

Benton County Natural Areas & Parks Department TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN

March 2003



“Corvallis and Philomath are blessed with a most interesting and varied physical setting. Every dictate of reason and desire tells us to retain permanently some of the green fields and wooded hills where we can see them daily and reach them easily. Walking the footpaths and wooded trails of the greenbelt would become our most popular recreation, and a passionate interest for many. The healing hand of Nature would lift the spirits of those burdened by the loneliness and disappointments of life. Everyone would enjoy a greenbelt and none more than our myriad successors destined to trod its trails far into the future.”

— Charles and Elsie Ross, November 18, 2001



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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BENTON COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

MAKING BENTON COUNTY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE – Benton County government brings to its citizenry the authority, structure, and services to respond to public concerns and opportunities and provides a means for local decision-making.

BENTON COUNTY NATURAL AREAS & PARKS DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

MAKING BENTON COUNTY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE – inviting friends and families for recreation and renewal. The Benton County Parks Department serves the interests and pursuits of Benton County residents by providing access to natural, historic and recreational areas and conserving, restoring, and developing parkland investments.

To learn more about the BENTON COUNTY NATURAL AREAS
& PARKS DEPARTMENT

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

As human population increases and development nibbles away at open spaces and wild areas throughout Benton County, trails become important links to the natural world and play a vital role in community health and livability. During recent years, the citizens of Benton County have made it clear that trails are an important component of the County's recreational offerings, and that the existing trail system within the County should be maintained and expanded in the future. Citizens have provided this feedback to County Parks staff via numerous questionnaires, public hearings, and meetings.

A 1998 survey of Benton County residents by the Willamette Livability Forum showed that residents ranked an expanded park and trail system second in importance only to education.

The *1995 Benton County Parks System Comprehensive Plan* recommended expansion of existing and future recreational opportunities within the County, and for several years Benton County Parks has been working to develop trails in collaboration with volunteers, landowners, nonprofit groups, and partnering agencies. The development of this *Trail System Plan*, as an addendum to the *Parks System Comprehensive Plan*, will provide additional structure as a management tool to guide trail prioritization, development, and maintenance. This plan is a living document, subject to review and reconsideration, and is intended to assist in the decision-making process as the County continues to enhance its trail system for its citizens.

In April 2002, Benton County Parks staff completed a Trail Planning Process using a Focus Group to help establish the guidelines and priorities listed in this Plan. The Focus Group was composed of partnering public agencies and community members with an acute interest in trails who are knowledgeable about, and active on, the County's parks and public lands. These individuals provided the input to establish the priorities; based on guidelines that trails should connect urban and residential areas to public open space lands and trails should also provide connections between public lands. Direction from this group was valuable in order to identify and develop opportunities for trail connections. In addition, the Focus Group made two additional recommendations: 1) inclusion of the Willamette River as a water-based trail connector; and 2) utilization of abandoned railway corridors for connecting public resources.

This *Trail System Plan* also outlines the economic, social, and health benefits of trails, with the intent of providing data that supports the community values associated with trails. Because partnerships are an integral component of the *Trail System Plan*, collaboration with other governmental agencies, private landowners, non-profit organizations, and community volunteers is necessary to implement any of the objectives outlined within this Plan. Funding for trail easement acquisitions, development, and maintenance is also critical to the success of any planning effort. Opportunities for funding are summarized in this document.

CHAPTER 2: Benton County Trail System Plan Guidelines

1. Provide a coordinated system of trails that link communities with publicly owned open space and natural areas, and provide linkages between these public parcels.
2. Locate and design trails to provide a diversity of challenges; loop and destination opportunities have highest priority.
3. Include water routes, such as the Willamette River, and abandoned railroad rights-of-way into the trail system.
4. Work with willing landowners in efforts to develop trails, especially as a means to manage public access and control trespass on private property.
5. Promote consideration and respect among users toward private lands where trails are to be developed. This will lead to additional trails through donations of trail corridors, easements, and offers of trail permits.
6. Promote advocacy for the trails through use of volunteers and internships.
7. Coordinate trail planning, funding, construction and maintenance between all levels of government, e.g. City of Corvallis, Oregon State University, Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, interested non-profit organizations such as the Greenbelt Land Trust and the Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club, and the general public.
8. Identify funding opportunities to acquire trail easements, and to construct and maintain trails.
9. Accomplish trail easements and trail development, if feasible, prior to or at the same time of residential development. Experience has shown that it is more difficult to construct a trail system in a community that is already developed.
10. Utilize public rights-of-way when necessary; however, whenever feasible, trails should be located off street.
11. Develop educational and interpretive trails within specific parks and natural areas, where feasible.
12. Develop ADA accessible trails, where feasible.

CHAPTER 3: Benton County Trail Plan Priorities

At the April 15, 2002 meeting, Trails Focus Group Chair Phil Hays led members through a voting process, in order to develop a priority list of the trails under discussion. Members used the 12-point Trail Guidelines that had been developed earlier along with trail opportunity timing information as the basis for their voting criteria. The ranking is listed below.

Trails and Connections Voting Results

[Established by Trails Focus Group, April 2002]

1. Bald Hill Park (Corvallis) to Fitton Green Natural Area
2. Willamette Canoe Trail
3. Philomath to Fitton Green Natural Area
4. Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail - Harris Road to Tum Tum Road through Thompson Timber (via County Easement) to Marys Peak
5. Fitton Green to Cardwell Hill Trail to Bezell Memorial Forest
6. Jackson Frazier Wetland to Chip Ross Park (Corvallis)
7. Chip Ross Park to MacDonald Forest on South Facing Ridge
8. Adair Village to E.E. Wilson Wildlife Refuge/Adair Village to Adair Park
9. Philomath to Evergreen Ridge
10. Walnut Park (Corvallis) to McDonald Forest


Additional Potential Trail Connections To Be Tracked

- Corvallis to Albany on east side of Willamette River
- Bezell Memorial Forest to Fort Hoskins along Alexander Road
- Community of Alsea connection to Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail
- Monroe connection to Willamette River via Long Tom River
- Corvallis to Finley Wildlife Refuge
- McCulloch Peak (MacDonald Forest) to Fitton Green Natural Area
- Marys River Trail - Corvallis to Philomath
- Marys Peak Group of Sierra Club committed to working on Corvallis-to-Sea Trail within U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Lands (Marys Peak to Coast)



TRAILS PLAN

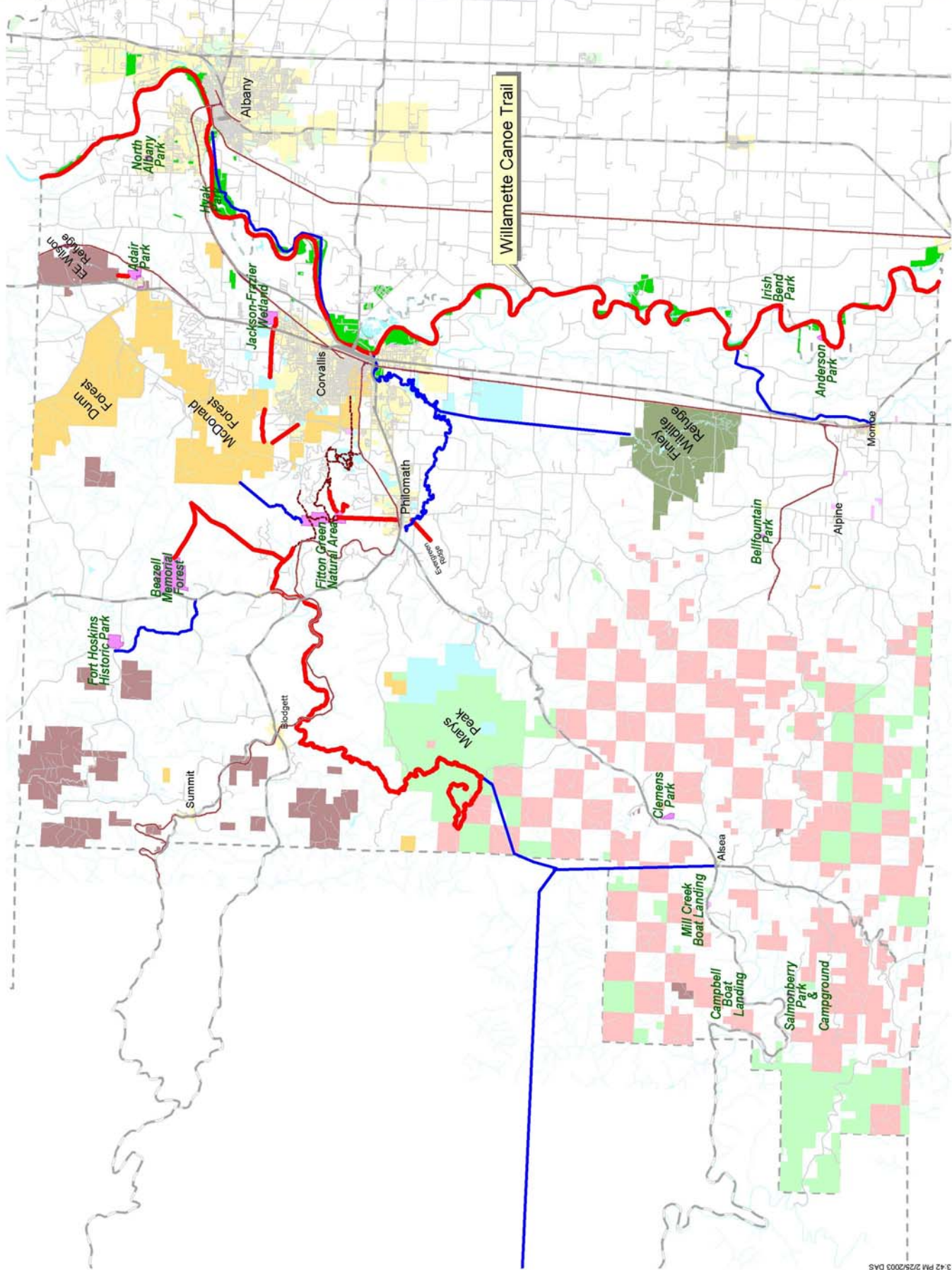
Trail Connections

-  Existing Trails
-  Highest Priority
-  Additional Connectors
-  Railroad Opportunities

Public Lands

-  Benton County Parks
-  Willamette Greenway Public Lands
-  BLM
-  Benton County
-  City Administered Public Lands
-  Finley Wildlife Refuge
-  OSU
-  State of Oregon
-  USFS

Trails within existing County Parks are shown on separate individual maps



CHAPTER 4: Public Use & Support of Trails

As stated in the introduction, a 1998 survey by the Willamette Livability Forum documented that Benton County residents ranked an expanded park and trail system as second in importance; education was number one.

The Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department's, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), 2003-2007, surveyed a wide range of outdoor activity. The results show that Oregonians are actively engaged in all types of outdoor recreation activities in the State. The most popular activities are a reflection of the population, which is aging and more concerned about fitness, and increasingly metropolitan. These are also activities that are generally engaged in near home, and on a regular basis. By far, the highest use activities are:

- Running/walking for exercise and walking for pleasure
- The next most popular activities, bird watching and nature/wildlife observation, are done right from people's homes.
- The implications for outdoor recreation planners and managers are that people demand most outdoor recreation opportunities in the communities where they live. Traditional non-metro outdoor recreation activities that have high demands include sightseeing, RV camping, ocean beach use, fishing, and hiking.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan also provides estimates of outdoor recreational activities for both State residents and Out-of-State residents. The top ten activities for each category are shown in the following tables. *For these tables, the definition of user day tables is one instance of participation in a single outdoor recreation activity by one person.

Outdoor Activity - State Residents	Estimated Annual User Days* (Millions)
1. Running/Walking for Exercise	49.2
2. Walking for Pleasure	47.7
3. Birdwatching	18.7
4. Nature/Wildlife Observation	17.6
5. Sightseeing/Driving for Pleasure	12.3
6. RV/Trailer Camping	11.0
7. Golf	9.6
8. Using Park Playground Equipment	8.8
9. Bicycling	7.4
10. Ocean Beach Activities	6.0

Outdoor Activity - Out-of-State	Estimated Annual User Days* (Millions)
1. Running/Walking for Exercise	10.5
2. RV/Trailer Camping	6.2
3. Walking for Pleasure	5.1
4. Sightseeing/Driving for Pleasure	2.6
5. Nature/Wildlife Observation	2.1
6. Birdwatching	1.9
7. Power Boating for Pleasure	1.9
8. Ocean Beach Activities	1.8
9. Outdoor Photography	1.5
10. Picnicking	1.0

The SCORP's comparison of recreation participation change over the 14-year period from 1987 to 2002, using similar methodology, shows the most significant "participation growth activities" in the state of Oregon are:

- Golf (+188%)
- Nature/Wildlife Observation (+170%)
- Non-Motorized Boating (+138%)
- Using Playground Equipment (+108%)
- RV/Trailer Camping (+95%)

The most significant "participation loss activities" in the state are:

- Outdoor Tennis (-42%)
- Swimming in Outdoor Pool (-33%)
- Horseback Riding (-32%)
- Picnicking (-24%)
- Car Camping with a Tent (-24%)

The 1990-1991 Benton County Parks Survey showed that residents chose hiking and walking, followed by picnicking, as the most preferred outdoor recreation. The survey also noted that:

- 53% of requests for expanded opportunities identified hiking and interpretive trails.
- Trail construction should be a major element in future park development.

Other recent area surveys and public planning processes have reached the same conclusions regarding public support for a coordinated trail system. These surveys and planning efforts included:

- Corvallis Area Mail Questionnaire - 1988/89
- Oregon Business Council's Survey of Values and Beliefs - 1993
- Oregon State Parks Recreation Trails Plan - 1995
- Benton County Parks System Comprehensive Plan - 1995
- West Corvallis-North Philomath Plan (WCNP) - 1996
- South Corvallis Refinement Plan - 1998
- Greenbelt Land Trust Open Space Report - 1998
- Fitton Green Natural Area Management Plan - 2000
- City of Corvallis Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan - 2000
- North Corvallis Area Plan - 2001
- Bezell Memorial Forest Management Plan - 2001

CHAPTER 5: Economic & Social Benefits to the Community

Natural and scenic areas contribute to the overall image and attractiveness of a community, providing aesthetic enjoyment, a sense of community, and a personal sense of well being (Benton County Parks System Comprehensive Plan 1995). Parks, open space, and available recreation opportunities contribute significantly to a community's quality of life, making the community a desirable place to live and work.

Parks, open space, and trails not only protect and connect the natural resources for current and future generations, they also influence a range of beneficial economic and social impacts on their surrounding communities. In choosing a new location for their business, owners of small companies are currently giving the highest priority to the availability of recreational opportunities, parks, and open space (Crompton et al. 1997). In addition, recent surveys show that one of the primary criteria for home buyers in choosing a home location is proximity to trails and open space (Garvin and Berens 1996; Wall Street Journal 1997).

In 1967, Boulder, Colorado was the first U.S. city to provide additional opportunities to prospective homeowners when it passed a dedicated sales tax to fund the preservation of open space with connecting trails (The Trust for Public Land 1999). Today, Boulder is surrounded by a greenbelt system encompassing more than 40,000 acres, which ensure its citizens a view of the majestic Rocky Mountains and access to common public lands. The accompanying increase in property values repaid the city's greenbelt purchases in only three years. Following development of the open space greenbelts, the city has continued to receive an additional \$500,000 in property taxes each year. This same pattern of increased home values associated with open space is widely seen throughout the nation (Brabec 1992). Easy public access to open space is linked to a high quality of life and a reduction in anti-social behavior (National Recreation and Parks Association 1996). In turn, satisfaction with quality of life is vital to local and regional economic health (Garvin and Berens 1966; Ives 1999).

CHAPTER 6: Health & Wellness Benefits to the Community

In the past, leisure time was not as extensive and was valued differently than today. However, leisure time is now recognized by society as essential for maintaining a balance between busy personal and professional lives and for providing an opportunity to build community relationships (Benton County Parks System Comprehensive Plan, 1995). Walking and hiking provide one of the best forms of exercise while relieving stress and mental fatigue. There is also an increasing trend for individuals, families, and organized groups to seek recreational opportunities, such as hiking, closer to home (Benton County Parks System Comprehensive Plan, 1995).

“Bicycling and walking offer many health benefits not only by improving physical health and quality of life but also by reducing health care costs. According to a National Park Service study, *Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenways Corridors*, people who exercise regularly have 14 percent lower claims against their medical insurance and spend 30 percent fewer days in the hospital.” (Source, National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse Technical Assistance Series, September 1995).

*A letter to: Jay Dixon, Chair, Linda Modrell, and Annabelle Jaramillo
Benton County Board of Commissioners*

March 26, 2003

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Benton County’s Parks Advisory Board, Parks Department staff, and you, for developing and accepting the current Benton County Trail System Plan.

During my 30 years tenure in the Benton County Health Department, my main goal was to promote public health... “healthy people in a healthy community”. It takes community-wide vision, leadership, and partnerships between local governments, private business, interested groups, and citizens to plan and create a healthy community.

According to Keeping Oregon Healthy “people with healthy lifestyles who do not smoke, get proper nutrition, control their weight and get adequate physical activity can significantly lower their risk of certain chronic diseases”. A healthy community includes planning that encourages and enables residents of all ages and physical abilities to have available affordable and accessible alternatives to be physically active. The positive outcomes of regular low impact exercise, such as walking and bicycling, have been well documented to decrease risks for heart disease, diabetes, obesity and to improve overall physical and mental well being.

This community based Trail System Plan increases opportunities to engage in physical exercise and will promote and support resident’s choices for a healthy lifestyle. The Benton County Trail Plan is good recreational planning and it is good public health planning, which supports “healthy people in a healthy community”.

Thank you for your continuous efforts in making Benton County a beautiful, healthy, and wholesome place to live.

Sincerely, Mary Anne Deagen

Benton County Community Health Deputy Administrator, Retired

CHAPTER 7: Statewide Trail Issues

In 1995, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) surveyed a number of state recreational users (including hikers, horseback riders, cross country skiers, cyclists, and float boaters) to receive feedback on issues related to trail use. Responses were received from 1600 recreational users, and these results assisted development of the Oregon Recreation Trails Plan. Major issues identified are addressed below:

Access to Trails - Most trails in Oregon are on public land, which is not adjacent to residential neighborhoods. As a result, OPRD is committed to work with local governments to promote a network of trails within populated areas, and as links to remote trails, so that users can reduce driving time.

Lack of Dedicated Funding for Recreation Trails - Trail maintenance budgets/staff are low, while public interest in trail maintenance continues to grow. Because of this, there is a commitment within OPRD to form partnerships with other natural resource and recreation management agencies/organizations to prepare funding proposals requesting further program support.

Trails for the Physically Challenged - The Forest Service and BLM are leading in a program to increase the number of trails at various levels of difficulty for the physically challenged. This is being done through use of the *Design Guide for Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation* (Driskell 1993); this approach is based on the *Universal Access Information System* (Axelson and Chesney 1994). By using this program, trails can be evaluated for level of accessibility/challenge and that information provided to users through signage and brochures. The highest priority for new trails will be for those that are universally accessible and close-to-home. (NOTE: Jackson-Frazier Wetland, a Benton County Park, has a 2/3-mile barrier free boardwalk accessing a beautiful section of this resource).

Trail User Conflict - Running/walking for exercise was ranked No. 1, walking for pleasure No. 2, bird-watching was No. 3, with nature/wildlife observation ranked as No. 4 of the top ten state recreation activities surveyed in the state (SCORP 2003-2007). The increased use of common trail systems has led to conflicts, especially among mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers. This situation can be managed by creating limited use trails, single purpose trails, or by signage indicating the trail's primary and secondary uses. Signage is also useful to inform users of trail courtesy and other issues.

CHAPTER 8: Trail Plan Themes & Considerations

Connectivity - A major focus of the Benton County Trail System Plan is to provide public access through a network of trail linkages from urban and residential regions to the large open space and natural areas which the County is so fortunate to have. Examples include establishing trail connectors from Corvallis/Philomath to Bald Hill Park and Fitton Green Natural Area, and to Marys Peak. The Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department and Benton County Parks, with the support of private landowners and volunteers, have developed a portion of this connection with the current Bald Hill Trail System.

Linkage to Willamette/Marys River Access Points for Boating, Bank Fishing, and Day Uses - Waterways are now being recognized for their potential as “water trails” or “Blue Ways” (Oregon Recreation Trails Plan, 1995). Benton County features both the Willamette River and Marys River corridors, which could provide greater public access and recreational use, when connected with land trails. A good example of a potential connection is the Marys River Natural Area with Avery Park (Greenbelt Land Trust Open Space Report, 1998). A top priority in this *Trail System Plan* is to address the possibilities of a Canoe Trail along the Willamette River. A partnership with other cities, counties and the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation is an important component of a Willamette Canoe Trail linking communities along the river.

Rails-to-Trails - Abandoned railway corridors can be considered “linear parks” (Flint et al. 1993) and often provide excellent recreational trails because of their flat grade and location in or near urban/suburban areas where trail need is high (Oregon Recreation Trails Plan 1995). They may provide opportunities for a new multi-use trail system, which could be enjoyed by many users including: bicyclists, joggers, walkers, equestrians, bird-watchers, the physically challenged, etc.

Landowner Participation - Participation by landowners in trail development should be encouraged under the “willing seller/willing buyer” philosophy, with land secured only from willing landowners. Therefore future trail connectors and open space parcels will depend on landowner cooperation and available financial resources. This *Trail System Plan* will be used as a guide to identify these opportunities as they appear.

Outreach and Partnership - Community outreach to support the *Trails System Plan* includes, but is not limited to, the following groups and organizations: the Greenbelt Land Trust, City of Corvallis, Adair Village, Monroe, Philomath, Community Service Consortium, the Bureau of Land Management, the USDA Forest Service, Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club, local equestrian and bicycle groups, Kings Valley Harriers (Running Club), volunteers, potential internships with Oregon State University (OSU), OSU Extension Service, Linn-Benton Community College, local service clubs, area schools (both Philomath and Crescent Valley High Schools already have classes working

with natural resource issues in the community), Marys River Watershed Council, private landowners, etc.

Further Notes - The Benton County Trail System Plan will be integrated with, and will enhance, the updated OPRD - Recreation Trails Plan, which is currently under revision. Both the Benton County Trail System Plan and Oregon Statewide Trails Plan (OPRD 1995) recognize the importance of providing access to the Willamette River and the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail, as key components of a Statewide trail corridor system.

CHAPTER 9: Trail Funding & Grant Opportunities

Several mechanisms currently exist to provide for trail easement purchase, design, construction, and maintenance. All of these sources have been successfully used by the Benton County Natural Areas & Parks Department. These resources include:

- **The State’s Recreational Trails Grant** program administered by OPRD funds projects statewide under a competitive grant/local match program. This yearly competition funds acquisition, planning, and construction of trails. It primarily supports projects with a regional view. Examples include: additions to the Bald Hill Trail System, Jackson-Frazier Wetland Boardwalk, and the Fitton Green Natural Area.
The Local Government Grant Program also administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department provides matching funding on a competitive basis for both acquisition of land for outdoor recreation activities and development of basic outdoor facilities, including trails.
- **Federal Sources** are project targeted and change frequently. An example is the Jackson-Frazier Wetland Boardwalk construction, which was supported by grants from the Environmental Protection Agency for two years. Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (L&WCF) managed by OPRD, under a competitive grant/match program, are used for acquisition, development, and major rehabilitation of park and recreation areas and facilities.
- **Partnerships** have been formed with a variety of agencies that share the common goal of a successful trail program. Examples include the Community Services Consortium’s (CSC) program that supports at-risk youth doing meaningful work in the summer. This training program provided youth employment opportunities and supplied cost-free labor to both the Jackson-Frazier Wetland Boardwalk and Fort Hoskins Historic Park Recreational Trail construction projects. With labor costs supported by CSC, all additional funds were spent on trail related materials and expenses.
- **Foundations** have funds to grant within their non-profit guidelines. Often mutually beneficial outcomes merge with a project to insure its success. An example is the Oregon Parks Foundation granting funds for materials and equipment, which supported the donated Community Services Consortium youth crew, to build the 1.2-mile recreational trail at Fort Hoskins Historic Park.

- **The Parks Department's** budget is a source of additional funds that can be directed at an identified trail priority. These funds, of course, include budgeted amounts for trail work. This work can be accomplished by volunteers, Park Rangers, staff, Corrections Work Crew (CWC), contractors, or as often the case, a coordinated blend.
- **Other funding sources** are a critical area to monitor for a successful trail project. Included within this category are landowners willing to provide easements for public access for the benefit of the larger community. This has happened several times in the Bald Hill Trail System, and on other projects.
- **Federal Title III** funds are available through 2006 and can be used to purchase conservation and trail easements. The annual County budget process is used to determine the allocation of these funds.

CHAPTER 10: A Case Study of Success - The Bald Hill Trail System

Timeline of the Bald Hill Trail System Development

[Please reference Map Section: Bald Hill Trail]

- **1977**, an Agreement between Benton County and Oregon State University provided for a bike/pedestrian path to be developed between 35th and 53rd Streets, which is currently called Campus Way Bike Path.
- **1988**, the County Public Works and Parks Departments, with assistance from a Citizen Task Force and volunteers, relocated the Irish Bend Covered Bridge from its location on the Long Tom River to the Campus Way Bike Path.
- **1988-89**, the trail between the Fairgrounds and Bald Hill Park (City of Corvallis) was identified in the County's Capital Improvement Plan, as part of County Park's planning process.
- **1990**, Jack Brandis, adjacent landowner to the west of the Fairgrounds, collaborated with Benton County and the City of Corvallis Parks Departments, to allow a public easement through his property connecting the County Fairgrounds with Bald Hill Park. However, the planned rock and chip trail was changed to a multi-modal paved path with an additional chip trail to accommodate equestrian use, when Benton County Public Works received a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ISTEA Funds - Intermodal System Transportation Enhancement Act) in April 1993. Mr. Brandis donated a perpetual easement in support of the project. Public Works was responsible for the grant and the development of this highly successful path that connects Reservoir Road and Oak Creek Road through Bald Hill Park with the County Fairgrounds - now named the Midge Cramer Memorial Path.
- **1990's**, Corvallis, Benton County, OSU, and Philomath embarked on an Area Growth Management Plan that was eventually adopted by the City of Corvallis in 1998. The West Corvallis North Philomath Area Plan outlines the trails in the Area Plan. Andrew and Lauralee Martin, working with the Greenbelt Land Trust, were very instrumental in getting the government agencies interested in the Area Plan. The Martins' view trails as a community asset and worked with Benton County Parks and other partners to make this a reality.
- **1993**, the Bureau of Land Management (Salem Office) directed their staff to work with local Governments on the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail concept. Public forums were held, and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) placed the Corvallis-to-Sea-Trail in the State Trails Plan. The Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail originates at the Benton County Fairgrounds. (See map appendix - Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail)

- **1993**, City of Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon State University and Benton County Parks Departments worked collaboratively to improve the trail system in Bald Hill Park; State and Federal Grants were secured as an element of the partnership. With the help of volunteers, Greenbelt Land Trust, Scouts, landowners Andrew & Lauralee Martin (as a portion of the trails within Bald Hill Park passes through the Martin's property), and others, the Benton County Parks Department and the Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department developed the trails that exist at Bald Hill Park.
- **1999**, Benton County Parks completed the trail from Bald Hill Park to the west end of the Martin property, along Mulkey Creek. Andrew and Lauralee Martin donated a public easement to Benton County allowing the trail to go through their property.
- **2001**, a trail connecting the Oak Creek entrance to Bald Hill Park to the Mulkey Creek Trail was completed. Andrew & Lauralee Martin and the Greenbelt Land Trust paid for the trail development supplies; the Martins again donated the public easement to Benton County, and Benton County Parks staff developed the trail. The City of Corvallis also received a donation from the Mardi Keltner estate to develop a trail connector on the west side of Bald Hill.
- **2001**, Benton County Parks Department received a grant from OPRD to establish trail access and improvements for Fitton Green Natural Area, a 308-acre open space resource west of Bald Hill Park.

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