

**Deschutes River Access and Habitat Restoration Plan
Draft Project List Community Survey Results Summary
March 2021**

Introduction

As part of the public engagement scope for the Deschutes River Access and Habitat Restoration Plan (Plan), the Bend Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) solicited input from the community regarding their current use of the river, as well as their opinions on the 33 projects included in the [Draft Project List](#). This input was gathered via a non-statistically valid community survey that was available from February 9th through February 28, 2021. The survey was advertised on the BPRD website, social media pages, newsletters, A-frame signs at three park locations, stakeholder email list (reaching nearly 300 individuals and organizations) and focus group (a group made up of 14 community members representing agency, recreational, environmental, business and educational interests who are helping inform plan development) member outreach. The survey was available in both English and Spanish, and 41 people either took the survey in Spanish or identified as Latinx in the English language survey. The Latinx and Spanish language responses remain low in relationship to Bend's overall population (4% of survey vs. 9% of the population) and BPRD will continue to strive for more representative engagement for the Plan and out other outreach efforts.

Overall, BPRD received 980 responses to the survey. The respondents represented residents of every Bend neighborhood and nearly half took the time to provide open ended comments. BPRD is utilizing these survey results as an additional data point to help inform and refine the draft project list.

The survey included 42 questions, including an open-ended question that received 435 responses. What follows is a high-level summary of the survey results focused on key take-aways. Unless specifically noted, survey responses from the Spanish language survey or those who identified as Latinx, generally align with the overall survey results.

Key Take-aways

A number of questions in the survey were more general in nature. High level results from some key overarching questions include:

- **Location of residence:** Though survey respondents represented all 14 Bend neighborhoods, those who had the most respondents included River West (19%), Southwest Bend (12%) and Southern Crossing (10%). For the respondents who took the survey in Spanish or who identified as Latinx, the top three neighborhoods were Southwest Bend (17%), Old Farm District (12%) and Summit West (12%).
- **Activities:** When asked which top three activities respondents enjoyed at river parks, 84% choose trail walking, running or biking, 50% chose paddling the river and 31% chose visiting a park along the river. For the respondents who took the survey in Spanish or who identified as Latinx, the first and second choice activities were the same, while floating the river was the third most enjoyed activity.
- **Parks visited:** The Plan focuses on 14 riverfront parks and when asked which parks they frequent for the activities noted in the bullet above (and asked to check as many as apply), the top three most visited parks were Farewell Bend Park (77%), Riverbend Park (70%) and Drake Park (64%).
- **River access satisfaction:** When asked about satisfaction with river access, 75% indicated they were satisfied, 13% indicated they were dissatisfied and 12% had no opinion.

The remainder of the questions were specifically focused on the draft project list. Below are results from select projects where consensus by the Focus Group had not been achieved, projects that had significant public input in the comments section, and projects that received the most/least support from survey respondents.

- **Cedarwood Trailhead, Parking Options:** For Cedarwood trailhead, the survey asked respondents to identify their preferred project from four options. The responses were fairly split between options, specifically: 37%

preferred the addition of a few parking spaces, 31% didn't know or didn't have an opinion, 17% desired no changes at the trailhead and 15% preferred a short-term loading zone at the trailhead.

- Farewell Bend Park Parking: The potential project at Farewell Bend Park to add more parking was the most popular project based upon survey respondents' feedback, both in the positive nature of the responses to the question specifically about the project and as noted below, the responses to the question that asked people to select their top three projects. For the project specific question, 79% of respondents supported this project, 14% of respondents didn't support this project and 7% didn't know or had no opinion.
- Riverbend Park, Permanent Dog Off-leash Water Access: The survey inquired about the potential for an off-leash dog water access at Riverbend Park. Fifty-eight percent of respondents agreed with this project, 23% of respondents disagreed with this project and 20% were unsure or had no opinion. The permanent off-leash water access received more support than the seasonal off-leash dog water access points at Farewell Bend and Riverbend beaches. Respondents agreed with those two projects 42% and 46%, respectively. Correspondingly, 37% of respondents disagree with seasonal access at Farewell Bend Park and 34% of respondents disagree with seasonal access at Riverbend Park.
- Miller's Landing Park Access Points: The potential project at Miller's Landing Park includes closure of the downstream access point and associated habitat restoration, as well as improvement of the boardwalk access point. The majority of respondents agreed with this project. Specifically, 68% of respondents agreed with this project, 16% disagreed with this project and 16% had no opinion or didn't know.
- Columbia Park access points: The survey inquired about the potential to close both the designated and user created access points at Columbia Park and to complete habitat restoration. Fifty-four percent of respondents agreed with this project, 30% of respondents disagreed with the project and 16% had no opinion or were unsure.
- Pioneer Park rock wall: The potential project at Pioneer Park includes the removal of the rock wall and creation of a more natural riparian area. With the exception of the two seasonal off-leash dog water access areas, this project was the one that survey respondents disagreed with the most. Specifically, 40% of respondents agreed with this project, 31% of respondents disagreed with this project and 28% had no opinion or were unsure.
- Most supported projects: When questioned about the three projects that were most important to them, the following projects received the most support:
 1. Farewell Bend Park – installation of additional parking and a loading zone: 26%
 2. Spanning the River – installation of signage and kiosks: 15%
 3. Riverbend Park – permanent dog off-leash water access: 15%

For the respondents who took the survey in Spanish or who identified as Latinx, the top project was consistent with 22% support, however, the second most important project was Riverbend Park – improve beach to include accessible boat launch (22%) and Farewell Bend Park, South – consolidate and improve access points (19%).

The final question provided respondents the opportunity to share additional thoughts with the BPRD team. As noted previously, 435 people took the opportunity to share additional feedback with BPRD. Key highlights include:

- Columbia Park project – extensive comments on this project, with the majority expressing a desire to keep the designated access point open.
- Cedarwood Trailhead project – a number of comments were received about this project with the majority requesting that no parking be added.
- Off-leash dog water access – numerous comments on this topic were fairly evenly split between those advocating for off-leash dog water access and those opposed to off-leash dog water access.

As noted previously, this is a high-level summary of survey response data. A comprehensive packet of survey responses is available upon request from BPRD.