

TRAVEL



OREGON

DESTINATION READY 2.0
PROJECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & INVESTMENTS

Dylan VanWeelden

DESTINATION READY BACKGROUND

- In 2020, Oregon's communities were significantly impacted by COVID-19, wildfires and social unrest.
- To address these challenges, Travel Oregon launched the Destination Ready program in 2021 to support the development, enhancement and stewardship of key visitor experiences focusing on destination recovery and resilience.
- In 2021, Travel Oregon launched Destination Ready 2.0, continuing efforts to strengthen visitor experiences and build long-term resilience.
- Through the program, Travel Oregon staff and expert consultants partnered with awarded communities to conduct data-informed destination assessments, identifying short-and-medium-term priority projects to strengthen key visitor lures.
- Communities that completed the program became eligible for project implementation support, technical assistance and funding.

DESTINATION READY 2.0 AWARDEES

1. Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs
2. Columbia County Economic Team
3. Experience Grants Pass
4. Experience Roseburg
5. Florence Area Chamber of Commerce
6. Harney County Chamber of Commerce
7. Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce.
8. Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce
9. North Marion Tourism Collaborative
- 10.Visit McMinnville
11. Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce

DESTINATION READY 2.0 PROJECTS

The following projects received Travel Oregon staff technical assistance, consultation services and \$387,302 in funding in 2022-2024:

1. Crook County Outdoor Recreation Map
2. Harney County Outdoor Recreation Map
3. Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Outdoor Recreation Map
4. Molalla River Corridor Outdoor Recreation Map
5. Dollar Mountain Trail System Development
6. Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Accessibility Assessment
7. Hells Canyon Scenic Byway Stewardship Plan
8. Illinois Valley Alternative Lodging Feasibility Study
9. Panther Creek Mountain Bike Trail System Development
10. Rough and Ready Botanical Trail Improvements
11. Yamhill County Gravel Cycle Routes & Signage Plan
12. Yamhill Rivers Access Strategy Analysis



Wild Rivers Coast Alliance

2. HARNEY COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION MAP

DESTINATION LEAD: Harney County Chamber of Commerce

KEY PARTNERS:

- Bureau of Land Management – Burns District
- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Eastern Oregon Visitors Association
- City of Burns
- PMC Arts & Culture Foundation
- U.S. Forest Service – Malheur National Forest

TIMELINE:

- October 2022 – September 2023
- 1st round of prints/dist. September 2023 – August 2024
- 2nd round of prints/dist. September 2024 – August 2025

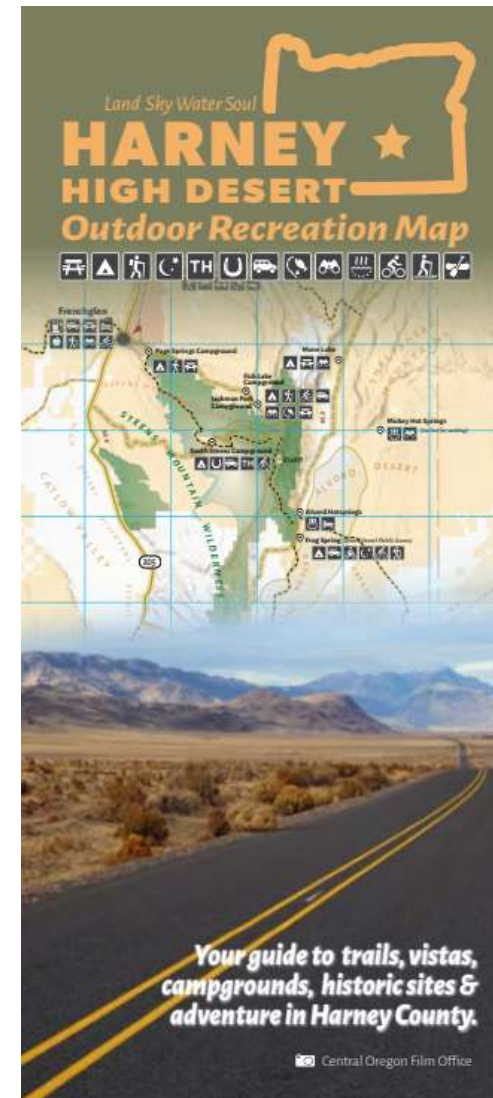
LEAD CONSULTANT: A Lens for Wanderlust

TRAVEL OREGON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- SOW development, contract and budget management for cartographer, copywriter, printer, distributor
- Project manager
- Partner meeting facilitator
- Destination lead management including use of Travel Oregon Outdoor Recreation Map toolkit and brand

TRAVEL OREGON FINANCIAL INVESTMENT: \$47,688

- Cartographer/process support - \$18,000
- Copywriter - \$2,740
- Printer - \$22,880 (2 years)
- Distributer - \$4,068 (2 years)

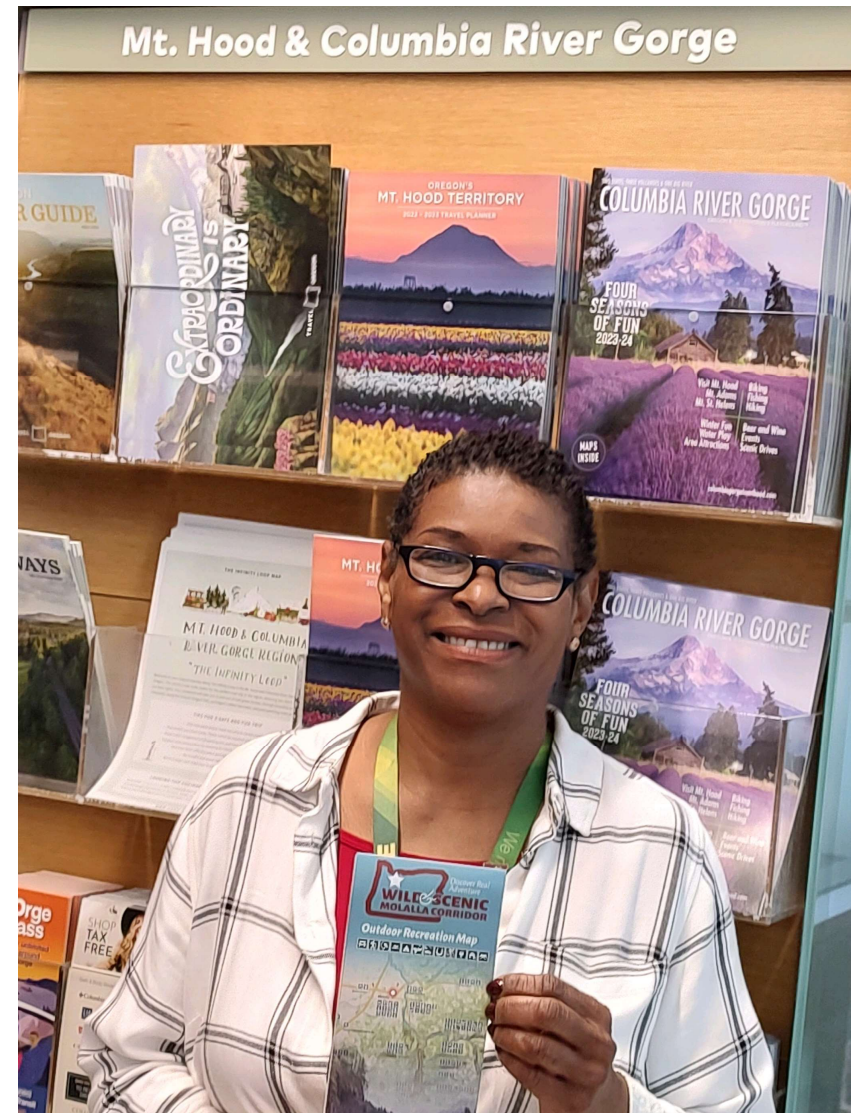


PROJECT OUTCOMES: OREGON OUTDOOR RECREATION MAPS

With the addition of four new Outdoor Recreation Maps, Travel Oregon now features 11 destinations across the state. These high-quality map brochures, available to tens of thousands of visitors for free, can be found in-person at Welcome Centers, select hotels, attractions, I-5 rest areas, and online at TravelOregon.com

"These are incredibly beautiful and informative outdoor recreation maps! They have filled a HUGE void we have had for years in the Oregon Welcome Centers!"

- Stephanie Lewis, Travel Advisor



5. DOLLAR MOUNTAIN TRAIL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Design a 15-mile high-quality, mountain bike and hiking trail system to boost accessible outdoor recreation, tourism and economic impact in Grants Pass, offering a valuable recreational asset for both residents and visitors.

DESTINATION LEAD: Grants Pass Parks & Recreation

KEY PARTNERS:

- Bureau of Land Management – Medford District
- Josephine County
- Southern Oregon Trail Association
- Visit Grants Pass

CONSULTANT: C2 Recreation

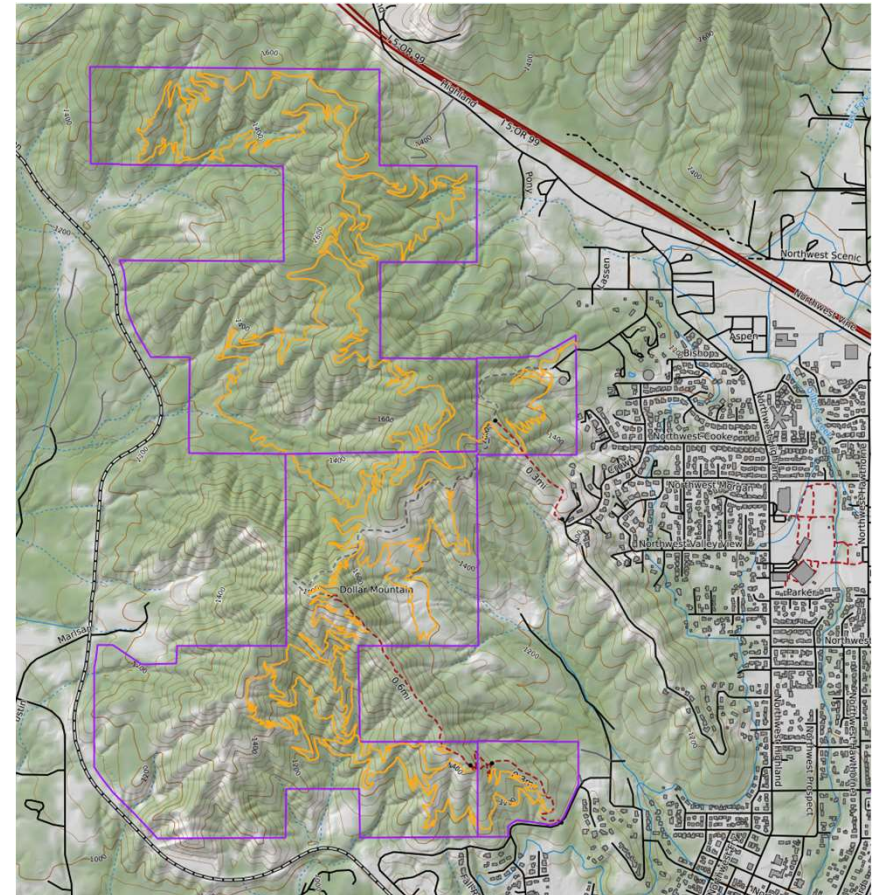
TIMELINE: October 2022 – March 2023

TRAVEL OREGON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- SOW development, contract and budget management
- Letter of support
- Press interview

TRAVEL OREGON FINANCIAL INVESTMENT: \$35,003

- Design (BLM parcel) - \$19,769
- Design updates & flagging (City parcel) - \$15,234



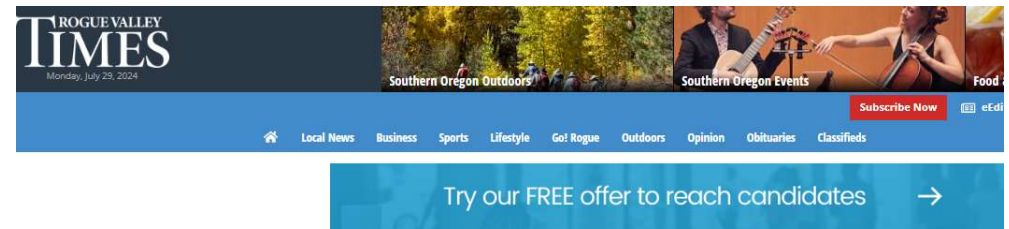
PROJECT OUTCOMES: DOLLAR MOUNTAIN TRAIL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

With trail design complete, Grants Parks & Recreation Department applied for and received a \$350,000 grant from Oregon State Parks Local Government Grant Program to fund trail construction and a new parking lot in 2024.

Not only is the trail system largely in support by residents (78% according to a 2020 survey), but it also supports the city's fuel-reduction (fire mitigation), eco-tourism and economic development, and accessible recreation improvement goals.

"This will result in more visitors spending dollars in shops and hotels and boost the community goals of being an eco-tourism destination while also expanding the recreational opportunities for local community members."

- Josh Hopkins, Parks Superintendent



FEATURED

\$350K grant will boost Grants Pass Dollar Mountain trail project

By JAMES SLOAN Rogue Valley Times · Oct 15, 2023 Updated Oct 16, 2023



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6. HELLS CANYON SCENIC BYWAY ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

Conduct an accessibility assessment of 15 visitor-facing locations along the Hells Canyon Scenic Byway, including lodging, restaurants, art galleries, visitor centers, and outdoor recreation sites, to better understand the barriers disabled travelers may encounter and ways to improve their experience.

DESTINATION LEAD: Eastern Oregon Visitors Association (EOVA)

KEY PARTNERS:

- Visit Baker
- Visit Union County
- Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce

CONSULTANT: Disabled Hikers

TIMELINE: May 2023 – June 2023

TRAVEL OREGON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- SOW development, contract and budget management

TRAVEL OREGON FINANCIAL INVESTMENT: \$8,000

- Assessment documentation and reporting
- *EOVA contributed additional funds.*



Hells Canyon Overlook: This is one of the most wheelchair accessible outdoor sites along the entire Byway. There are paved paths, accessible picnic tables, and accessible vault toilets. However, there is no designated accessible parking.

PROJECT OUTCOMES: HELLS CANYON SCENIC BYWAY ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

With the initial accessibility assessment complete, the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association input all the visitor-facing site information into Blue-Path.org, a non-profit that provides consumers with disabilities detailed accessibility information, enabling them to navigate more effectively and informed.

Building from the momentum, Umatilla Tourism and Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce were awarded \$65,900 Travel Oregon Competitive Grants in 2023 to offer destination accessibility workshops, conduct further assessments, and input more visitor-facing information on Blue-Path.org. This initiative enhances the quality and availability of accessibility-related information for visitors across more Eastern Oregon counties.

Expanding Accessible Spaces Spaces

FREE
Program!



Who?

Locally-owned businesses
and attractions in these
counties:

- Baker
- Morrow
- Umatilla
- Union
- Wallowa

Priority will be given to tourism-
related entities, like:

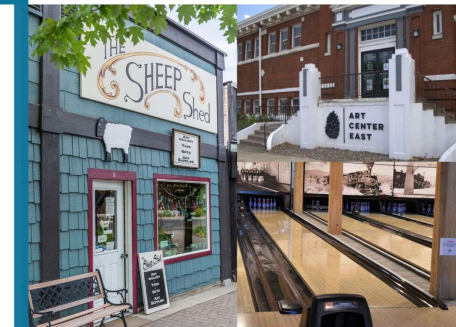


Photo credit: Joni Kabana, EOVA, La Grande Economic Development

9. PANTHER CREEK MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Develop a 25-mile bike-optimized trail system to boost accessible outdoor recreation, tourism and economic impact in Yamhill County, diversifying the visitor offerings and creating a valuable recreational asset for both residents and visitors.

DESTINATION LEAD: Cycle Yamhill county

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

- Bureau of Land Management – NW Oregon District
- Cycle Yamhill County
- Weyerhaeuser Corporation
- Willamette Valley Visitors Association

TIMELINE: March 2023 – July 2024

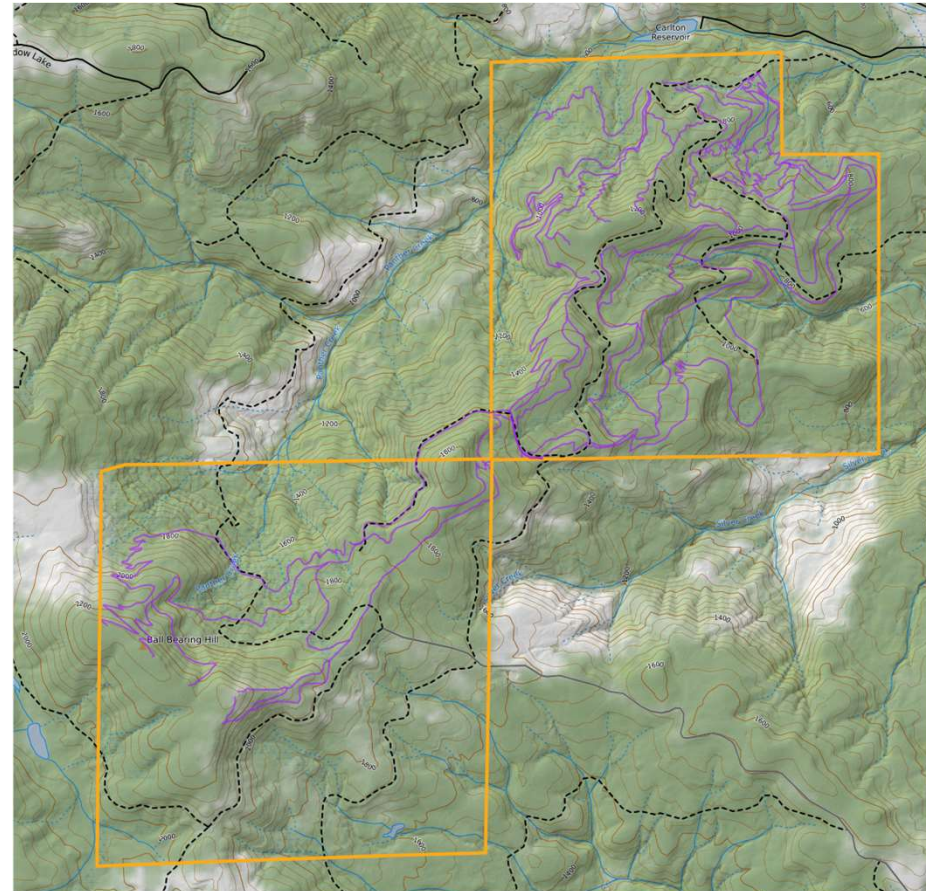
CONSULTANT: C2 Recreation

TRAVEL OREGON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- SOW development, contract and budget management
- Steering committee member

TRAVEL OREGON FINANCIAL INVESTMENT: \$75,358

- Feasibility Assessment - \$3,650
- Concept Plan - \$5,000
- Design & Flagging - \$36,708
- Environmental Assessment - \$30,000



PROJECT OUTCOMES: PANTHER CREEK MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

With trail design, flagging and preliminary work for an environmental assessment underway, Cycle Yamhill County continued outreach and fundraising, gaining support from Senator Merkley, as chair of a key Senate Appropriations subcommittee, writing the project into the fiscal year 2025 Interior-Environment spending bill:

"\$3.096 million to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in partnership with Cycle Yamhill County, for the construction of the Panther Creek Trail Network. The funding will be used to construct nearly 25 miles of world-class mountain bike trails on BLM-managed forestland in Yamhill County, creating recreational opportunities for community members and providing a boost to the regional economy."

- www.merkley.senate.gov



MERKLEY ANNOUNCES KEY COMMITTEE ACTION TO BOOST OREGON'S WILDFIRE RESILIENCY, WATER INFRASTRUCTURE, AND CLIMATE INVESTMENTS UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP

July 25, 2024

AS CHAIR OF A KEY SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE, MERKLEY WROTE THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 INTERIOR-ENVIRONMENT SPENDING BILL TO FUND TOP OREGON PRIORITIES, INCLUDING ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY-INITIATED PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE.

Washington, D.C. – Oregon's U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley—as Chair of the Senate Interior-Environment Appropriations Subcommittee—announced he secured critical investments to strengthen forest health and wildfire resiliency, protect public lands and the environment, boost important programs for Tribes, and support critical projects for Oregon communities.

The federal funding comes through the fiscal year 2025 (FY25) Senate Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, which encompasses funding for the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, Indian Health Service (IHS), and several other agencies.

Chair Merkley wrote the Interior-Environment bill to include key priorities for Oregon, including \$43.7 million for 25 community-initiated projects throughout the state, as well as significant investments to support programs and projects that help support wildfire management and smoke preparedness, permanently raise wildland firefighter pay, build drought resiliency and conservation, and address the water crisis in the Klamath Basin.

Under Chair Merkley's leadership, the Interior-Environment bill passed the committee with bipartisan support—a key step on the road to becoming law.

12. YAMHILL RIVERS ACCESS STRATEGY ANALYSIS

Perform a comprehensive assessment of existing public access points along the Yamhill Rivers to identify key access opportunities, decrease the use of social trails and undeveloped access points, and reduce negative impacts to riparian ecosystems. The development of strategy is aimed at further enhancing Yamhill Rivers' communities as a destination and increasing the economic vitality of the region.

DESTINATION LEAD: Willamette Valley Visitors Association

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

- Cities of Dayton, Lafayette, McMinnville, Sheridan and Willamina
- Oregon State Marine Board
- Taste Newberg
- Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District
- Visit McMinnville

TIMELINE: September 2023 – July 2024

CONSULTANT: C2 Recreation

TRAVEL OREGON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

- SOW development, contract and budget management
- Steering committee member

TRAVEL OREGON FINANCIAL INVESTMENT: \$5,000

- *Visit McMinnville and Willamette Valley Visitors Association also contributed funds for a total of \$16,300.*

DISCUSS RECREATION ON THE YAMHILL RIVER, NORTH YAMHILL RIVER, & SOUTH YAMHILL RIVER

JOIN US FOR A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION ON IMPROVING RECREATIONAL ACCESS TO THE YAMHILL RIVERS.

Share your thoughts on recreating on the Yamhill Rivers and help us enhance this resource for everyone to enjoy. Light refreshments are provided!

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

April 8, 6-8 pm: Sheridan - Sheridan High School
April 9, 10 am-12 pm: McMinnville - Kent Taylor Civic Hall
April 9, 6-8 pm: Dayton - Palmer Creek Lodge

INTERESTED IN REGISTERING FOR A MEETING OR LEARNING MORE? SCAN THE QR CODE OR EMAIL INFO@YAMHILLRIVERS.ORG

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

Willamette Valley **Visit McMinnville**

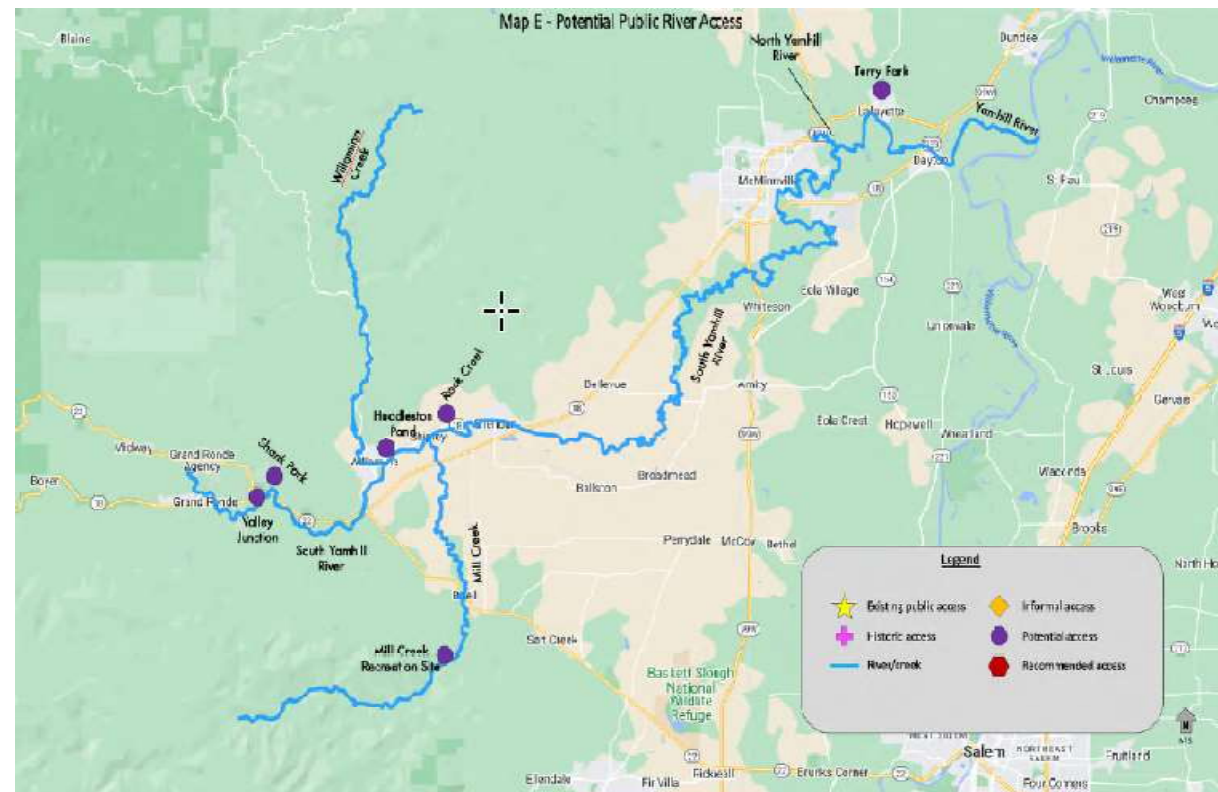
TRAVEL OREGON

JOEY HAMILTON

PROJECT OUTCOMES: YAMHILL RIVERS ACCESS STRATEGY ANALYSIS

With robust community engagement and buy-in of the municipalities, county and Oregon Marine Board, the Yamhill Rivers Access Steering Committee applied and was awarded the National Park Service-Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program in 2024. The program assists local communities over the course of 1-2 years in realizing their conservation and outdoor recreation vision and goals by providing a broad range of services and skills.

With the technical assistance of National Park Service, the Yamhill Rivers Access Strategy will continue building momentum in forming an Action Committee focused on outreach, action and implementation of the Yamhill Rivers Public Access Plan.



An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. On the left, a steep hill covered in dense evergreen forest slopes down towards a sandy beach. The beach is bordered by dark, rocky areas. To the right of the beach, the ocean extends to the horizon under a clear blue sky. White waves are visible breaking along the shoreline. The text "THANK YOU" is superimposed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters in the upper-middle part of the image.

THANK YOU

Questions?
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