

Rogue River Access and Management Plan Draft Alternatives

The Rogue River Access and Management Plan was initiated in December, 2011 and is being led by Jackson County Parks (JCP) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). The project boundary begins at Givan Ranch Park just north of Medford on Agate Road (Old Elks Picnic Grounds) and extends downriver past the Table Rocks to the Gold Nugget Wayside on State Highway 234. The goal of the planning project is to identify appropriate public access points for water-based and upland recreation sites along the Rogue River, following the removal of Gold Ray Dam and to develop a strategy to proactively manage changing and increasing recreational use patterns, while maintaining the integrity of the natural resources in the area and minimizing potential conflicts. The plan is focused on proper management of existing public lands, in an attempt to balance public access needs with river restoration and conservation efforts.

The core planning team includes a group of land managers and agencies who are working collaboratively to develop the plan including the JCP, ODFW, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon State Marine Board, Bureau of Land Management, and Rogue Valley Council of Governments. In addition, planning assistance is being provided by the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. To help inform the planning process, a Technical Advisory Committee and Citizen Advisory Group were formed. Meetings with these groups were held in winter 2012 and an open house with the larger community was held in spring 2012. On-line and in-person surveys were also developed to further gather input from recreation users, neighbors, and visitors to the area.

The vision statement is:

The scenic Table Rock reach of the Rogue River provides recreation opportunities for visitors and residents of the Rogue River Valley to experience the river through a network of public access sites that promote safe and responsible use of the river, protect environmental resources, respect private property, and share the natural, historical, and cultural stories of the river.

The project area was broken into three reaches based on the character of the river. These reaches are:

Reach 1: Givan Ranch (near Old Elks Picnic Grounds) to TouVelle State Park

Reach 2: TouVelle State Park to Gold Ray Natural Area

Reach 3: Gold Ray Natural Area to Gold Nugget Waysides

Issues, constraints, opportunities and needs were developed at both the reach level and access site level. This analysis was developed through a wide range of public input (Technical Advisory Committee, Citizen Advisory Group, Public Open House, On-line Survey) and technical input (land manager observations and input, literature review, existing laws and regulations, regional recreation priorities, needs identified in other related plans, and field observations).

Key issues and needs that emerged include: *(see opportunities and constraints table for a more comprehensive list):*

- Lack of access sites and amenities
- Safety concerns for boaters using the newly connected river and being unprepared for the Class IV whitewater rapids
- Presence of human waste and litter
- Need for trail use and connectivity
- Limited public knowledge of which areas are appropriate for public access and which sites are private
- Presence of user-made trails and sites

- Desire for interpretation, environmental education, and stewardship
- Increase in use and conflicts
- Increase in use and conflicts with mining/dredging
- Interface between private lands and recreation uses
- Need for funding for development and maintenance of recreation sites
- Desire to continue existing experiences (hunting, hiking, equestrian, boating, fishing, picnicking)
- Desire to keep the area natural
- Regional need for overnight facilities and group campsites
- Support the Rogue River Greenway
- Support for active restoration projects

Mining and dredging activity has increased in recent years and was identified as an issue by the community affecting both the recreational experiences and resources in the river. Dredging is legal activity that is jointly governed by the Oregon Department of State Lands and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Dredging permits and regulations are enforced by the Oregon State Police. The land managers collaborating on this plan do not have authority to regulate this use. The final plan will include information on what the regulations are and provide the agency contacts to follow-up with for more information or enforcement issues that may arise.

Three alternatives emerged to address the key issues and needs that cover a range of development and recreation experiences for each reach. The alternatives are described below:

- Alternative 1: Minimum level of development
- Alternative 2: Moderate level of development
- Alternative 3: Maximum level of development

These alternatives are provided to give a range of potential options that could occur and gather input on these options. A final alternative could be a combination of any of the alternatives and new measures that are identified during the outreach period. It is also important to note that before any alternatives are implemented site designs, environmental reviews, agency approvals, cultural surveys, permits and funding would need to be obtained.

The following themes and activities are addressed in each of the alternatives.

- River access sites and amenities
- Trail use and connectivity
- Interpretation and education
- Operation, maintenance, funding strategies, and partnership opportunities
- Wayfinding and signage
- Restoration
- River monitoring and management

Reach 1: Givan Ranch to TouVelle State Park: (Includes Givan Ranch, Denman Wildlife Area, and TouVelle State Park)			
	Alternative 1- Minimum Development	Alternative 2 – Moderate Development	Alternative 3 – Maximum Development
River access and amenities	<p>Givan Ranch Create a boat-in only day-use site on South Parcel</p> <p>TouVelle State Park Improve existing boat launch at TouVelle State Park</p>	<p>Givan Ranch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a non-motorized boat launch, fishing access sites, sanitation facilities, and mid-size developed campground on the north parcel (with a focus on creating a campground that fits with the natural/cultural resources, preserves the riparian habitat and is economically sustainable) • Create a boat-in only campground at the south parcel <p>TouVelle State Park Same as Alternative 1</p>	<p>Givan Ranch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a mixed-use boat launch, sanitation facilities, and larger developed campground with electric and water hook-ups for RVs • Possible addition of an equestrian camping area • Develop day-use picnic shelters and gathering places • Create an ADA fishing access facility • Create a boat-in only campground at the south parcel • Explore options to obtain legal public access to South Parcel via Agate Rd. <p>TouVelle State Park Same as Alternative 1</p>
Trail use and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance soft surface trails at Givan Ranch for equestrian and hiking use and connect the two Givan parcels by trail through the existing 16’ easement • Enlarge existing parking lot off Agate Rd. for trail users • Provide information through brochures or signs on the existing easiest horse trail creek crossings across Little Butte Creek at Denman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 1 • Connect trails between Givan Ranch, Denman, and TouVelle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternatives 1 and 2 • Continue trail connection to Eagle Point along Little Butte Creek pending availability of existing trails on Denman Wildlife Area
Interpretation and education	<p>Create electronic and printed interpretive materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of electronic, printed materials, and signage at Denman and Givan Ranch • Explore outdoor classroom opportunities in partnership with local school districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 2 • Create an interpretive center at Givan Ranch showcasing the existing farm structures and cultural history

Operation, maintenance, funding strategies, and partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek grants for site development • Partner with hiking and equestrian user group for assistance with maintenance, trail development, volunteer patrols, and clean-ups • Charge day-use fees at Givan Ranch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 1 • Charge overnight fees at Givan Ranch to create a sustainable funding source for Givan Ranch maintenance and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Alternative 2
--	--	--	---

DRAFT

Reach 2: TouVelle State Park to Gold Ray Natural Area (Sites include Gold Ray Natural Area and Kendall Bar)			
	Alternative 1- Minimum Development	Alternative 2 – Moderate Development	Alternative 3 – Maximum Development
River access and amenities	<p>Kendall Bar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No facilities <p>Gold Ray Natural Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic tables • Parking • Basic sanitation 	<p>Kendall Bar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat-in only day-use site (pack-it-in/pack-it-out) <p>Gold Ray Natural Area West-end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the existing informal/user-created boat launch and develop a formal non-motorized boat launch/slide • Parking • Picnic shelter and picnic tables • Enhance existing sanitation facilities • Trash cans <p>East-end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat-in/walk-in river access 	<p>Kendall Bar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat-in-only overnight use • Sanitation facility (possibly seasonal) <p>Gold Ray Natural Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Alternative 2
Trail use and connectivity	Support and promote development of the Rogue River Greenway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action in Alternative 1 • Formalize user made hiking trail system at Gold Ray Natural Area throughout Kelly Slough while maintaining wild areas on east end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 1 • Evaluate the feasibility of connecting the Gold Ray to Table Rocks via a hiking trail • Develop a trail to connect Gold Ray and Salmon Rock while maintaining wild areas on east end • Bank angling sites along trail system
Interpretation and education	Create an interpretive “cheat-sheet” targeted to river-guides to help inform guides and their clients about the river’s natural, historical, and cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 1 • Create a boat-in/walk-in interpretive trail with interpretive materials located at Kendall Bar and sites at Gold Ray Natural Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternatives 1 and 2 • Interpretive/outdoor education center/facility at Gold Ray Natural Area

<p>Operation, maintenance, funding strategies and partnership ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with user groups for assistance with maintenance, trail development, volunteer patrols, and clean-ups • Seek grants to fund development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 1 • Explore opportunities for partnering with commercial guiding companies to help maintain Kendall Bar and Gold Ray Natural Area • Charge day-use fee at Gold Ray Natural Area • Explore management partnerships for managing adjacent lands at Gold Ray Natural Area (between JCP and ODFW) and at Kelly Slough (between ODFW, Jackson County and The Nature Conservancy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 2
--	--	---	--

DRAFT

Reach 3: Gold Ray Natural Area to Gold Nugget Waysides (Sites include Fishers Ferry, Hardy Riffle, Doughton Falls/Lymans Rapid, Nugget Falls, Gold Nugget Waysides)

	Alternative 1- Minimum Development	Alternative 2 – Moderate Development	Alternative 3 – Maximum Development
River access and amenities	<p>Fishers Ferry Keep the site, but do not improve it</p> <p>Hardy Riffle No facilities</p> <p>ODFW Doughton Falls/Lymans Rapids Explore opportunities to obtain the ODOT property to preserve legal access to ODFW property off of HWY 234</p> <p>Nugget Falls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities with the railroad to create legal access • Support and promote development of this site for the Rogue River Greenway <p>Gold Nugget Waysides No changes</p> <p>User-made sites in this reach along upper river road on public lands Restore these sites to their natural condition as replacement sites are developed</p>	<p>Fishers Ferry Same as Alternative 1</p> <p>Hardy Riffle Boat-in/walk-in only day-use site (pack-it-in/pack-it-out)</p> <p>ODFW Doughton Falls/Lymans Rapids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action in Alternative 1 • Develop a non-motorized boat launch • Sanitation facility • Picnic tables • Parking <p>Nugget Falls Same as Alternative 1</p> <p>Gold Nugget Waysides Improve foot access to the river connecting a trail to all three sites</p> <p>User-made sites in this reach on public lands Same as Alternative 1</p>	<p>Fishers Ferry Same as Alternative 1</p> <p>Hardy Riffle Explore opportunities with the railroad to create drive-in public access for fishing, boating, and picnicking</p> <p>ODFW Doughton Falls/Lymans Rapids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action in Alternative 1 • Develop a mixed-use boat launch • Sanitation facility • Picnic shelter and picnic tables • Parking <p>Nugget Falls Same as Alternative 1</p> <p>Gold Nugget Waysides Same as Alternative 2</p> <p>User-made sites in this reach on public lands Same as Alternative 1</p>
Trail use and connectivity	Support and promote development of the Rogue River Greenway	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1

Interpretation and education	Create an interpretive “cheat-sheet” targeted to river-guides to help inform guides and their clients about the river’s natural, historical, and cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions in Alternative 1 • Create a “water based” interpretive trail with interpretive materials located at Fishers Ferry, Hardy Riffle, and Doughton Falls. 	Same as Alternative 2
Operation, maintenance, funding strategies and partnership ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek grants for project development and possible acquisition of ODOT property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek grants for site development • Create a management partnership between ODFW and JCP to manage Doughton Falls • Explore opportunities for partnering with commercial guiding companies and/or user groups to help take care of the sites • Charge day-use fees at Doughton Falls 	Same as Alternatives 1 and 2
Future Plans	Incorporate improvement ideas for Nugget Falls and Gold Nugget Waysides into the Recreation Management Plan in next BLM planning process	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1

Project Area Wide Recommendations			
	Alternative 1- Minimum Development	Alternative 2 – Moderate Development	Alternative 3 – Maximum Development
Wayfinding and signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Rogue River Water Trail Guide as the main wayfinding guide Signage will be rustic and sparse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop sign plan for wayfinding that complements the Rogue River Water Trail Guide. Follow the Rogue River Water Trails protocol for access site/rapid naming and signage guidance Signage will be modern and more frequently located and could include river mile signage, regulations, river access sites, and road signs 	Same as Alternative 2
Restoration	Promote on-going active restoration projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action in Alternative 1 Restore user made sites between Gold Ray and Fisher’s Ferry as they are decommissioned and alternative sites are created Pursue opportunities and support partnerships to implement large scale riparian restoration projects for wildlife habitat and aesthetic benefits 	Same as Alternative 2
River monitoring and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor use through existing on-going efforts by Oregon State Parks, Jackson County Parks, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon State Marine Board, and the Jackson County Marine Patrol. Form a stakeholder committee that oversees monitoring efforts and recommends management actions based on the monitoring results. The goal will be to monitor use and conflict to head off problems with management solutions. The focus of management actions will be on less restrictive actions such as providing information/education to users and these will be selected before more restrictive actions like increase enforcement or developing a registration or permit system. The committee will identify best metrics to use to determine when river user conflicts merit management/regulation change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track river use by existing on-going efforts like Alternative 1 and at any new or improved sites Explore opportunities to work with commercial guides to track use numbers on the river, number of encounters with other boats/parties, and maintenance Form a stakeholder committee (same as Alternative 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions in Alternatives 1 and 2 Promote user education and resource protection through interagency collaboration

DRAFT