

Rivers to Ridges

Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study

Vision and Strategies



June 2003

Endorsements

Elected and appointed officials

As a confirmation of the cooperative effort that created this regional vision, the following elected and appointed bodies have endorsed the vision by unanimous consent:

- Springfield Planning Commission (November 19, 2002)
- Lane County Board of Commissioners (February 12, 2003)
- Eugene Planning Commission (March 3, 2003)
- Eugene City Council (March 12, 2003)
- Willamalane Park and Recreation District (April 2, 2003)
- Springfield City Council (May 5, 2003)

Other Groups and Organizations Endorsing the Vision:

- American Society of Landscape Architects
- Eugene Advisory Committee on Parks, Open Space, and Recreation
- Eugene to Pacific Crest Trail Board
- Friends of Buford Park and Mount Pisgah
- Friends of Mount Pisgah Arboretum
- Lane County Parks Advisory Committee
- Lane County Audubon
- League of Women Voters
- Long Tom Watershed Council
- McKenzie River Trust
- Willamette Resources Education Network

Acknowledgements

The *Rivers to Ridges Vision* was developed based on extensive input received between December 2001 and May 2003 from citizens, elected officials, and staff from local, state, and federal agencies. Representatives from the cities of Eugene and Springfield, Willamalane Park and Recreation District, Lane County, and Lane Council of Governments formed the local staff team, with policy direction provided by the Metropolitan Policy Committee. A description of the citizen outreach program and full listing of groups and organizations providing input during the process is listed on page 11 of this report.

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June 2003

Table of Contents

1	Regional Context
1	Study Background and Purpose
2	Guiding Principles
2	Variety
3	Scenic Quality
3	Connectivity
4	Recreation and Education
4	Habitat
5	Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands
5	Community Buffers
6	The Vision
9	Rivers to Ridges Process
9	Mapping and Analysis
10	Local, State, and Federal Input
11	Citizen Outreach
12	Historic Landscape Context
14	Defining Open Space
25	Implementation and Funding Strategies
25	Implementation Strategies
31	Economic Impacts Assessment
31	Developable Lands Inventory
31	Property Values
32	Economic Development
32	Tax Revenue
32	Tourism
Maps	
7	Vision Map
Tables	
15	Proposed Future Park and Open Space Areas
29	Parks and Open Space Protection and Acquisition Options

Rivers to Ridges

Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study

Regional Context

The Eugene-Springfield metropolitan region lies at the southern end of the Willamette Valley. Waters from the Willamette and McKenzie River systems flow from headwaters in the Cascade Range through our urban area. The Coast and Middle Forks of the Willamette River converge on the southern edge of the metropolitan region, and the McKenzie River joins the Willamette Main Stem on the northern edge of the region. Here the Willamette Valley, western Cascades, and Coast Range physiographic provinces converge. Forested hills frame much of the urban region. The metropolitan landscape is comprised of these rivers, hills, and the relatively flat Willamette Valley floor. In 2002, the metropolitan region's population was more than 275,000 with over 140,000 living in Eugene and over 50,000 living in Springfield.



Coast Fork Willamette River near Creswell

As the region continues to prosper and grow, open space will undoubtedly be lost, while at the same time recreational demand will increase. The challenge is to decide what open space areas are vital to maintaining the region's quality of life and to devise methods to ensure these areas remain intact for future generations. This is the goal of the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study.

Study Background and Purpose

Parks and open space planning for the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area has occurred primarily at a local level without the benefit of a broader regional perspective. Prior to the initiation of this process, there was not a single comprehensive vision for the metropolitan region as a whole. Lack of such a vision has resulted in lost funding opportunities and difficulties with local coordination. To address this issue, the Eugene and Springfield city councils, the Lane County Board of Commissioners, and the Willamalane Park and Recreation Board met jointly on November 29, 2000, and agreed by unanimous consensus to proceed with, and jointly fund, a Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study.

Study Goals:

- **To create a regional parks and open space vision.**
- **To identify long- and short-term strategies for implementing the vision.**



Wild sunflower (Wyethia angustifolia)

Guiding Principles

for Parks and Open Space Planning for the Eugene-Springfield Region

A number of local plans give direction and set policy on the subject of parks, open space, and recreation for the metropolitan region. These include the *Eugene/Springfield Metro Plan (1987)*, *Eugene Parks and Recreation Plan (1989)*, *West Eugene Wetland Plan (2000)*, *Willamalane Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (1995)*, *Lane County Parks Master Plan (1980)*, *Central Lane Regional Parks Plan (1970)*, and the *Draft Region 2050 Goals and Objectives (June 2001)*. In addition, the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* and statewide planning goals 3,4,5,6, 7, 8, and 15 all pertain to the region's parks and open space.

Although each plan gives unique and often specific direction on the region's park and open space system, several recurring themes can be found throughout most of these plans. These common themes are being used as guiding principles for the development of a regional parks and open space vision and include:

- Variety
- Scenic Quality
- Connectivity
- Recreation and Education
- Habitat
- Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands
- Community Buffers

Variety

Provide a variety of open space types (agriculture, forest, natural areas, and developed parks) to serve the diverse needs of the community.

Bethel Park - north Eugene



Developed parks for active recreation



Agricultural land near Coburg

The working landscape (farm and forest lands)

Meadowlark Prairie - West Eugene



Natural areas

Scenic Quality

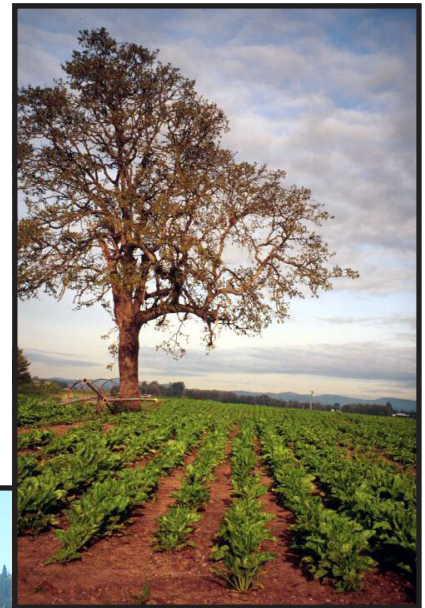
Protect, conserve, and enhance elements of the natural and historic landscape that give the region its uniqueness and sense of place, including forested hillslopes and ridges, river and waterway corridors, agricultural lands, vistas, and unique natural features.



Agricultural land near Cedar Creek, north of Springfield



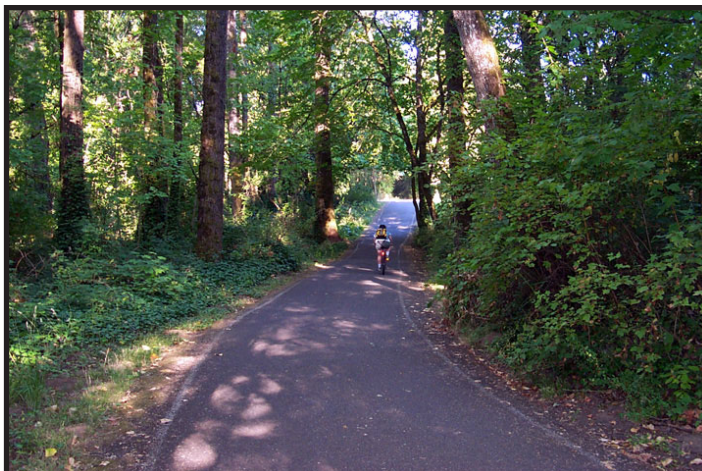
Thurston Hills



Agricultural land north of Eugene

Connectivity

Provide uninterrupted open space and recreational corridors or greenways that link park and recreational facilities, schools, wildlife habitat, and natural resource areas, including connections between urban areas and open space on the urban fringe.



Island Park - Springfield

Ridgeline Trail - Eugene



Recreation and Education

Provide a variety of regional recreational opportunities to meet the diverse needs of residents and visitors in the region and utilize open space lands in and around the metro area for the interpretation of natural resources and historically important cultural resources.



Spencer Butte



West Eugene Wetlands

Habitat

Protect and enhance a variety of habitat types including unique or at-risk plant and wildlife communities. In our region, oak savanna, wetland and upland prairie, and riparian forest are all considered critical habitats.



Oak Savanna - south of Eugene



Fender's blue butterfly

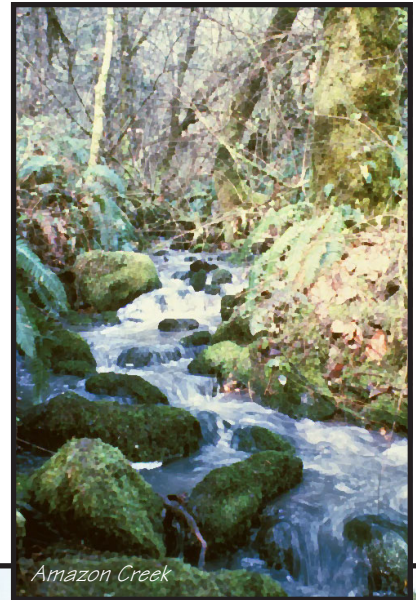


Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands

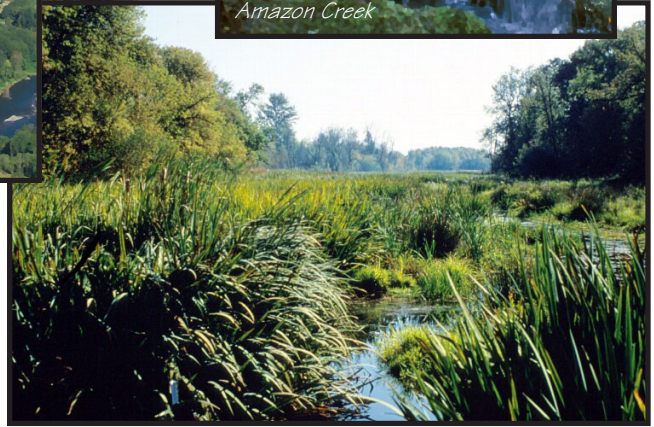
Protect, conserve, and enhance rivers, waterways, and wetlands and associated floodplains for their habitat, flood protection, water quality, recreation, and scenic values.



McKenzie River, Cedar Creek, and Camp Creek Ridge



Amazon Creek



Bertelsen Slough - west Eugene

Community Buffers

Maintain open space between the metro area and nearby small cities in order to preserve community identity and protect farm and forest values and operations.



Agricultural land north of Eugene



Coburg

The Vision

The Rivers to Ridges Vision Map (right) was developed using extensive input received between December 2001 and May 2003 from citizens, appointed and elected officials, staff from local, state, and federal agencies. The vision map is a guide for future park and open space planning and protection and does not change existing plan designation or zoning in any of the areas identified. The legend categories include:

Existing Open Space Anchors

These include existing regionally significant public parks and open space areas that form the foundation of the existing open space system. These include areas such as the Dorris Ranch Park, Buford Recreation Area, Spencer Butte Park, Island Park, Alton Baker Park, Delta Ponds, the west Eugene wetlands, the Willow Creek Natural Area, Elijah Bristow State Park, Armitage Park, and Fern Ridge Reservoir.

Potential Future Open Space Anchors

These are areas that have been identified as potential key additions to the regional parks and open space system based on ecological, scenic, recreational, or cultural values.

Key Future Upland Connections (greenways)

These are primarily ridgeline corridors that could be used to connect major open space anchors and serve as recreational and wildlife corridors.

Key Water-Based Connections (blueways)

These are linear corridors that follow major rivers and creeks. These corridors typically include the riparian zones and floodplains associated with creeks and rivers and are well suited for habitat protection and restoration.

Existing Recreational Trails

These include the existing major multi-use paths and trails within the study area and provide both recreational and transportation uses.

Potential Future Recreational Trails and Pathways (opportunities)

These potential recreational trails and pathways could provide access to and between major open space anchors and would be sited to avoid impacts to sensitive habitat and private property.

Community Buffers

This symbol indicates critical areas needed to provide separation between the metro area and nearby small cities. In most instances these separators or buffers could take the form of agricultural or forest lands, riparian corridors, or other natural areas.

Community Gateways

These are major points of entry into the community and have the potential to provide a scenic gateway and a clear urban-rural transition.

Highly Visible Scenic Resources

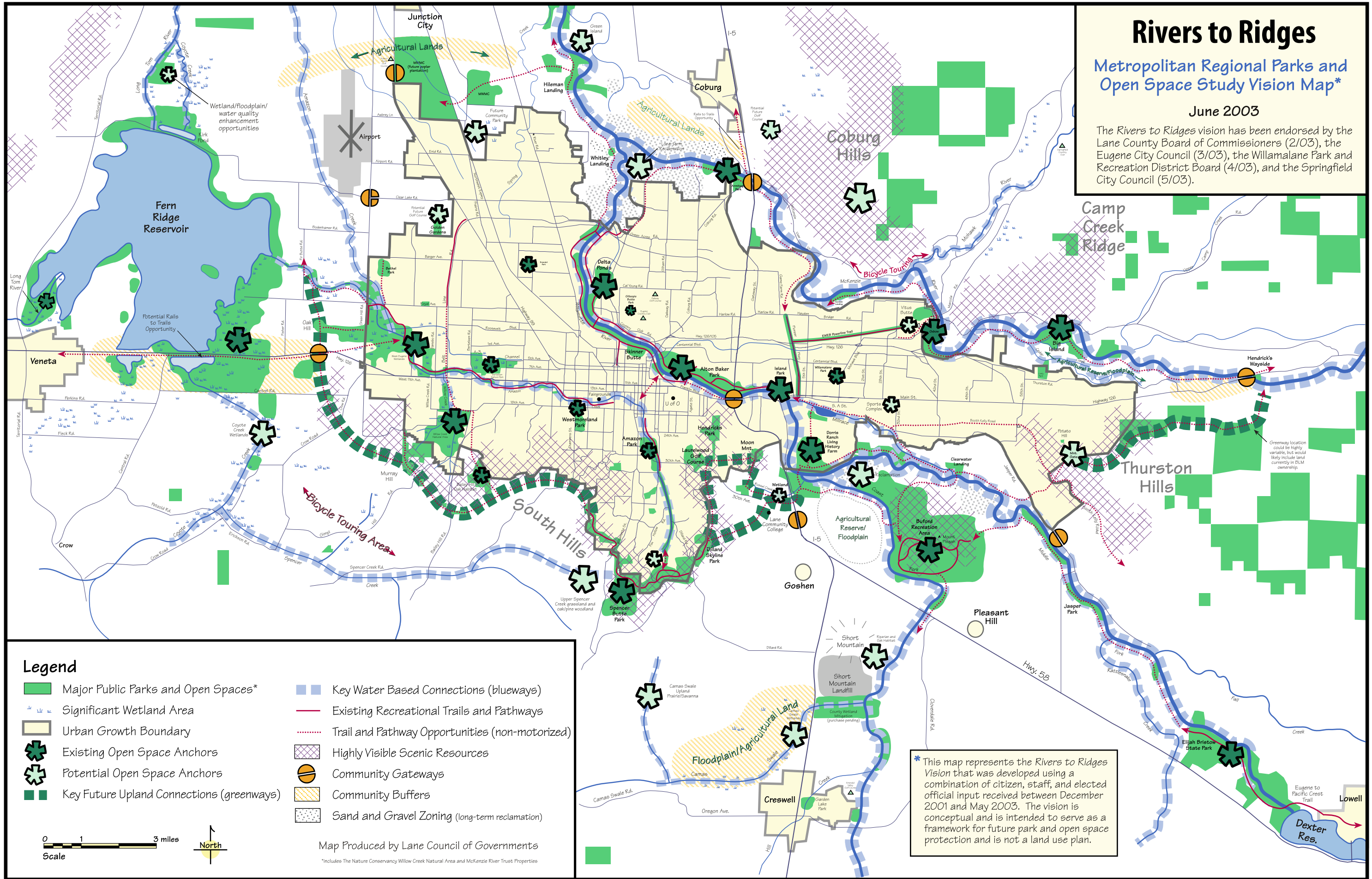
These are generally forested hillslopes and buttes that are highly visible from population centers.

Rivers to Ridges

Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study Vision Map*

June 2003

The Rivers to Ridges vision has been endorsed by the Lane County Board of Commissioners (2/03), the Eugene City Council (3/03), the Willamalane Park and Recreation District Board (4/03), and the Springfield City Council (5/03).



Legend

- Major Public Parks and Open Spaces*
- Significant Wetland Area
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Existing Open Space Anchors
- Potential Open Space Anchors
- Key Future Upland Connections (greenways)
- Key Water Based Connections (blueways)
- Existing Recreational Trails and Pathways
- Trail and Pathway Opportunities (non-motorized)
- Highly Visible Scenic Resources
- Community Gateways
- Community Buffers
- Sand and Gravel Zoning (long-term reclamation)



Map Produced by Lane Council of Governments
 *Includes The Nature Conservancy Willow Creek Natural Area and McKenzie River Trust Properties

* This map represents the Rivers to Ridges Vision that was developed using a combination of citizen, staff, and elected official input received between December 2001 and May 2003. The vision is conceptual and is intended to serve as a framework for future park and open space protection and is not a land use plan.

Rivers to Ridges Process

To develop the *Rivers to Ridges* vision, a process that included a combination of analysis and mapping; coordination with local, state, and federal agencies; and public outreach was used and is described below. The Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC), which includes representatives from the Eugene and Springfield city councils, the Board of County Commissioners, and the Willamalane Board of Directors, provided policy direction for the study. LCOG managed the study, meeting monthly with staff representatives from the two cities, Willamalane, and the County.

Mapping and Analysis

A series of seven maps were produced during this planning process to help analyze key natural features, visual resources, and land use patterns. These maps are included in a separate technical appendix and are described below:

Historic Vegetation Patterns

This map depicts the historic vegetation patterns that were recorded by the General Land Office surveys of the mid-1850s, shortly after Euroamerican settlement of the southern Willamette Valley began. During the 1990s, this survey data was interpreted and re-mapped by the Oregon Division of State Lands and The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

Existing Vegetation Types

Using 1993 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife vegetation data, this map depicts the generalized vegetation patterns for most of the study area. Included on this map are the rare or critical habitat types in our region, which include oak savanna, riparian forest, prairie, and wetlands. Although the riparian forest and oak savanna are well depicted on this map, wetlands and prairie are difficult to map based on aerial photo interpretation, so are in need of refinement in the future. To help refine the wetland vegetation category, an additional layer of inventoried wetlands has been added to this map.

Existing Public Lands

This map depicts all land currently in public ownership and is broken out into categories of federal, state, county, and cities and municipalities. Most, but not all of the lands depicted on this map, are in public ownership for park and open space protection. The map also includes some lands under land trust ownership or with land trust conservation easements (McKenzie River Trust and TNC) and private golf courses.

Viewshed Analysis

The purpose of this map is to identify the most highly visible slopes within the metropolitan region. A total of 21 viewpoints from around the region were selected for this model. Public land and other protected open spaces were included for reference.

Natural Constraints to Development

This map identifies areas with constraints to development including floodplains and floodways, steep slopes (over 25 percent), and wetlands. Public land and other protected open spaces were included for reference.

Vacant Land and Rural Zoning

This map shows all vacant or undeveloped parcels within the study area. The undeveloped lands outside urban growth boundaries are shaded by zoning category to reflect intended uses. Public land and other protected open spaces were included on this map for reference.

Class I and II Agricultural Soils

This map depicts the class I and II agricultural soils within the study area. These *prime* agricultural soils are generally concentrated along the historic McKenzie and Willamette River floodplains. Although the class I and II soils are generally considered best for growing row crops, class III and IV soils are often well suited for other types of agriculture common to the valley such as ryegrass, which can tolerate the heavier clay soils generally found in these areas.

Local, State, and Federal Input

In the first step toward developing consensus on a parks and open space vision, a half-day design charrette (work session) was held on December 7, 2001. This brought approximately 30 representatives from local, state, and federal agencies together with the goal of identifying opportunity areas for potential inclusion in the future open space system.



During this work session, the larger group was broken into four smaller groups. Each group had the same assignment, which was to develop a

conceptual vision map using their institutional knowledge along with the following guidelines:

- Follow the seven guiding principles (policy direction):
- Variety;
- Scenic Quality;
- Connectivity;
- Recreation and Education;
- Habitat;
- Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands; and
- Community Buffers
- Think at a regional scale;
- Be realistic;
- Be aware of, and limit, impacts to developable lands;
- Focus on open space areas that provides clear benefit; and
- Be visionary.

The small groups then presented their concepts to the larger group. Upon comparing each of the concepts, it became very clear that each shared many of the same ideas and identified similar geographic features. In each concept, utilizing the rivers and ridgelines to connect the open space

system was a central theme. Based on the result of the charette, along with additional meetings with local, state, and federal agencies and initial public input, a first draft of the working vision was developed and presented to MPC, and later presented to the public for review.

Citizen Outreach

Under the first phase of this study, two public workshops were held with the purpose of getting input on the guiding principles and later the working vision.

On January 23, 2002, approximately 120 people attended a public forum titled *Rivers to Ridges* at the Eugene Water & Electric Board's Training Center in Eugene. The purpose of this public forum was to introduce the study and the guiding principles and to begin to get general and site-specific input on the region's existing and future open space system. In addition, Julee Conway, Director of the Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department, and Charles Vars, former Corvallis Mayor and open space advocate, made a presentation on their city's park and open space protection effort.

On May 22, 2002, a second public workshop was held at the Willamalane Senior Center in Springfield and was attended by approximately 55 people. The purpose of the workshop was to get feedback specific to the Working Draft Vision Map. The input received from these two events was used to refine the vision.

Under the second phase of the study, a targeted outreach program made presentations to a wide spectrum of interest groups and organizations between October 2002 and March 2003. The purpose of this outreach was to receive additional feedback on the vision and collect letters and resolutions of support that can be used as our region works toward implementing the vision map. The following groups received a *Rivers to Ridges* presentation and provided input on the vision during the outreach process:

- Lane County Parks Advisory Committee
- Lane County Audubon Society
- Home Builders of Lane County
- McKenzie River Trust
- League of Women Voters of Lane County
- McKenzie-Willamette Confluence Project Steering Committee
- Long Tom Watershed Council
- Eugene Advisory Committee on Parks, Open Space, and Recreation
- American Society of Landscape Architects - Lane County Chapter
- Friends of Mount Pisgah Arboretum
- Willamette Resources Education Network
- Eugene to Pacific Crest Trail Board
- Friends of Buford Park and Mount Pisgah
- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Sierra Club
- Convention & Visitors Association of Lane County
- Lane County Land Owners Association
- Land Watch Lane County
- Friends of Willamalane

Historic Landscape Context

Our landscape helps define us as a community and differentiates our region from others across the country. Fortunately, the pre-settlement vegetation communities in our region were well documented by the General Land Office surveys conducted in the Willamette Valley in the 1850s (see Historic Vegetation Map in the Technical Appendices). This, combined with more recent vegetation mapping, allows for the comparison of the historic and present landscape and is critical information for determining which vegetation and habitat types are most in decline or at risk.

The Eugene-Springfield region has always had a diverse mix of habitats due to its location in the southern end of the Willamette Valley where the Coast Range and the Cascades converge with the flat-bottomed valley, with isolated buttes, and maturely dissected hills on its southern and eastern margins. Prior to Euroamerican settlement in the mid-1850s, the native Kalapuyan people burned much of the Willamette Valley annually. The fires helped to maintain the open prairie and savanna habitats. In the late nineteenth century, settlers began putting much of the prairie into agricultural production, altering natural drainage patterns and replacing native vegetation with crops. In addition, lack of fire in the landscape has resulted in both prairie and savanna being replaced by closed forest over time.

Four major vegetative communities dominated the region prior to settlement:

Riparian Forest

Historically, dense riparian forests, up to two miles in width, lined the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers with associations of Douglas fir, Oregon ash, black cottonwood, bigleaf maple, alder, western red cedar, and willow. The riparian forests grew abundantly on the river floodplain, which was interspersed with a network of braided channels and was subject to frequent flooding. Today,

approximately 20 percent of the area once occupied by riparian vegetation in the Willamette valley remains, much of it lost to urbanization and agriculture.



Prairie

A mosaic of wetland and upland prairie historically covered much of the valley floor and was likely kept in this state through seasonal Kalapuyan burning. Nearly all of this habitat type has been replaced by cropland, pasture, and urban land uses since the 1850s. Some relatively small remnant wetland prairie patches still remain in west Eugene and in the vicinity of Coyote Creek. Upland prairie has not been well inventoried, but is thought to be



even less common today than wetland prairie. It is estimated that less than 1 percent of the native prairie once found in the entire Willamette Valley currently exists.

Savanna

Periodic fires maintained the tree communities on the hilltops and edges of the valley in open canopied oak and pine savanna. Cessation of burning changed the structure of these open

woodlands over time by allowing re-population of the openings with tree seedlings. Fast-growing Douglas fir have proliferated in many places and shaded out the oaks while grazing has significantly reduced the native grass and forb layer in these areas. Today, approximately 12 percent of the savanna that once existed in the Willamette Valley remains. In our region, most remaining savanna areas can be found in the foothills in south Eugene, Mount Pisgah, Short Mountain, and in the Coburg hills.

Closed Canopied Coniferous Forest

In the 1850s, diverse, coniferous forests were found at higher elevations and on steeper slopes. Much of this forest still remains today, although most is managed for timber production. In some areas its range has actually expanded as coniferous forests have replaced areas once dominated by oak savanna.



Defining Open Space

The scenic quality of our landscape lends uniqueness and beauty to life in the Eugene-Springfield region. Rivers and creeks lined with green riparian forest wind through the valley bottom, and forested hillslopes and buttes provide a scenic backdrop that rivals any region in the nation. Productive farmland and forests still rings much of our urban area, providing open vistas and clear separation between communities. Our region is widely known for our parks, sports facilities, and bicycle trails.

Open space, by definition, is land that is either in an undeveloped condition or land that has been permanently preserved for natural resource protection or recreation. Whether in public or private ownership, open space can provide a public benefit. Physical access to open space is not essential in many cases, as it can provide numerous public benefits beyond recreation, such as visual quality, habitat, watershed health, and farm and forest production. However, as our region continues to prosper and grow, open space areas will be lost, while at the same time, demand for parks and open spaces will increase.

In order to ensure an open space legacy for the future, it is important that we identify the most critical components of our region's existing open space system and look for ways to ensure long-term protection. Public acquisition is one option available for providing

protection, but many other areas could receive long-term protection, while remaining in private ownership. For example, conservation easements are commonly used to protect a variety of open space functions such as visual quality and habitat. Oregon's land use planning laws will likely continue to be an important mechanism for protecting open space outside of urban growth boundaries, but should not be relied on alone to protect the most critical open space resources.



Identifying and preserving our most valuable open space assets will be critical in the coming years as our region continues to grow and prosper .

Vision Narrative

Over the next 20 years, a great opportunity exists to solidify the parks and open space vision depicted in this study. The following table attempts to provide some detail and definition to the areas identified in the vision including possible time frame, purpose (how each area ties into the guiding principles), potential size, and partnership opportunities. Additional study of these lands and willingness and interest of property owners will undoubtedly determine the exact geographic extent of these areas. The vision map is a guide for future park and open space protection and does not change existing plan designation or zoning in any of the areas identified.

Rivers to Ridges – Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study

Proposed Future Park and Open Space Areas

Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Potential Future Open Space Anchors					
Amazon Headwaters	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scenic Quality ▪ Recreation and Education (trail connection, proximity to schools) ▪ Connectivity (connects Kinney Park to Ridgeline trail and Spencer Butte) ▪ Habitat ▪ Waterway and Wetland 	5-25 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eugene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inside UGB
Camas Swale Floodplain	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scenic Quality ▪ Habitat (wetland prairie restoration potential) ▪ Waterway and Wetlands ▪ Community Buffer 	1,000-2,000 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ American Farmland Trust ▪ Lane Soil Conservation District ▪ Natural Resource Conservation Service ▪ Lane County ▪ ODFW ▪ USFWS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outside UGB ▪ Wetland mitigation potential
Camas Swale Upland Prairie/Savanna	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitat (oak/pine savanna, upland prairie) 	500-1,000 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ McKenzie River Trust ▪ Lane County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outside UGB
Coburg Hills	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scenic Quality (viewshed protection) ▪ Recreation and Education (potential trail system and vista points on public lands) ▪ Habitat (oak savanna and prairie; rare plant and animal species) ▪ Connectivity (consolidate and provide access to existing public lands) 	3,000 to 10,000 acres (including BLM lands)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lane County ▪ City of Springfield ▪ City of Eugene ▪ McKenzie River Trust ▪ Weyerhaeuser Company ▪ Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) ▪ Bureau of Land Management (BLM) ▪ Willamalane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently a high priority Forest Legacy Program area. ▪ Highly visible slopes from most of metropolitan area. ▪ Habitat for federally endangered Fender's blue butterfly. ▪ Outside UGB

*All proposals will rely on voluntary participation by property owners.

Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Coyote Creek Wetlands	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity (with Fern Ridge Reservoir and West Eugene Wetlands) Recreation and Education Habitat (wetland and riparian) Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands Community Buffer 	1,000-1,500 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife The Nature Conservancy Lane County Eugene NRCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential restoration of lower Coyote Creek Valuable bottomland gallery forest Outside UGB
Golden Gardens	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation and Education (proximity to urban area; potential municipal golf course) Habitat (restoration potential) Wetlands 	200 acres (including land currently in City ownership)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene Lane County Private Sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be addressed in Eugene Parks and Recreation Plan update Outside UGB
Green Island	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Habitat Rivers, Waterways, & Wetlands Recreation and Education 	800-1,200 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McKenzie River Trust USFWS NRCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon habitat Floodplain restoration
Lower Coyote Creek/ Long Tom Confluence	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity (Fern Ridge Reservoir) Recreation and Education Habitat (wetland and riparian restoration and enhancement potential) Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	50-100 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Tom Watershed Council NRCS U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Lane County Corps of Engineers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside UGB
Middle Fork/Coast Fork Confluence Area	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Recreation and Education Connectivity (links Burford Recreation area with Dorris Ranch, the Springfield public lands along the Middle Fork Willamette, Springfield Mill Race, and future ridgeline trail connections) Habitat (habitat protection and restoration potential) Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	500-1,500 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lane County McKenzie River Trust Bonneville Power Administration Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Army Corps of Engineers Oregon State Parks Springfield Willamalane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside UGB Valuable habitat restoration/enhancement potential Floodplain protection
Regional Sports Complex (Springfield)	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation (active) 	20 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willamalane Springfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (pending final approvals) Inside UGB

*All proposals will rely on voluntary participation by property owners.

Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Russell Creek Wetland	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Recreation and Education Habitat Connectivity Wetland 	18 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene State of Oregon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent to proposed armory Junction of three proposed trails State ownership
Short Mountain	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Recreation and Education (possible trail and vista points) Connectivity Habitat (savanna and riparian) 	300-500 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lane County McKenzie River Trust Friends of Buford Park Oregon State Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consists of the summit and slopes to the Coast Fork Willamette River. Outside UGB
Thurston Hills	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (viewshed protection) Recreation and Education (potential trail system and vista points on public lands) Habitat Connectivity (consolidate and provide access to existing public lands) 	1000 to 3,000 acres (including BLM lands)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lane County City of Springfield BLM McKenzie River Trust Willamalane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly visible slopes from Springfield. Includes portion of Potato Hill Includes BLM Lands Primarily outside UGB
Upper Spencer Creek Prairie and Oak/Pine Savanna	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Habitat (oak savanna and upland prairie) Recreation and Education (potential connections to ridgeline trail system) 	500-1,500 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. Forest Service (Forest Legacy Program) City of Eugene Lane County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could connect to ridgeline trail system Outside UGB Rare ecosystem (oak savanna/upland prairie)
Vitus Butte	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (viewshed) Recreation and Education (potential trail system and vista points on public lands) Habitat (oak savanna and prairie; rare plant and animal species) Connectivity (to EWEB path) 	10-20 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willamalane Springfield EWEB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside UGB
Willamette/McKenzie River Confluence Area	Long-range (currently in active use for aggregate extraction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Recreation and Education (future trails, river access) Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	1000-2,500 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lane County City of Eugene U.S. Fish and Wildlife McKenzie River Trust BPA, NRCS Sand and Gravel operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes area to old McKenzie/Willamette Confluence Primarily Outside UGB Within the Willamette River Greenway

*All proposals will rely on voluntary participation by property owners.

Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Greenways					
Eugene Ridgeline (Dillard/Skyline Park to Hendricks Park)	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Scenic Quality (highly visible from much of south Eugene) Recreation and Education (extension of ridgeline trail system) 	2.1 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene McKenzie River Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily Outside UGB
Eugene Ridgeline (Hendricks Park to Lane Community College via Moon Mountain)	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Scenic Quality (highly visible from LCC basin) Recreation and Education (extension of ridgeline trail system) Habitat (wildlife corridor) 	1.9 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene McKenzie River Trust Lane County Lane Community College Oregon National Guard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily outside UGB
Eugene Ridgeline (Dillard/Skyline Park to Lane Community College)	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Scenic Quality (highly visible from LCC basin) Recreation and Education (extension of ridgeline trail system) Habitat (wildlife corridor) 	2.2 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene Lane County Lane Community College McKenzie River Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside UGB
Eugene South Hills Ridgeline (Blanton Road to Murray Hill)	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Scenic Quality (highly visible from much of Eugene) Recreation and Education (extension of ridgeline trail system) Habitat (wildlife corridor) 	4.6 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene Lane County McKenzie River Trust U.S. Forest Service (Forest Legacy Program) EWEB The Nature Conservancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of portions currently underway Primarily outside UGB
South Hills Ridgeline (Murray Hill to Amazon Diversion Channel)	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity (west Eugene wetlands to ridgeline) Scenic Quality (highly visible from much of Eugene) Recreation and Education (extension of ridgeline trail system) Habitat (wildlife corridor) 	5.1 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene Lane County McKenzie River Trust U.S. Forest Service (Forest Legacy Program) The Nature Conservancy EWEB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside UGB TNC interest in Upper Willow Creek area

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Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Blueways					
Amazon Creek Martin Street Diversion Channel	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Waterways and Wetlands 	9.2 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent wetland restoration potential Inside UGB
Amazon Diversion Channel "A" Channel to Fern Ridge Reservoir	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Connectivity Recreation and Education (potential Fern Ridge Bicycle Path route) Habitat Waterways and Wetlands 	3.5 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM ODFW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent wetland restoration potential Outside UGB
Camas Swale	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Waterways and Wetlands Community Buffer (Metro area and Creswell) 	4.5 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene City of Creswell Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM ODFW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent wetland restoration potential Adjacent agricultural lands Outside UGB
Coast Fork Willamette River	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	12.6 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers Lane County BLM ODFW Coast Fork Watershed Council Friends of Buford Park McKenzie River Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corps of Engineers General Investigation Study underway Salmon bearing Outside UGB
Lower Amazon Creek ("A" Channel)	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Waterways and Wetlands 	5.0 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM ODFW Long Tom Watershed Council NRCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent wetland restoration potential

*All proposals will rely on voluntary participation by property owners.

Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Lower Coyote Creek (below reservoir)	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Waterways and Wetlands 	3.8 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM Long Tom Watershed Council ODFW Land Trusts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for reconnection to historic channel Valuable bottomland gallery forest Floodplain protection Outside UGB
Lower Long Tom River (below reservoir)	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	2.1 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM Long Tom Watershed Council ODFW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon bearing Potential for reconnection to historic channel Adjacent wetland restoration potential Outside UGB
Lower Mohawk River	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat Recreation and Education (canoe route) Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	3.7 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McKenzie Watershed Council Mohawk Watershed Council McKenzie River Trust Corps of Engineers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon bearing Outside UGB
McKenzie River	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (highly visible river) Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands Community Buffer (Coburg and metro area) 	19.8 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McKenzie Watershed Council McKenzie River Trust Corps of Engineers Springfield Lane County Willamalane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon bearing Municipal water supply Outside UGB

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Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Middle Fork Willamette River	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (highly visible river) Connectivity Recreation and Education (potential route for Eugene to Pacific Crest trail) Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	13.2 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Springfield Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM McKenzie River Trust Eugene to Pacific Trail Group Oregon State Parks Willamalane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part of on-going Corps of Engineers General Investigation Study Salmon bearing Outside UGB
Rattlesnake Creek	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat 	5.3 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ODFW Corps of Engineers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon habitat restoration potential Outside UGB
Spencer Creek	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity (connects oak savanna areas to Coyote Creek/Fern Ridge wetlands) Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	8.5 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene Corps of Engineers Lane County USFWS BLM ODFW McKenzie River Trust U.S. Forest Service (Forest Legacy Program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upper Spencer Creek passes through high quality oak savanna habitat Outside UGB
Springfield Mill Race	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Connectivity Recreation and Education Habitat Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	3.9 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Springfield Willamalane Corps of Engineers Lane County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside and Outside UGB Corps of Engineer's/City restoration project planned Stormwater treatment Mouth of Millrace is being relocated to Clearwater Park
Upper Coyote Creek	Long-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity (to Fern Ridge Reservoir) Recreation and Education (canoe route) Habitat Rivers, Wetlands, and Waterways Community Buffer 	5.4 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corps of Engineers Lane County U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service BLM ODFW McKenzie River Trust The Nature Conservancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent wetlands and floodplain Outside UGB

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Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Willamette River Main Stem	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connectivity (Alton Baker Park, Skinner Butte Park, Island Park) ▪ Recreation and Education ▪ Habitat ▪ Rivers, Wetlands, and Waterways 	15.0 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Springfield ▪ Willamalane ▪ Eugene ▪ Lane County ▪ Corps of Engineers ▪ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ▪ McKenzie River Trust ▪ U.S. Forest Service (Forest Legacy Program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salmon bearing ▪ Willamette Greenway ▪ Inside and Outside UGB
Willow Creek (11th to 18th Ave.)	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connectivity (Willow Creek Natural Area and Amazon Creek and wetlands) ▪ Recreation and Education (proximity to school, potential trail access) ▪ Habitat ▪ Wetlands and Waterways 	0.8 mile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Nature Conservancy ▪ BLM ▪ City of Eugene ▪ BPA ▪ USFWS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adjacent wetlands ▪ Watershed protection ▪ Protection of hydrology for threatened and endangered species ▪ Connection to ridgeline trail system ▪ Inside UGB

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Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Agricultural Lands					
Between Junction City and Eugene UGBs	Short-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (agricultural lands) Community Buffer (between Eugene and Junction City) High quality agricultural soils 	800-1,500 acres (including existing MWMC lands)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Farmland Trust NRCS East Lane County Soil Conservation District Eugene Junction City Lane County McKenzie River Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would include the planned MWMC poplar plantation Protection tools would maintain protection of farming practices. Outside UGB
Cedar Creek Area	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (agricultural lands) Recreation and Education (retaining the working landscape) Rivers, Waterways, and Wetlands 	200-400 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Springfield NRCS American Farmland Trust McKenzie River Trust East Lane County Soil Conservation District Springfield Willamalane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection tools would maintain protection of farming practices. Outside UGB
Seavey Loop Area	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (agricultural lands) Recreation and Education (cultural resource; u-pick farms) 	800-1,200 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Farmland Trust NRCS Lane County Soil Conservation District Lane County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection would likely be in the form of conservation easements to maintain agricultural practices. Outside UGB
South of Coburg	Mid-range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (agricultural lands) Community Buffer (Coburg-Eugene, in conjunction with the McKenzie River) 	300-500 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Coburg American Farmland Trust NRCS East Lane County Soil Conservation District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection tools would maintain protection of farming practices. Outside UGB

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Site Name	Time Frame	Purpose (guiding principle)	Potential Size or Length	Potential Partners*	Comments
Community Gateways					
Airport (Green Hill Road and Airport Road)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene 	Green Hill Road and Airport Road are entries to the metro area for those arriving by air.
Eugene North (Highway 99)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality Community Buffer 	In conjunction with protection of agricultural lands in this area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Farmland Trust NRCS Lane County Soil Conservation District Eugene Junction City Lane County McKenzie River Trust MWMC 	This gateway would help retain the open space connection between Junction City and Eugene and likely take the form of working farms and agricultural land.
Eugene West (Highway 126)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality (entry beautification) Wetlands 	In conjunction with ridgeline trial, oak savanna, and wetland acquisition programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Eugene BLM U.S. Fish and Wildlife 	This gateway would likely take the form of a forested ridgeline (between oak hill and Murray Hill) and the wetland prairie landscape
Eugene-Springfield North (I-5)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality 	McKenzie River corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Farmland Trust NRCS East Lane County Soil Conservation District Eugene Junction City Lane County McKenzie River Trust 	This gateway would announce the entry into the metro area from the north and would be defined by the McKenzie River's riparian forest and adjacent agricultural lands.
Eugene-Springfield South (I-5)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eugene 	This gateway would announce the entry into the metro area from the south.
Springfield East (Highway 126)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality 	McKenzie River corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Springfield Lane County McKenzie River Trust Oregon State Parks 	This gateway would announce the entry into Springfield from the east and would be defined by the McKenzie River crossing and riparian forest.
Springfield South (Jasper Road)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Quality 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Springfield Lane County 	Jasper Road is the entry to Springfield from the south and will likely become more heavily traveled in the future.

*All proposals will rely on voluntary participation by property owners.

Implementation and Funding Strategies

A full range of implementation and funding strategies available to implement the regional parks and open space vision have been identified in this study. A complete list and description of these strategies is included in the Technical Appendices, and includes local funding mechanisms, state funding programs, federal funding and protection programs, additional open space protection mechanisms, and implementation structuring options. This list is fairly extensive and will serve as a toolbox for identifying strategies to help implement the vision. No single strategy or funding source will be sufficient to implement the entire vision, so combinations of these strategies will need to be employed. The table on pages 27-28 links various elements depicted on the Vision Map with potential available funding sources. The list below includes key recommended strategies for implementation.

Implementation Strategies:

- 1. Rely on voluntary participation of property owners when acquiring land or purchasing conservation easements.**

A key objective of this study is to devise strategies that will not infringe upon the rights of property owners and will stress voluntary participation. Most park and open space protection programs rely on responsible negotiations with willing sellers based on appraisals of fair market value to benefit the public's and owners' interests.

- 2. Use local funding sources as matching funds to leverage state, federal, and private funding.**

To better utilize our region's limited resources, available local funding should be used to match for a variety of available state, federal, and local grant programs whenever possible. This is an excellent way to stretch available local funds, with most grant programs requiring between 10 and 50 percent local match. Local funding can come from a variety of sources as detailed on pages 29-30 of this report and in the Implementation Options section of the Rivers to Ridges Technical Appendices.

- 3. Partner with state and federal agencies and land trusts to help implement the vision.**

It is clear that the local governments cannot realistically implement the entire vision without assistance. With numerous state and federal agencies and two land trusts already active land managers in our region, great opportunities exist to form partnerships that will more effectively work toward protecting open space in a coordinated fashion. Potential partners have been identified and are listed in the table on pages 15-24 of this report.

- 4. Expand opportunities to use private foundation funds to acquire park and open space lands and to make improvements for public enjoyment, compatible with the purposes for those lands.**

Several foundations fund land acquisition and improvements, particularly for habitat, education, and interpretation.

5. Use the purchase of conservation easements as a tool for preserving farm and forestlands in areas where the Oregon land use planning laws may not provide adequate protection over time.

Often, it is possible to keep land in an undeveloped state for scenic, habitat, or resource protection purposes while maintaining private ownership of the land. For example, the purchase of conservation easements will typically allow these lands to remain in private ownership while preserving the public benefits that they provide over the long term through the easements. Conservation easements on farm and forest lands often allow for continued controlled production while removing the threat of development to these critical lands. Conservation easements can be customized to allow or disallow certain activities and property owners can restrict public access to the land if desired. As is the case with land acquisition, purchase of conservation easements should rely on voluntary landowner participation.

6. Bring lands, where a full range of public use is planned, into public ownership.

Where public access is desired to accommodate trails, recreation, and educational activities, the land should be brought into public ownership, or at a minimum, public access rights should be secured through an easement.

7. Continue the coordination between Willamalane Park and Recreation District, Lane County, the City of Springfield, and the City of Eugene to implement the regional parks and open space vision.

Because the regional parks and open space vision spans numerous jurisdictional boundaries, coordination among local partners is essential for implementing the vision. This approach takes advantage of partner strengths and abilities to contribute services to meet common objectives. In addition, state and federal funding programs consider collaborative partnerships attractive when making resource allocation decisions. Expanding this partnership and coordination over time to include other local, state, and federal entities; and land trusts will greatly improve the region's ability to implement the vision.

8. Work with private property owners to create conservation management plans for improving water quality, soil retention, habitat, and scenic quality, while allowing for normal farming and forestry practices to continue.

Providing funding and technical assistance to private property owners is a low-cost alternative for achieving many open space objectives. A number of voluntary programs administered through the Natural Resource Conservation Service are currently available including the Wetland Reserve Program, the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Forestry Incentives Program. All provide technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners on a voluntary basis and often provide tax incentives. These programs are well suited to help achieve open space objectives such as habitat enhancement and preservation along waterways (blueways), and in other critical habitat areas.

9. Continue to identify and support state and federal funding programs that would help achieve the vision.

A number of state and federal programs are currently available that could provide a great deal of funding for local park and open space acquisition and protection if pursued. Our region has had success in recent years in receiving funding through programs such as the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, but could better take advantage of other programs through improved local coordination. In addition, by having a local partnership working toward a common goal, the odds of our region receiving funding through many of these programs will be greatly increased.

10. Set priorities and phasing for implementation of the vision. Look for opportunities as they arise to secure those lands most at risk.

Local and outside sources of funds are limited and strong competition exists for those limited funds. While priorities help direct wise expenditure of funds, the program should have enough flexibility to react to unique opportunities when they arise.

11. As local park, recreation, and open space master plans are updated in years to come, look for opportunities to incorporate and implement the regional vision. This also applies to local land use plans, state and federal land plans, and site design for key parcels.

The Willamalane Park and Recreation District and the City of Eugene are currently in the process of updating their parks, recreation, and open space comprehensive plans, and Lane County will likely be updating its 1980 Parks Master Plan within the next several years. It is important that plan updates incorporate and refine the elements proposed in the regional parks and open space vision wherever possible. The plan updates will also be a valuable process for refining and prioritizing many of the proposed elements of the regional vision.

12. Work with the region's sand and gravel operators and stakeholders to develop phased reclamation plans that will allow reclamation to begin while extraction is underway elsewhere on the site, and that the final reclaimed site complements the region's park and open space system where possible.

With appropriate reclamation, former aggregate mining sites can become a valuable asset to a community. In Oregon, the eligibility of a parcel to be mined rests with the land use authority (e.g. Lane County), which establishes the secondary beneficial use to which the land must be reclaimed. The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) is responsible for monitoring mining activities and eventual reclamation. Because most of our region's aggregate resources are located along major stretches of river, many of these areas can be reclaimed and the habitat enhanced to provide tremendous public benefit for flood control, water quality, habitat, and scenic quality after mining has been phased out. Local governments should coordinate with the sand and gravel operators and stakeholders during the development of their reclamation plans to insure they are complementary to the region's park and open space system when completed.

Through a local consensus-oriented approach, the McKenzie-Willamette Confluence Project Steering Committee has been working in recent years toward identifying a long-term vision for the confluence area of the McKenzie and Willamette River and their environs. This approach, which involved landowners, government officials, and the McKenzie Watershed Council, is a good model for how future, multi-objective aggregate and restoration planning could occur. Local governments should coordinate future planning and actions in this area with this committee.

13. Develop and expand existing mechanisms to encourage volunteerism in parks and open space operations and promote private and business donations for both acquisition and operation of the park and open space system.

Private donations of land and funds can be used with local dollars to match state and federal funds. When conducted as part of an ongoing program, these resources can be projected as a predictable, reliable source of revenue. Likewise, volunteer time not only assists in operations and maintenance, but also can be calculated as in-kind match for state, federal, and foundation funds.

14. Continue to study the economic and social benefits of parks and open space to maintain and improve this region's livability.

The value of parks and open space in improving nearby property values, job recruitment and retention, tourism, and as an educational resource should be documented and quantified as we grow into the twenty-first century.

15. Ensure that sufficient operations and maintenance funds are identified for each property that is brought into the public parks open space system.

Much of the land identified as future open space would likely remain in private ownership under conservation easements or other agreements. In many of these cases, the majority of the operations and maintenance practices would be conducted by the owners. This is particularly likely for farm and forest lands that would be kept in active production. When new land is brought into public ownership, an operations and maintenance funding strategy should be developed to ensure that these lands can be properly cared for over the long term. Many of the state and federal land management agencies identified as potential partners could be available to assist with, or help fund, ongoing operations and maintenance. Another option could be modeled after land trusts such as TNC, which often sets up endowments to pay for long-term maintenance at the time of purchase.

Parks and Open Space Protection and Acquisition Options

The purpose of this table is to connect various elements depicted on the Vision Map with potential available funding sources. Detailed descriptions of each of the implementation/funding options listed below can be found in the Technical Appendices.

Implementation/Funding Option	Greenways	Blueways (Riparian)	Agricultural Lands	Wetlands	Forest Lands	Community Parks	Habitat	Other
Local								
Property Tax Serial Levy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Facilities, O&M
General Obligation Bonds	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Facilities, O&M
Use Taxes	x	x		x	x	x	x	Facilities, O&M
System Development Charges								Facilities
Stormwater User Fee		x		x			x	Restoration and enhancement
State								
Oregon Park and Recreation Department (ORPD) Grants Programs		x			x			Camping facilities
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Land and Water Acquisition Grants		x		x			x	Restoration and Enhancement
Federal								
Land and Water Conservation Fund	x	x		x	x	x	x	Easements only
Wetland Reserve Program				x				
North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA)				x				
Flood Hazard Mitigation and Riverine Ecosystem Restoration Program (Corps)		x					x	
Emergency Watershed Protection (NRCS)		x						
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (NRCS)								Habitat Enhancement
Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (USFW)	x	x		x	x		x	
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program								
Farmland Protection Program (USDA)			x					Conservation Easements
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (NRCS)							x	Habitat Enhancement
Forest Legacy Program (USFS)	x	x			x		x	

Implementation/Funding Option	Greenways	Blueways (Riparian)	Agricultural Lands	Wetlands	Forest Lands	Community Parks	Habitat	Other
Forest Incentives Program (NRCS)								Forest management
Stewardship Incentives Program (USFS)					x			Forest health assistance
Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)		x		x			x	
Timber Receipts (Title III)	x	x			x		x	Easements for recreation and conservation
BPA Northwest Power Planning Act		x		x			x	
TEA-21	x	x						
Federal Public Lands Highways Discretionary Fund	x	x						
Community Development Block Grant Program (HUD)	x	x				x		
Other								
Land Exchanges	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Density Transfer/Cluster Development	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Tax Incentives	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Donations and Gifts	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Endowment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Life Estates	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Park Foundations	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Private Foundation Grants	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Land Trusts/Conservancies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Conservation/Mitigation Bank								Restoration and Enhancement

Economic Impacts Assessment

Although a detailed *impacts analysis* was not funded under this project, a number of general assumptions can be made as to how the proposed parks and open space vision might impact the local economy in areas such as property values, developable lands inventories, tax revenues, and tourism.

Developable Lands Inventory

When elected and appointed officials initiated this study, they asked specifically that the parks and open space vision result in minimal impacts to the region's developable lands inventory. This direction has been reflected in the Vision Map, with most proposed future parks and open space areas identified being located outside current urban growth boundaries or on lands with generally low suitability for development. Because much of our region's most valuable open space lands are within floodplains, on steep slopes or ridges, or are wetlands, the protection of these resources tends not to have major impacts on developable lands inventories as these areas are generally poorly suited for development.

Review of existing land use, transportation, and other related local plans was central to the development of the parks and open space vision, as a way to avoid potential conflicts with the intent of adopted plans. This has also included close coordination with the *Region 2050* planning process now underway. Under *Region 2050*, several growth scenarios are being developed for our region, with the intent of accommodating the next fifty years of projected growth. In comparing the draft growth scenarios with the *Rivers to Ridges* vision map, few major conflicts currently exist. As the *Region 2050* process continues, the *Rivers to Ridges* vision will be utilized to help direct the development of additional growth scenarios.

Property Values

The fact that proximity to dedicated parks and open space areas increases residential, and in some cases commercial, property values is well documented. In a National Association of Realtors survey (2001), 50 percent of those polled said that if they were in the market to buy a new home, they would be willing to pay up to 10 percent more for a house located in proximity to a designated park or open space area. A recent study in Portland showed that a home located within 1,500 feet of a park or open space area sells for an average of \$2,105 more than a



comparable home located elsewhere (*The Impact of Open Space on Property Values in Portland, Oregon, 2000*). Another recent study looked at the creation of an 8,300-acre oak woodland preserve in the rapidly urbanizing Santa Rosa Plateau area in southern California. It was found that both land and home values consistently decreased as distance from the open space boundary increased. The study estimated that the creation of the oak woodland reserve resulted in an increase of over \$20 million in the area's total land and home value and will ultimately result in increased property tax revenues for the area (*Value of Oak Woodlands and Open Space on Private Property Values in Southern California, 2002*).

In general, those park and open space areas with public access and trails are most likely to increase the value of adjacent properties. In our region, this would likely include properties adjacent to natural areas containing trails and bike paths, parks that accommodate active recreation, and golf courses. Of lesser, but still positive impact to adjacent property values, are open spaces with limited access such as agricultural lands and natural areas with conservation easements, which do not typically permit public access.

Economic Development

Many businesses today are free to shop for an appealing location and they clearly prefer communities with a high quality of life, including an abundance of open space and nearby recreation. Quality of life is also critical for a business' ability to attract and retain good employees.

Across the nation, parks and protected open space are increasingly recognized as vital to the quality of life that fuels economic health. In a 1995 poll, researchers from the Regional Plan Association and the Quinnipac College Polling Institute in Connecticut queried nearly 2,000 people from around the country about quality of life. The major elements cited as crucial for a satisfactory quality of life were low crime with safe streets and access to greenery and open space.

Tax Revenue

Based on the proposed parks and open space vision, loss of tax revenue as a result of open space protection is likely to be fairly minimal. Because most of the areas identified as potential future open space are currently in either agricultural, forest, or conservation tax deferral status, tax revenue collected on these parcels tends to be relatively low, on average, approximately \$1 per acre per year. If these lands were to be taken off the tax roll, the minimal loss in tax revenue would likely be offset by increased values of taxable land and homes immediately adjacent to the parks and open space areas.

An early example of parkland increasing the value of adjacent property is New York's Central Park. In the 1850s, landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmstead justified the purchase of land for the park by noting that the rising value of adjacent property would produce enough in taxes to pay for the park. By 1873, the park, which until then had cost approximately \$14 million for land purchase and improvements, was responsible for an extra \$5.24 million in taxes each year.



Tourism

It is likely that an expanded regional park and open space system with its associated recreational opportunities would lead to an increase in tourism in our area. Any increase in tourism would make a positive contribution to the local tax base via room and meal taxes, in addition to benefiting businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and sporting good stores through direct spending.

An example of a community that benefits from its nearby open space system is Moab, Utah. Each year approximately 100,000 tourists come to Moab to ride the Slickrock mountain bike trail, generating an estimated \$1.3 million in annual tax receipts for Moab as a part of the \$86 million spent annually by tourists visiting the area.