



Plan, Play & Protect

RIVER ACCESS & HABITAT RESTORATION

Project Overview

Bend Park & Recreation District (BPRD) is planning for recreational access and habitat restoration at parks along the Deschutes River. Today, park district residents own 16 parks along the Deschutes River, which include numerous access points to facilitate water play. River use has grown in popularity in recent years and over 205,000 people floated through the Bend Whitewater Park in the summer of 2020. However, in a recent survey, residents indicated that access to the river is still a top need.

Increased use has the potential to cause impacts such as habitat degradation and bank erosion. Staff has completed an inventory and assessment of riverbank conditions on BPRD-owned property, which summarized conditions and identified opportunities for restoration and improved river access. Staff also studied recreational use at the 16 parks, which confirmed a high volume of recreational use, and identified 94 user-created access points in addition to the 25 designated access points. In order to reverse the trend of damaged vegetation and erosion, the district is evaluating improving and consolidating access for these areas.

Project Goals

- Identify and prioritize projects that balance habitat restoration and user access
- Improve and consolidate existing access points
- Engage diverse stakeholders to inform plan
- Develop a fiscally sound implementation plan

Project Process & Timeline

The Deschutes River Access and Habitat Restoration Plan will involve the community to understand what types of access there should be, where recreational access and habitat restoration should occur, and which locations are priorities, given limited funding.

Opportunities for engagement include:

- Public surveys – February 2020 and February 2021
- Virtual Community Meetings – winter and summer 2021
- Board Meetings –December 2020, winter 2021, spring 2021, summer 2021 and fall 2021
- Receive project updates via social media, BPRD website or email updates

The planning effort began in January 2020, and the plan is anticipated to be adopted by the BPRD board in fall 2021.

How to get involved

For more information or to be added to the project email list, please contact Sarah Bodo, Park Planner: 541-706-6118 or SarahB@bendparksandrec.org. Additional information may be found at the project website – www.bendparksandrec.org/riverplan.