

**CLARK COUNTY REGIONAL
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PLAN
JUNE 2000**

**Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation
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JUNE 2000**

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A. INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Plan Approach

The Parks and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan serves as the county's blueprint for acquiring, developing, and maintaining parks, trails, recreation facilities, and open space lands. It also guides the provision of recreation services and programs throughout the county. Clark County adopted its first comprehensive parks and recreation plan in 1965, and updates occurred in 1975, 1981, 1987, and 1993. Now, in 2000, the plan is being updated again.

This plan is the second update that has occurred under the framework of the 1990 Washington State Growth Management Act. The need for coordinated planning and for park and recreation services and facilities are addressed in the legislative findings and within the 13 primary planning goals of the GMA.

Legislative Findings (RCW 36.70A.010): The Legislature finds that uncoordinated and unplanned growth, together with a lack of common goals expressing the public's interest in the conservation and the wise use of our lands, pose a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the health safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of the state. It is in the public interest that citizens, communities, local governments, and the private sector cooperate and coordinate with one another in comprehensive land use planning.

Planning Goals (RCW 36.70A.020): Open Space and Recreation. Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.

The Growth Management Act also addresses the location and provision of urban services. The GMA requires that urban government services be provided only in urban areas, and identifies cities as the appropriate provider of urban services and counties as the appropriate provider of rural and regional services.

In keeping with these directives, the 1993 parks plan update specifically addressed the changing role of the county within the area of parks and recreation services. The plan stated: "In contrast to previous plans, the service standards, needs, policies and capital facilities plans in this document reflect the county's shift from a provider of both urban and regional services to a provider of regional and rural services." The 2000 parks plan update adopts the same planning framework. This plan specifically focuses on regional services and facilities, including regional parks, regional trails, conservation areas and greenways, regional special facilities, and habitat lands.

This planning element lays the groundwork for a comprehensive regional parks and open space system by:

- Assessing public attitudes toward the acquisition, development, and management of regional parks, open space, and recreation facilities, and to involve the general public in park, open space, and recreation planning.

- Establishing goals, objectives, and standards for regional outdoor recreation facilities and grounds, including regional parks, conservation areas and greenways, habitat areas, trails, special facilities, and regional parks.
- Establishing priorities for the acquisition and development of regional park and open space facilities, and the implementation of recreation programs, and to incorporate these priorities into the county’s capital facilities program.
- Establishing the groundwork for obtaining funds and other resources for acquisition, capital improvements, operation and maintenance programs, and recreation activities.
- Planning for and developing a park and recreation system that serves the diverse recreational interests of the residents of Clark County and fosters an environmentally sensitive approach towards preservation and enhancement of the county’s valuable natural resources such as its fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, and water quality.
- Considering cooperative “partnership” agreements with other government agencies, land trust organizations, and private and commercial interests in the area of park, open space, and recreation planning and development.
- Providing the framework from which the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Commission and Board of County Commissioners can establish specific policies for the parks department.

Plan Coordination – Open Space, Trails, Sports Fields, Habitat

During the 1990s, Clark County has prepared various resource documents that focus on specific types of park, recreation, and open space needs. These include the Clark County Open Space Commission Report, Regional Trails and Bikeways Plan, and the Sports Fields Master Plan. These documents provide extensive, detailed information regarding land and facility inventories, demand and need, and project priorities. These documents continue to provide valuable planning guidelines for the Clark County community, and elements from these plans are incorporated into this document to maintain consistency and coordinated planning.

In addition, Clark County adopted in December 1994 its first “Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan” as a supplement to the comprehensive parks and recreation plan. A primary purpose of this plan is to establish planning eligibility under the Washington Wildlife and Recreation (WWRP) Urban Wildlife Habitat Account, which is managed by the Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, and other possible grant programs.¹

¹ As noted above, a primary purpose of the Urban Wildlife Habitat element is to establish funding eligibility under the IAC’s Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Urban Wildlife Habitat Account. It is important to note that the scope of the grant program and scope of this planning component are somewhat different. In urbanized counties such as Clark County, the Urban Wildlife Habitat Program covers areas within a 5-mile radius of any incorporated town or city. The scope of the planning document, however, is countywide. The larger service area was utilized to maintain consistency with the comprehensive parks plan and other planning documents and to recognize the importance of interconnected habitat and open space systems, to help encourage partnerships between agencies, and to avoid fragmentation of wildlife populations, wildlife habitat, and wildlife migration patterns.

As part of the 2000 parks plan update, the Urban Wildlife Habitat Element is being updated and incorporated into the comprehensive parks plan. In keeping with IAC guidelines, specific sections of the plan address goals and objectives, existing conditions, needs and priorities, and capital improvements program. In preparing the urban wildlife habitat elements, the county has utilized extensive work that has already occurred under the Clark County Open Space Commission, Conservation Futures Open Space Program, WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Program, Washington Conservation Commission Limiting Factors Analysis, and Growth Management planning process. It is not the purpose of this plan to replace or supercede these planning processes, but to incorporate the important findings and recommendations that have been established through the development of these documents and data sources. These planning processes—supported by extensive public involvement and review—provide an essential foundation to help meet the needs for the protection and conservation of wildlife habitats and populations in Clark County.

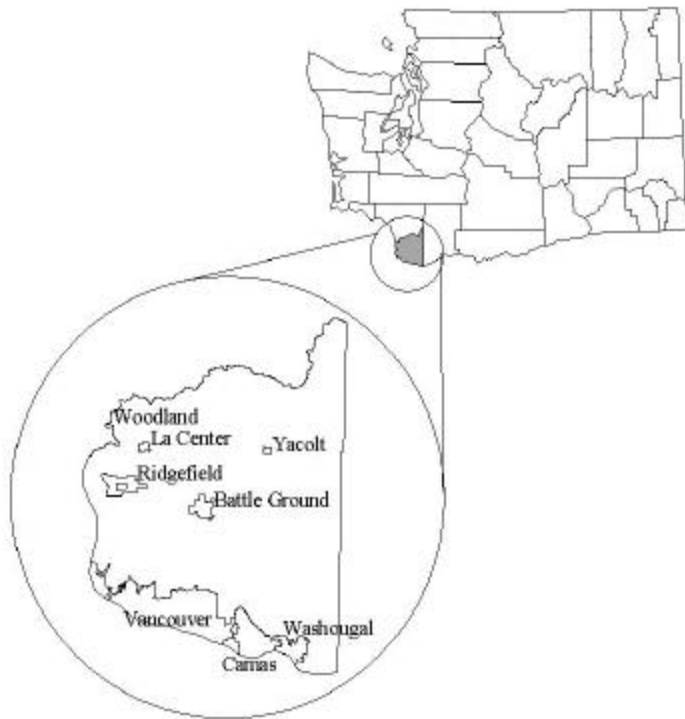
B. PLANNING AREA

PLANNING AREA

Physical Setting

Clark County is located in southwest Washington approximately 70 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. The county is bordered on the south and west by the Columbia River, on the north by the Lewis River, and on the east by the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. In terms of political jurisdictions, the county is bordered on the south and west by the state of Oregon, on the north by Cowlitz County, and on the east by Skamania County.

Clark County lies in a geographic basin known as the Willamette-Puget Trough, which is formed by the Cascade Mountains and Coast Range. The county includes over 41 miles of shoreline on the Columbia River, and the land area covers 627 square miles, which is characterized by four topographic zones. Low-lying bottomlands extend along the Columbia River. A series of alluvial plains and terraces extend north and northeast from the Columbia River bottomlands. These plains and terraces transition into uplands which range in width from two to seven miles and in many places are separated from the plains and terraces by an escarpment of from 100 to 200 feet. The east and northeast portions of the county consist of the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range.



Urban development is most extensive in the plains and terraces that extend along the Columbia River in the south section of the county. This area includes the cities of Vancouver, Clark County's largest city, Camas and Washougal. Rural residential and agricultural lands extend north and east from the Vancouver Urban Growth Area to the slopes of the Cascade Mountain range. Other incorporated cities inside Clark County include Ridgefield, Battle Ground, La Center, Yacolt, and part of Woodland.

Broadly speaking, the county supports a wide range of vegetation and habitat types. The Columbia River Lowlands are particularly rich in plant and habitat diversity. In fact, the sloughs, channels, and alluvial floodplain of the Vancouver Lake Lowlands and Sauvies Island (Oregon) “contain the largest remnants of marshes and hardwood bottoms left along the Columbia River” (Lower Columbia River Ecoregion Restoration Project, August 1994). The plains and terraces also support diverse vegetation, despite extensive development; vegetation ranges from improved pasture and row crops to upland forests with some tree stands of 20 and 30 acres or more. In addition, Whipple Creek, Salmon Creek, and other stream systems support a variety of wetland and riparian zone vegetation. The Cascade foothills, which include the east and northeast parts of the county, consist of volcanic rock overlain by glacial drift and shallow soils that support extensive forest vegetation. Douglas fir is the predominant species. However, forested areas also include western red cedar, hemlock, oak, maple, alder, and a variety of other trees and plants.

The largest surface water feature in the county is the Columbia River. M.J. Mundorff writes in Geology and Ground Water Resources of Clark County, Washington that, “In addition to its prime importance as a source of water, the Columbia River serves as a control for the movement of all other water in the county. All surface streams discharge into it, and it is base level for ground water so that any ground water leaving the county does so by discharging into the Columbia River or its tributaries” (Mundorff, 1960).

Other major stream and river systems in the county include the North and East Forks of the Lewis River, the Washougal River, Lake River, Burnt Bridge Creek, Salmon Creek, Whipple Creek, Gee Creek, Allen Creek, Cedar Creek, Souixon Creek, and Lacamas Creek. The largest concentration of lakes in Clark County occurs in the Columbia River lowlands. These include Post Office, Curtis, Round, Green, and Vancouver Lakes, and several lakes within the boundaries of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, including Campbell, Canvasback, Wigeon, Quigley and Long Lakes. These lakes tend to be shallow, with depths and surface areas that fluctuate on a seasonal basis. Other lakes in the county include Battle Ground, Lacamas, Merwin, and Yale Lakes. Of these, only 28-acre Battle Ground Lake is naturally occurring. The other three are created by dams.

Several of the county’s lake and river systems are classified in the county’s Shorelines Management Master Program as *Shorelines of Statewide Significance* (see below). This designation encompasses lakes larger than 20 acres and streams and their associated wetlands downstream of a point where the mean annual flow exceeds 1,000 cubic feet per second. Shorelines of Statewide Significance include (Perspectives Resource Document, February 1992):

1. Lewis River, including portions of the tributaries of Canyon Creek and Cedar Creek, and associated lakes Mud Lake, Merwin Lake, and Yale Lake.
2. East Fork of the Lewis River, including a portion of the tributary of Lockwood Creek.
3. Washougal River, including a portion of the tributary of Lacamas Creek.
4. Columbia River, including the associated Reed, Lady, and Sand Islands, and Camas Slough.
5. Vancouver Lake, including associated Caterpillar Island, Shillapoo Lake (drained), and Buckmire Slough.

6. Lake River, including portions of the tributaries of Salmon Creek and Whipple Creek, and Curtis, Round, Post Office, Green, Campbell, Quigley, and Hathaway Lakes, and Bower Slough.
7. Bachelor Island, including Widgeon, Canvasback, and Long Lakes, and Bachelor Island Slough.
8. Gee Creek, including Carty and Lancaster Lakes, and Squaw Island.

Climate

Clark County's climate is influenced by the Coast Range to the west and Cascade Range to the east. The Coast Range provides limited shelter from the Pacific Ocean. Then, as moist heavy air from the west rises up the steep-sloping Cascade Range the air is cooled creating moderate rainfall in the lower lying areas and heavier rainfall on the west slope of the Cascades.

Normal annual precipitation ranges from 38 inches on the western floodplains to 114 inches in the mountainous northeastern part of the county. The county has a very definite winter rainfall climate, with 63 to 70 percent of the total precipitation occurring in the five months of November through March. Most precipitation falls as rain; normal annual snowfall ranges from less than six inches on the western plains to over 22 inches in the northeast portion of the county (Population and Economic Handbook, 1998).

Generally, Clark County has wet mild winters and warm dry summers. The temperature in the county, as recorded by four reporting stations, averages 37 degrees in January and 65 degrees in July. Prevailing surface winds are generally from the northwest in the months of April through September and from the east-southeast during October through March. There are occasional winds from the east that are part of extremes in either cold or hot weather. Winter storm tracks are generally from the southwest with infrequent snowstorms dropping down from the Gulf of Alaska. Major wind events occur infrequently. Two of the more famous events were the 1962 Columbus Day Storm and the 1972 Peter Ogden Tornado.

Population

Clark County is one of the fastest growing and most heavily populated counties in Washington State. The county's estimated population for 1999 is 337,000, which represents about 537 persons per square mile. (Population estimates are provided by the Washington State Office of Financial Management.) Between 1970 and 1999, the county's population increased at a rate of 62% from 128,454 to 337,000. In 1980, the county's population of 192,227 represented 4.7% of the statewide total. In 1999, the county's population of 337,000 represented 5.9% of the state total. Overall, Clark County is the fifth most populace county in the state of Washington.

There are eight incorporated towns and cities within the county. The largest is Vancouver, with an in-city population in 1999 of 135,100. The city is also surrounded by a large unincorporated urban area. In 1998, the population of the entire Vancouver Urban Growth Area was 235,123. This population is concentrated in the southwest section of the county adjacent to the Columbia River and the Vancouver Lake Lowlands. The other towns and cities in the county are Camas, Washougal, Ridgefield, Battle Ground, La Center, Yacolt, and part of Woodland, which overlaps Clark and Cowlitz Counties. The total 1999 population of these other towns and cities was

32,710. (This number, in the case of Woodland, includes only that portion of the city lying in Clark County.)

Population projections for Clark County indicate continued steady growth over the next 20 years. The Washington State Office of Financial Management estimates that the county's population in 2020 will range somewhere between 378,185 and 473,899. This represents a percentage increase from 1999 in the range of 11% to 29%.

Socioeconomic

Clark County's economy has been growing steadily as the county's population has continued to grow at a fast pace. The labor force has been on a rise, increasing from 127,500 in 1990 to 170,300 in 1997. Unemployment rates have consistently hovered around four to seven percent for the past eight years. The economy of the county continues to diversify. Historically, the county depended heavily on resource-based industries such as agriculture, timber, and mining. After 1950, however, heavy manufacturing and then high-tech industries became important components of the county's economy. Current trends show large increases in wholesale and retail trade and service sectors. Wholesale and retail trade have increased 39.6 percent from 1990 to 1997, and services have increased by 48.8 percent. Employment in the manufacturing sector has increased by 21.2 percent between 1990 and 1997 (Population and Economic Handbook, 1998).

Factors that contribute to Clark County's economic growth include high-quality transportation services and facilities. Clark County and the Vancouver-Portland metropolitan area provide a number of transportation facilities that help make Clark County a regional hub for commerce. Commercial river traffic utilizes the Columbia River, and the Port of Vancouver provides facilities for deep-draft ocean-going vessels. North-south and east-west transcontinental railroad lines serve Clark County. Interstate 5, Interstate 205, and State Highway 14 provide major freeway access. The Portland International Airport is located immediately south of the Columbia River, and provides national and international airline service for both passengers and freight.

In terms of educational services, the development of a full service satellite Washington State University Campus in Vancouver has enhanced the availability of higher education in southwest Washington. WSU-Vancouver is the primary provider of junior-senior and graduate level college education. Clark College, located near downtown Vancouver, continues to provide high quality education within the community college system and provides a variety of educational services for the larger county community.

Clark County and the southwest Washington region provide a rich diversity of natural features and recreation, historic and cultural opportunities. Clark County lies in close proximity to the Pacific Ocean and Cascade Mountains, including the major peaks of Mount St. Helens, Mount Adams, and Mount Hood. The county encompasses a variety of local, state, and federal wildlife refuges and conservation and greenway systems, including the Ridgefield and Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuges on the Columbia River. Historic sites of regional and national importance include Fort Vancouver and Officers' Row, located near downtown Vancouver. The county also encompasses a variety of regional parks, trails, and special facilities that serve a county-wide population. This plan examines the existing system of regional parks and open space facilities and evaluates the need for additional lands, facilities, and services to meet current and future needs of the county's rapidly growing population.

C. HABITAT AREAS

HABITAT AREAS

Introduction

Clark County is one of the fastest growing and most heavily populated counties in the state. These conditions have increased impacts on a variety of resources, including habitat and open space lands. Despite this, Clark County continues to support a variety of valuable wildlife habitat that ranges from the Douglas fir forests of the Cascade Mountains to the wetlands and riparian forests of the Columbia River lowlands.

In recent years, several methods have been used to map and/or designate the county's highest priority habitat and critical/sensitive lands (e.g., high-quality wetlands). These include the Clark County Open Space Commission Report, GMA Critical Lands designations, Washington State Priority Habitat and Species Program, Washington Conservation Commission Fish Distribution Maps and Limiting Factors Analyses, and Lower Columbia Steelhead Conservation Initiative. While these programs utilized different methodologies to identify high-priority wildlife habitat, the results produce similar or complementary findings and lead to consistent preservation priorities.

Clark County Open Space Commission Report

The Clark County Open Space Commission was appointed in 1989 to help define and identify the county's highest priority open space lands. The commission defined open space in terms of its various functions and benefits. These specifically included open space to preserve wildlife habitat and also included various functions and benefits that support wildlife species and populations (e.g., open space to protect shorelines, open space to preserve natural vegetation, and open space to preserve sensitive water-related areas). Methodologies were developed to map individual functions and benefits; then the various functions and benefits were aggregated to produce a high-value open space map.

To help build a conceptual framework for purposes of mapping wildlife habitat, the Open Space Commission adopted this statement: "The primary benefit of wildlife habitat is the support it provides to fish and animals by maintaining existing populations and increasing species diversity and abundance. Special consideration may be given to rare, sensitive, or endangered species habitat. Specific attributes include the supply of food, water, and cover, or resting, breeding, nesting, and migrating sites. Almost all natural areas provide habitat, but riparian corridors harbor a particularly wide range of fish and wildlife." The Open Space Commission then developed a weighted, three-tiered system for actually mapping habitat areas throughout the county. The following system was used:

Tier 1: All endangered, threatened, and species of concern habitat as identified by the WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Program. These include game, nongame, and fish species.

Tier 2: Approximations for important generalized species habitat, including all wetland areas, areas within the 100-year floodplain, areas within 100 feet of all lakes, rivers, and streams, and big game winter ranges in the northeast corner of the county.

Tier 3: All other undeveloped areas in Clark County.

Both the *Wildlife Functions and Benefits Map* and the *Open Space Aggregate Map* are included in this document (see Appendix A). From these maps, priority wildlife habitat and open space areas clearly emerge. These include the Vancouver Lake Lowlands, Steigerwald Lake Lowlands, major stream and river systems, including the North Fork of the Lewis, East Fork of the Lewis, Washougal, Salmon Creek, Lacamas Creek, and Burnt Bridge Creek systems, and big-game winter range in the foothills of the Cascades.

Sources utilized by the Open Space Commission for mapping purposes included the WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Program, Soil Conservation Service (now Natural Resources Conservation Service) Wildlife Habitat Map, and interviews with WDFW, DNR, USF&WS, and WDOE personnel, as well as a private biological consultant. Floodplain areas were mapped using county data. And data for salmon bearing streams and big-game winter range were obtained from SCS and WDFW personnel.

Clark County Critical Areas Designations

Clark County has identified and mapped priority habitat areas as part of the Growth Management planning process. Under the GMA, cities and counties are required to designate five types of “Critical Areas:” *Wetlands, Frequently Flooded Areas, Aquifer Recharge Areas, Geologically Hazardous Areas, and Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas* (RCW 36.70A.170). In addition, in designating critical areas, cities and counties must give “special consideration to conservation or protection measures to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries” (RCW 36.70A.172).

Chapter 13.51 of the Clark County Code (Habitat Conservation Ordinance) defines and provides a mapping framework for fish and wildlife habitat to be protected as GMA Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas. Habitat areas include priority habitat and species sites as defined and mapped under the Washington State Priority Habitat and Species Program and locally important habitat sites as defined and mapped under the code. For purposes of identification and mapping, the following definitions apply:

“‘Priority Habitat and Species’ (PHS) shall mean the official definitions and all area classifications by that name used by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). . . . Priority species sites include all areas within one thousand (1,000) feet of state listed endangered, threatened, sensitive or candidate species. Clark County shall defer to DFW in regards to classification, mapping and interpretation of PHS.”

“‘Riparian Zone’ means areas encompassing riparian habitat, a subset of priority habitat and as defined by DFW, extending outward from the ordinary high-water mark of waters to the one hundred (100) year floodplain or the following distances if greater: Definitions of the Type 1 through 5 waters are found in WAC 222-16-030:

DNR Type 1 and 2 waters, 250 feet;

DNR Type 3 waters, 200 feet;

DNR Type 4 and 5 waters, 150 feet.

“‘Locally Important Habitat’ means those areas so designated by Clark County by virtue of containing unusual or unique habitat warranting protection because of qualitative species diversity or habitat system health indicators.” (LIH applies to areas that have been officially identified and mapped as provided in the CCC.)

Point sites of sensitive, threatened, or endangered wildlife species are mapped by WDFW and are available for review under procedures set forth by WDFW. In addition, in the case of inconsistencies, official habitat area definitions of priority habitats and species shall prevail over countywide mapping in determining the location of habitat conservation areas.

Washington State Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) Program

In mapping fish and wildlife conservation areas, the Open Space Commission Report and Habitat Conservation Ordinance both utilize as a key component the Washington State Priority Habitat and Species Program. Priority habitats “are those habitat types or elements with unique or significant value to a diverse assemblage or species.” Priority habitats “may consist of a unique vegetation type or dominant plant species, a described successional stage, or a specific structural element” (WDFW Priority Habitats and Species List, July 1999). In addition, areas identified as priority habitats have one or more of the following attributes:

- Comparatively high fish and wildlife density.
- Comparatively high fish and wildlife species diversity.
- Important fish and wildlife breeding habitat.
- Important fish and wildlife seasonal ranges.
- Important fish and wildlife movement corridors.
- Limited availability.
- High vulnerability to habitat alteration.
- Unique or dependent species.

WDFW has identified and defined 18 priority habitats in Washington State (See Appendix B). Eleven of these priority habitats are believed to occur in Clark County (Pers. Comm., WDFW, March 2000). These are caves, cliffs, freshwater wetlands, instream, old growth/mature forests, oak woodlands, riparian, rural natural open space, snags and logs, talus, and urban natural open space. In some cases, WDFW has completed or is preparing management guidelines that help describe the importance of individual priority habitats. WDFW has completed management guidelines for oak woodlands and riparian priority habitats, which occur extensively in Clark County. These guidelines underscore the importance of riparian habitat for supporting wildlife:

A riparian habitat area is defined as the area adjacent to aquatic systems with flowing water (e.g., rivers, perennial or intermittent streams, seeps, springs) that contains elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems which mutually influence each other.

Protection of riparian habitat compared to other habitat types, may yield the greatest gains for fish and wildlife while involving the least amount of area. Riparian habitat:

- *Covers a relatively small area yet it supports a higher diversity and abundance of fish and wildlife than any other habitat;*
- *Provides important fish and wildlife breeding habitat, seasonal ranges, and movement corridors;*
- *Is highly vulnerable to alteration;*
- *Has important social values, including water purification, flood control, recreation, and aesthetics.*

“Natural riparian corridors are the most diverse, dynamic, and complex biophysical habitats on the terrestrial portion of the earth” (Naiman et al. 1993:209). Wildlife occurs more often and in greater variety in riparian habitats than in any other habitat type. Although riparian areas constitute a small portion of the surface landscape, approximately 85% of Washington’s wildlife species have been known to use riparian habitat associated with rivers and streams (Thomas et al. 1979, Brown 1985).

In addition to the statewide classifications of priority habitats, WDFW has identified “priority habitat areas” in Clark County. These designations were incorporated into the GMA Resource Document and are largely consistent with the findings of the Open Space Commission Report (see Appendix C). These habitat areas include, for example, the Washougal and Little Washougal Rivers, Lewis River area, Vancouver Lake area north to the Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge, and Salmon Creek. The county’s GMA documents note that these areas are generalized and are intended to be further defined as more data become available.

Limiting Factors Analysis

In response to the listing of various salmon and steelhead populations as federal threatened and endangered species, the Washington Legislature in 1998 directed the state Conservation Commission to prepare Limiting Factors Analyses on watersheds throughout the state. The State Legislature also directed the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (the lead entity for salmon recovery in the lower Columbia region) to identify factors for decline on a stream-by-stream basis and to identify and prioritize projects that will maximize salmon recovery. The Conservation Commission, LCFRB, Clark County, and other partners are cooperating in the development of Limiting Factors Analyses in Clark County and the region. Work products include fish distribution maps and the limiting factors analyses which identify conditions that limit salmon production within watersheds.

The organizational framework for the LFAs is Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs). Clark County is covered by parts of two WRIAs. WRIA 27 includes three major drainages—North Fork Lewis, East Fork Lewis, and Kalama. WRIA 28 consists primarily of a series of independent tributaries to the Columbia River and extends from the vicinity of the Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge in Clark County to Bonneville Dam in Skamania County. WRIA 28 encompasses in Clark County Lake River, the Washougal River, Salmon Creek, Flume Creek, Whipple Creek, Burnt Bridge Creek, Gibbons Creek and Lawton Creek. The LFA for WRIA 27 was completed in January 2000; the LFA for WRIA 28 will be completed in late 2000 or early 2001.

The Limiting Factors Analysis and Fish Distribution Maps provide important information regarding habitat conditions on salmon-bearing streams. These documents will continue to be updated and refined as new data become available and should be considered a primary tool in identifying and prioritizing projects that will help with salmon recovery in Clark County. The “habitats in need of protection” for WRIA 27 are listed below.

North Fork Lewis – Habitats in Need of Protection

- *Off-channel habitat surrounding Eagle Island is critical rearing area for juvenile fall chinook.*
- *The entire mainstem reach between Cedar Creek and Merwin Dam needs protection to assure healthy returns for the most important spawning population of fall chinook in the lower Columbia region.*
- *The Cedar Creek watershed provides the majority of spawning and rearing habitat left for all species of anadromous fish in the North Fork system. Protection and enhancement of this basin is critical.*
- *Wetland complexes in the lower 2 miles of the South Fork of Chelatchie Creek provide extremely important overwintering and rearing habitat for coho salmon.*
- *The North Fork Chelatchie Creek contributes cool, clear water to Cedar Creek. Protection of the wetland complexes and springs in the upper reaches in Section 10 should help maintain water quality.*
- *All backwater slough areas above the Lewis River Salmon Hatchery provide spawning grounds for the few remaining chum salmon that return to the North Fork.*
- *The lower reaches of Johnson, Ross, Robinson, and Colvin Creeks provide important spawning habitat for coho and sometimes steelhead.*

East Fork Lewis – Habitats in Need of Protection

- *Wetlands and associated off-channel habitats for coho and steelhead juveniles are limited by agricultural, residential, and surface mining developments within the lower 9 miles of floodplain. Also, the most dense observed spawning for chum salmon historically occurred in side channels and upwelling areas in the lower 6 miles of the East Fork Lewis River (WDF 1973).*
- *Habitat within Riley Creek and Brezee Creek is generally intact and in fairly good shape. If passage problems can be addressed in Brezee Creek, a significant amount of good quality habitat could be available for coho salmon and steelhead.*
- *Protection of the entire valley floor in the lower floodplain from extensive future development or surface mining will help maintain groundwater recharge, reduce elevated stream temperatures, decrease fine sediment inputs, eliminate the chance of additional catastrophic avulsions, and protect the hyporheic zone.*
- *Protect the spawning and rearing habitat for the “healthy” wild fall chinook population in the mainstem between RM 10 and RM 15.*
- *Rock Creek was identified by the TAG (Technical Advisory Group) as probably the most important tributary to protect within the East Fork watershed for production of wild winter steelhead. In general, the habitat within Rock Creek is functional and spawning surveys find the highest density steelhead redds per stream mile of any of the East Fork’s tributaries. Protection of this area is critical to the success of recovery efforts for steelhead within the basin.*

Lower Columbia Steelhead Conservation Initiative (LCSCI)

The draft Lower Columbia Steelhead Conservation Initiative was developed by Governor’s Joint Natural Resources Cabinet, in cooperation with local government partners, to help address the listing of wild steelhead in the lower Columbia region. In addition to addressing issues and

recovery strategies related to steelhead, the LCSCI provided a springboard for conservation planning for other species at risk in the lower Columbia area, including chum, chinook, cutthroat trout, and bull trout. The LCSCI included a prioritization of streams and steelhead populations; the prioritization was divided into five tiers. Kalama River/Winter Run and Wind River/Summer Run were identified as Tier I priorities. East Fork Lewis/Summer Run and Washougal River/Summer Run were identified as Tier II priorities.

D. WILDLIFE SPECIES

WILDLIFE SPECIES

Introduction

Clark County provides a variety of terrestrial and freshwater habitats that support a diversity of fish and wildlife species. Wildlife populations include both resident and migratory species that may be divided generally into mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians (Perspectives Resource Document, Feb. 1992). This section examines general wildlife populations, priority species, species of concern, and migratory species and supporting habitats.

General Wildlife Populations

Mammals: Clark County provides habitat for more than 55 species of mammals, ranging from eastern cottontail and deer mice to black bear and Roosevelt elk. Mammals in Clark County may be divided into seven orders: marsupials, shrews and moles, bats, hares, rodents, carnivores, and hoofed animals. Mammal populations may fluctuate seasonally due to migration, food supplies, weather conditions, and other factors. In addition, habitat conditions strongly influence the location and distribution of mammals and other wildlife in the county. The Cascade Foothills, for example, provide extensive winter range for large mammals such as black-tailed deer and Roosevelt elk. A list of mammals considered resident species of Clark County is included in Appendix D.

Birds: Clark County provides habitat for more than 240 species of birds. These include relatively common species such as European starling, California gull, barn swallow, great-horned owl, and American wigeon, as well as relatively rare species such as great egret, purple martin, snipe, green or green-backed heron, and black-crowned night heron. The Columbia River lowlands, with their abundant wetland areas and mild climate, provide especially favorable conditions for bird species. In fact, the Clark County Perspectives Resource Document states, “it is likely that any (bird) species found in Clark County may also be found in the refuge.” Two lists of Clark County birds are included in Appendix D: Vancouver Audubon Society’s *Preliminary Checklist of Clark County Birds* and the list of Clark County birds contained in the Perspectives Resource Document.

Fish: The Columbia River system, including its primary and secondary tributaries, and the various freshwater ponds and lakes in the county support more than 40 species of fish. Fish populations include both native species such as chinook and coho salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon, and non-native species such as largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, and crappie. Fish populations in the county also include both migratory and resident species. Most of the migratory species are anadromous, which means they hatch in freshwater streams, migrate to the ocean as juveniles, and then return to freshwater as adults to spawn. Moreover, the county’s various salmon and steelhead runs include both hatchery-reared and naturally producing stocks of fish. Lists of fish species that can be found in the lower Columbia system and in selected lakes in Clark County are included in Appendix D.

Herpetofauna: Herpetology refers to the study of amphibians and reptiles. The Perspectives Resource Document lists 14 species of amphibians (salamanders, toads, and frogs) that may be found in Clark County, and seven species of reptiles (turtles, lizards, and snakes). The Resource Document notes that amphibians and reptiles are distinct groups. Amphibians prefer marsh, lake, and stream habitats, while reptiles, excluding turtles, tend to prefer upland habitats.

Herpetofauna hibernate during the winter and are often difficult to observe in the spring, summer, and fall since they are generally secretive. A list of herpetofauna that may be found in Clark County is included in Appendix D.

Priority Species

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife publishes a priority species list for the state of Washington. WDFW defines priority species as “fish and wildlife species requiring protective measures and/or management guidelines to ensure their perpetuation.” Priority species must qualify under at least one of three criteria:

Criterion 1 – State Listed and Candidate Species: State listed species are those native fish and wildlife species legally designated under the Washington Administrative Code as endangered, threatened, or sensitive. State candidate species are those fish and wildlife species that will be reviewed by the department for possible listing as endangered, threatened, or sensitive according to the process and criteria defined in the WAC.

Criterion 2 – Vulnerable Aggregations: Vulnerable aggregations include those species or groups of animals susceptible to significant population declines, within a specific area or statewide, by virtue of their inclination to aggregate. Examples include heron rookeries, seabird concentrations, marine mammal haulouts, shellfish beds, and fish spawning and rearing areas.

Criterion 3 – Species of Recreational, Commercial, and/or Tribal Importance that are Vulnerable: Native and non-native fish and wildlife species of recreational or commercial importance, and recognized species used for tribal ceremonial and subsistence purposes, that are vulnerable to habitat loss or degradation.

This planning element includes in the appendix a list of priority species that are found in the state of Washington. Priority species found in the southwest Washington region include the designation WDFW Region #5, which comprises Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties. The list includes information about the status of the species and identifies which of three PHS criteria were used to designate a particular species as a priority species. Examples of priority species found in WDFW Region 5 and Clark County include: sandhill cranes (criterion #1 – state listed species), great blue heron (criterion #2 – vulnerable aggregations), largemouth bass (criterion #3 – recreational importance).

Species of Concern

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife publishes both a *Priority Habitat and Species* list and a *Species of Concern* list. The Species of Concern list is essentially a subset of the Priority Species List (see above – PHS Criterion #1). Species of Concern include those species that have been listed by the state as endangered, threatened, sensitive, and candidate, as well as species listed or proposed for listing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Washington Administrative Code establishes species that are state endangered, threatened, and sensitive. Candidate species are established by WDFW policy. Definitions of each designation are as follows:

State Endangered: Any wildlife species native to the state of Washington that is seriously threatened with extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the state (WAC 232-12-014).

State Threatened: Any wildlife species native to the state of Washington that is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout a significant portion of its range within the state without cooperative management or removal of threats (WAC 232-12-011).

State Sensitive: Any wildlife species native to the state of Washington that is vulnerable or declining and is likely to become endangered or threatened in a significant portion of its range within the state without cooperative management or removal threats (WAC 232-12-011).

State Candidate: Any fish and wildlife species that the department will review for possible listing as State Endangered, Threatened, or Sensitive. A species will be considered for designation as a State Candidate if sufficient evidence suggests that its status may meet the listing criteria defined for State Endangered, Threatened, or Sensitive (WDFW Policy M-6001).

Clark County provides habitat for a number of TES and Candidate species. These include sandhill cranes (state endangered), peregrine falcon (state endangered), bald eagle (state threatened), larch mountain salamander (state sensitive), chinook salmon (federal threatened), chum salmon (federal threatened), and steelhead (federal threatened). A complete list of Washington State Listed Species (Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive) and Species of Concern is included in Appendix D.

Migratory Species and Supporting Habitats

Anadromous Fish: Clark County and the lower Columbia region provide critical habitat for a variety of migratory fish and wildlife species. These include a variety of salmon and steelhead populations that have been listed or proposed for listing as federal threatened species, as well as some of the largest populations of migratory waterfowl, neotropical migrant birds, and shorebirds on the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Historically, it is estimated that as many as 15 - 17 million adult salmon and steelhead returned each year to the Columbia River. Over time, these fish populations have experienced severe declines. Salmon and steelhead populations are now estimated to be less than 10 percent of their original size. Many individual stocks have been eliminated and others are severely depressed. In recent years, the number of chum salmon returning to the Columbia have been in some years less than one percent of historic high levels.

The lower Columbia region now has the largest number of salmon and steelhead runs in the state of Washington listed or proposed for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act. These include lower Columbia chum (federal threatened), chinook (federal threatened), steelhead (federal threatened), sea-run cutthroat (proposed federal threatened), and coho (under review). Bull trout, a resident species, are also listed as federal threatened.

Collectively, Clark County streams support several naturally spawning stocks of listed salmon and steelhead. Streams supporting naturally producing anadromous fish populations include the Lewis River system, the Washougal River system, Salmon Creek and other smaller tributaries. These streams provide critical habitat for spawning and rearing, and are essential to the overall

recovery of lower Columbia fish populations. Both the Lower Columbia Steelhead Conservation Initiative and Washington Conservation Commission Limiting Factors Analysis identify Clark County streams as highly important to salmon recovery. The LCSCI identifies the East Fork Lewis and Washougal Rivers as “Tier II” streams; only the Wind and Kalama are rated as higher priorities in terms of steelhead recovery in the lower Columbia region.

Migratory Birds: Clark County and the lower Columbia River are located within an extensive migration route known as the Pacific Flyway that extends from the Bering Sea in Alaska along the Pacific Seaboard to South America. In addition, the wetlands and floodplains associated with the Columbia River, lower East Fork Lewis, and other tributaries are a key part of an area known as the Lower Columbia River Ecoregion, which extends downstream from Bonneville Dam to the Pacific Ocean.

The lower Columbia’s floodplain and wetland areas are highly important for migrating and wintering waterfowl, neotropical migrant birds, and shorebirds. These areas support the second largest wintering and migration populations of waterfowl on the Pacific Northwest Coast, the first being the northern bays of Puget Sound. Peak waterfowl numbers exceed 200,000 birds during migration, and the area regularly winters over 150,000 ducks, geese, and swans. The main puddle duck species are mallard, northern shoveler, American wigeon, northern pintail, and green-winged teal. The main diving ducks are canvasback, ring-necked duck, and lesser scaup. In addition, the area provides important habitat for several subspecies of Canada geese: taverners, lessers, cacklers, dusks, Aleutians, and to a lesser extent Vancouvers. All subspecies listed within the region winter in substantial numbers with the exception of Aleutians and Vancouver Canada geese (Lower Columbia Ecoregion Restoration Project, August 1994).

The protected riparian communities of the Lower Columbia River Ecoregion provide excellent habitat for a mixed assemblage of neotropical migratory bird species. Although several species are transients, the lower Columbia also supports one of the richest nesting neotropical bird communities in the Pacific Northwest. Twenty-six species of land birds utilize the forests for nesting, including several declining species in the Pacific Northwest: western wood pewee, willow flycatcher, purple martin, Swainson’s thrush, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, and black-headed grosbeak. In their lowland breeding range, all of these species are dependent upon palustrine hardwood forests. Although several are not listed by the Partners in Flight Program or the USFW Service, most are listed as threatened or species of concern in Washington, Oregon, and California (Lower Columbia River Ecoregion Restoration Project. August 1994).

The Lower Columbia Ecoregion is also seasonally important for migratory shorebirds. Twenty-five species of shorebirds have been recorded in the region. Most of the migratory shorebirds migrate along the coast staging in coastal tidal habitats such as Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor, and the bays of Puget Sound. However, the Vancouver Lake/Shillapoo Bottoms, Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, and Sauvies Island also provide important habitat for these bird species; the most common include long-billed dowitchers, dunlin, western sandpiper, common snipe, and yellow legs (Lower Columbia River Ecoregion Restoration Project, August 1994).

Terrestrial Wildlife: As part of the Pacific Flyway and lower Columbia River system, Clark County provides critical habitat to a variety of fish and bird species. In addition, the county provides locally important migration corridors for terrestrial wildlife. “These migration routes may include areas that are necessary for long-term shifts in wildlife species distributions, or that are used to facilitate movement to and from breeding habitats or summer and winter ranges.

Examples include travel corridors that are used by frogs and salamanders moving to and from seasonal wetlands for breeding, or by big-game during movements between summer and winter ranges” (WDFW letter, July 1994). Generally, the Clark County Open Space Commission and other groups have recognized the importance of maintaining interconnected systems of habitat and open space lands, particularly river and stream corridors, to enhance seasonal migrations and the general movement of wildlife populations.

WDFW Management Guidelines for Priority Habitats also emphasize the importance of interconnected systems of riparian habitat for purposes of fish and wildlife migration—especially in rapidly developing areas. The guidelines state: “The importance of riparian areas as travel corridors and routes for dispersion is amplified in developed or fragmented landscapes because alternative overland travel routes are often unavailable, discontinuous, or life endangering (Carleton and Taylor 1983, Blake 1986). Dispersing juveniles or adults of some species are prone to predation while traveling through open areas. In highly developed landscapes, riparian corridors provide essential connections between isolated natural areas” (Knutson and Naef, Management Recommendations for Washington’s Priority Habitats--Riparian, December 1997).

E. EXISTING AREAS & FACILITIES

EXISTING AREAS & FACILITIES

Introduction

This chapter presents an inventory of existing regional recreation and open space facilities provided by local, state, and federal agencies and private nonprofit organizations. Site-specific inventories are included, and are organized by operating agency, park classification, and natural system (e.g., Lower Salmon Creek Greenway). A table of site amenities and facilities is also included. Additional information about individual sites is available in Appendix E.

Park and Recreation Areas

US Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service has no substantial land holdings in Clark County. However, approximately 1,180 acres of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest are located within Clark County. The majority of the National Forest is located east and north of Clark County and extends from the Columbia River to Mount Rainier. It contains 1,366,000 acres and includes the 110,000 acre Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. Forest Service lands provide a variety of recreational opportunities including camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, and snowmobiling.

National Park Service

The National Park Service operates and maintains the 209-acre Fort Vancouver National Historic Site which is located in Vancouver near the Columbia River. The fort was established by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1824 and was the earliest white settlement in Clark County. A visitors center has been built and portions of the fort have been reconstructed. The National Park Service also maintains parade grounds and a play area.

US Fish & Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, located on the Columbia River in northwest Clark County. The refuge covers 5,149 acres and is the largest wildlife preserve in the county. The refuge includes a wide range of habitats, including emergent, scrub/shrub, and forested wetlands, and riparian and upland forests. Some parts of the refuge are leased for crop production and managed to support wildlife species such as Canada geese and sandhill cranes. While some parts of the refuge are closed to public access, other areas provide a variety of recreation opportunities. These include wildlife observation, hiking, environmental education, fishing, and seasonal waterfowl hunting in designated public hunting areas. A 1.5-mile nature trail extends through the "Carty Unit" at the north end of the refuge.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also manages the 974-acre Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge located on the Columbia River east of the Port of Camas/Washougal Industrial Park. Most of the refuge was purchased by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1985 to mitigate damage caused by the construction of the second powerhouse at Bonneville Dam. The land was transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1988 for management. Management plans are currently being written, with an emphasis toward anadromous fish and biological diversity.

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife is mandated by the state Legislature to preserve, protect, and perpetuate wildlife and to provide fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreation opportunities compatible with healthy and diverse wildlife populations. In Clark County, the department manages four wildlife and public hunting areas. These are Jenny Creek (20 acres located 3/4 mile north of La Center), Pigeon Springs (127 acres located on Cedar Creek west of Amboy), Vancouver Lake (477 acres on La Frambois Road at the south end of Vancouver Lake), and Shillapoo (1,684 acres between Lower River Road and SR501 west of Vancouver Lake). In addition, the department has developed boat launches and public access areas on many of the county's lakes and rivers. These include, for example, Daybreak Boat Launch on the East Fork of the Lewis River which was developed through a partnership between Clark County and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources is the largest public landowner in Clark County. DNR's most extensive land holdings cover about 60,000 acres within the 73,000-acre Yacolt Multiple Use Area. The YMUA lies in eastern Clark County and Skamania County. Recreational opportunities include fishing, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, off-road vehicle use, and motorcycle riding. DNR has developed eight camping and/or picnic areas within the Multiple Use Area, six of which are located in Clark County.

DNR also manages Caterpillar Island and the Woodland Special Campground for the handicapped. Caterpillar Island is located in the Columbia River four miles northwest of downtown Vancouver. Access is by boat only and facilities include four picnic sites. The Woodland Special Campground is located three miles east of Woodland on County Road 38. Facilities include 10 camp sites, five picnic sites, trails, and playground equipment.

Washington State Department of Parks and Recreation

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages four park sites in Clark County: Battle Ground Lake, Paradise Point, Reed Island, and Wormald. Total property holdings in Clark County are 1,044.

Battle Ground Lake State Park encompasses 280 acres with 4,100 feet of freshwater shoreline surrounding 28-acre Battle Ground Lake. Approximately 40 acres of the park have been developed. Facilities include 8 ½ miles of hiking and horse trails, a swimming beach and bathhouse, boat launch, 35 vehicle access overnight camp sites, 15 walk-in camp sites, a group camp with four Adirondacks, one large and two small group shelters, 89 picnic sites, children's play equipment, and open play meadow. Two full-time park rangers live on site. In addition, a volunteer campground host lives at the park 10 months each year.

Paradise Point State Park encompasses 96 acres and 6,180 feet of freshwater shoreline on the East Fork of the Lewis River immediately east of Interstate 5. Facilities include 70 drive-to camp sites, nine walk-in camp sites, swimming beach, picnic tables, trails and a primitive boat launch. Paradise Point State Park is located at the downstream end of the Lower Lewis River Greenway System. This system encompasses almost 2,000 acres and includes 10 miles of shoreline on the East Fork Lewis. Land managers include state parks, WDFW, Clark County, and private conservation groups.

Reed Island State Park is located 20 miles east of Vancouver in the Columbia River. Reed Island encompasses 508 acres with approximately six miles of freshwater shoreline. Facilities include five camp sites, five picnic sites, and a one-half mile hiking trail. Reed Island supports one of the largest rookeries for great blue heron in the Pacific Northwest.

Wormald State Park encompasses 160 acres. The park sits near the East Fork of the Lewis River, east of Moulton Falls, and is undeveloped. Wormald is surrounded by private property and access is walk-in only.

Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department

Clark County and the city of Vancouver completed in January 1997 the consolidation of the Clark County Parks Division and the Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department. The Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department now manages a combined inventory of approximately 6,025 acres of park and open space lands. These lands are divided into eight categories: regional parks, trails, conservation and greenway systems, wildlife habitat, special facilities, community parks, neighborhood parks, and urban open space.

The system of urban park and recreation facilities in the Vancouver urban area includes developed and undeveloped neighborhood and community parks, urban open space, conservation and greenway areas, trails, and special facilities, such as the Vancouver Tennis and Racquetball Center, and the Rudy Luepke Senior Center. Recreation programming is provided directly by department staff. Most facilities and services are intended to serve the urban population. However, some facilities—such as the Columbia River Renaissance Trail and Burnt Bridge Creek Greenway—also address regional needs.

The regional system of parks and open space focuses on providing countywide services. There are approximately 5,007 acres of regional park and open space land available to all county residents. These facilities include eight regional parks (e.g., Lewisville), seven special facilities (e.g., Daybreak), and over 2,900 acres of conservation and greenway systems.

Cities and Towns

There are eight incorporated cities in Clark County: Vancouver, Camas, Washougal, Ridgefield, Battle Ground, La Center, Yacolt, and part of Woodland, which overlaps Clark and Cowlitz Counties. Each city provides its own park facilities. These facilities are intended to serve city residents; however, they occasionally serve a regional need. For example, both Camas and Washougal have been active in acquiring open space lands in the Washougal River Greenway, and Camas owns portions of and manages the 3.5-mile Lacamas Heritage Trail.

School Districts

There are nine public school districts in Clark County which provide, in addition to core educational facilities, a variety of recreation opportunities and facilities for area residents. Typical facilities include play courts, soccer fields, baseball fields, football fields, running tracks, open play meadows, and children's play apparatus. Individual school board policies govern the general public use of school-based recreation facilities during non-school hours. Some school districts allow organizations, such as youth soccer and baseball groups, to reserve and rent school buildings, playgrounds, and athletic fields.

Private and Nonprofit

Private recreation facilities exist throughout Clark County. They provide a wide range of recreation activities generally on a membership or fee basis. For example, the Cedars Golf Course is open to the public on a fee basis. This facility provides a full-size, 18-hole golf course, driving range, putting greens, and pro shop. The private recreation industry influences recreation planning by providing needed facilities, thereby easing the burden on public recreation facilities. However, when these facilities are not available for general public use, they are not considered in the overall assessment of public demand and need.

Nonprofit organizations provide a variety of recreation facilities in Clark County. These facilities are typically dedicated to a single use, such as baseball or soccer, and are reserved for the teams and leagues that developed them. When located on park land, these facilities are available to the public when not in use by the nonprofit organization. The Salmon Creek Sports Complex north of Hazel Dell is an example.

In addition, private land trusts are becoming increasingly involved in Clark County with the acquisition, preservation, and stewardship of habitat and open space lands. The Columbia Land Trust, for example, currently owns or holds easements on a variety of sites that include Enchanted Acres, Camp Currie, Lacamas Creek Greenway, Fallen Leaf Lake, Mud Lake, and Washougal Gateway. In some cases, land trusts acquire sites with the intent to hold them in perpetuity. In other cases, the land trust will hold properties under terms of memoranda of understanding or other agreements that provide for future transfer of the properties to other agencies or jurisdictions.

Special Partnership Facilities

Clark County Fairgrounds – The Clark County Fairgrounds is located west of Interstate 5 near the I-5/179th Street interchange. Clark County owns the fairgrounds. Through a contract with the county, a committee consisting of representatives from the county and the Clark County Fair Association Board of Directors manages all events at the fairgrounds. Existing facilities include a stage and grandstand, equestrian center, commercial and exposition buildings, community center, animals barns, fair offices, and storage facilities. (In November 1998, Clark County signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a private vendor for the construction of an 18,000-seat amphitheater.) Recent events at the fairgrounds range from the fair itself to many other educational, agricultural, and entertainment-oriented activities. These include animal shows, the Home and Garden Idea Fair, 4-H and Future Farmers functions, community meetings, company picnics, and business fairs and trade shows. A master plan, completed in 1995, helps to guide improvements to grounds and facilities.

Tri-Mountain Golf Course – Clark County is the owner of the Tri-Mountain Golf Course, located immediately east of the I-5 corridor and south of NW 299th Street. Golf Resources Northwest, a private management company, manages the golf course under agreement with Clark County. The golf course covers 18 holes, with a putting green and driving range. Other facilities include a restaurant, clubhouse, pro shop, and banquet room.

English Pit Shooting Range – The English Pit Shooting Range is a special facility owned by Clark County and managed under lease by the Vancouver Wildlife League. The facility includes five ranges: pistol, small bore, sighting-in (25 yards), rifle/black powder (50 yards), and rifle (100 yards). Operating hours and days vary with the time of year and season. A small annual

membership fee is charged to cover operating costs, plus a per-visit fee. The shooting range is located immediately west of SE 192nd Avenue, about one-half mile south of SE 18th Street.

Harmony Sports Complex – The Harmony Sports Complex is a special facility owned by Clark County and managed by the Harmony Sports Association. The existing site covers 40 acres, with plans to expand at the current location. The sports complex provides opportunities for soccer, Little League, and youth softball. The site is located at the corner of SE 18th Street and 192nd Avenue.

Grist Mill - The historic Cedar Creek Grist Mill was built in 1876 and restored in 1989 as a centennial project. It is the only 19th century grist mill still operating in Washington State. The mill is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is situated immediately upstream of an updated (higher and wider) covered, authentic timber-truss bridge—the only one in Clark County. The new bridge was built in 1995. The 11.8 acre site is currently owned by the Washington State Fish & Wildlife Department and leased to the Friends of the Cedar Creek Grist Mill until April 30, 2001. The site also functions as a fish-monitoring site. The creek has a fish ladder built in the 60s-70s. Clark County will continue discussions with WDFW, the leaseholder, and interested parties to clarify options for long-term ownership and management of the site.

Special Study Areas

L&C Railroad – Clark County acquired in 1985 the Lewis and Clark Railroad right-of-way which extends diagonally through the county from Vancouver Lake to Chelatchie Prairie. Clark County acquired the right-of-way both for commercial transportation uses and as a trail corridor. The Clark County Comprehensive Trails Plan identifies the corridor as one of five top priority, “natural corridor” trail systems in the county. The corridor connects Battle Ground Lake State Park, Lucia Falls Park, Moulton Falls Park, and many other major recreation sites.

Camp Bonneville – Camp Bonneville is a 3,000+ acre federal military training facility located in southeast Clark County. In 1995, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission selected Camp Bonneville for transfer and reuse. In compliance with federal guidelines, the Clark County Board of Commissioners adopted in September 1998 a draft reuse plan for the site. The plan includes a 1,000-acre regional park, a retreat center/outdoor school, and approximately 2,000 acres for trails and nature areas. Law enforcement, cultural, and educational facilities are also identified in the plan. The Department of the Army must approve the county’s reuse plan. If the plan is approved, studies of the feasibility and costs of removing unexploded ordinance from the site will govern transfer of the facility to local agencies. Camp Bonneville provides an important opportunity for meeting regional parks needs in Clark County and is considered a high priority for regional park acquisition in the Capital Improvements Program.

F. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Introduction

This chapter describes the public's involvement in developing the regional parks plan. It begins by reviewing six citizen-based planning efforts conducted between 1989 and 1998. Next, it describes the results of public opinion surveys, community meetings, and stakeholder interviews conducted in late 1999. Finally, it outlines opportunities for public input through the SEPA environmental review process and at public meetings held by the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners.

Community-Based Plans

The six plans reviewed in this section are community-based plans. Their development involved public input and participation, and their implementation has enjoyed community support.

Clark County Open Space Commission Final Report

The 14-member Clark County Open Space Commission was organized in November 1989 to prepare an open space plan for the county. Following three years of work, which included a citizen survey in June 1991, the commission issued its final report in August 1992. The commission's report has served as the primary guide in planning and acquiring the county's growing system of open space, greenways, and habitat areas. The report's 13 general policies for evaluating and prioritizing open space lands, and the category-specific planning policies for river systems and associated floodplains and Columbia River lowlands are listed in this document. The Clark County Open Space Commission Final Report is incorporated by reference.

Clark County Trails & Bikeway System Plan

The county's trails and bikeway plan was prepared under the guidance of and with input from a 15-member task force of private and public agencies and interested citizens. Task force membership included representatives from bicycle, walking, and equestrian clubs, the Clark County Parks Board, and providers of trails on public lands, including the US Fish & Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, and Washington Departments of Fisheries, Wildlife, Transportation, and Natural Resources. Additional information was gathered during two series of public workshops.

Published in December 1992 and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in September 1993, the Clark County Trails & Bikeway System Plan establishes nine general and 31 specific planning policies to guide the acquisition, design, and development of trails and bikeways. The general planning goals are listed in this document. The complete trails and bikeway plan is incorporated by reference.

Clark County Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

The 1994 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan was the county's first parks plan developed under the requirements of the Growth Management Act. Under GMA, preparation of the parks plan was incorporated into the overall land use planning process. This included participation in an extensive public outreach program involving 19 public workshops held throughout the county, a public opinion survey, community outreach, and citizen and agency advisory boards.

The county parks department also sponsored opportunities for public input and involvement, including two public opinion surveys—the June 1991 open space survey and the March 1992 parks survey—six special citizen committees, and 10 special interest group meetings.

The Clark County Board of Commissioners adopted the Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan in June 1994, and readopted it in December 1994. Since adoption, the plan has served as the county's policy guide for acquisition and development of urban and regional parks and facilities. The regional goals and objectives from the 1994 plan are included in this document, with minor changes, additions, and deletions. Urban policies will be addressed in a separate planning process.

Clark County Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan

The 1995 Clark County Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan was developed as a guide for identifying, acquiring, and maintaining lands that provide valuable wildlife habitat. Preparation of the plan involved integrating data from public planning projects and existing plans and reports. Information generated by the Clark County Open Space Commission, Conservation Futures Open Space Program, and Growth Management planning program was used extensively. Other important sources included the 1991 open space citizen survey, 1992 parks citizen survey, GMA Perspectives program, and site-specific management plans for the LaCenter Bottoms Stewardship Site, South Vancouver Lake Conservation and Greenway Area, and WDFW's Shillpoo and Vancouver Lake Wildlife Areas.

The 1995 plan was published as a stand-alone document. Here, it is integrated with the parks, recreation, and open space plan. Its goals and objectives have been transferred and remain fundamentally the same, with changes to reflect the listing of lower Columbia salmon and steelhead populations under the federal Endangered Species Act. Adoption of the new parks, recreation, and open space plan will replace the 1995 Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan.

Clark County Sports Field Master Plan

The Clark County Sports Field Master Plan was published in January 1998. It was developed under the guidance of two community-based committees. A 16-member citizen task force represented user groups. It was composed of representatives of baseball, softball, soccer, and football at the adult, teen, and youth levels. Invitations to participate were sent to 42 leagues. A 13-member administrative task force represented sport field providers. It included members from cities, schools, and Clark County.

The plan includes goals for cities, schools, user groups, and the county. Thirteen county planning goals were compiled from the plan and are listed in this document. The complete sports fields plan is incorporated by reference.

Clark County 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan

Clark County's current land use plan was prepared under the requirements of the Growth Management Act. The planning process began in October 1991 with development of the Community Framework Plan—a vision of what the county should like in 50 years. This was followed by preparation of the 20-Year comprehensive land use plan. Both processes were structured to maximize public input.

Opportunities for citizens to learn about and participate in the planning process were extensive. They included a steering committee composed of all city mayors and the county commissioners,

a technical advisory committee, and issue-based subcommittees, including one on parks. A comprehensive public information program was also implemented, including newsletters, speakers, a telephone “hotline,” programming on city-county television, and periodic progress reports mailed to all county residents. Other opportunities for citizen participation included eight visioning workshops, five planning fairs, planning workshops, a lecture series, and a countywide public opinion survey conducted in 1992.

The Clark County 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan was adopted in 1994, and amended and readopted in 1996 and 1997. A condensed version of the parks plan is included as an element of the comprehensive plan.

Assessing Public Opinion

Several methods were employed as part of the 2000 parks plan update to solicit public opinion about the needs and priorities for regional park facilities in Clark County. The results of these efforts played an important role in preparing and prioritizing the capital facilities plan.

Community Survey

Intercept Research Corporation of Tigard, Oregon, was retained to conduct a statistically reliable survey of the community’s attitudes and priorities related to acquisition and development of regional parks, recreation, and open space facilities and areas. The survey was conducted during August and September of 1999.

When the results of the 1999 survey are compared to a similar survey conducted by Intercept Research in March of 1992—a seven-year period during which the county’s population grew over 30%, adding 79,500 new residents—the results are very similar. For example, the five most popular recreation activities identified in the two surveys are the same activities, in the same order, but with higher individual and household participation in 1999. A more complete discussion of the survey’s results is presented later in this section and in Appendix F.

Internet Survey

Mail Survey

A separate survey, composed of fewer questions, was posted on the county’s Internet site and distributed at public meetings; 74 surveys were completed and returned. Although not a scientific sampling, this “individual” survey provided valuable citizen input into development of the parks plan.

Responses to the individual survey were quite similar to those of the community-wide survey, with slightly higher levels of support and participation. For example, the importance of parks to the county’s quality of life was rated as “very important” or “important” by 91% of individual survey respondents and 92% of community-wide survey respondents. However, the “very important” component of the combined rating was 87% in the individual survey and 67% in community-wide survey. There were also areas where survey responses were dissimilar. For example, support for a real estate excise tax dedicated to acquisition and maintenance of natural areas and open space lands received 70% approval from individual survey respondents, while only 55% of community-wide respondents were in favor. A more complete summary of the survey’s results is presented in Appendix G.

Public Meetings

Five public meetings were held at locations throughout the county in late September and early October, 1999, to allow citizens the opportunity to ask questions, submit ideas, and make recommendations about the future of the county's regional system of parks and open spaces. Each meeting was well advertised with public notices, paid advertisements, direct mail, and letters to the editor. Participation varied among locations, with a total attendance of 52. Public comments and recommendations are listed in Appendix H.

Meeting #1 LaCenter/Ridgefield: Public comment focused on the East Fork Lewis River and the LaCenter Bottoms, including development plans, trail improvements, and equestrian impacts.

Meeting #2 Camas/Washougal: The use patterns and impacts of bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians in Lacamas Lake Park were popular topics. The future development and management of Cottonwood Beach was discussed, including possible participation by several different agencies. Additional park and recreation facilities around Lacamas Lake and better preservation and utilization of the Columbia River waterfront were mentioned.

Meeting #3 Battle Ground/Yacolt: The needs identified during this meeting varied widely. The need for sports fields, especially for youth, was seen as critical. Efforts to acquire park land in the city should be increased, although the opportunity may already be lost. Partnering with Clark County and looking outside the city for park land was discussed, as was the importance of conserving natural areas and systems, such as wetlands, and the benefits they provide.

Meeting #4 West Vancouver: Much of the discussion focused on trails, including the need for re-vegetation, better support facilities, trailheads, and incorporation of equestrian use. The remainder of the discussion was wide-ranging, and included the need for wildlife habitat preservation, access for the disabled, accelerated land acquisition, better public information, and more sports fields and swimming pools.

Meeting #5 East Vancouver: The final meeting was held in the East Vancouver UGA. Priorities identified by participants included regional parks, regional trails, sports fields, open spaces, and swimming pools.

Stakeholder Interviews

More than 20 interviews were held with individuals and small groups who have a direct interest in the county's parks and open space plan and the services and facilities it addresses. Information gathered from these interviews provided an important perspective of the community's parks and open space needs. The interview process also offered an opportunity to discuss service delivery, partnership opportunities, project and program priorities, and implementation and management strategies.

Interviews included representatives from federal, state, and local agencies that provide parks and open space facilities in Clark County, as well as from agencies responsible for water quality, wildlife preservation, and timber management. Special interest groups that focus on trail development, equestrian facilities, and bicycle paths were also consulted, as were representatives from business, industrial development, and neighborhood preservation.

Vision 2000 Symposium

The “Vision 2000” open space planning symposium was held in Vancouver on March 23, 2000. More than 200 Vancouver and Clark County residents participated in the event. Individually and in groups, participants shared ideas and developed plans for the future of open space in Clark County over the next 50 to 100 years.

A summary of the ideas and suggestions generated at the symposium are contained in the report “Framing a Community Vision for Open Space in Vancouver and Clark County” (Appendix L). The report provides a broad framework for open space planning and addresses the major areas of trails, wildlife habitat, urban parks, urban density, views and vistas, and community landscaping/vegetation.

Telephone

Regular Mail and email

Three additional ways to submit input were widely advertised: telephone, regular mail, and email. In most cases the direct telephone number and mailing and emailing addresses of the staff member in charge of the project were provided. Although few in number, responses by telephone and mail provided an important source of information for use in developing the parks plan.

Public Review & Adoption Process

In addition to the public’s participation in developing the regional parks and open space plan, four additional opportunities to influence the plan are provided.

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) establishes guidelines and procedures for determining if a proposed action, such as the adoption of a comprehensive parks and open space plan, has significant, adverse environmental impacts. These procedures include public and agency notification of proposed actions and opportunities for public comment.

Locally, processes for adopting the parks and open space plan provide several opportunities for public input and comment. The plan is reviewed first by the citizen-based Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation Commission. The commission’s meetings are open to the public. The plan goes next to the Clark County Planning Commission, which considers, modifies and recommends action on the plan. Planning Commission meetings and hearings are open to the public and opportunities for public comment are provided. Finally, the Clark County Board of Commissioners considers, modifies and takes action on the plan. Board meetings and hearings are open to the public and opportunities for public testimony are provided.

Public Opinion Survey

Clark County retained Intercept Research Corporation of Tigard, Oregon, to conduct a statistically-reliable assessment of citizen’s attitudes and opinions about park, recreation, and open space facilities and services. Telephone interviews were conducted with 400 randomly-selected residents throughout Clark County during August and September of 1999.

Hiking or walking was the most popular recreation activity with 78% individual participation and 84% household participation. Picnicking (66% and 69%), wildlife observation (49% and 51%), camping (47% and 53%), and swimming (45% and 57%) completed the top five activities. These are the same top five activities identified in the county's 1992 parks survey, in the same

order, but with higher individual and household participation. Bicycling and fishing ranked sixth and seventh, the reverse of the 1992 survey.

Swimming pools were ranked as the most needed facility, project, improvement, or program in the parks and recreation system (26%)—the same ranking found in the county's 1992 parks survey. More parks in general (19%), more hiking/walking trails (13%), new and renovated sports fields (13%), bike trails (11%), and more playgrounds for children (10%), complete the list of the top six most needed facilities.

The importance of park and recreation services and facilities to the quality of life in Clark County was ranked "5-very important" by 67% of survey respondents—up from 52% in the county's 1992 parks survey. Another 25% of respondents ranked the importance of parks as "4." When these two rankings are combined, 92% or nine out of every 10 survey respondents believed park and recreation services and facilities are important to Clark County's quality of life.

Overall safety and security of parks and recreation facilities in Clark County was ranked "5-excellent" by 13% of survey respondents—up from 8% in the county's 1992 parks survey. Similarly, 32% of survey respondents ranked safety and security as "4," up from 22% in 1992.

Improved water quality was cited by 75% of survey respondents as a "very important" reason to have natural areas and open space lands in Clark County. Protecting wildlife habitat (63%), conserving farm and rural forest lands (61%), and protecting shorelines (62%) were the next three factors ranked as "very important" functions. More than half of the survey respondents identified providing low-intensity recreation facilities (58%), preserving historic and archeological sites (57%), and recovering threatened salmon species (51%) as "very important" reasons to have natural areas and open space lands.

Additional real estate excise tax dedicated to acquisition and maintenance of natural areas and open space lands was supported by 55% of survey respondents. Opposition totaled 29%, with 16% undecided. In 1992, support was 58%, opposition was 32%, with 10% undecided.

Vancouver's Central Park/Fort Vancouver Historic Site was visited at least once during the preceding 12 months by 61% of survey respondents. Lewisville Park (45%), Lacamas Lake Park (37%), Vancouver Lake Park (37%), and Salmon Creek Park (31%), complete the list of the top five regional parks. Hiking and walking activities are supported by the next three facilities: Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge (29%), Salmon Creek Trail (27%), and Burnt Bridge Creek Trail (25%). Burnt Bridge Creek Trail and the Salmon Creek Trail received the highest frequency of use by those who indicated they had visited the sites: 9.96 and 8.54 times, respectively.

Continued development of park and recreation facilities and services to meet current and future needs was supported by 91% of survey respondents—down slightly from 93% in the 1992 parks survey. Purchasing land now to be set aside for future park and recreation development was supported by 85% of survey respondents—up from 76% in 1992. And 81% of survey respondents supported allowing local and national businesses to sponsor park facilities (and to post signs indicated sponsorship) as a way to generate additional revenue.

Support for increased taxes to acquire and develop or preserve regional parks, natural areas, open space lands, trails, and sports facilities decreased as the amount of the annual tax increased (\$10,

\$20, or \$40). The highest support (77%) was for acquiring and developing regional parks at a cost of \$10 per year. The lowest support (37%) was for acquiring and developing sports fields at a cost of \$40 per year. For all three proposed tax increases, acquiring and developing regional parks received the highest level of support, followed by acquiring and preserving natural areas and open space lands. Next was acquiring and developing hiking biking equestrian trails, followed by acquiring developing sports fields.

G. DEFINITIONS & STANDARDS

DEFINITIONS & STANDARDS

Introduction

Clark County's regional system of parks and open space is divided into five categories: regional parks, greenways, trails, special facilities, and wildlife habitat. Each category is composed of facilities that serve a regional function; that is, they serve the entire county. One category, regional parks, is based on a minimum service standard measured in acres per population. Greenways, trails, and wildlife habitat are based on a specific resource, such as a river system or a sensitive habitat area, independent of population. Special facilities can be either population- or resource-based.

These park categories, as well as the population-based standards, have evolved through several editions of the county's parks, recreation, and open space plan. They are based generally on standards published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, 1983) and have been modified to fit the needs of Clark County.

Regional Park

A regional park is an area with natural or man-made qualities for outdoor recreation, such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and trail uses, or with unique qualities or historical significance. Play areas may also be included. Regional parks typically serve several communities within one hour driving time, although closeness to population centers is desired. They typically range in size from 100 to more than 325 acres. The desirable size is 200 acres or greater, although no minimum is recommended.

Acquisition goal:	20 acres/1,000 population
Acquisition standard:	10 acres/1,000 population
Development standard:	18% of site developed

Regional Conservation and Greenway Systems

Regional conservation and greenway systems are resource-based open spaces. They are acquired with the intent of little or no development. Conservation areas may act as a buffer for an existing park or residential area, or may protect a sensitive natural area. Greenways are similar to conservation areas, but are typically long, relatively narrow lands which follow roads, creeks, ridges, ravines, and other natural or transportation corridors. Conservation and greenway systems serve various functions, including protection of environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife habitat, wildlife viewing, environmental education, and trails.

The Clark County Open Space Commission Final Report identifies four categories of conservation, greenway, and open space lands. Each category includes lands that provide multiple benefits and high functional value.

1. *River systems and associated floodplains*, which provide low-intensity recreation, natural vegetation, shorelines, and fish and wildlife habitat. Examples include North and East Fork Lewis River, Lacamas Lake and Creek, Washougal River, Burnt Bridge Creek, and Salmon Creek.
2. *Columbia River lowlands*, which provide low-intensity recreation, natural vegetation, shorelines, and fish and wildlife habitat, similar to that of river systems and associated floodplains, but on a larger scale.
3. *Cascade foothills*, which provide significant wildlife habitat, natural vegetation, watersheds and waterways, and remote, low-intensity recreation opportunities.
4. *Dispersed open space areas*, which are site-specific and may include resource, economic, and urban benefits.

These four categories and the acquisition priorities developed by the Open Space Commission guide the county in acquiring and managing regional conservation and greenway systems. The availability of funding and the level of threat to identified, high priority lands determine the rate at which the open space plan is implemented.

Acquisition standard: no acreage standard; acquisition based on the value of the resource, and on completing the conservation and greenway system

Development standard: no acreage or facility standard; improvements based on management plans, and on the quality and character of the resource

Regional Trails

The Clark County Trails and Bikeways System Plan identifies a comprehensive trail and bicycle system throughout Clark County that provides opportunities for non-motorized travel (walking, bicycling, skating, and horseback riding) to meet county recreation, fitness, and commuting needs. These trails serve all county residents. Five trail types are identified in the plan:

1. Regional multi-use trails, which make up a network of trails across the county for pedestrian and bicycle use, with equestrian use on the shoulder, where feasible.
2. Local trails, which provide access from neighborhoods to regional multi-use trails.
3. Rustic trails, which provide access to natural areas and opportunities for loop trails.
4. Semi-primitive trails, which are found in rural and forest areas and provide a more nature-related experience.
5. Bike lanes and pedestrian walkways, which are located on city, county, and state road rights-of-way.

Regional trail projects that are consistent with the plan, expand and/or complement existing facilities, and complete trail linkages within existing systems are given high priority. Trailheads with auto parking, restrooms, signage, interpretative markers, and educational information are

desirable. Trail design and construction standards are included in the Trails and Bikeways System Plan.

There is no service standard. Trail segments should be of sufficient distance to meet the intended recreation, fitness, or commuting need.

Acquisition standard: no acreage standard; acquisition based on functional value of the resource, and on completing the trails and bikeways system

Development standard: no acreage or facility standard; development based on completing the trails and bikeways system; design guidelines are in the Trails & Bikeway System Plan

Regional Special Facilities

Regional special facilities are typically located and developed to serve one or more recreational, historical, cultural, environmental, or educational activities. They may be located independently, or within a regional park, greenway, or other park area. Facility standards and minimum sizes vary. Some special facility types do not have standards; however, the facility and/or site must be large enough to accommodate the specific use.

Regional special facilities range from active recreation areas, such as sports complexes and campgrounds, to more passive activities, such as scenic overlooks and botanical gardens. The Clark County Sports Field Master defines the types and quantities of sports fields needed to meet current and projected use patterns.

Acquisition standard: no acreage or facility standard; acquisition needs based on the facility type and community use patterns

Development standard: no acreage or facility standard; development based on facility type and community use patterns

Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife habitat is composed of land, water, vegetation, and other natural resources necessary to support fish and wildlife populations. Clark County has used several methods to map and/or designate its highest priority habitat and critical/sensitive lands (e.g., high-quality wetlands). These include the Clark County Open Space Commission Report, GMA Critical Lands designations, Washington State Priority Habitat and Species Program, Washington Conservation Commission Fish Distribution Maps and Limiting Factors Analyses, and Lower Columbia Steelhead Conservation Initiative. While these programs utilized different methodologies to identify high-priority wildlife habitat, the results produce similar or complementary findings and lead to consistent preservation priorities.

Acquisition standard: no acreage standard; acquisition based on the value of the resource, and on completing/protecting identified, valuable wildlife habitat

Development standard: no acreage standard; improvements based on management plans, and on the quality and character of the resource

H. BENEFITS OF RECREATION

BENEFITS OF RECREATION

Introduction

One way to express the importance of local park and recreation services and facilities is to highlight the individual and community benefits they provide. Rather than measuring the number of facilities or calculating their service capacity, this approach identifies the values and benefits of participation.

Known as the “benefits movement,” this strategy has gained popularity since its 1991 inception as a benefits-based method for evaluating, measuring, promoting, and marketing park and recreation services. Clark County first used the benefits concept in its 1994 comprehensive parks plan.

The values of participation are represented here by four benefit categories: personal, social, economic, and environmental.²

Personal Benefits

A park, recreation, and open space system provides the basis for cultivating personal benefits such as physical fitness and health, stress reduction, positive self-image, opportunities for personal growth, and a better quality of life.

1.1 Physical recreation and fitness contributes to a full and meaningful life.

1.2 Regular physical activity is one of the very best methods of health insurance for individuals.

1.3 Relaxation, rest, and revitalization through the opportunity of leisure is essential to stress management in today's busy and demanding world.

1.4 Meaningful leisure activity is an essential source of self-esteem and positive self-image.

1.5 Leisure provides the opportunity to lead balanced lives, achieve our full potential, and gain life satisfaction.

1.6 Children's play is essential to the human development process.

1.7 Leisure opportunities for youth provide positive lifestyle choices and alternatives to self-destructive behavior.

1.8 Parks and open spaces bring beauty to an area while giving people satisfaction and improving their quality of life.

² “The Benefits of Parks and Recreation,” The Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario, Gloucester, Ontario, 1992

Social Benefits

A park, recreation, and open space system provides opportunities for social benefits such as leadership development, community involvement, ethnic and cultural harmony, stronger families, community pride, and opportunities for disabled and disadvantaged individuals.

- 2.1 Leisure provides leadership opportunities that build strong communities.
- 2.2 Community recreation reduces alienation, loneliness, and antisocial behaviors.
- 2.3 Community recreation promotes ethnic and cultural harmony.
- 2.4 Recreating together builds strong families, the foundation of a stronger society.
- 2.5 Leisure provides opportunities for community involvement, and shared management and ownership of resources.
- 2.6 Integrated and accessible leisure services are critical to the quality of life of people with a disability and disadvantaged individuals.
- 2.7 Leisure opportunities, facilities, and the quality of the local environment are the foundations of community pride.
- 2.8 Leisure services enrich and complement protective services for latchkey children through after-school and other recreational services.

Economic Benefits

Park, recreation, and open space opportunities provide economic benefits such as preventative health care, productive workforce, business relocation and expansion, reduced vandalism and crime, tourism, and investment in environmental protection.

- 3.1 Pay now or pay more later! Investment in recreation as a preventive health service makes sense.
- 3.2 A fit workforce is a productive workforce.
- 3.3 Small investments in recreation yield big economic returns.
- 3.4 Parks and recreation services motivate business relocation and expansion in your community.
- 3.5 Meaningful leisure services reduce the high cost of vandalism and criminal activity.
- 3.6 Recreation and park services are often the catalyst for tourism, a growing sector of our economy.
- 3.7 Investments in environmental protection through the provision of parks and open spaces pay for themselves.

Environmental Benefits

Park, recreation, and open space opportunities provide environmental benefits such as greater environmental health, environmental protection and rehabilitation, and insurance for an improved environmental future.

4.1 Through the provision of parks, open spaces, and protected natural environments, recreation can contribute to the environmental health of our communities. This is an essential, life-sustaining role.

4.2 The public is often prepared to pay for environmental protection and rehabilitation in their communities, and to support parks and recreation organizations that play a lead role in that protection.

4.3 Investing in the environment through parks and the provision of open space in residential areas, leads to an increase in neighborhood property values through accessibility to environmentally friendly green spaces and associated recreation opportunities.

4.4 The trend toward natural environment based leisure activities is insurance for a new and improved environmental future.

I. GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Introduction

The goals, objectives, and policies included in this plan provide the framework for the county's regional parks and recreation system. Goal statements are presented first. They are broad, inclusive, and focus on long-term results. Objectives that support and further refine the goals are listed next. Finally, implementing policies are listed below each objective.

Collectively, they create a community-based vision of the services and facilities needed to serve the county's residents. They promote stability and predictability. And they ensure that the efforts of citizens, staff, and elected officials are focused on common outcomes.

Individually, they provide policy direction for implementing the parks plan. They provide guidance in setting priorities and allocating limited resources. And they serve as benchmarks for measuring success or failure.

Planning Goals

With the adoption of the Growth Management Act in 1990, the Washington State Legislature prescribed land use planning guidelines for selected cities and counties in the state, including Clark County. The Legislature identified 13 planning goals to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations (now codified in Chapter 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington). Three of these goals directly affect the development and implementation of this plan.

RCW 36.70A.020(9) covers parks, recreation, and open space:

“Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.”

RCW 36.70A.020(10) covers the environment:

“Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.”

36.70A.020(13) covers historic preservation:

“Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archeological significance.”

Under the umbrella of the Growth Management Act, Clark County has developed local planning goals to further guide the development and provision of park services and facilities. The county’s mission statement for parks is the most fundamental of these goals:

“Maximize the quality of life in Clark County by providing regional open space, trails, parks, and recreational opportunities and facilities, and by planning to acquire, restore, enhance, preserve, develop and manage these facilities and

natural resources in such a manner as to afford the maximum benefit to the community.”

Objectives & Policies

This section is divided into six planning objectives and corresponding implementing policies. The objectives and policies are organized based on the types of facilities and services addressed in this plan: general policies (multiple park types), regional parks, special facilities, trails, conservation and greenway systems, and wildlife habitat.

Objective #1

General Policies

Provide a comprehensive parks program that focuses on regional facilities and services that benefit all county residents regardless of location, and that provides broad-based opportunities for community involvement.

1.1 GENERAL POLICIES

1.1.1 Conduct comprehensive, long-term planning for parks, trails/bikeways, open space, wildlife areas, and recreation services that assures adequate open space and park land is available for current and future needs.

1.1.2 Coordinate the delivery of regional park and open space services with other government agencies, towns and cities, private nonprofits, and other partner organizations to maximize opportunities and efficiencies.

1.1.3 Coordinate regional park and open space activities with Metro, Lower Columbia River Estuary Program, and other appropriate jurisdictions in Oregon to promote bi-state planning and funding efforts.

1.1.4 Coordinate regional park and open space acquisition, planning, and management with other county departments and programs to maximize efficiency.

1.1.5 Encourage and work with school districts to allow for shared access of facilities for recreational and other public purposes.

1.1.6 Insure public participation in the management of park and recreation services through appointment of a citizen advisory group and through citizen-based, project-specific task forces.

1.1.7 Respond to public interest by working with communities, sports associations, and special and general interest groups to provide public park and recreation facilities that the county could not provide alone.

1.1.8 Maximize the refunding potential of Conservation Futures and other local revenue sources by applying for matching grants from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation and other granting agencies.

1.1.9 Encourage the donation of lands that further the goals of the comprehensive parks plan, have acceptable maintenance and management costs, and are not well suited for placement in a land trust.

1.1.10 Provide countywide recreation opportunities through community school programs and through sponsorship of special events, festivals, community celebrations, education, environmental, interpretation, camping, and recreation activities.

***Objective #2
Regional Parks***

Plan, acquire, develop, and maintain throughout Clark County a system of regional parks that provides a broad range of recreational opportunities and access to natural resources.

2.1 REGIONAL PARKS – POLICIES

2.1.1 Provide a system of regional park facilities that meets adopted standards and that serves a countywide population.

2.1.2 Give preference to acquisitions that meet one or more of the following.

1. Adjacent to other public ownerships, when possible.
2. Contains unique natural features.
3. Contains features of cultural, archeological, or historical significance.
4. Located near population centers.
5. Is a threatened resource.
6. Provides opportunities for joint funding, use, ownership, and management.
7. Provides opportunities to take advantage of special conditions that arise (e.g., land donations).
8. Is identified as a priority in the parks, trails, open space, or wildlife habitat elements of the comprehensive parks and recreation plan.

2.1.3 Acquire adequate land and resources to support the intended recreational and/or open space uses of a site, allowing adjacent private property owners to continue permitted land uses.

2.1.4 Acquire regional park sites that are accessible by public transportation; if public transportation is not available, request that services be provided to the site.

2.1.5 Develop a master plan for each regional park facility before committing to any major use of the site.

2.1.6 Design and develop all regional facilities through a public master planning process that considers the following.

1. The standards and definitions in this plan.
2. Cost-efficient maintenance.
3. Resource protection.
4. User safety.
5. Sensitivity to adjacent land uses (including noise, traffic, lighting).
6. Compatible multiple purposes and use, when appropriate.

7. Americans with Disabilities Act.

2.1.7 Establish and implement effective management practices for:

1. Resource protection (wildlife, fisheries, habitat).
2. Quality recreational experience.
3. Public safety.
4. Cost efficiency.

2.1.8 Manage natural resources wisely by preserving and restoring natural areas while providing for appropriate public access and education opportunities.

2.1.9 Maintain the county's parks at a level that keeps all facilities safe, sanitary, and open for public use, and that protects the county's capital investment.

2.1.10 Manage publicly owned land adjacent to resource land using practices that do not interfere with continued use of the resource land for the production of food, agricultural products, or timber, or for the extraction of minerals, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and industry best management practices.

2.1.11 Generate revenue from appropriate fees, charges, concessions, leases, and other sources, with all revenues dedicated for park and recreation projects.

Objective #3

Regional Special Facilities

Plan, acquire, develop, and maintain regional special facilities that meet identified needs and are otherwise unavailable to the community.

3.1 SPECIAL FACILITIES – GENERAL POLICIES

3.1.1 Provide regional special facilities that meet the greatest need, according to national or adopted county standards, and that do not duplicate facilities that adequately meet the public need at a reasonable price.

3.1.2 Give greater consideration to special facilities that generate revenues to offset the cost of their maintenance and operation.

3.1.3 Design and manage special facilities to accommodate compatible, multiple purposes and uses, when appropriate.

SPORTS FIELD MASTER PLAN

The Clark County Sports Field Master Plan was published in January 1998. The plan addresses seven sports field categories: teen/adult baseball, youth baseball, adult softball, youth softball, teen/adult soccer, youth soccer, and football. An inventory and needs assessment are provided for each category, and policies and actions to build and improve sports fields are recommended.

The plan calls for the county to join with cities, school districts, and local sports organizations to jointly implement a regional system of sports fields and complexes. Only those policies directly affecting Clark County are included here.

The Clark County Sports Field Master Plan is incorporated herein by reference and shall guide county participation in establishing regional sports fields and complexes.

3.2 SPORTS FIELDS – POLICIES

3.2.1 Join with cities, school districts, and local sports organizations in Clark County to develop a countywide system of sports fields and sports field complexes to serve the baseball, softball, soccer, and football needs of youth and adults.

3.2.2 Provide overall planning and assessment of sports field needs in Clark County, including update of field inventories and evaluations every five years, and listing of priority improvements needed at each field site.

3.2.3 Assist cities, school districts, and local sports organizations in identifying and acquiring land for sports field complexes, particularly land for regional field complexes.

3.2.4 Provide design and technical support for athletic field development by cities, school districts, and local sports organizations.

3.2.5 Assume primary responsibility for organizing a sports field council, provide county representation, and fund a one-year staff position of sports council coordinator.

3.2.6 Help develop and adopt countywide design standards for construction of athletic fields.

3.2.7 Promote the development of athletic fields in new parks, particularly in larger community parks and regional parks.

3.2.8 Provide land and establish development standards and operating conditions for local sports groups to build, maintain, and operate their own fields.

3.2.9 Prepare grant requests and provide land acquisition services for and agree to hold title to Prairie and Wineberg fields.

3.2.10 Assume primary responsibility for coordinating development of non-exclusive sports field complexes.

3.2.11 Seek grants, private land donations, and other funding sources for land acquisition and sports field development.

3.2.12 Provide under contract to participating school districts and local sports groups maintenance of their ballfield facilities.

3.2.13 Provide mowing and general repair of county-owned sports fields, and all maintenance of sports fields that are an integral part of a general purpose county park (e.g. neighborhood park).

Objective #4
Regional Trails

Promote, develop, operate, and maintain a comprehensive trail/bicycle system throughout Clark County that provides non-motorized travel (walking, bicycling, skating, and horseback riding) to meet county recreation, fitness, and commuting needs.

REGIONAL TRAILS & BIKEWAY SYSTEM PLAN

The Clark County Trails & Bikeway System Plan was published in December 1992 and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in September 1993. The plan identifies 10 regional trail corridors. Five trails are proposed to follow rights-of-way: North Fork Lewis River, Columbia River/Evergreen Highway, Washougal River Corridor, Columbia River/Renaissance, and the Lewis & Clark Railroad right-of-way. Five trails are proposed to follow natural corridors: Vancouver Lake, Burnt Bridge Creek/Lacamas Creek, Salmon Creek Greenway, North Fork Lewis River, and East Fork Lewis River.

The plan establishes nine general and 31 specific planning policies to guide the acquisition, design, and development of trails and bikeways. The general planning goals are restated in this section.

One objective identified in the trails and bikeways plan, and included among the priority projects in the action program, is completion of a feasibility study of a trail link along the Lewis & Clark Railroad right-of-way from Battle Ground south to 78th Street. Current efforts to develop commercial and freight services along this portion of the rail line, and citizen-based efforts to restore tourism and recreational use from Battle Ground north to Moulton Falls, require that this objective be identified as a lower priority.

The Clark County Trails & Bikeway System Plan, as modified by this section, is incorporated herein by reference and shall guide the county in establishing a network of regional trails and bikeways.

4.1 REGIONAL TRAILS – POLICIES

4.1.1 Develop a network of trails and bikeways throughout the county that will interconnect population centers, community facilities, work places, neighborhoods, recreational opportunities, and natural greenspaces.

4.1.2 Develop and maintain a comprehensive trail and bikeway system to link with other providers.

4.1.3 Plan and coordinate the development of trails and bikeway links within Clark County and surrounding jurisdictions and become the facilitator for other provider and volunteer efforts.

4.1.4 Acquire open greenspace and natural corridors for trail development.

4.1.5 Promote appropriate planning and design solutions to avoid adverse environmental impacts on sensitive areas.

- 4.1.6 Work closely with corporate business, private developers, and public agencies to incorporate trails and bikeways, where feasible.
- 4.1.7 Promote sensitive planning solutions and develop support services to diminish land owner concerns.
- 4.1.8 Promote sensitive planning solutions and design and development support services such as education, enforcement, and maintenance to reduce personal safety hazards.
- 4.1.9 Develop an interpretive, educational program for the historic and environmentally significant sites along the trail and bikeways system.
- 4.1.10 Coordinate planning for appropriate facilities, where feasible, for off-road vehicle users.

Objective #5

Conservation & Greenway Systems

Identify, evaluate, and preserve as open space undeveloped lands throughout Clark County to form an interconnected system of rivers and their associated flood plains, Columbia River lowlands, agricultural lands, forest lands, and urban open spaces.

OPEN SPACE COMMISSION FINAL REPORT

The Clark County Open Space Commission Final Report was completed in August 1992, and has been used extensively to guide the establishment of a conservation and greenway system in Clark County. The report creates five categories of open space: river systems and associated flood plains; Columbia River lowlands; agricultural lands; forest lands; and urban open space.

The report also establishes 13 general planning policies to guide the evaluation and prioritization of open space lands, and establishes category-specific planning policies. The general planning policies are stated below, along with category-specific planning policies for river systems and associated floodplains and Columbia River lowlands.

The Clark County Open Space Commission Final Report is incorporated herein by reference and shall guide the county in establishing a system of open space lands.

5.1 OPEN SPACE – GENERAL POLICIES

5.1.1 Identify, evaluate, and prioritize for acquisition and/or preservation lands that create an interconnected system of open spaces.

5.1.2 Consider acquiring open space lands where there is a high probability of loss or conversion before acquiring open space lands where there is a low probability of loss or conversion. This should take into consideration both actual development and property division and ownership patterns.

5.1.3 Give added consideration to open space lands which enhance the value of other protected abutting or neighboring parks, forest, wildlife preserves, natural areas, or other open spaces.

5.1.4 Give added consideration to open space lands where existing access facilities are appropriate for the character of the property, or where the possibility exists to provide access facilities which are appropriate for the character of the property.

5.1.5 Preserve and protect open space lands based on location of the resource, rather than on a uniform distribution throughout the county. However, in the specific case of neighborhood parks, community parks, and urban open space, Clark County has existing standards which should be used to determine distribution.

5.1.6 Where appropriate, attempt to link open space lands into an interconnected system.

5.1.7 Generally emphasize the preservation of large contiguous blocks of open space. In certain circumstances, however, it may be appropriate to acquire smaller unconnected tracks, e.g., urban open space or the last available piece of open space of a certain category or function.

5.1.8 Preserve the character of natural areas containing threatened or endangered plant or animal habitat.

5.1.9 When acquiring or otherwise protecting open space lands, give special consideration to archeological and historical resources, unique sites, and views and vistas.

5.1.10 When acquiring open space lands of similar character, emphasize the preservation of those lands which are in closest proximity to the largest number of users.

5.1.11 Coordinate efforts to protect open space lands with local, state, regional, and federal agencies to complement acquisition programs and maximize resource potential.

5.1.12 Consider relevant state policies and guidelines including those set forth in the Growth Management Act.

5.1.13 Take into consideration the economic impact and future well-being of the community when implementing the open space program.

5.1.14 Fully implement the parks and recreation element of Clark County's 20-year plan.

5.2 RIVER SYSTEMS & ASSOCIATED FLOODPLAINS – POLICIES

5.2.1 Identify, evaluate, and prioritize for acquisition and/or preservation lands located along river systems and their associated floodplains that create an interconnected system of greenways and conservation areas.

5.2.2 Attempt to preserve interconnected systems of open space along the county's major streams, rivers, and lakes. For example, acquisitions should link Salmon Creek, Burnt Bridge Creek, Lake River, and Vancouver Lake.

5.2.3 Attempt to connect public ownerships within river systems, so as to create extended linear greenways.

5.2.4 Strive to acquire open space lands which allow extensive public access to shoreline properties. If wildlife, wetland, or other sensitive open space values would be significantly affected by public access, consideration should be given to preserving shorelines without or with limited public access.

5.2.5 Consider relevant state and local policies and guidelines including those set forth in the Shorelines Management Act and the county's Shorelines Master Program.

5.2.6 Give priority consideration to shorelines of statewide significance.

5.3 COLUMBIA RIVER LOWLANDS – POLICIES

5.3.1 Identify, evaluate, and prioritize for acquisition and/or preservation floodplains and lowlands adjacent to the Columbia River in the Vancouver Lake lowlands and the lowland areas including and surrounding Reed Island, Steigerwald Lake, and Lawton Creek.

5.3.2 Implement methods to preserve agriculture within lowland areas to preserve the overall character of this open space category.

5.3.3 Work cooperatively to acquire additional open space lands and provide greater access to the Columbia River shoreline.

5.3.4 Coordinate with other agencies to support the acquisition and/or proper management of sensitive wildlife habitat, water-related areas, and other open space lands; where combined funding and/or management is possible, these practices should be encouraged.

5.3.5 Consider relevant regional, state, and local policies and guidelines including those set forth in the Habitek Plan, the Shorelines Management Act, and the county's Shorelines Master Program.

Objective #6

Wildlife Habitat

Preserve, conserve, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife conservation areas and open space lands and raise public awareness about the importance of these resources.

Clark County completed in September 1995 its initial comprehensive Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan. The plan examined a variety of issues related to the protection and conservation of wildlife habitat and wildlife populations in Clark County, and helped establish planning eligibility for various grant programs such as the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. Many of the goals and objectives originally adopted in 1995 have direct application today and have been retained in the updated plan. In some cases goals and objectives have been modified or added to take into consideration new information, planning requirements, and changed conditions such as the listing of lower Columbia salmon and steelhead populations under the federal Endangered Species Act.

6.1 PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION – POLICIES

6.1.1 Protect and conserve Clark County's high-priority fish and wildlife conservation areas and open space lands.

6.1.2 Develop and/or maintain acquisition, incentive, and regulatory programs for the protection and conservation of environmentally critical areas including wildlife habitat areas, wetlands, and shorelines.

6.1.3 Use Northwest native plants in the restoration and enhancement of fish and wildlife conservation areas.

6.1.4 Restore streams and improve fish passage in urban and rural stream systems within Clark County.

6.1.5 Provide habitat protection that will support a diverse and sustainable population of fish and wildlife, and that supports a diversity of habitat types.

6.1.6 Acquire habitat lands where there is a high probability of loss or conversion before acquiring habitat lands where there is a low probability of loss or conversion. This should take into consideration both actual development and property division and ownership patterns.

6.1.7 Give added consideration to habitat lands that enhance the value of other protected abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, natural areas, or other open spaces.

6.1.8 Preserve and protect habitat lands based on the value and location of the resource, rather than on uniform distribution throughout the county.

6.1.9 Emphasize the preservation of large contiguous blocks of fish and wildlife habitat. In certain circumstances, however, it may be appropriate and desirable to acquire smaller disconnected areas that provide habitat needs in an urbanizing area, where opportunities are not available to connect habitat sites, or where a disconnected property serves an important habitat need.

6.1.10 Provide special emphasis to areas that contain or support threatened or endangered plant or animal habitat.

6.1.11 Attempt to preserve interconnected systems of habitat along the county's major streams, rivers, and lakes. For example, acquisitions should link Salmon Creek, Burnt Bridge Creek, Lake River, and the Vancouver Lake Lowlands.

6.1.12 Give priority consideration to "Shorelines of Statewide Significance."

6.1.13 Maintain or enhance the structural and functional integrity of riparian habitat and associated aquatic systems needed to perpetually support fish and wildlife populations on both site and landscape levels.

6.1.14 Give special consideration to habitat that helps preserve and enhance anadromous fish populations.

6.1.15 Locate and design recreation facilities in a manner that minimizes impacts to riparian areas and other sensitive habitats.

6.1.16 Consider a full range of implementation mechanisms to preserve and protect fish and wildlife conservation areas, including transfer of development rights, conservation easements, and current use taxation programs.

6.1.17 Encourage the identification and preservation of locally important habitats consistent with Clark County's approved LIH program.

6.2 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION – POLICIES

6.2.1 Encourage interagency cooperation for purposes of protecting and conserving fish and wildlife conservation areas and open space lands.

6.2.2 Cooperate with other jurisdictions and agencies to protect environmentally sensitive lands, especially ecosystems that span jurisdictional boundaries.

6.2.3 Coordinate the county's habitat acquisition program with all incorporated towns and cities to combine acquisition efforts, maximize funding opportunities, and otherwise increase efficiencies.

6.2.4 Coordinate the county's habitat acquisition program with the State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other key agencies to maximize efficiency and avoid duplication.

6.2.5 Coordinate the county's acquisition program with METRO, Lower Columbia River Estuary Program, and other programs and agencies in Oregon to promote coordinated bi-state planning and funding efforts.

6.2.6 Coordinate with the farm community and natural resource and wildlife management agencies, such as the State Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Clark County Conservation District, to develop complementary wildlife habitat, land use, and farm practice guidelines that can be applied in critical habitat areas.

6.2.7 Seek technical assistance from the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and other wildlife resource agencies for development, restoration, and enhancement proposals that affect state or federal sensitive, threatened, or endangered species.

6.2.8 Participate as a member of the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board in the development and implementation of a regional recovery plan for listed salmon and steelhead populations.

6.2.9 Coordinate regional and county-based salmon recovery planning, project implementation, monitoring, and enforcement activities with the National Marine Fisheries Service, Governor's Salmon Team and other appropriate agencies.

6.2.10 Coordinate with the Columbia Land Trust and other private nonprofit nature conservancy associations to help protect fish and wildlife habitat in Clark County.

6.2.11 Coordinate with city and county ESA programs and other fish and wildlife resource agencies the preparation and implementation of design, development, maintenance, and

management practices and standards that support the recovery of endangered and threatened species and that comply with the federal Endangered Species Act.

6.3 PLANNING PROGRAMS & PRACTICES – POLICIES

6.3.1 Establish planning programs and practices that help protect and conserve fish and wildlife conservation areas and open space lands.

6.3.2 Define, identify, and map various types of environmentally sensitive areas using data provided by federal, state, or other sources. For example, Clark County should utilize data provided through the WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Program, DNR Natural Heritage Program, and Washington Conservation Commission Fish Distribution and Limiting Factors Analysis data sets. (In utilizing this data, Clark County shall respect all program guidelines relating to the use of information about sensitive wildlife habitats, wildlife populations, and sites.)

6.3.3 Utilize data from the PHS program, fish distribution and limiting factors analysis program, and others sources to assist the local planning processes, such as SEPA review and the application of Critical Areas Ordinances.

6.3.4 Encourage consistency between Clark County and the various towns and cities in the county regarding planning programs and practices that support the preservation and management of wildlife habitat and populations.

6.3.5 Help develop plans at the watershed level that address impacts of wildlife habitat.

6.3.6 Consider relevant state policies and guidelines including those set forth in the Growth Management Act relating to the conservation of fish and wildlife areas. These include requirements to include best available science in the development of critical areas ordinances and to give special consideration to conservation and protection measures to preserve and enhance anadromous fisheries.

6.4 OUTDOOR EDUCATION & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – POLICIES

6.4.1 Provide outdoor education and community involvement opportunities that increase public awareness about the importance of fish and wildlife conservation areas and open space lands.

6.4.2 Facilitate public education and outreach programs explaining the variety of critical area and habitat resources that exist in Clark County, and the benefits and opportunities for conservation and protection.

6.4.3 Provide opportunities for public access and wildlife observation that are compatible with resource values at project sites.

6.4.4 Encourage school participation in monitoring, management, and other outdoor education activities and community service projects.

6.4.5 Encourage community involvement by sponsoring or supporting friends groups, site tours, and related activities.

6.4.6 Coordinate with the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board, Governor's Salmon Team and other agencies to increase community understanding about salmon recovery programs at the state, regional, and local level.

6.4.7 Include in the design and development of specific sites improvements that help increase understanding of sensitive fish and wildlife populations and that help explain habitat conditions that are needed to support them.

J. DEMAND & NEEDS ANALYSIS

DEMAND AND NEED

Introduction

This section examines the demand and need for regional parks and open space facilities based on definitions, standards, goals and objectives, public comment, and other key factors. The analysis of demand and need is divided into the five regional facility and land types: Regional Parks, Regional Trails, Conservation and Greenway Systems, Special Facilities and Wildlife Habitat.

In the case of regional parks, both definitional and population-based standards are used to help determine need. Definitional standards identify physical characteristics of the park type including size (generally 200 to 350 acres), service area (1-hour drive time), location and other features. Population-based standards identify need based on a ratio of parkland per 1,000 population. The National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) provides guidelines that local communities can adapt to specific community needs and characteristics. Clark County has adopted a minimum standard for regional parks of 10 acres per 1,000 population and a goal of 20 acres per 1,000 population.

Population-based standards do not apply to some facility types. In the case of conservation and greenway systems, wildlife habitat, and trails, need must be evaluated based on definitional standards, goals and objectives, resource values, habitat requirements, and other similar factors. Collectively, several factors were used to help evaluate demand and need for regional park and open space facilities. These include:

- Goals and Objectives
- Population Forecasts and Facility Standards (Regional Parks/Some Special Facilities)
- Community-Based Plans and Resource Documents (e.g., Open Space Report)
- Public Comment and Priorities Identification
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Staff Review and Comment
- Expansion and Enhancement of Existing Facilities
- Distribution and Location of Existing Facilities
- Opportunities for Appropriate Access to Natural Resources and Features
- Wildlife Habitat and Species Conditions/Requirements

Regional Parks

This plan identifies a high need for the acquisition and development of regional park facilities. The highest priority in the 6-Year CIP is placed on the acquisition of regional parkland. However, there is a corresponding need to develop regional park facilities, such as internal trail systems, group and family picnic sites, and play fields. Key factors identifying need include population-based standards, public comment, and survey data related to individual and family participation in recreation activities.

The county's population-based standards identify an immediate need for the acquisition of regional parkland. The current inventory of regional parks in Clark County includes 12 sites totaling 2,300 acres. Based on the minimum standard of 10 acres per 1,000 population, the

existing regional park deficit is over 1,000 acres. At forecasted growth rates, this deficit will increase by the year 2020 to almost 2,500 acres.

County standards also identify the need for developed regional parks. The current inventory of developed regional parks in Clark County includes nine sites totaling 417 acres. Based on the minimum development standard of 18% of the acquisition standard, the existing regional park development deficit is 190 acres. This deficit will increase to 436 acres in 2020 at projected rates of growth.

1999 Inventory

<i>Regional Park</i>	<i>Acres Land</i>	<i>Acres Developed</i>
Battle Ground Lake (State)	280.00	40.00
Brush Prairie	40.00	0.00
Cottonwood Beach (Port of C/W)	74.74	0.00
Fort Vancouver National Historic Site	209.00	75.00
Frenchman's Bar	178.00	37.00
Lacamas Lake	298.00	18.00
Lewisville	152.00	90.00
Moulton Falls	301.00	27.00
Paradise Point (State)	96.00	35.00
Salmon Creek	158.00	43.00
Vancouver Lake Park	234.00	52.00
Whipple Creek (Land Trust/County)	<u>279.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	2,300.00	417.00

Standards

Regional Parks Acquisition

10 acres per 1,000 population

Regional Parks Development

18% of Regional Park Site

Demand & Need

Regional Parks Acquisition

10 acres x population/1000 = Demand

Demand – Inventory = Need

<i>Population</i>		<i>Demand at Standard</i>	<i>1999 Inventory</i>	<i>Need at Standard</i>
1992 Clark County Population	257,500	2,575 acres		
1999 Clark County Population	337,000	3,370 acres	2,300 acres	1,070 acres
2005 OFM "High" Forecast	368,156	3,682 acres	2,300 acres	1,382 acres
2010 OFM "High" Forecast	402,679	4,027 acres	2,300 acres	1,727 acres
2015 OFM "High" Forecast	437,167	4,372 acres	2,300 acres	2,072 acres
2020 OFM "High" Forecast	473,898	4,739 acres	2,300 acres	2,439 acres

Regional Park Development

Acquisition (land) Demand x 18% = Demand

Demand – Inventory = Need

<i>Year</i>	<i>Demand at Standard</i>	<i>1999 Inventory</i>	<i>Need at Standard</i>
1999	607 acres	417 acres	190 acres
2005	663 acres	417 acres	246 acres
2010	725 acres	417 acres	308 acres
2015	787 acres	417 acres	370 acres
2020	853 acres	417 acres	436 acres

Both public comment and public opinion surveys support the acquisition and development of regional parkland as high priorities. As noted earlier, the five most popular recreation activities in the county based on individual and household participation are activities typically provided in regional parks. These include hiking and walking, picnicking, wildlife observation, camping, and swimming. In addition, both stakeholder and public meeting comments underscored the need for regional parks. These included both general comments about the need for this facility type and site-specific comments. During the Camas/Washougal public meeting, for example, the future development of Cottonwood Beach was repeatedly mentioned as a high priority.

To help meet demand for regional parks, the 6-Year CIP includes 10 projects that involve the acquisition of regional park property. These projects range from small expansions (e.g., 5.5 acres at La Center Bottoms) to new regional parks (e.g., Green Mountain). If all projects identified in the 6-Year CIP are implemented, these actions will have a substantial impact on reducing existing and forecasted deficits for regional parkland (see table below).

<i>Proposed Regional Acquisition 2000 – 2005 CIP</i>	<i>Low/High Acre Estimate (With C.B.)</i>	<i>Low Acre Estimate (W/O C.B.)</i>	<i>Low/High Acre Estimate (With C.B.)</i>	<i>High Acre Estimate (W/O C.B.)</i>
Camp Bonneville (C.B.)	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	0
Green Mountain	0	200.00	0	440.00
Tukes Mountain	0	200.00	0	320.00
Southeast County	0	200.00	0	240.00
Camp Currie	249.00	249.00	249.00	249.00
Whipple Creek	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
Brush Prairie	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
Mud Lake	140.00	140.00	140.00	140.00
La Center Bottoms	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50
Evergreen Fisheries	<u>9.50</u>	<u>9.50</u>	<u>9.50</u>	<u>9.50</u>
	1,494.00	1,094.00	1,494.00	1,494.00
1999 Regional Inventory	2,300.00	2,300.00	2,300.00	2,300.00
2005 Inventory (w/proposed CIP)	3,794.00	3,394.00	3,794.00	3,794.00
2005 Demand	3,682.00	3,682.00	3,682.00	3,682.00
2005 Need (Surplus)	(112.00)	288.00	(112.00)	(112.00)

High priority needs and action steps in the regional parks category are summarized below.

- Acquire new regional parkland to meet the current deficit of regional parks in Clark County. (Acquisitions could include both new sites and expansion of existing sites.) Camp Bonneville is a top priority for acquisition and can significantly address the need for regional parks as outlined in the table above. Green Mountain, Tukes Mountain, and Southeast County also provide excellent opportunities to meet the need for regional parks if Camp Bonneville does not come into county ownership in the near term (1-5 years). Moreover, if Camp Bonneville is included in the county’s regional park system, Green Mountain, Tukes Mountain, and Southeast County still provide excellent opportunities to meet longer term regional park needs and/or should be evaluated for their capacity to meet the needs for ballfields and other special facilities, as well as for open space and habitat values.
- Acquire new regional parkland to meet the current deficit of regional parks in Clark County. (Acquisitions could include both new sites and expansion of existing sites.) Specific projects should include new parks in the vicinity of Tukes Mountain, Green Mountain, Southeast County, and Mud Lake/Mainstem Lewis.
- Expand existing sites to help reduce the deficit of regional parkland and to provide an adequate landbase at specific sites that don’t currently meet the size standard for regional parks.
- Develop regional parks to help expand recreation opportunities within the system. Specific projects should include Cottonwood Beach, La Center Bottoms, and Burnt Bridge Creek.

Regional Trails

Clark County’s regional trail system is intended to provide “non-motorized travel (walking, bicycling, skating, and horseback riding) to meet county recreation, fitness, and commuting needs.” The long-range vision for the county’s regional trail and bikeway system is set forth in the *Clark County Trails and Bikeway System Plan*. This plan identifies an interconnected, countywide system of regional trails that includes five “on-rights-of-way” and five “natural corridor” trail systems.

On-Rights-of Way

North Fork Lewis
Columbia River/Evergreen Highway
Washougal River Corridor
Columbia River Renaissance
Lewis and Clark Railroad

Natural Corridors

Vancouver Lake
Burnt Bridge Creek/Lacamas Creek
Salmon Creek Greenway
North Fork Lewis River
East Fork Lewis River

This plan places a high priority on both the acquisition and development of the county’s regional trail system. Over the past 10 years, Clark County and various cities in the county have become increasingly active in providing trail facilities. These include a variety of regional trail segments that support the County’s Trails and Bikeway Systems Plan.

Existing Facilities (Completed or Funded)

Upper East Fork Lewis	3.0 miles
Bells Mountain	7.5 miles
Columbia River Renaissance	4.5 miles
Frenchman's Bar	2.5 miles
Salmon Creek	3.0 miles
Burnt Bridge Creek	5.0 miles
Lacamas Heritage	3.5 miles
Steigerwald Lake	3.5 miles

Various factors support an increased need for acquisition and development of regional trail systems. Both the 1992 and 1999 Parks and Recreation Public Opinion Surveys identified walking and hiking as the highest rated recreational activity in terms of individual and family participation. (The 1999 survey identified 78% individual and 84% household participation.) Bicycling in the 1999 survey was the sixth highest rated activity out of 19 activities. Both stakeholder and public meetings identified trails as a top priority. Stakeholder groups, in particular, identified a high need for trails. The Chinook Trail Association, Clark County Executive Horse Council, Volkssports organizations, and other groups strongly supported the acquisition and development of an expanded trail system.

Public meetings identified support but also raised issues about the need for separation of use on trails. These kinds of design considerations should be evaluated as project implementation occurs. High priority needs in the regional trails category are highlighted below. The Action Plan and 6-Year CIP provide additional information about implementation strategies and specific project recommendations and implementation schedules.

- Establish as high priorities trail projects that expand or link existing or funded facilities. These include expansion of the Columbia River Renaissance, Burnt Bridge Creek, Vancouver Lake Lowlands/Shillapoo Bottoms, Salmon Creek, and Lacamas Heritage Trail systems.
- Provide trail opportunities on the Lewis and Clark Railroad that link regional parks and greenways and that interconnect with the East Fork Lewis/Bells Mountain Trail System. (Trail acquisition, development, and use should complement excursion trains and other commercial or tourist-oriented rail activities.)
- Provide trail opportunities that serve the primary user groups identified in the Trails and Bikeway Systems Plan, while maintaining separation and other design features that maximize enjoyment for each user group.

Conservation and Greenway Systems

Clark County has made a substantial commitment over the past 15 years to the acquisition and preservation of conservation and greenway systems, and this plan continues to identify these efforts as a top priority. Historically, key events in this area have included the adoption in 1985 of the Conservation Futures Open Space Program, which provided a significant funding source for acquisition/preservation activities, and completion in 1992 of the Clark County Open Space Commission Report. The Open Space Commission Report, in combination with the Regional Parks and Open Space Plan, has been the primary guide for defining and identifying high-priority open space.

The Open Space Commission defined open space in terms of its various functions and benefits (e.g., open space to protect wildlife habitat, open space to protect natural vegetation, and open space to protect shorelines). By defining, mapping, and aggregating these various functions and benefits, the highest priority open space areas emerged. In particular, this process identified as high priority open space lands *River Systems and Their Associated Floodplains and Columbia River Lowlands*. The Open Space Commission also identified priority categories of open space that were not clearly identified through the “aggregating” process. These included open space categories focusing on economic functions (farm and forest) and urban open space.

To help establish specific project priorities, the Open Space Commission identified five “categories” of open space: *River Systems and Their Associated Floodplains, Columbia River Lowlands, Urban Open Space, Agricultural Land, and Forest Lands (including Rural Forests and Cascade Foothills)*. These categories were then divided into 24 “segments,” which were grouped into three tiers, and from these tiers and segments, 19 priority projects were selected (see below). To help prioritize projects, the Open Space Commission also adopted a series of general and category-specific planning objectives. These addressed several key issues such as probability of conversion, enhancing existing facilities, and emphasizing projects that link interconnected systems of open space. Through this process, the Open Space Commission established a long-term vision for preserving a system of high-priority open space lands, and identified priorities for implementation.

Open Space Segments

Tier I

Vancouver Lake Lowlands – Columbia Lowlands
 East Fork Lewis – River Basin
 Salmon Creek – River Basin
 Lacamas Creek – River Basin
 Washougal River – River Basin
 Burnt Bridge Creek – River Basin

Tier II

Rural Special – Forest
 Whipple Creek – River Basin
 North Fork Lewis – River Basin
 Salmon/Whipple Creek – Ag.
 Cascade Special – Forest
 Urban Open Space – Urban

Tier III

Rural Forest – Forest
 Vancouver South Slope – Columbia Lowlands
 Neighborhood and Community Parks – Urban
 Steigerwald Lake – Columbia Lowlands
 Gee Creek – River Basin
 Glenwood/Brush Prairie – Ag.

Tier III cont.

I-5/East Fork Lewis – Ag.
 Vancouver Lake Lowlands – Ag.
 Allen Creek – River Basin
 Chelatchie Prairie – Ag.
 Hockinson – Ag.
 Cascade Regular - Forest

Phase I Project Priorities

- Vancouver Lake Lowlands – South of Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge
- Salmon Creek – Mouth to Highway 99, including Cougar Creek
- East Fork Lewis – Lucia Falls to Moulton Falls Park
- East Fork Lewis – Lewisville Park to Lucia Falls, including Little Rock Creek
- East Fork Lewis – Daybreak to Lewisville
- Lacamas Creek – Mouth through Lacamas Park
- Washougal River – Mouth through Sandy Swimming Hole
- Burnt Bridge Creek – Mouth to Burton Road
- Urban Open Space – General

Phase II Project Priorities

- East Fork Lewis – Paradise Point State Park to La Center Bottoms
- East Fork Lewis – La Center Bottoms to Daybreak, including Lockwood and Mason Creeks.
- Lacamas Lake – including Lacamas Creek through Lechtenberg Park
- North Fork Lewis – Haapa to Cedar Creek, then up Cedar Creek to Grist Mill
- Rural Special Forest – General
- Salmon Creek – Highway 99 to Pleasant Valley
- Urban Open Space – General
- Washougal River – Sandy Swimming Hole to Mouth of Little Washougal
- Whipple Creek/Salmon Creek Park Agricultural Area

During the 1980s and 1990s, Clark County utilized various programs such as Conservation Futures, the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, and Aquatic Lands Enhancement Program to help acquire and protect significant conservation and greenway areas. Key acquisitions occurred in the South Vancouver Lake Lowlands, Lower East Fork Lewis River (Paradise Point to Daybreak), and the Upper East Fork Lewis River (Lucia to Moulton Falls). However, there continues to be a substantial need for additional acquisitions to meet the goals and priorities set forth in the Open Space Commission Report.

In addition, during the 1999/2000 parks plan update, both survey results and public comment supported the acquisition and preservation of open space lands. Many comments focused on the pace of growth and the need generally to protect watersheds, shorelines, mature forests, and urban open space. Several comments focused on the need to acquire land at specific sites or areas; these included the lower East Fork Lewis, Columbia River shoreline, and the upper Washougal. Both the individual and community-wide public opinion surveys also provided strong support for protecting various open space functions. During the survey, individuals were asked to rate how important it is to have natural areas and open space lands to protect various resource values. The combined response for “important” and “very important” are listed below:

<i>Open Space/Natural Areas Resource Value</i>	<i>%Important & Very Important (Individual/Community Surveys)</i>
Improve water quality	(89/89%)
Protect wildlife habitat	(86/84%)
Provide trails, greenways and other low-intensity recreation	(79/84%)
Conserve farm and rural forest lands	(78/82%)
Protect Shoreline	(82/80%)
Recover threatened salmon species	(76/72%)
Preserve historic and archaeological sites	(68/78%)

Based on public comment, survey data, completed acquisition projects, and the findings of the Open Space Commission Report and other plans and resource documents, specific needs and priorities are highlighted below:

- Implement projects that help provide an interconnected system of open space along the county’s streams, rivers, lakes, and other natural features. Specific projects include the acquisition of shoreline and associated uplands on the East Fork Lewis, Salmon Creek, and Washougal Rivers.

- Establish as high priorities projects that complete or expand open space areas and corridors. Key sites include the East Fork Lewis - Paradise Point to La Center; East Fork Lewis - La Center to Daybreak; Salmon Creek Greenway; Burnt Bridge Creek Greenway; and Vancouver Lake/Shillapoo Lowlands.
- Identify conservation and greenway priorities that support high-priority wildlife habitat. Key examples include Eagle Island, Salmon Creek Forested Uplands (confluence of Morgan and Salmon Creeks); Cedar Creek, Upper Washougal, and other critical habitat for salmon recovery.
- Identify project priorities where there is a high threat of loss, conversion, or degradation.
- Identify project priorities that help support trail linkages, wildlife viewing stations, and other low-impact recreation uses; projects should be located and designed to minimize impact to wildlife habitat and other open space values.
- Incorporate priorities from the Clark County Open Space Commission Report, Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan, Washington Conservation Commission Limiting Factors Analysis, and other resource-based plans.
- Consider funding opportunities to replace or extend the Conservation Futures Open Space Program. Conservation Futures funds have been committed to high-priority open space projects through the term of this plan and CIP. Identification of a new funding source(s) to support the acquisition of open space, greenways, and wildlife habitat is a high-priority need.

Wildlife Habitat

Clark County adopted in 1995 its first “Urban Wildlife Habitat Plan” as a supplement to the County’s Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan. The habitat plan helped establish planning eligibility for various state and federal programs, including the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. To help establish project needs, the 1995 plan utilized habitat area priorities established by both the Open Space Commission and GMA planning processes. As the habitat plan noted, “the habitat priorities established by the Open Space Commission are in almost all respects consistent with the findings of the GMA process related to critical lands, and more specifically to Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas.” A table comparing the Open Space Commission and GMA priorities is included in Appendix C.

The Open Space Commission Report also strongly supports management recommendations for specific priority habitats as established by WDFW. The Open Space Commission identified river systems and their associated floodplains and the Columbia River Lowlands as two of the highest priority open space categories. In 1997, WDFW developed management recommendations for riparian habitat. These guidelines observe that: “Protection of riparian habitat, compared with other types, may yield the greatest gains for fish and wildlife while involving the least amount of area. . . . Wildlife occurs more often and in greater variety in riparian habitats than in any other habitat type” (Knutson and Naef, Management Recommendations for Washington’s Priority Habitat, December 1997). This plan identifies as a high priority the acquisition of riparian areas on several river systems in the county, including the East Fork Lewis, North Fork Lewis, Salmon Creek, and Washougal.

This plan also identifies as a high need the protection of critical salmon habitat. In 1998/99, the National Marine Fisheries Service listed lower Columbia chum, chinook, and steelhead as federal threatened species. Sea-run cutthroat trout have been proposed for listing and coho are candidates for listing. Clark County is now in the process of developing recovery strategies for these listed species. The acquisition and preservation of critical habitat areas can provide

significant benefits to salmon recovery. Specific projects identified in the CIP with benefits to salmon include Eagle Island, Salmon Creek Forested Uplands, Lower East Fork Lewis River. The CIP also supports as a high priority the acquisition of critical salmon habitat to be identified under the Limiting Factors Analysis process in cooperation with the Washington Conservation Commission, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board, and other partner organizations.

The CIP also identifies projects that encourage and support outdoor education and interpretation facilities. In general, these improvements will be located at key sites within the county's greenway systems such as Lucia Falls and the La Center Bottoms. These facilities would provide information about salmon recovery, clean water, and other habitat and open space values. Specific projects and action steps in the Wildlife Habitat category include the following:

- Establish as high priorities projects that help provide an interconnected system of conservation area and habitat lands along the county's streams, rivers, lakes, and other natural features. Specific projects should include the acquisition of shorelines and associate uplands on Salmon Creek, the East Fork Lewis, North Fork Lewis, and Washougal Rivers.
- Identify and acquire critical salmon habitat within Clark County's watersheds. Specific projects should include the acquisition of Eagle Island, spawning and rearing areas on the lower East Fork Lewis, spawning and rearing areas on the upper Washougal, and critical habitat on Salmon Creek.
- Coordinate salmon habitat acquisition, preservation, and restoration projects with the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board and the Washington Conservation Commissions limiting factors analysis.
- Provide outdoor education and interpretive facilities at key locations within the county's conservation and greenway systems to provide information about salmon recovery, clean water, and other habitat issues.

Special Facilities

The special facilities category covers a wide range of single-purpose or specialized activities and facility types. Examples include boat launches, ball field complexes, swimming pools, archery ranges, and historic sites. These kinds of facilities may be located within larger park settings or may be located separately.

Several types of special facilities or sites received some level of comment during the public involvement process. These included historic sites (e.g., "Point Vancouver" on the Columbia River), gazebos and information stations, formal gardens, off-leash pet areas, small boat moorage on Columbia River, swimming pools, and ballfield complexes. Swimming pools were identified as the highest priority special facility as part of the public opinion survey. When individuals were asked to name the three most needed facilities, projects, improvements or programs in the parks and recreation system, swimming pools were mentioned the highest number of times. (Twenty-six percent of those polled identified swimming pools among their three choices.)

During the public meeting series, some of the most frequent comments focused on the need for sports fields. Comment at the Battle Ground/Yacolt Area meeting, for example, identified a high need for sports fields in the central county area, as well as sports fields in Clark County generally. It was mentioned that sports fields in the Battle Ground area were at or beyond capacity, and that the need ranged over different sport activities, including baseball, softball and soccer. Some individuals emphasized the need for youth facilities, but a need was identified for

all age brackets. Generally, these comments are supported by the findings in the Clark County Sports Fields Master Plan, which was completed in January 1998. The following numbers are extracted from the Sports Fields Master Plan and identify immediate, short-term (2003), and long-term (2017) needs by facility type on a county-wide basis. (It is important to note that needs vary among districts; the Sports Fields Master Plan should be consulted for needs based on specific district areas.)

<i>Facility Type</i>	<i>Immediate</i>	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Adult/Teen Baseball	6	9	23
Youth Baseball	36	47	113
Adult Softball	13	16	28
Youth Softball	4	7	25
Teen/Adult Soccer	0	5	26
Youth Soccer	10	19	71
Football	2	5	18

This update of the County’s Regional Parks and Open Space Plan incorporates the Sports Fields Master Plan by reference, and supports the findings, recommendations, and implementation strategies outlined in that document. This Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan helps to address special facility needs through land acquisition programs that will accommodate sports fields and other special facilities. In addition, the 6-Year CIP includes a limited number of development projects. Specific projects and action steps include:

- Incorporate by reference and support the findings and recommendations in the Clark County Sports Fields Master Plan.
- Acquire at least three regional park sites in the county that will provide the land base to support sports field facilities and complexes and other special facility needs such as information stations, group picnic areas, and gardens.
- Continue to work with cities, school districts, and local sports organizations to allow development of sports fields on county-owned properties and in designated parks.
- Provide boat launch and/or water access facilities at Haapa on the North Fork Lewis River (funding approved through the IAC), and a small boat launch area, interpretive signing, and gazebo to be located near the La Center Bridge.
- Develop outdoor information stations at key sites within the county’s conservation and greenway system to help explain issues relating to salmon recovery, clean water, other open space values. These facilities should include signing, kiosks, interpretive trails, and similar facilities as appropriate for specific sites.

K. FINANCING PROGRAMS

FINANCING PROGRAMS

Introduction

This section summarizes financial, regulatory, and incentive programs available to Clark County for use in implementing the parks plan. They are divided into five areas: federal and state funding programs, local funding programs, incentives, regulations, and other methods. Two of these areas—state and local funding—have changed significantly since the last park plan was adopted in 1994.

Referendum 47, which was approved in November 1997, reduced the levy limit applied to most political jurisdictions from 106% to 100% plus inflation. A finding of “substantial need” is now required to exceed the new limit. R-47 also permanently reduced state property tax by 4.7%.

A second measure, Initiative 695, was approved in November 1999. It repealed existing fees and excise taxes for most motor vehicles and established a \$30 per year license tab fee. I-695 also established the requirement that any increase in taxes, fees, or monetary charges imposed by the state or by local government receive voter approval.

Initiative 695 was ruled unconstitutional in King County Superior Court in March 2000. The court enjoined the state and its subdivisions from implementing the initiative’s vote requirement. However, relief from both repeal of motor vehicle excise taxes and implementation of a \$30 vehicle license fee was denied, pending Washington State Supreme Court review or lack of timely appeal.

An appeal of the King County ruling was filed with the Washington State Supreme Court and now awaits a summer 2000 hearing. The results of the appeal will significantly alter several of the funding programs in this section. These programs have been identified with a parenthetical reference to I-695.

Federal & State Funding Programs

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

This program provides matching grants to state and local agencies to protect and enhance salmon habitat and to provide public access and recreation opportunities on aquatic lands. In 1998, DNR refocused the ALEA program to emphasize salmon habitat preservation and enhancement.

However, the program is still open to traditional water access proposals. Any project must be located on navigable portions of waterways. ALEA funds are derived from the leasing of state-owned aquatic lands and from the sale of harvest rights for shellfish and other aquatic resources.

IAC Grant Programs

Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) was created in 1964 as part of the Marine Recreation Land Act (Initiative 215). The IAC grants money to state and local agencies, generally on a matching basis, to acquire, develop, and enhance wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Some money is also distributed for planning grants. IAC grant programs utilize funds from various sources. Historically, these have included the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, state bonds, Initiative 215 monies (derived from unreclaimed marine fuel

taxes), off-road vehicle funds, Youth Athletic Facilities Account, and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. (A separate summary has been prepared for the WWRP.)

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)

Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)

The IAC is a state office that allocates funds to local and state agencies for the acquisition and development of wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Funding sources managed by the IAC include the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. The WWRP is divided into Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts; these are further divided into several project categories. Cities, counties, and other local sponsors may apply for funding in urban wildlife habitat, local parks, trails, and water access categories. Certain state agencies may also apply for funding in natural areas, critical habitat, and state parks categories. Funds for local agencies are awarded on a matching basis. Grant applications are evaluated once each year. However, in 1999, the IAC limited project review in odd-numbered years to local park acquisition. The State Legislature must authorize funding for the WWRP project lists.

Salmon Habitat Recovery Grants

Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCRFB)

The Washington State Legislature established the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in 1999 to help support salmon recovery in Washington State. The SRFB provides grant funding to local, state, and private individuals and organizations for habitat protection and restoration projects and activities that produce sustainable and measurable benefits to fish. Grants are submitted through local and regional “lead entities,” where those have been established in the state. The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board serves as the lead entity for the lower Columbia region, including Clark County. During the initial grant cycle in 1999/2000, project sponsors were required to provide a minimum 15% local match and monitoring and stewardships programs had to be provided for each project.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The WRP provides landowners the opportunity to preserve, enhance, and restore wetlands and associated uplands. The program is voluntary and provides three enrollment options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and 10-year restoration cost-share agreements. In all cases, landowners retain the underlying ownership in the property and management responsibility. Land uses may be allowed that are compatible with the program goal of protecting and restoring the wetlands and associated uplands. The NRCS manages the program and may provide technical assistance.

Water Resources Development Act

Environmental Restoration Programs and Authorities

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides funds for environmental and/or ecosystem restoration projects under provisions of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), as amended. Section 306 of the WRDA of 1990 specifically authorizes environmental restoration as one of the primary missions of the Corps. Environmental and/or ecosystem restoration projects are intended to “improve the condition of a disturbed ecosystem, including its plant and animal communities, or portions thereof, to some prior ecological condition.” Various authorities and programs are established for these purposes. These include General Investigation

Studies and “Continuing Authorities” under Sections 206 (’96), 1135 (’86), and 204 (’92) of the WRDA. Generally, projects require the support of a local sponsoring organization and some level of cost sharing is required. The federal share on Continuing Authorities may range as high as \$5 million. For General Investigations there is no per project cost limit.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

United States Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency

The Conservation Reserve Program provides annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to help preserve and enhance sensitive habitat areas on qualifying agricultural lands. The program, established in 1986, is voluntary. Lands enrolled in the CRP must be used for riparian buffers, filter strips, shallow water areas for wildlife, or other uses that provide beneficial habitat values. Landowners enter into agreements that last 10 to 15 years. Unlike the 1998 CREP, the CRP is not limited to stream areas that support salmon runs listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Washington Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

United States Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Clark County Conservation District

This program is a federal/state partnership, authorized in 1998, that involves the retirement of farmland for conservation purposes. Washington CREP focuses on the preservation and restoration of riparian habitat that supports salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act. This voluntary program provides financial incentives to farmers and ranchers to remove lands from agricultural production. Eligible landowners enter into agreements for periods of 10 to 15 years. Landowners receive an annual rental payment and cost-sharing is available for habitat enhancements. The federal Farm Service Agency is the primary administrative agency; the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Clark County Conservation District provide technical assistance.

Trust Lands Transfer Program

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

This program provides a mechanism to protect DNR-managed properties with significant natural, park, or recreational attributes while infusing money into the public school construction fund. The program has been in effect since 1989. The program identifies “common school trust lands” with significant park, recreation, and natural features, which are difficult to manage as income-producing properties for trust beneficiaries and transfers them to more appropriate ownership. The Legislature appropriates funds to “buy out” these properties from the School Trust Program. Revenues equal to the timber value on subject properties are placed in the Common School Construction Account, while the timber is not harvested. The Legislature also provides for the replacement of the land by appropriating the land value of the property to purchase other real property having better income potential for trust beneficiaries. The properties to be preserved may be transferred to local or state agencies. The selection process involves a detailed evaluation system. Key features include: 1) properties must have a high timber value to land value ratio; 2) properties must be of statewide significance for park, recreation, or natural area uses; and 3) the properties must have significant difficulties (e.g., sensitive wildlife habitat) in managing the property for income to trust beneficiaries.

Jobs for the Environment (JFE)

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

The JFE program was created by the state Legislature in 1993. The program promotes the long-term, stable employment of dislocated natural resource workers in the performance of watershed restoration activities. The program provides minimum funding commitments for salaries and benefits for displaced workers, and funding is also available for training. Since its inception, the program has completed many in-stream, riparian, and upland restoration projects. Entities eligible to apply for funding include state and local governments, tribes, and nonprofit organizations. Funding proposals will focus on limiting factors and recovery strategies within all or a portion of a Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA). Specific projects will then be identified, prepared, and approved for implementation over the life of the grant agreement.

Forest Legacy Program

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

U.S. Forest Service

This program provides funds to acquire permanent conservation easements on private forestlands that are at risk of being converted to nonforest uses such as residential or commercial development. Congress established the program in 1990, and DNR is the lead state agency for the program in Washington State. The program is intended to preserve “working forests,” where forestlands are managed for the production of forest products and where traditional forest uses are encouraged. These uses will include both commodity production and non-commodity values such as healthy riparian areas, important scenic, aesthetic, cultural, fish, wildlife and recreation resources, and other ecological values. Historically, the program focus has been on the I-90 Highway Corridor east of Puget Sound within the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway area.

Washington State Ecosystems Conservation Program (WSECP)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

This WSECP was established in 1990 and is divided into federal- and state-managed components. The federal program focuses funds on projects that help restore habitat for threatened, endangered and sensitive species and, secondarily, for species of concern. In addition, the program attempts to concentrate funds within a limited number of watersheds to maximize program benefits. The program provides funds to cooperating agencies or organizations. These grants, in turn, can be distributed among project sites. The program requires a 50% cost-share from cooperating agencies, and individual landowners at project sites must enter into maintenance/management agreements that have a 10-year minimum duration.

Washington State Ecosystems Conservation Program (WSECP) – Upland Wildlife Restoration Initiative

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will purchase important upland habitat, or provide technical and/or financial assistance to protect, restore, or enhance such habitat on private property. The program emphasizes certain target species including pheasant, quail, and turkey, but also emphasizes protecting and enhancing habitats that support species diversity. The program covers the entire state, with an emphasis on eastern Washington. Private landowners who volunteer for this program enter into agreements that outline protection and maintenance programs. The program includes both agricultural and forestlands.

Local Transportation Improvement Projects
Southwest Washington District
Washington State Department of Transportation

The Southwest Washington District of the Washington State Department of Transportation undertakes a variety of multi-modal transportation construction and improvement projects. These include non-motorized transportation improvements that target pedestrian, bicycle and other non-motorized methods of transportation. The department started in 1999 a large-scale interchange realignment and widening project along I-5, between Main Street and N.E. 78th Street. The project includes a pedestrian overpass that will facilitate a connection of the Burnt Bridge Creek trail system, which is currently divided by the freeway. In general the cost of the improvements directly associated with the bicycle/pedestrian element can be utilized as a source of local matching funds for grant application purposes.

Community Development Block Grants
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Clark County receives funds each year from the federal Community Development Block Grant Program. These funds are intended to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. Funds received by Clark County are administered by an Urban County Policy Board. The Board is made up of the mayor or a designated representative from each town and city in the county and one county commissioner. Agencies and jurisdictions submit projects for consideration during an annual review process. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis with a maximum project request for CDBG funds of \$300,000. Policy divides project allocations evenly between infrastructure and social service projects.

Local Funding Programs

Property Tax—Lid Lift
Clark County

Chapter 84.52 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to impose two ad valorem taxes upon real and personal property: a tax for general county purposes with a maximum rate of \$1.80 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, and a tax for road purposes with a maximum rate of \$2.25 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The county's general property tax is collected countywide. The road tax is collected only in unincorporated areas.

Chapter 84.55 of the Revised Code of Washington further limits the amount of regular property taxes that can be levied. For counties and other jurisdictions with a population of 10,000 or more, regular property taxes may not exceed the lesser of 106% or 100% plus the percentage change in inflation, of the amount levied in the highest of the three most recent years. An additional amount is allowed for the increase in assessed value resulting from new construction, improvements to property, and the increased value of state assessed property. The percent change in inflation is measured by the implicit price deflator for personal consumption published by the federal department of commerce.

Upon a finding of substantial need, the legislative authority of a taxing district other than the state may use a limit factor of 106% or less. In districts with legislative authorities of four members or less, two-thirds of the members must approve. In districts with more than four members, a majority plus one vote must approve. The new limit factor is effective for taxes collected in the following year only.

The limit factor, coupled with changes in property value, may cause levy rates to rise and fall—although not above statutory maximums. Once the levy rate is established each year under the limit factor (e.g., \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value), it may not be raised without the approval of a majority of the voters. Receiving voter approval to raise the levy rate beyond the limit factor is known as a lid lift. A lid lift may be permanent, or may be for a specific purpose and time period. Other limits on taxing authority remain in effect, such as the aggregate levy rate limits of \$5.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value and 1% of true and fair market value.

Property Tax—Conservation Futures

Clark County

Chapter 84.34 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to impose (I-695 would require voter approval) a property tax up to six and one-quarter cents per thousand dollars of assessed value for the purpose of acquiring interest in open space, farm, and timber lands. Known as Conservation Futures, these funds may be used for acquisition purposes only. Funds may be used to acquire mineral rights, and leaseback agreements are permitted. The statute prohibits the use of eminent domain to acquire property. Clark County adopted the Conservation Futures levy in October 1985. Clark County allows all eligible jurisdictions, including cities, to apply for funding from the Conservation Futures fund.

Property Tax—Excess Levy

Clark County

Chapter 84.52 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes cities and counties, along with other specified junior taxing districts, to levy property taxes in excess of limitations imposed by statute when authorized by the voters. Levy approval requires 60 percent majority vote and 40 percent validating turnout at a general or special election held in the year in which the levy is made.

Property Tax—County Bonds

Clark County

For the purposes of funding capital projects, such as land acquisitions or facility construction, counties have the authority to borrow money by selling bonds. Three general types of bonds may be sold: voter-approved general obligation bonds, agency-approved or councilmanic bonds, and revenue bonds.

Voter-approved general obligation bonds may be sold only after receiving a 60 percent majority vote and 40 percent validating turnout at a general or special election. If approved, an excess property tax is levied each year for the life of the bond to pay both principal and interest. The maximum debt limit for voter-approved bonds is two and one-half percent of the value of taxable property in the county.

Councilmanic bonds may be sold by counties without public vote. The bonds—both principal and interest—are retired with payments from existing county revenue. If new tax revenue, such as additional sales tax or real estate excise tax, is proposed as a funding source, voter approval may be required (I-695 would require voter approval). The Legislature has set a maximum debt limit for councilmanic bonds of one and one-half percent of the value of taxable property in the county.

Revenue bonds are sold with the intent of paying principal and interest from revenue generated by the improvement, such as fees and charges. For example, revenue bonds might be sold to fund a public water system that will generate revenue through utility charges to customers. Other funds may be dedicated to assist with repayment; however, it is desirable to have the improvements generate adequate revenue to pay all bond costs. Limits on the use and amount of revenue bonds are generally market-driven through investor faith in the adequacy of the revenue stream to support bond payments.

Sales Tax Clark County

Chapter 82.14 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes the governing bodies of cities and counties to impose sales and use taxes at a rate set by the statute to help “carry out essential county and municipal purposes.”

Cities and counties may impose (I-695 would require voter approval) a sales and use tax at a rate of five-tenths of one percent on any “taxable event” within their jurisdictions. This tax is now in effect in Clark County. These funds are used for general county purposes.

Cities and counties may also impose (I-695 would require voter approval) an additional sales tax at a rate “up to” five-tenths of one percent on any taxable event within the city or county. This additional sales tax is in lieu of imposing the one-half of one percent real estate excise tax authorized under RCW 82.46.010(3). It is now in effect in Clark County at a rate of three-tenths of one percent. Two-thirds of net revenue is used exclusively for additional law enforcement personnel.

Additional taxing authority is granted for special and limited uses. RCW 82.14.340 authorizes counties to impose (I-695 would require voter approval) a sales tax at a rate of one-tenth of one percent to be used exclusively for criminal justice purposes. Criminal justice purposes are defined as activities that substantially assist the criminal justice system. This tax is now in effect in Clark County. A minimum of ten percent of the revenue must be expended to reduce the number of incarcerated juvenile offenders through early intervention, treatment and intensive supervision programs.

RCW 82.14.350 authorizes counties with a population smaller than one million to submit for voter approval a sales tax equal to one-tenth of one percent to provide funds for costs associated with financing, design, acquisition, construction, equipping, operating, maintaining, remodeling, repairing, reequipping, and improvement of juvenile detention facilities and jails.

Real Estate Excise Tax Clark County

Chapter 84.46 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes the governing bodies of counties—and cities—to impose excise taxes on the sale of real property within limits set by the statute. The authority of counties may be divided into four parts.

1. The Board of Commissioners may impose (I-695 would require voter approval) a real estate excise tax on the sale of all real property in unincorporated parts of the county at a rate not to exceed 1/4 of 1% of the selling price. Funds must be used solely for financing capital projects specified in a capital facilities plan element of a comprehensive plan. The definition of "capital projects" includes planning, acquisition, construction, reconstruction, repair,

replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of parks, recreational facilities, and trails. This tax is now in effect in Clark County.

2. The Board of Commissioners may impose (I-695 would require voter approval) a real estate excise tax on the sale of all real property in the unincorporated parts of the county at a rate not to exceed 1/2 of 1%, in lieu of a five-tenths of one percent sales tax option authorized under RCW 82.14.040 (2). The statute provides for a repeal mechanism. This levy is not available to Clark County, because it has implemented a portion of its discretionary sales tax option.
3. Boards of Commissioners—in counties that are required to prepare comprehensive plans under the Growth Management Act—are authorized to impose (I-695 would require voter approval) an additional real estate excise tax on all real property sales in unincorporated parts of the county at a rate not to exceed 1/4 of 1%. These funds must be used "solely for financing capital projects specified in a capital facilities plan element of a comprehensive plan." This tax is now in effect in Clark County.
4. Boards of Commissioners may also impose—with voter approval—a real estate excise tax on each sale of real property in the county at a rate not to exceed 1% of the selling price for the specific purpose of acquiring and maintaining "local conservation areas." (A separate summary has been prepared for this program.)

***Real Estate Excise Tax—Local Conservation Areas
Clark County***

Chapter 82.46 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to impose—with majority voter approval—an excise tax on each sale of real property in the county at rate not to exceed one percent of the selling price for the purpose of acquiring and maintaining conservation areas. The authorizing legislation defines conservation areas as “land and water that has environmental, agricultural, aesthetic, cultural, scientific, historic, scenic, or low-intensity recreational value for existing and future generations...” These areas include “open spaces, wetlands, marshes, aquifer recharge areas, shoreline areas, natural areas, and other lands and waters that are important to preserve flora and fauna.”

***Hotel-Motel Tax
Clark County***

Chapter 67.28 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes cities and counties to levy (I-695 would require voter approval) and collect a combined special excise tax of up to two percent on all charges for furnishing lodging at hotels, motels, and similar establishments. Counties may levy up to two percent. Cities may levy up to two percent, which is deducted from the county’s rate. Revenues may be used to acquire and operate tourism-related facilities, which are defined as “real or tangible personal property with a usable life of three or more years, or constructed with volunteer labor, and used to support tourism, performing arts, or to accommodate tourist activities.”

***Leasehold Excise Tax
Clark County***

Chapter 82.29A of the Revised Code of Washington establishes a state leasehold excise tax of 12.84 percent on the lease or contract rent of publicly-owned real and personal property. Cities and counties are authorized to levy (I-695 would require voter approval) and collect up to a

combined six percent, which is deducted from the state's rate. Counties may levy up to six percent. Cities may levy up to four percent, which is deducted from the county's rate.

User Fees

Clark County

Chapter 36.68.090 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to charge "reasonable" fees for use of publicly-owned park and recreation facilities. Typically, fees are set at a level that recovers all direct and indirect costs. Fees may be set at lower levels based on public policy or market factors. Some facilities are not suited for user fees, such as neighborhood parks where the cost of collection would exceed revenue.

Development Impact Fees

Clark County

Chapter 82.02 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties, cities and towns planning under RCW 36.70A.040 to impose impact fees on commercial and residential development activity to partially finance public facilities to serve new growth and development. Public facilities funded with impact fees must be part of an adopted capital facilities plan, and may include parks, open space, and recreation facilities. Public facility needs not created by new growth and development must be met from other sources of public funds within a reasonable period of time. In September 1990, the Board of Clark County Commissioners imposed impact fees on new development in the unincorporated urban area to help pay for neighborhood and community parks and urban open space. (I-695 may require voter approval of the addition of new impact fees or modification of existing fees.)

State-Distributed Motor Vehicle Fund

Clark County

Chapters 46.68 and 47.30 of the Revised Code of Washington establish the distribution and expenditure of monies from the motor vehicle fund. Funds are allocated to the state, counties, cities, and towns for road, street, and highway purposes. These include "reasonable" amounts for planning, accommodating, establishing, and maintaining trails for pedestrians, equestrians, or bicyclists. Qualified trail projects must be severed by highways, accommodated on an existing highway right-of-way, or separate motor vehicle traffic from pedestrians, equestrians, or bicyclists to a level that materially increases motor vehicle safety, and be part of the adopted comprehensive trail plan of the governmental authority with jurisdiction over trails.

Incentive Programs

Current Use Taxation

Clark County

Chapter 84.34 of the Revised Code of Washington establishes criteria for tax deferments for agricultural and timber lands, and authorizes counties to establish criteria for tax deferments for open space lands. Owners of such lands may apply to be taxed according to current use, rather than true market value, in return for maintaining their land in farm, timber or open space use. When the property is removed from the program, the tax savings realized by the land owners for the current year and a period dating back up to seven years, plus interest, are collected. Tax savings dating back further than seven years may not be collected. If the removal of classification or change of use occurs in less than ten years or if the owner fails to provide two years advance notification of withdrawal, an additional 20 percent penalty is imposed.

Density Bonuses

Clark County

Density bonuses are a planning tool used to encourage a variety of public land use objectives, usually in urban areas. They offer the incentive of being able to develop at densities beyond current regulations in one area, in return for concessions in another. Density bonuses are applied to a single parcel or development. An example is allowing developers of multi-family units to build at higher densities if they provide a certain number of low-income units. For density bonuses to work, market forces must support densities at a higher level than current regulations.

Transfer of Development Rights

Clark County

The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based planning tool which allows land owners to trade the right to develop property to its fullest extent in one area for the right to develop beyond existing regulations in another area. Local governments may establish the specific areas in which development may be limited or restricted and the areas in which development beyond regulation may be allowed. Usually, but not always, the “sending” and “receiving” property are under common ownership. Some programs allow for different ownership, which, in effect, establishes a market for development rights to be bought and sold.

Cluster Development Ordinance

Clark County

Clark County adopted the Rural Cluster Development ordinance in October 1999. The ordinance allows clustering of homesites in specified rural zones: R-5, R-10, and R-20. The maximum density allowed is the same as the underlying zone; however, lots may be reduced in size and grouped on the site so that a remainder parcel is available for open space, resource, and other authorized uses. Minimum cluster lot size is one acre.

The ordinance provides two methods of clustering. The total allowable density may be used on cluster lots, with the remainder parcel used only for forestry and agricultural uses as defined in county code. Alternatively, one lot less than the total allowable density may be used on cluster lots, with a remainder parcel that can be developed. Under the second option, the remainder lot may be used for the same purposes as the underlying rural zone.

Regulatory Programs

Forest Practices - Conversion of Timber Lands

Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Clark County

Timber land conversion is regulated primarily through the Washington Forest Practices Rules and Regulations adopted pursuant to RCW 76.09. Reforestation requirements generally apply to lands harvested through clear cutting, or in a manner where 50 percent or more of the timber volume is removed in a five-year period. Forest Practices regulations provide further technical detail on restocking and regeneration standards. A Forest Practice Application is required by DNR prior to harvesting, in which the landowner must indicate if the forest land will be used for active use incompatible with timber growing in the next three years. If so, reforestation requirements to not apply. If a change to a more active use is declared but not initiated in three years time, the requirements are then applied and must be completed within one year. If the harvest application does not indicate an intent to convert to a more active use reforestation is required. RCW 76.09 (Forest Practices) also states that local government entities may then deny

any permits relating to nonforestry uses on the land subject to the application, for a period of six years.

***Land Division Ordinance
Clark County***

Clark County's land division ordinance (Clark County Code, Title 17) establishes procedures, standards, and requirements for the “division or redivision of land into...lots, tracts, parcels, sites or divisions for the purpose of sale, lease or transfer of ownership.” These divisions fall into three categories:

1. subdivisions, which involve the division of land into five or more lots;
2. short subdivisions, which involve the division of land into four or fewer lots; and
3. large lot subdivisions, which involve the division of land into five or more lots, the smallest of which is at least five acres.

Reviews are conducted to assess the availability and adequacy of public services, such as roads, parks, schools, and drainage, and to evaluate compliance with county codes, including zoning, impact fees, water supply, erosion control, and environmental impacts.

When an adopted park plan identifies a future park site located in whole or in part in a proposed subdivision or short subdivision, and the park facility will serve an area larger than the development, the subdivider, when recommended by the county park director, may be required to reserve the park site for purchase by the public within a one year period. A similar “reservation for public purchase” procedure for regional open space and greenbelt systems is included in the code.

***State Hydraulic Code – Hydraulic Project Approval
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife***

The Washington State Hydraulic Code (75.20.100 – 160) was established in 1949 to protect fish and shellfish from the impacts of construction and other activity in marine and freshwater. While the law has been amended occasionally over time, the basic authority has been retained. The law requires any person, organization, or government agency wishing to conduct any construction in or near state waters to do so under terms of a “Hydraulic Project Approval” (HPA) permit issued by WDFW. Major types of activities or development include but are not limited to: bridges, piers, docks, piling, boat launches, culverts, gravel removal, channel realignment, and pond construction. The permit process affects activities within the ordinary high water line of waters of the state. The HPA can be obtained as part of the Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) process, which combines several federal, state, and local permit application requirements.

***Shoreline Management Master Program
Clark County***

The Shoreline Management Master Program (SMMP) was established by the county in 1974 to regulate shoreline uses as mandated by the 1971 Shorelines Management Act. The geographical scope of the program covers land within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark of all rivers where mean annual flow exceeds 20 cubic feet per second, all lakes of 20 acres or more, and any associated wetlands or floodplains. The program requires permits to be obtained for “substantial development” within shoreline areas. In addition, the Master Program classifies shorelines as Urban, Rural, Conservancy or Natural Environments. Each classification has particular policies,

regulations, and use limitations. The program also distinguishes “Shorelines of Statewide Significance,” which include lakes over 1000 acres and rivers downstream of a point with a mean annual flow greater than 1000 cfs. This distinction is reflected primarily in SMA policies that emphasize certain uses on Shorelines of Statewide Significance. The Washington Department of Ecology is currently updating program guidelines, including time frames for local jurisdictions to update their SMMPs.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

Clark County

SEPA provides a procedural framework to ensure that appropriate agencies and other parties consider the environmental impacts of development proposals. SEPA also provides general policies that are used as regulatory tools to address such impacts, with an emphasis placed on project mitigation rather than denial. The SEPA process originates with the lead agency, usually the city or county requiring a building permit. A number of smaller-sized projects are categorically exempt, subject to local standards within SEPA “flexible thresholds.” Some exempt projects within designated critical areas such as floodplain, wetlands, shoreline, or unstable slopes require a SEPA checklist. In reviewing the checklist, the lead agency evaluates impacts to areas with regard to earth, air, water, noise, dust, odor, and other elements of the environment. Outside agency input is usually accepted on wildlife, ecology, or other relevant issues. The lead agency is then required to make a determination of non-significance (DNS), mitigated determination of non-significance (MDNS), or determination of Significance (DS).

Critical Areas Ordinances

Clark County

The Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to designate and prepare development regulations for five types of critical areas. These are wetlands, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, aquifer recharge areas, and fish and wildlife conservation areas. In developing regulations for critical areas, cities and counties must use best available science and must give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries. (Separate summaries for the county’s Habitat Conservation Ordinance and Wetlands Protection Ordinance appear below. Ordinances for critical areas can be found in Titles 13 and 18 of the Clark County Code.)

Habitat Conservation Ordinance

Clark County

The purpose of this ordinance is to protect environmentally distinct, fragile and valuable fish and wildlife areas, while allowing reasonable use of the private property. The scope of the ordinance covers any proposed development or non-development clearing activities within designated habitat areas which are not listed as exempt. Habitat areas include priority habitat and species sites and “locally important habitat” sites as defined in the ordinance. The ordinance specifically defines riparian zones, a subset of priority habitats, as areas adjacent to streams extending outward from the ordinary high-water mark to the outer edge of the 100-year floodplain or the following distances if greater: 250 feet (DNR Class 1 & 2), 200 feet (DNR Class 3), and 150 feet (DNR Class 4 & 5). The ordinance identifies regulated and exempt activities, and provides procedures for review and approval of development activities.

Wetlands Protection Ordinance

Clark County

The purpose of this ordinance is to help protect the county's wetlands and wetland buffers and the various functions and values they provide, including flood control, groundwater recharge, and fish and wildlife habitat. Ordinance goals include no net loss of wetland acreage or functions. The ordinance applies to proposals on parcels with non-exempt wetlands or buffers that involve certain "triggering applications" (subdivision and short subdivision approval, site plan approval, and grading permits) and other identified regulated activities. The scope of the ordinance is tied to a rating system for wetlands and buffers. The wetlands rating system identifies five categories of wetlands with associated "base buffer widths." These range from 300 feet (category 1) to 50 feet (category 4). Category 5 wetlands are exempt. The buffer rating system includes four types, and base buffer widths may be adjusted based on buffer quality and other factors. The ordinance identifies regulated and exempt activities, and provides procedures for identifying and marking buffers and for reviewing and approving permits. (Certain delineation and marking requirements shall be waived for rural subdivisions and short subdivisions if the applicant designates building envelopes on final plats that are outside any wetland or buffer.) All wetland permits require approval of a preliminary and final enhancement/mitigation plan as set forth in the ordinance.

Environmental Combining District

Clark County

The Environmental Combining District (Clark County Code 18.325) is a zoning overlay enacted as part of the Habitek project in 1987. It was permanently established in an expanded form in 1990. It is intended to "preserve, protect and enhance wetlands and identified sensitive wildlife habitat, including areas where industrial development is permitted, minimizing the environmental impacts of development in these areas, insuring no net loss of wetlands or functions, and promoting natural and complimentary appearance for recreational or industrial structures in the affected areas." Wetlands and sensitive wildlife habitat, as defined in the code, must be preserved or mitigated. Seven sensitive wildlife habitat areas in the Vancouver Lake/Lake River lowlands are specifically identified.

Flood Plain Combining District

Clark County

The Flood Plain Combining District (Clark County Code 18.327) is intended to protect life and property by regulating development within flood prone areas. The overlay district is applied to all 100-year flood plains as identified on Flood Insurance Study maps, as an addition to regulations of the underlying zone. Much of these regulations are mandated by Federal Emergency Management Agency. The flood plain district is composed of two parts: 1) a floodway area, defined as the waterway and adjacent land that is needed to discharge the base flood without increasing the water level elevation more than one foot, and 2) a floodway fringe, which is simply the remainder of the 100-year flood plain. Agricultural and recreational uses permitted in the underlying zone which do not involve structures or storage are allowed outright in the district. Other uses allowed by underlying zoning require a flood plain permit. The permit process requires the submission of detailed plans documenting both the soundness of construction to reduce susceptibility to flood hazard, and the limiting of flood impacts elsewhere due to the alteration of waterways caused by the development itself.

***Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service***

The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area was created by federal act in 1986. It covers approximately 292,500 acres of land and water along the Columbia River, including 6,000 acres in Clark County east of Washougal. The principal goals of the Act are to protect and provide for scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources in the area, and to protect and support the area economy.

The Act classifies Gorge area lands as urban, special management or general management. There are 13 urban areas totaling 28,500 acres, all outside Clark County, which are exempt from regulation. Special management areas encompass 114,600 acres of the most environmentally and visually sensitive lands, with prohibitions on most land division and development. The remaining 149,400 acres are classified as general management areas in which development may be permitted if it does not adversely affect scenic, natural, cultural or recreational resources. Most of Clark County lands within the scenic area are classified as general management areas, with Reed Island and approximately 500 acres along the Skamania County border classified as special management areas. Any change in existing land use or activity or development outside the urban areas requires approval by either the U.S. Forest Service or the Gorge Commission, in addition to complying with appropriate county regulations.

Other Methods & Funding Programs

***Storm Water Utility Local Improvement Districts
Clark County***

Chapter 36.89 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to form utility local improvement districts to "establish, acquire, develop, construct, and improve" storm water control facilities. By definition, these are facilities that protect life and property from "storm, waste, flood, or surplus waters." ULIDs are composed of properties that pay for and benefit from the storm water facility. In practice, storm water control activities often involve protection and restoration of wetlands, ponds or other water-related areas that provide important open space benefits.

***Local Improvement Districts
Road Improvement Districts
Clark County***

Chapter 36.94 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to form local improvement districts to fund sanitary and storm sewers and water supply systems. Chapter 36.88 authorizes formation of road improvement districts to fund road construction. LID and RID projects are typically funded through the sale of bonds that are subsequently repaid from special assessments. Both LIDs and RIDs are composed of properties that pay for and benefit from their respective facilities. These facilities may also provide the benefits of open space and wildlife habitat, provided the project is tied to the district's primary activities.

***Interagency Agreements
Clark County***

Chapter 39.34 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes cooperative efforts between units of local, state and federal government. Cooperative projects have been successfully accomplished by local jurisdictions in Clark County, including the joint acquisition, development and use of park, recreation and open space facilities. Shared school/park facilities are the most visible example of this concept.

Public/Private Utility Corridors

Public and private utility providers maintain corridors of land for delivering services, such as electricity, gas, oil, and rail travel. These corridors can be managed to maximize the protection and enhancement of open space. Habitat management, landscaping, and allowing park development in utility corridors are examples.

Park and Recreation Districts

Park District Commissioners

Chapter 36.69 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes the formation of park and recreation districts for the purposes of providing leisure-time activities and recreation facilities. They must be initiated by petition, and may include any unincorporated area, all or part of a city or town with city or town approval, or more than one county. Formation requires majority voter approval. Park and recreation districts are governed by five elected commissioners. They may issue regular and voter-approved general obligation bonds, collect voter-approved annual excess levies, and impose with voter approval a regular property tax levy of 60 cents or less per thousand dollars of assessed value for 6 consecutive years. Revenue bonds and local improvement districts are also authorized.

Park and Recreation Service Areas

Clark County

Chapter 36.68 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes counties to form park and recreation service areas to finance, acquire, construct, improve, maintain or operate park and recreation facilities. They may be initiated by resolution adopted by the county legislative authority or by petition, and may include any unincorporated area and all or part of a city or town with city or town approval. Formation requires majority voter approval. Members of the county legislative authority, acting ex officio and independently, compose the governing body of any park and recreation service area created within their county. Park and recreation service areas that include towns or cities may be governed by interlocal agreement. Multicounty park and recreation service areas must be governed by interlocal agreement. They may issue regular and voter-approved general obligation bonds, collect voter-approved annual excess levies, and impose with voter approval a regular property tax levy of 60 cents or less per thousand dollars of assessed value for 6 consecutive years.

Metropolitan Park Districts

Park District Commissioners

Chapters 35A.61 and 35.61 of the Revised Code of Washington authorize the formation of metropolitan park districts for the purposes of management, control, improvement, maintenance and acquisition of parks, parkways and boulevards. In addition to acquiring and managing their own lands, metropolitan districts may accept and manage park and recreation lands and equipment turned over by any city within the district or by the county. Formation of a metropolitan park district may be initiated in cities of five thousand population or more by city council or city commission ordinance, or by petition, and requires majority voter approval. The proposed district must have limits coextensive with the limits of the city. Metropolitan park districts are governed by five park commissioners. They may issue regular and voter-approved general obligation bonds, sell revenue bonds, propose special levies, form local improvement areas, and impose (I-695 would require voter approval) a regular property tax levy not to exceed 75 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value.

Metropolitan Municipal Corporations Metropolitan Council

Chapters 35A.57 and 35.58 of the Revised Code of Washington authorize the formation of metropolitan municipal corporations in any area of the state containing two or more cities of which one is a city of ten thousand or more population. They may be authorized to perform one or more of the following functions: water pollution abatement, water supply, public transportation, garbage disposal, parks and parkways, and comprehensive planning. Formation of a metropolitan municipal corporation may be initiated by resolution from the largest city, two or more smaller cities, or the board of county commissioners of the proposed area. Formation may also be initiated by petition of at least four percent of the qualified voters of the metropolitan area. Majority voter approval is required.

A metropolitan municipal corporation is governed by a council composed of elected officials from the component counties and cities, and possibly other persons, as determined by agreement of the component jurisdictions. They may submit propositions to voters to issue general obligation bonds or to levy general property taxes for one year. Three-fifths majority approval is required. Additionally, special revenue and taxing authority is provided for some functions, such as transportation. Contributions by component cities and the county are also authorized.

Youth Investment Fund Clark County

Clark County established in 1994 a Youth Investment Fund to help address the needs of youth—primarily teens—throughout the county. Grants are awarded to government agencies and nonprofit organizations through a competitive RFP process. A 25% match is required. The largest grant awarded in 1999 was \$60,000. A total of \$200,000 has been budgeted for grants in 2000.

Land Trusts

Land trusts are private non-profit organizations that traditionally are not associated with any government agency. Land trusts that have completed projects in Clark County include the Columbia Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, and the Heritage Trust of Clark County. The Columbia Land Trust has been particularly active and successful in completing projects in Clark County, where it currently owns title to or holds conservation easements on 606 acres of parks, open space, and wildlife habitat lands. Another trust that could be active in the future is the American Farmland Trust, which recently initiated a Northwest farmland protection program.

Private Grants, Donations & Gifts

Many trusts and private foundations provide funding for park, recreation and open space projects. Grants from these sources are typically allocated through a competitive application process, and vary dramatically in size based on the financial resources and funding criteria of the organization. Philanthropic giving is another source of project funding. Efforts in this area may involve cash gifts and include donations through other mechanisms such as wills or insurance policies. Community fund-raising efforts can also support park, recreation, or open space facilities and projects. One example is Southwest Washington Independent Forward Thrust (SWIFT) which raises funds through an annual auction for the purpose of supporting civic, educational, cultural, social and health programs.

Business Sponsorships/Donations/Fundraising

Business sponsorships are used to support special projects and programs. Sponsorships and donations range widely, and include in-kind contributions such as food, door prizes and computer equipment. Business and community fundraising projects are also used to support special projects and programs. Recycling drives, golf tournaments and candy sales are three examples of fundraising efforts.

L. PARTNERSHIPS

PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

Each year the need for regional park and open space services well exceeds the capacity of any single funding source to provide them. To help implement these services, the county must utilize a wide range of partners, funding sources, and implementation strategies. In fact, since the formation of the Clark County Parks Department in the early 1970s, every major regional park and open space project has relied to a significant degree on partnership programs and opportunities.

This plan includes a series of general and category-specific goals, objectives, and policies that emphasize the need for partnerships and interagency coordination. More than 25 policy statements specifically address the need for partnerships and coordination to maximize regional parks and open space services. These include intergovernmental, interdepartmental, educational, public/private, and bi-state partnership activities. These kinds of partnerships will continue to be essential to meeting the needs of the regional park and open space system.

Current Status

Today, Clark County works with a wide range of partners in key areas to provide regional park and open space services. Partnerships range from public-sector grant support to private-sector land donations and volunteer work crews. The following list includes categories of partners and partnership activities that are now occurring within the regional parks and open space system.

Partners:

Federal agencies
State agencies
Cities and towns
Port districts
Private-sector business
Private nonprofits
Neighborhood groups
Schools
Individual citizens
Conservation Districts
Special Interest Groups

Partnerships:

Land donations
Bargain sales
Grant programs
Master planning and design
Recreation activities
Clean-up and stewardship
Research and monitoring
Habitat restoration/enhancement
Trail building

A partial list of specific agencies, organizations and programs that are now or that have recently been involved in partnerships with Clark County include the following.

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)
Chinook Trail Association (CTA)
Clark Conservation District
Clark County Executive Horse Council
Clark Public Utilities (CPU)
Cities of Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Vancouver, Washougal
Columbia Land Trust (CLT)
Ducks Unlimited (DU)

Environmental Enhancement Group (EEG)
Fish First
Friends of the East Fork (FOEF)
Habitat Partners
Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB)
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)
Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)
Washington Wildlife and recreation Program (WWRP)
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Selected Highlights

Historically, Clark County has relied heavily on partnerships and interagency coordination to acquire, develop, enhance, and manage regional park and open space lands and facilities. Partnership projects that are currently active involve lands and facilities on Vancouver Lake, East Fork Lewis, North Fork Lewis, Washougal, Lacamas Lake and Lacamas Creek, and many other locations. Partnership projects have included a wide range of sports groups, conservation organizations, trail interests, neighborhood associations, and businesses and business groups. Clark County should maintain these partnerships and develop new partnerships to help implement the 6-Year Capital Improvements Program. Selected active projects appear below.

Project: Eagle Island

Size: 279 acres.

System: North Fork Lewis.

Partnership Activities: Acquisition, development, restoration, and maintenance.

Key Partners: Clark County, WDFW, Pacificorps, DNR, Fish First, LCFRB, SRFB.

Project Highlights: Project involves the acquisition and preservation for habitat purposes of Eagle Island. Funding agencies include Clark County, DNR, Pacificorps, and LCFRB/SRFB. Fish First and other conservation groups will assist with monitoring, restoration and stewardship activities. Eagle Island provides critical habitat for the last viable run of wild fall chinook in the Columbia River system below Bonneville Dam, as well as other salmon and steelhead populations.

Project: South Vancouver Lake

Size: 873 acres.

System: Vancouver Lake Lowlands (South).

Partnership Activities: Acquisition, restoration, maintenance and operation.

Key Partners: Clark County, Vancouver, WDFW, NRCS, USFWS, DU, CPU, IAC.

Project Highlights: Clark County, WDFW, and city of Vancouver own and manage 873 contiguous acres at south end of Vancouver Lake. Clark County and the IAC provided funds for acquisition. NAWCA and WRP funds will be used to restore more than 300 acres of wetlands and associated uplands.

Project: East Fork Lewis Greenway

Size: 1,950 acres.

System: Lower East Fork Lewis.

Partnership Activities: Acquisition, restoration, maintenance and operation.

Key Partners: Clark County, city of La Center, WDFW, State Parks, USFWS, NRCS, LCFRB, SRFB, Clark Conservation District, DU, IAC, Friends of the East Fork, Environmental Enhancement Group, Private Land Owners.

Project Highlights: Project site includes almost 2,000 acres of contiguous shoreline and uplands habitat on East Fork Lewis between I-5 and Lewisville Park. Over 425 acres of wetlands and riparian habitat are scheduled to be restored utilizing funds from DNR/ALEA, NAWCA, WRP, LCFRB, SRFB, and other funding sources and agencies. This project—as part of a coordinated group of projects funded under the NAWCA program—is part of the largest wetlands restoration project ever attempted on the lower Columbia River.

Project: Camp Currie

Size: 252 acres.

System: Lacamas Lake and Lacamas Creek.

Partnership Activities: Acquisition and maintenance/operation.

Key Partners: Clark County, CLT, James River, IAC.

Project Highlights: This project involves the acquisition of 252 acres of shorelines and uplands at the north end of Lacamas Lake. Key funding sources include Clark County's Conservation Futures open space program, IAC/WWRP, and donated land value. Acquisition includes the Camp Currie group camp, which has been serving the community since the 1940s.

Project: Evergreen Fisheries Park

Size: 62 acres.

System: Central Columbia River Shoreline.

Partnership Activities: Acquisition, development, and maintenance/operation.

Key Partners: Clark County, Vancouver, WDFW, CPU, Evergreen Schools, IAC, CLT.

Project Highlights: This project involves phase 2 acquisition, development, and management of a 62-acre park site on the Old Evergreen Highway, including WDFW's Vancouver Trout Hatchery. CPU is providing funds to help manage the hatchery and support outdoor education and stewardship activities. The Columbia Land Trust is assisting with the acquisition of 9.5 acres, including East Biddle Lake. Clark County (Conservation Futures) and the IAC (WWRP) are providing funds for acquisition and development of properties and recreation facilities. Evergreen School District utilizes the site for year-round outdoor education programs.

Project: Bells Mountain Trail

Size: 7.5 miles.

System: Upper East Fork Lewis.

Partnership Activities: Acquisition, development, and maintenance and operation.

Key Partners: Clark County, DNR, IAC, Chinook Trail Association, Private Landowners.

Project Highlights: Clark County secured funds through the IAC to develop a 7.5-mile multi-use trail system that connects Moulton Falls Regional Park to DNR's Cold Creek Campground. The trail corridor extends through DNR and some private forest lands. The Chinook Trail Association has assisted with flagging, surveying, mapping, brushing, tread clearing, and path construction; the CTA will continue to provide maintenance services along the trail system.

M. ACTION PLAN & 6-YEAR CIP

ACTION PLAN AND 6-YEAR CIP

Introduction

The purpose of a 6-Year Capital Improvements Program is to provide a specific timetable for project implementation and to match project priorities with implementation mechanisms. The CIP identifies project name, project type, funding source(s), estimated cost, and implementation year. The CIP must consider funding opportunities and limitations and the capacity to maintain and manage facilities on the project list.

The following table summarizes by park category the number and cost of acquisition and development projects listed in the primary 6-Year CIP.

6-Year CIP Summary

	<i>Acquisition</i>	<i>Development</i>
<i>Regional Parks</i>		
# of projects	10	3
\$ cost	\$ 35,854,000	\$ 4,525,000
<i>Regional Trails</i>		
# of projects	6	9
\$ cost	\$ 5,480,000	\$ 10,850,000
<i>Conservation & Greenway</i>		
# of projects	6	
\$ cost	\$ 4,825,000	
<i>Wildlife Habitat</i>		
# of projects	4	
\$ cost	\$ 6,322,000	
<i>Special Facilities</i>		
# of projects		5
\$ cost		\$ 1,315,300
<i>Total 6-Year CIP</i>		
# of projects	26	17
\$ cost	\$52,481,000	\$ 16,690,300

The process for identifying projects for the 6-Year CIP was similar for each of the project categories. The first step involved developing a long-term (20-year or “resource-based”) list of projects by project type. These lists are included in Appendix I. The second step involved identifying priorities for inclusion in the CIP based on a variety of factors. These included:

- Goals and Objectives
- Population Forecasts and Standards
- Public Comment and Priorities Identification
- Community-Based Plans and Resource Documents
- Project Sequencing
- Funding Commitments (i.e., Approved Projects)
- Expansion and Enhancement of Existing Facilities
- Staff Review and Comment

- Appropriate Access to Natural Resources and Features
- Wildlife Habitat and Species Conditions (e.g., ESA Listings)

This section includes the primary 6-Year CIP based on project priorities and year of implementation. It also includes a project list that groups projects in the 6-Year CIP based on project categories (e.g., regional parks). This second project list provides a brief description of each project. It is important to note that the 6-Year CIP receives an annual review and update. The review may take into consideration:

- New or modified funding sources for project implementation
- Changed capacity to manage and/or maintain lands and facilities
- Completed or modified projects
- New partnership opportunities
- Changing priorities
- Changing trends and demographics

APPENDIX A
OPEN SPACE/HABITAT MAPS

APPENDIX B
PRIORITY HABITATS

APPENDIX C
OPEN SPACE/GMA HABITAT COMPARISON

APPENDIX D
SPECIES LISTS

APPENDIX E
INVENTORY

APPENDIX F
COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY RESULTS

COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY

Clark County retained Intercept Research Corporation of Tigard, Oregon, to conduct a statistically-reliable assessment of citizen's attitudes and opinions about park, recreation, and open space facilities and services. Telephone interviews were conducted with 400 randomly-selected residents throughout Clark County during August and September of 1999.

Survey Results

Please tell me whether you participated, or a member of your family participated, in any of the following recreational activities within the last year:

	Individual Participation	Total Household Participation
Hiking or walking	78%	84%
Picnicking	66%	69%
Wildlife observation	49%	51%
Camping	47%	53%
Swimming	45%	57%
Bicycling	40%	53%
Fishing	31%	43%
Jogging or running	27%	39%
Golf	23%	36%
Bowling	22%	31%
Power boating	20%	24%
Canoeing, row-boating or kayaking	17%	21%
Basketball	15%	29%
Tennis	9%	14%
Four-wheeling	8%	11%
Baseball	7%	18%
Softball	7%	17%
Hunting	7%	12%
Horseback riding	7%	11%
Off-road motorcycling	6%	10%
Soccer	5%	21%
Handball or racquetball	5%	8%
Archery	3%	6%
Sailing	3%	4%
Wind surfing	0%	2%

Please tell me what you consider to be the three most needed facilities, projects or improvements or programs in the parks and recreation system. (first, second and third mentions combined)

Swimming pool	26%
More parks in general	19%
More hiking/walking trails	13%
New/renovated sports fields/soccer/baseball/basketball/tennis	13%
Bike trails	11%
More playgrounds for kids	10%
More/better maintained restrooms	5%
More youth activities/programs at parks/recreation areas	5%
More/better facilities/community centers/buildings/equipment/classes	4%
More picnic areas	4%
Undeveloped natural areas/forest/wetlands/wildlife habitat	4%
More/better camping facilities	3%
Better security/more frequent patrols	3%
More/better parks on/by/with clean water/rivers/lakes/aquatic parks	3%
Better landscape maintenance	3%
Other	12%
Don't know	27%

On a scale of one to five, how important do you believe parks and recreation services and facilities are to the quality of life in Clark County?

5 = Very Important	67%
4	25%
3	6%
2	2%
1 = Not Important	1%
Mean	4.55

On a scale of one to five, how would you rate the overall safety and security of the parks and recreational facilities in Clark County?

5 = Excellent	13%
4	32%
3	29%
2	7%
1 = Poor	1%
Don't Know	18%
Mean	3.59

Please evaluate the following factors pertaining to natural areas and open space lands in Clark County. On a scale of one to five, how important is it to have natural areas and open space lands to: (scale: 5.00 = “Very Important,” 1.00 = “Not Important at All)

	Very Important (5.00)	Important (4.00 & 5.00)	Not Important (2.00 & 1.00)	Mean Rating
Improve water quality	75%	89%	2%	4.64
Protect wildlife habitat	63%	84%	5%	4.42
Conserve farm and rural forest lands	61%	82%	5%	4.40
Protect shorelines	62%	80%	5%	4.39
Provide hiking trails, biking trails, greenways, and other low-intensity recreation	58%	84%	4%	4.36
Preserve historic and archeological sites	57%	78%	7%	4.28
Recover threatened salmon species	51%	72%	7%	4.15

The Washington State legislature has authorized counties to enact a real estate tax of up to one percent to be paid by the buyers of real estate. Funds from this tax would be used exclusively to acquire and maintain natural areas and open space lands. Such a tax would require the approval of the voters in each county. Would you favor or oppose a real estate tax of this kind for Clark County?

Favor	55%
Oppose	29%
Don't Know	16%

Approximately how many times during the past 12 months have you visited or used each of the following regional parks:

	Percent Having Visited/Used	Average Number of Times Visited
Central Park	61%	3.77
Lewisville Park	45%	3.46
Lacamas Lake Park	37%	4.43
Vancouver Lake Park	37%	3.59
Salmon Creek Park	31%	5.07
Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge	29%	3.78
Salmon Creek Trail	27%	8.54
Burnt Bridge Creek Trail	25%	9.96
Moulton Falls Park	26%	3.75
Renaissance Trail	25%	3.90
Frenchman's Bar Park	24%	3.08
Lucia Falls Park	23%	2.14
Daybreak Park	19%	4.25
LaCenter Bottoms Wetlands	7%	2.89
Whipple Creek Park	6%	5.83

Do you believe Clark County should purchase land now to be set aside for future park and recreation development?

Yes	No/Don't Know
85%	15%

Do you believe Clark County should continue to develop park and recreation facilities and services to meet current and future needs?

Yes	No/Don't Know
91%	9%

Do you believe Clark County should allow local and national businesses to sponsor parks, picnic shelters, and other facilities, and to post signs indicating their sponsorship, as a way to generate additional revenue?

Yes	No	Don't Know
81%	12%	7%

If it meant raising the taxes you currently pay by (\$40/\$20/\$10) per year, would you favor efforts by Clark County to:

Percent Responding "Yes"

	\$40 per Year	\$20 per Year	\$10 per Year
Acquire and develop large regional parks, such as Lacamas Lake, Vancouver Lake and Lewisville	51%	71%	77%
Acquire and preserve natural areas and open space lands	45%	61%	73%
Acquire and develop hiking, biking and equestrian trails	43%	61%	70%
Acquire and develop sports fields for youth and adults such as soccer, baseball and soccer fields	37%	49%	61%

APPENDIX G
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

Two methods were used to survey the community's attitudes and priorities related to acquisition and development of regional parks, recreation, and open space facilities. Intercept Research Corporation of Tigard, Oregon, conducted a statistically reliable survey during August and September of 1999. It is referred to as the "community-wide" survey. A separate survey, composed of fewer questions, was posted on the county's Internet site and distributed at public meetings. It is referred to as the "individual" survey and does not meet sampling standards for statistical reliability. It does, however, provide important public input for use in developing the county's regional parks and open space plan.

Survey Results

On a scale of one to five, how important do you believe parks and recreation services and facilities are to the quality of life in Clark County?

	Individual Survey	Community-wide Survey
5 = Very Important	83%	67%
4	8%	25%
3	8%	6%
2	0%	2%
1 = Not Important	0%	1%
Mean	4.75	4.55

On a scale of one to five, how would you rate the overall safety and security of the parks and recreational facilities in Clark County?

	Individual Survey	Community-wide Survey
5 = Excellent	13%	13%
4	31%	32%
3	33%	29%
2	10%	7%
1 = Poor	1%	1%
Don't Know	13%	18%
Mean	3.06	3.59

Please evaluate the following factors pertaining to natural areas and open space lands in Clark County. On a scale of one to five, how important is it to have natural areas and open space lands to: (scale: 5.00 = “Very Important,” 1.00 = “Not Important at All)

	Very Important (5.00)	Important (4.00 & 5.00)	Mean Rating
Improve water quality			
Individual	61%	89%	4.44
Community-wide	75%	89%	4.64
Protect wildlife habitat			
Individual	57%	86%	4.39
Community-wide	63%	84%	4.42
Provide hiking trails, biking trails, greenways, and other low-intensity recreation			
Individual	59%	79%	4.35
Community-wide	58%	84%	4.36
Protect shorelines			
Individual	48%	82%	4.24
Community-wide	62%	80%	4.39
Conserve farm and rural forest lands			
Individual	48%	78%	4.22
Community-wide	61%	82%	4.40
Recover threatened salmon species			
Individual	44%	76%	4.12
Community-wide	51%	72%	4.15
Preserve historic and archeological sites			
Individual	32%	68%	3.88
Community-wide	57%	78%	4.28

The Washington State legislature has authorized counties to enact a real estate tax of up to one percent to be paid by the buyers of real estate. Funds from this tax would be used exclusively to acquire and maintain natural areas and open space lands. Such a tax would require the approval of the voters in each county. Would you favor or oppose a real estate tax of this kind for Clark County?

	Individual Survey	Community-wide Survey
Favor	70%	55%
Oppose	15%	29%
Don't Know	14%	16%

Approximately how many times during the past 12 months have you visited or used each of the following regional parks: (Presented here as percent of respondents having visited or used the regional park at least once in the past 12 months.)

	Individual Survey	Community-wide Survey
Central Park	75%	61%
Lewisville Park	52%	45%
Lacamas Lake Park	47%	37%
Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge	47%	29%
Vancouver Lake Park	42%	37%
Frenchman's Bar Park	40%	24%
Renaissance Trail	40%	25%
Salmon Creek Park	37%	31%
Lucia Falls Park	34%	23%
Moulton Falls Park	34%	26%
Salmon Creek Trail	34%	27%
Burnt Bridge Creek Trail	33%	25%
Daybreak Park	29%	19%
LaCenter Bottoms Wetlands	22%	7%
Whipple Creek Park	21%	6%

Do you believe Clark County should purchase land now to be set aside for future park and recreation development?

	Yes	No/Don't Know
Individual	82%	18%
Community-wide	85%	15%

Do you believe Clark County should continue to develop park and recreation facilities and services to meet current and future needs?

	Yes	No/Don't Know
Individual	93%	7%
Community-wide	91%	9%

Do you believe Clark County should allow local and national businesses to sponsor parks, picnic shelters, and other facilities, and to post signs indicating their sponsorship, as a way to generate additional revenue?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Individual	64%	28%	8%
Community-wide	81%	12%	7%

APPENDIX H
PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS

LaCenter/Ridgefield

- What kind of trail will be developed along the East Fork of the Lewis River? Will there be barrier-free access?

The existing Clark County Trails & Bikeway System Plan indicates that a “natural trail corridor” is contemplated along the north side of the river. Specifics of the trail will depend on available funding and the public process that determines the design. Segments of the trail within ½ to 1 mile of trailheads will likely be barrier-free, with outlying segments being less intensively developed.

- What kind of development will occur from LaCenter to I-5? What are the possibilities?

Specifics of the future development will depend of available funding and the public process that determines the various components and design. Elements could include: trails, trailheads, a park component, an extension of Paradise Point State Park, camping, environmental education, etc. (Note: The draft 6-Year Capital Improvements Plan includes as priority item #6 \$525,000 for development of LaCenter Park.)

- What properties are being acquired in the lower East Fork of the Lewis River Greenway

Properties targeted for acquisition were previously approved by the Board of County Commissioners through adoption of the Conservation Futures Acquisition Plan. Properties fall on both the north and south sides of the river, upriver from I-5 to SR-503. (Note: The draft 6-Year Capital Improvements Plan includes as priority item #30 \$1,500,000 for acquisition of additional greenway land to complete contiguous public ownership from Paradise Point State Park through LaCenter Park).

Camas/Washougal

- Equestrians are using Lacamas Park trails. Is this use intended/allowed?

Equestrian use of the trail system in Lacamas Park is intended by the parks Department. Facilities to properly accommodate equestrian use are not fully developed.

- There is a substantial need to prepare a management and site development plan for Cottonwood Beach. What role might the county play at Cottonwood Beach? What role might the cities play at Cottonwood Beach to maximize recreational opportunities?

The Parks & Recreation Department recognizes the significance of Cottonwood Beach as an important recreational resource, and is aware of the current use issues at the site. If the County decides that Cottonwood Beach should be developed to accommodate the intensive/more intensive use, a plan –through a public process - could be developed to facilitate improvements. Funding would need to be allocated to accomplish development and ongoing operations & maintenance costs. Partnership opportunities with the cities of Camas and Washougal exist to accomplish improved condition at the site. (Note: The draft 6-Year

Capital Improvements Plan includes as priority item #32 \$2,000,000 for development of Cottonwood Beach Park).

- There is property for sale on the east side of Lacamas Lake that might be acquired for horse trails and/or mountain bikes. What can be done to accomplish acquisition?

As with any acquisition opportunity, the project must be approved for acquisition by the County or City. Acquisition must lead to a reasonable chance that the property will help to accomplish specific parks and/or recreation goals. Additional, funding for acquisition, development and ongoing operation & maintenance must be identified and approved. That includes gaining inclusion onto the 20-Year Project Plan, and then the 6-Year Capital Improvements Plan.

Battle Ground/Yacolt

- Will the lower East Fork Lewis greenway include multi-use trails?

The existing Clark County Trails & Bikeway System Plan indicates that a “natural trail corridor” is contemplated along the north or south side of the river – extending from LaCenter upriver to Lewisville Park. While no specific plans for trail development have been formulated, the vision for the trail is to provide opportunities for a variety of trail users, to include pedestrian, bicycle and possibly equestrian users.

- What does it mean if the county adopts the sports fields master plan?

By adopting a sports field master plan, the County would be adopting revised policies that will guide its efforts and involvement in addressing the sports fields needs throughout the county. At this time, the plan has not been adopted, but the BOCC is considering possible revisions to the existing sports fields policies.

- Swimming pools benefit a large spectrum of people. Do we have a bias against them; why aren't there more in the community?

The County has previously undertaken efforts to facilitate the construction of more swimming pools in Clark County. A Bond Measure in 1990 included 3 pools, a bond measure in 1992 included 1 pool. The measures did not receive the required voter approval. Since that time, the BOCC has decided not to pursue urban level parks & recreation facilities, leaving that responsibility to the cities. The City of Vancouver has undertaken several attempts to gain voter approval for additional aquatic facilities – without success.

West Vancouver

- What are the plans for Lewisville Park? In particular, the cutting of vegetation along trails seems to be reducing bird populations.

No additional development plans are in place for Lewisville Park. Ongoing maintenance activities may inadvertently be impacting wildlife. The concern will be relayed to the Park's Maintenance Manager for follow-up.

- What is the status of trail development in the vicinity of Vancouver Trout hatchery?

The Vancouver Trout Hatchery project is funded and the project is currently in the final design phase. Permitting for the project has begun. Construction will start in late 2000, with anticipated completion in 2001. Development of the park will include internal on-site circulation trails.

- What will happen to Whipple Creek at time of development?

The park development plan previously adopted through a public process includes a community park component on the south-side of the park, a neighborhood park component on the north-side of the park, with various improvements related to the overall use of the park (i.e., parking, restrooms, picnic areas, etc.) (Note: The draft 6-Year Capital Improvements Plan includes as priority item #25 \$800,000 for additional land acquisition, and as priority item #14 \$300,000 for development of a 1-mile trail connection between the park and the Clark County Fairgrounds.

East Vancouver

- Does the county have a trails brochure identifying current facilities?

No, a current brochure of the trail system within Clark County is not available, due primarily to budget constraints.

APPENDIX I
20-YEAR PROJECT LISTS

20-YEAR PROJECT LISTS

Regional Parks – 20-Year Vision

Lower Yale
Lower Merwin
North Fork Lewis
Paradise Point
Lower East Fork
Whipple Creek
Green Mountain
Cottonwood Beach
Mud Lake/Lewis River
Brush Prairie
Ridgefield (Area)
Washougal
Lacamas Creek
North Central
Camp Bonneville
Larch Mountain
East Lacamas/Camp Currie
Southeast County
Tukes/Battle Ground
Lewisville
Moulton Falls
Salmon Creek
Frenchman's Bar
Lacamas Lake
Vancouver Lake
N. Salmon Crk. at 117th Ave.
Chelatchie/Tum Tum
Burnt Bridge Creek
North Tukes Mt.

Regional Trails – 20-Year Vision

On-Right-Of-Way

North Fork Lewis River
Lewis and Clark Railroad
Washougal River
Col. River/Evergreen Hwy.
Col. River Renaissance

Natural Corridors

Vancouver Lake
Burnt Bridge/Lacamas Crk
Salmon Creek
North Fork Lewis River
East Fork Lewis River

Project List

Salmon Crk Eq. I-5 to Van Lake
Salmon Crk 36th to Lake River
Upper Washougal Loop
L&CR.R. Moulton to Yacolt
Goodwin Rd. to 164th Ave.
Mouth Salmon Crk. to Shillapoo Loop
Lake Shore Rd. BBC to SC
Camp Bonneville
Evergreen. Hwy. I-205 to Ellsworth
East Fork Daybreak to LC
East Fork La Center to I-5
Durkee
Washougal to Steigerwald
Steigerwald/Gorge Link
Evergreen Highway
Ellsworth to Weber
Evergreen Fisheries to 164th Ave.
Rivershore East Loop
87th Ave. to 191st (BPA)
South Vancouver Lake
L&CR.R. B.G. to Lucia
L&CR.R. B.G. to B.G. Lake
L&CR.R. B.G. Lake to Lucia
Goodwin to Washougal Riv. Links
Salmon Creek Gwy to Whipple Crk
Frenchman's Bar
North Fork Lewis PPL
East Fork Lucia to Moulton
Whipple Crk. To Fairgrounds
BBC I-5 Overpass
BBC Falk Rd./BPA
BBC Devine to Burton/Meadow Brk
BBC Fruit Valley Rd Bridge Cross
C.R. Wintler to Weber
C.R. Wintler to Weber
Lewis River Ranch
Shillapoo Loop

Conservation Areas & Regional Greenways – 20-Year Vision (Includes habitat projects)

East Fork Lewis	Paradise Pt. to La Center	OSC/LFA
	La Center to Daybreak	OSC/LFA
	Riley/Brezee Creek	LFA
	Daybreak to Lewisville	OSC/LFA
	Lewisville to Lucia	OSC
	Lucia to Moulton	OSC
	Moulton to County Line	OSC

	Rock Creek	LFA
North Fork Lewis	Eagle Island	STKH/LFA
	Haapa to Cedar Creek	OSC
	Cedar Creek to Merwin	OSC/LFA
Cedar Creek	Lower reaches Lower Tribs	LFA
	Mouth to Grist Mill	OSC/LFA
	Grist Mill to Headwaters	OSC/LFA
	Lower Chelatchie Wetlands	LFA
	NF Chelatchie Wetlands	LFA
Canyon Creek	Mouth to Headwaters	STKH
Salmon Creek	Mouth to Hwy. 99	OSC
	Hwy. 99 to Pleasant Valley	OSC
	Pleasant Valley to CASEE	OSC
	CASEE to Morgan Creek	OSC
	Morgan Crk. to Headwaters	OSC
	Salmon Creek Forested Up.	PM/STK
	Washougal River	Mouth to Sandy Swimming
	Sandy to Little Washougal	OSC
	Little Wash. to County Line	OSC
	Big Eddy	
Little Washougal	Mouth to Headwaters	LFA
Burnt Bridge Creek	Mouth to Burton Road	OSC
	Burton to Devine	STKH
	Devine to 164 th	STKH
Lacamas Creek/Lake	Mouth thru Lacamas Park	OSC
	Lacamas Pk to Goodwin Rd	OSC/STKH
	Goodwin Rd to 164 th Ave.	STKH
	Upper Lacamas Greenway	
	Lacamas Lake to 4 th Plain	
Southeast County	4 th Plain to Camp Bonneville	
	4 th Plain to Ward Road	
	Ward Rd. to SC Forested Upl.	
Vancouver Lake Lowlands	South of Refuge	OSC
CR Lowlands/Steigerwald	Steamboat to County Line	OSC
Whipple Creek	Mouth to Source	OSC
Tukes Mountain	DNR Property	OSC/STKH
Dispersed Open Space	Miscellaneous	OSC/GMA
Habitat of Local Importance	Miscellaneous	GMA/HCO

Wildlife Habitat - 20-Year Vision

(See also Conservation Areas)

Resource Documents

Open Space Commission Priorities

GMA Priority Habitat Areas

Limiting Factors Analysis Preservation Priorities

Habitat Conservation Ordinance/WDFW Priority Habitats

Public Comment/Stakeholders – Salmon/Steelhead

Lawton Creek
Upper Washougal
Little Washougal
Washougal Tribs (e.g., Winkler Creek)
Cedar Creek (Mouth to Headwaters)
Cheltatchie Creek Lower
Eagle Island
North Fork Lewis Cedar Creek to Merwin
North Fork Lewis Tribs
Salmon Creek – Morgan Creek to Headwaters

Public Comment/Stakeholders – General

Vancouver Lake Lowlands
Eagle Island
Cedar Creek at Pigeon Springs
Sifton Wetlands
78th Street/Andresen Wetlands
Merwin/Yale Habitat Areas (Pacifcorp)
Steigerwald Lake Expansion
Gibbons Creek – Riparian Corridor
Mill Creek Wetlands
Environmental Education Sites

Special Facilities - 20-Year Vision

Sports Fields Master Plan
1994 Regional Parks Plan list

1994 Capital Improvements Program List

Haapa Boat Launch
Camp Lewisville
La Center Bottoms Interpretive
Lucia Falls
Pleasant Valley Environmental Education Center
Clark County Regional Center (Fairgrounds)

Public Comment/Stakeholders

La Center Boat Launch
Pittock/Leadbetter House
Conference Center/RV Park (N. Camas)
Lawton Creek Historic Site
Battle Ground Sports Complex
Battle Ground Area Skate Park
Swimming Pool
Off-Leash Pet Areas
Formal Gardens/Meeting Center
Small Boat Moorage on Columbia River
VLL Car Tour Route/Stations

Evergreen Little League Fields (Wineberg)
Overnight Camp Facility
Chelatchie Prairie/Tum Tum Campground
Lucia Falls Interpretive Center
Camp Currie Group Camp
Remote Control Airplanes
Rifle/Pistol Range
Archery Range
Tum Tum Mtn Trailhead
Special Occasions Center
Daybreak Equestrian Center

Survey – 3 Most Needed Facilities

Swimming Pools
Sports Fields Complexes
Community Centers
Camping Facilities

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**CLARK COUNTY REGIONAL
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PLAN
JUNE 2000**

**Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation
PO Box 1995
Vancouver, WA 98668-1995
360-696-8171**



**CLARK COUNTY REGIONAL
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PLAN
JUNE 2000**

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Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

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