

# Deschutes River Access and Habitat Restoration Plan

## Draft Project List

### January 21, 2021

## Potential Projects

What follows is a list of 33 potential projects for inclusion in the Draft Deschutes River Access and Habitat Restoration Plan (plan). These projects were developed through input by a focus group representing 14 diverse organizations, community members and BPRD staff. This is a first draft of potential projects for inclusion in the plan, and part of the continued conversation regarding plan content. This list has been reviewed by the focus group, the Bend Park and Recreation District (BPRD) board, and now the district seeks feedback from the public. All interested parties will again have the opportunity to review the draft project list as part of the review of the overall draft plan, which is anticipated to be released in summer of 2021.

These projects were evaluated using the following six criteria in order to determine their priority ranking:

1. Would the project protect, create or enhance habitat?
2. Would the project improve existing access or create a new access point?
3. Would the project be eligible for grants and partnerships?
4. Would the project advance equity in the community?
5. Would the project address expressed community needs?
6. Would the project address safety and facility risks?

Based upon the evaluation, the projects were grouped into three categories: high, medium and low priority. Of the 33 potential projects, 13 were ranked high priority, 12 were ranked medium priority and 8 were ranked low priority. The results of the evaluation process are not intended to be a strict prescription of the order in which projects should be developed. As such, the prioritization process does not dictate the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), rather it helps to inform when each project should be added to the CIP.

Funding for these projects will come from the general fund and it is anticipated that many, if not all of these projects will require some element of partnership and/or grant funding in order to move forward. The goal of the plan is to implement all of these projects over the course of the document's planning horizon; however, this will be contingent upon identifying successful partnerships and/or grants to facilitate project implementation.

## System Wide Ideas:

1. The district should implement a consistent signage and educational approach for all district river access properties. This should include multi-lingual signage. Kiosks with information about river and riparian zone restoration and protection would be useful at some river parks. **(High Priority)**.
2. The district should provide outreach and education with partners to make parks more welcoming to all. Riverbend and Harmon parks were identified as potential locations **(High Priority)**.

3. Expand volunteer ambassador program to include high use river parks (**High Priority**).
4. The district should expand the adopt-a-trail program to support the use of designated trails along the river. (**High Priority**).

#### River Rim Park

5. Consolidate access to 1 or 2 access points to protect and enhance remaining sensitive habitat, and armor those areas to reduce erosion. Improve safety and aesthetics of irrigation station (**Medium Priority**).
6. Designate a loop trail to direct visitors. Add seating as appropriate (**Low Priority**).
7. Modify steep trail to be more sustainable, make drainage improvements (**Low Priority**).

#### Farewell Bend Park, Upriver of Bill Healy Bridge

8. Determine which of the existing 29 (including 6 at Cedarwood Trailhead) access points should be improved and which should be closed. Implement applicable projects. (**High Priority**).
9. The district should improve access from the sidewalk on the southern side of the Bill Healy bridge to the Deschutes River trail. (**Medium Priority**).

#### Farewell Bend Park, Cedarwood Trailhead

10. The district should formalize the trail leading to the Deschutes River Trail and restore surrounding areas. (**Medium Priority**).
11. Address parking concerns/neighborhood compatibility at Cedarwood Trailhead with one of the following three projects (a) no changes to the parking/loading at the trailhead (b) addition of a few parking spaces, or (c) development of a short-term loading zone only (**Low Priority**).

#### Farewell Bend Park, Downriver of Bill Healy Bridge

12. The district should increase parking for park users by changing parallel parking to angled parking. In addition, a loading zone should be added. (**Low Priority**).
13. The district should close fence gaps at the picnic shelters to eliminate user-created access points and reestablish habitat. (**Medium Priority**).
14. Improve existing canoe launch to address erosion (**High Priority**).
15. Address erosion at the beach, including exploring alternatives to sand, while also maintaining a portion of sandy beach area (**Medium Priority**).
16. Improve accessibility to the water at the beach (**Medium Priority**).
17. Provide seasonal off-leash dog water access at the existing beach (**High Priority**).
18. The district should evaluate additional restoration options to enhance the existing wetland restoration project adjacent to the boardwalk, to improve conditions for the Oregon Spotted Frog and other species. Implement, as applicable. (**High Priority**).

#### Riverbend Park

19. The district should improve the beach to include an accessible boat launch. Enlarge beach as necessary to allow for multiple uses. (**High Priority**).

20. Provide seasonal off-leash dog water access at the existing beach. Could be used as a pilot project for permanent off-leash dog water access and then removed once permanent access is installed (**Medium Priority**).
21. Provide permanent off-leash dog water access with the exact location to be determined (**High Priority**).

#### McKay Park

22. The district should establish trees along the fish ladder section (floater channel) within the fenced area to provide shade. (**Medium Priority**).

#### Miller's Landing Park

23. The district should close and revegetate existing downstream access, while redesigning the boardwalk access for safety and improved access. (**High Priority**).

#### Columbia Park

24. Close and revegetate the existing designated access point. Close downstream user created access point by replacing single-rail fence with more protective fence to eliminate user created access and improve vegetation in flattened grass area (**High Priority**).

#### Harmon Park

25. The district should improve the dock so it's more stable and provides easier access in and out of the water. (**Low Priority**).

#### Pageant Park

26. Addition of an accessible boat access (**Low Priority**).

#### Brooks Park – no changes proposed

#### Pioneer Park

27. Remove the rock wall and create a more natural riparian area (**Medium Priority**).

#### Riverside Natural Area (Area between Pioneer Park and First Street Rapids Park) - no changes proposed

#### First Street Rapids Park

28. West side of river- The district should close user-created access points to protect vegetation and protect trail. Consider addition of fencing and revegetation. (**High Priority**).

29. East side of river- The district should evaluate consolidation and improvement of access points and implement applicable projects. (Medium Priority).

### Riverview Park

30. Renovate path to make more accessible (Low Priority).

### Sawyer Park

31. Armor 1-2 access points and close other redundant access points along the Fisherman's Trail (Medium Priority).
32. Define trail system, and eliminate duplicate and social trails on the west side of the river (Medium Priority).

### Riley Ranch Nature Reserve

33. Designate 1-2 additional access points where high use is observed (Low Priority).

## Considered but Dismissed

What follows are all projects that were suggested by the Focus Group, community or BPRD staff, and were subsequently dismissed for a variety of reasons. The list includes 54 projects, which are arranged by park. Each project includes the park name, project description and rationale for dismissal of the project. Note that in some cases, projects would still be completed, but they are not included within the plan (as they are considered maintenance). In addition, some projects may be considered as part of other development projects. Finally, just because a project is listed in this section does not mean that it will never happen, however, BPRD staff does not anticipate the potential for any of these projects to move forward during the planning horizon for the plan.

1. Systemwide: Addition of educational signage at select access points to indicate if dog usage is or is not acceptable at that location. Just a "No Dogs, Please" or "Dogs OK" at popular access sites might help.
  - a. This project will be considered as part of the broader systemwide project to implement consistent signage throughout the river parks that aligns with existing BPRD sign guidelines.
2. River Rim Park: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed due to the proximity to residential uses, healthy riparian vegetation, limited parking, danger associated with the rapids and steep slope that would foster erosion.
3. Farewell Bend Park, Cedarwood Trailhead: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed due to proximity to residential uses, fast current, healthy riparian vegetation and limited parking.
4. Farewell Bend Park, Cedarwood Trailhead: Addition of restrooms at the Cedarwood Trailhead.
  - a. Dismissed because this project is outside of the scope of the plan.
5. Farewell Bend Park, Cedarwood Trailhead: Addition of a few parking spaces at the Cedarwood Trailhead to ease parking constraints.

- a. Dismissed because the expressed community need focused on loading and unloading watercraft. A loading zone would better meet this need and complement the existing parking spaces.
- 6. Farewell Bend Park, Cedarwood Trailhead: Consider creation of accessible water access, including the addition of an accessible trail to the water.
  - a. Dismissed because no accessible parking exists, meeting grades would be challenging and would likely require switchbacks. Riverbend and Farewell Bend beaches were determined as more appropriate areas to focus on for accessible access.
- 7. Farewell Bend Park, Upriver of Bill Healy: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed because the site is adjacent to residential uses, healthy riparian vegetation, potential impacts to the Deschutes River Trail and proximity to the Riverbend South Restoration Project.
- 8. Farewell Bend Park, Under Bill Healy: Evaluate area under Healy Bridge for dedicated permanent off-leash dog swim area and potential improvements to safely facilitate that use.
  - a. Dismissed because the property is not owned by the district, it is an unwelcoming environment, the owner expressed desire to limit use due to bridge structural integrity considerations, danger associated with the fast current and proximity to the Riverbend South Restoration project.
- 9. Farewell Bend Park, Downstream of Bill Healy: Modify the dock to provide ADA access.
  - a. Dismissed because of potential challenges launching here due to existing mudflat. Accessibility improvements to be focused on Riverbend and Farewell Bend beaches.
- 10. Farewell Bend, Downstream of Bill Healy: Continue to remove debris—like cables and railroad ties—from river.
  - a. Dismissed because this work would be best considered in coordination with a project occurring proximate to such debris.
- 11. Farewell Bend Park, Downstream of Bill Healy: Create a swimming area between the boardwalk and footbridge. Use the existing boardwalk as part of the river access.
  - a. Dismissed because this was determined not to be a suitable swimming area given the mud flats and sensitive habitat.
- 12. Farewell Bend Park, Downstream of Bill Healy: Permanent off-leash dog water access at the existing canoe access.
  - a. Dismissed because concerns were expressed by regulatory bodies, the site is within a critical habitat area, there is private property downriver and the site has a steep slope that would make it prone to erosion.
- 13. Riverbend Park: Add sand volleyball courts.
  - a. Dismissed because this project is outside of the scope of the plan.
- 14. Riverbend Park, Near Bill Healy Bridge: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed due to concerns regarding impacts to the Riverbend South Restoration project’s habitat restoration long walk from parking, and user conflicts.
- 15. Riverbend Park: Locate a small access point downstream of the beach. This could help disperse users and provide a different experience. Would need to evaluate an appropriate location and use. Perhaps near the eastern/downriver edge of the park, where vegetation is not great.
  - a. Dismissed to focus on enlarging the existing beach to provide improved access.

16. Riverbend Park: Consider enhanced access between the river and the Haul Road Trail, including potential construction of an overlook.
  - a. Dismissed because this project is outside of the scope of the plan.
17. McKay Park: Adjust landscaping directly adjacent to existing wheelchair ramp into the river to minimize gravel covering the ramp.
  - a. Dismissed as this is a maintenance project and will be addressed in the near term by the BPRD Park Services team.
18. McKay Park: Consider an extensive re-design. A radically more meandering fish passage channel and comprehensive park re-design could enable creation of a diversity of habitats, water access areas for a variety of family recreation sites and safer and more recreationally successful whitewater features.
  - a. Dismissed as substantial monies were just recently invested in the development of this park and BPRD continues to evaluate and address the performance of the park. A future plan could consider a more extensive redesign.
19. McKay Park: Evaluate alternative projects to protect vegetation on the river side of the path, given that the existing split rail fences at each fish channel drop are inadequate to protect vegetation.
  - a. Dismissed because it is challenging for vegetation to thrive in this location.
20. McKay Park Existing Beach: Seasonal off-leash dog water access
  - a. Dismissed due to potential downriver riparian area impacts, limited parking and user conflicts.
21. Miller's Landing Park: Armor existing downstream access point.
  - a. Given proximity to residential properties and the extreme degradation experienced at this access point, staff recommends closing it and enhancing the boardwalk access site to provide a consolidated, armored option for multiple user groups.
22. Miller's Landing Park: Coordinate with William Smith Properties Inc. to better secure the east side of the river/pathway to prevent habitat degradation.
  - a. Dismissed as this site is on private property and outside of the scope of this project.
23. Miller's Landing Park: Evaluate working with William Smith Properties Inc. on their property on the upstream side of park which would be a good location for boat launch. However, habitat concerns should be taken into account given the Whitewater park's habitat channel is immediately upstream.
  - a. Dismissed as this site is on private property and outside of the scope of this project.
24. Miller's Landing Park: Permanent off-leash dog water access at southern user-created access point.
  - a. Dismissed due to healthy riparian vegetation, potential impacts to the habitat channel, immediately adjacent to private property, and user conflicts.
25. South of Miller's Landing Park: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed due to healthy riparian vegetation, potential impacts to the habitat channel, the site is on private property, and user conflicts.
26. Columbia Park: Add permanent restrooms to park.
  - a. Dismissed because this project is outside of the scope of the plan.
27. Columbia Park: Add ADA fishing spot.
  - a. Dismissed due to lack of sufficient space. Determined to be an infeasible project.

28. Columbia Park: Add bench/viewing spot upstream of bridge.
  - a. Dismissed as this project would negatively impact the healthy existing vegetation.
29. Columbia Park: Armor the existing access point
  - a. Dismissed due to safety concerns. This access point significantly contributes to bridge jumping at the adjacent bridge and closure will address this issue. Access continues to be provided at Miller's Landing Park.
30. Columbia Park: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed due to healthy vegetation, limited parking, narrow river channel, classification as a neighborhood park, proximity to residential uses, space constraints and steep slope.
31. Drake Park Existing Beach: Seasonal off-leash dog water access
  - a. Dismissed as the project would conflict with adjacent uses, create additional erosion, limited parking exists, proximity to residential uses and user conflicts.
32. Harmon Park: Remove the chain link fence even if only portions of it.
  - a. Dismissed due to safety concerns given proximity to playground and existing ballfield use.
33. Harmon Park: Lay back the retaining wall and restore habitat. The area is already shallow, and dredging tailings could build up the land there. (FG)
  - a. Dismissed because this site is not BPRD property, this project would decrease the size of the park and would change the nature of the park.
34. Harmon Park: Repurpose the boat house for community usage rather than BPRD recreation program storage.
  - a. Dismissed because the boat house is used for community purposes including recreational programming and preschool.
35. Pageant Park: Improve ease of access to the water by widening the existing step and adding a second step to allow for use in the winter when the water is lower.
  - a. Dismissed as the dock is in good condition and works for most uses.
36. Brooks Park: Consider modifications to the dock to provide ADA accessible boat access.
  - a. Dismissed as no accessible parking exists at this location and other parks such as Harmon and Pageant would be more suitable for this project.
37. Pacific Park: Provide a dog off-leash water access.
  - a. Dismissed due to proximity of residential uses, narrowness of property, high potential for user conflict, difficulty to retrieve dogs if swept downstream and moderate river width.
38. Pioneer Park: Construct a take-out here to allow for safe take-out prior to dam.
  - a. Dismissed due to safety concerns with dam.
39. Pioneer Park: Evaluate the south end of the park as a potential area for dog swimming.
  - a. Dismissed because the project would be costly and complicated, would conflict with neighboring uses and events, dam poses safety issue, impact to historical character of park, proximity to residential uses and user conflicts.
40. Pioneer Park: Add ADA fishing spot.
  - a. Dismissed due to shallow water levels and mudflats along the bank.
41. First Street Rapids Park, River Right: Extend the fencing on the northern side of the BPRD property all the way to the river to prevent trespassing onto private property.

- a. Dismissed as this access needs to be maintained as the only access point for maintenance, fire suppression and safety.
- 42. First Street Rapids Park: Install boat house for boat storage and a place to change and gather.
  - a. Dismissed as there are space constraints, insufficient parking, and the site is not a high boat usage site per the community survey.
- 43. First Street Rapids Park: Remove parking on one side of First Street.
  - a. Dismissed as this is outside of the scope of the plan. City staff has been alerted of this request.
- 44. First Street Rapids Park: Addition of vegetation near ADA access sidewalk to First Street Rapids Park in order to prevent cutting of the switchback.
  - a. Dismissed as existing switchback cutting is minimal and no vegetation currently exists that is being damaged.
- 45. First Street Rapids Park, River Left: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed because of fast current, healthy riparian vegetation, limited parking, proximity to residential uses, space constraints and a steep slope that would make this site more susceptible to erosion.
- 46. First Street Rapids Park, River Right: Permanent off-leash dog water access.
  - a. Dismissed because the project would conflict with adjacent uses, proximity to residential uses, fast current, limited parking, space constraints and user conflicts.
- 47. Riverview Park: Maintain access for boats.
  - a. Dismissed as access will be maintained.
- 48. Riverview Park: Consider cosmetic improvements, such as removing the chain-link fence.
  - a. Dismissed as outside of the scope of the plan.
- 49. Sawyer Park: Sawyer Park: Consider addition of fencing upriver along OB Riley Road.
  - a. Dismissed as this will be considered as part of the CIP project to address parking at Sawyer Park.
- 50. Sawyer Park: Consider addition of a permanent restroom.
  - a. Dismissed because this is outside of the scope of the plan.
- 51. Sawyer Park: Evaluate the addition of parking spaces as part of the parking project to occur in 2023 given that parking is already heavily utilized in summer.
  - a. Dismissed as this will be considered as part of the CIP project to address parking at Sawyer Park.
- 52. Sawyer Park: Consider cooperative parking agreements with nearby businesses.
  - a. Dismissed as this will be considered as part of the CIP project to address parking at Sawyer Park.
- 53. Sawyer Park: BPRD in partnership with DogPAC to further evaluate possibilities for dog swimming.
  - a. Dismissed because of fast river current/proximate rapids, long walk from the parking lot, narrow river corridor, and it is a preeminent birding area.
- 54. Miller's Landing Park: Redesign the boardwalk access for safety, accessibility, and the potential for it to be the only access point at Miller's Landing Park
  - a. Dismissed as this was combined with the other project at Miller's Landing.