designated trails.

Fuzzy Top Team - A management oversight group of department managers established to guide the planning process.

General Fund - Tax revenue from a variety of sources not designated for other purposes, but is allocated to the department by the legislature.

Hiker-Only Trails - Recreation trails open to hiking only. No mountain bikes, horses or motorized vehicles allowed.

Larch Mountain Team - small group of DNR employees who coordinated the planning process and facilitated the citizen-working group.

Motorized Trail - Recreation trail use, which is open to motorcycles, three and four wheel ATVs. In Capitol Forest these trails are also open to mountain bikes and hikers. These trails are normally at a minimum of 48 inches wide.

Non-Motorized Trail - Recreation trail use, which is open to horse use, mountain bikes and hikers that is often less than 48 inches wide.

Non-Commercial Event - An event hosted by a group, club or organization that does not compensate its organizing/board members or general members (i.e. non-profit groups) or exist for the purpose of generating a profit.

Organized Event - Any event sponsored by an individual, recognized club(s) or organization(s) that involves 25 or more participants and/or is advertised to the general public in advance, and is conducted at a predetermined time and place.

Permit - A document issued by the department allowing a club, organization or individual to hold an organized event on public lands.

Rock Candy Team (Citizen Working Group) - A citizen working group of recreationists, neighbors and local business representatives brought together to provide input and suggestions concerning Capitol State Forest's recreation activities and public access.

SWOT - A planning exercise asking participants to list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of recreation in Capitol State Forest.

Trailhead - A developed recreation facility where parking is provided to allow access to the department-managed trails

Undesignated Trail - A trail that was not built by the department and is not designated by the department, most frequently referred to a user-built trail.