

VIII: RECREATIONAL NEEDS

Summary. Hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, and other recreation activities make Wallowa County one of the recreation centers in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

Goal: To satisfy the recreational needs of visitors and of citizens of the County, and State, to promote recreation as an industry, and to improve or mitigate watershed conditions through well planned development in Wallowa County.

Findings: The findings below are the basis of decisions made with respect to the County's recreation resource:

General

1. Wallowa County possesses one of the state's finest year-around recreational potentials.
2. Wilderness comprises about 18 percent of the total County land area and an additional 34% is National Forest land, a total of 52%.
3. Eighty percent of the county's citizenry do not favor U.S.F.S. management programs that allocate land solely for wildlife habitat. Survey ca 1984.
4. Ninety percent of the county's citizenry do not favor additional Wilderness. Survey ca 1984.
5. Seventy-seven percent of the county's citizenry support road closures during deer and elk hunting season. Survey ca 1984.
6. That recreation and tourism is an increasingly important part of Wallowa County's economy.
7. State Land Use Law currently unduly restricts recreational activities allowed on land zoned Timber Grazing.
8. That Wallowa County has little, if any, lay representation at the State policy making level.

Process

9. Federal and State Land Use policies can have a large impact on the recreation and tourism economy of the County.

Capacity

10. That the Eagle Cap Wilderness and the State Park at Wallowa Lake are utilized to capacity during the summer season. Also, Wallowa Lake has additional infrastructure which is largely unused during the winter months.

Access

11. It is vital to County recreation and tourism industries that access to recreation and tourism areas be maintained. Access includes not only roads, but trails, cat roads, access easements, and other means of access.
12. That Dug Bar on the Snake River might be suitable for service facilities and that the public access road to that area supplies vital access to Dug Bar, Cow Creek and Imnaha River public fishing areas. The County recognizes the sensitive nature of the cultural resources located at Dug Bar.
13. The Hells Canyon Dam and its forebay provide for river access and recreational opportunities.

Facilities

14. The tourism and recreation industries in the County could be diversified by facilities such as a regional ski area or destination resort.
15. Using the shoulder of Hwy 351 from the Chief Joseph Monument to Wallowa Lake Lodge for a hiking/jogging/bicycling path is inadequate and unsafe.

Other Tourism

16. Emphasis in tourism in the County is shifting from traditional to more conventional.

Hunting and Fishing

17. Demand for deer, elk, and other big game hunting exceeds supply.

Additionally, ODF&W management policies, an initiative passed by Oregon voters, and other factors have served to decrease the supply.

18. Wallowa County has adopted the Wallowa County/Nez Perce Salmon Habitat Recovery Plan with Multi-species Emphasis. Also, stream corridor management and natural resource management is vital to both the Tourism and Recreation industries in the County.

Policies: The following statements of policy are related to satisfying the above goals.
General

1. The establishment of timber/grazing zone provisions for recreational development. As the promise of the ORS is not fulfilled in the OAR, the County will pursue resolution of this issue.
2. The County will not encourage the acquisition of additional land by the State or federal Governments or the conversion of additional public lands into wilderness. However, some flexibility in this policy may be advantageous to the County to achieve, assure, or consolidate access to tourism and recreation sites, including but not limited to public fishing access.
3. That Wallowa County will pursue local lay representation at the State policy making level.

Process

4. Local planning recommendations be incorporated into the plans of State and Federal agencies, and vice-versa. It is in the County's best interests to facilitate coordination of Federal, State and local Land Use decisions and policy development.
5. Suitability of potential recreation development be determined on the basis of location, demand, carrying capacity, recreational fulfillment, environmental effects, economics and related physical, social, and environmental concerns.
6. Local, state, and federal recreation development take into account (1) the U.S.F.S. Land Use Plan, (2) the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Plan, (3) The Oregon State Park's Master Plan, and (4) the County Land Use Plan, as applicable.

Capacity

7. Winter recreation and tourism development and expansion of the summer season into the shoulder months be considered desirable where economically feasible and environmentally suitable.
8. The existing infrastructure capacity at Wallowa Lake should be utilized year round.
9. Other Wilderness access points such as Bear Creek and the Minam River should be developed to take pressure off of heavily used areas.

10. The north County area should be developed for more ATVing, snowmobiling, and cross country skiing and other similar uses.

Access

11. Maintenance of Lostine River and Hurricane Creek access roads and facilities be given high priority.
12. The Wallowa Mountain Loop Road including Salt Creek Summit and the Upper Imnaha be given a high priority for improvement and development of recreation facilities.
13. Existing public access points to Wallowa Lake along HYW 351 should be improved and additional public access points developed. Overnight use of access points should be prohibited.
14. USFS road closures and maintenance decisions, including RS2477 roads, which could impact recreation, will be coordinated with the County as specified in the County's Transportation System Plan. Other USFS actions or policies which impact access to recreation and tourism sites shall be coordinated with the County. Access includes not only roads, but trails, cat roads, access easements, and other means of access.
15. The County urges the USFS and the NPS to, at a minimum, maintain the road from Cow Creek to Dug Bar at its current USFS rating level and to not let the road deteriorate below that standard. The County will coordinate facilities development at Dug Bar with the USFS, the NPS, and tribes and they will coordinate with the County, to assure access while protecting resources.
16. The County will also pursue a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest for maintenance of the Lower Imnaha road down to Cow Creek and will work to resolve easement issues.
17. The County will work to preserve the Hells Canyon Dam and the access and recreational opportunities it provides

Facilities

18. As specified in the County's Transportation System Plan, funding and/or other means to construct a 2-way bicycle, jogging, hiking, trail on the west side of the guard rail HYW 351 from the Chief Joseph Monument to the Wallowa Lake Lodge should be pursued and such a facility would benefit Tourism and Recreation at Wallowa Lake.

19. Development of one or more small or large destination resorts in the County should be encouraged.
20. Development of a regional ski area in the County should be encouraged and the County will work to streamline the land use permit application process with regard to applications involving public and private land.
21. The County will encourage the development of convention and performing arts center(s).
22. That minor betterment, rehabilitation, and repair of existing public parks is a permitted use where these activities do not increase visitation, or adversely impact the use of neighboring properties.
23. Private enterprise be given priority and be allowed to develop recreation facilities similar to those of State and Federal agencies where economically justifiable, and where environmental protection can be assured.

Other Tourism

24. The County will promote scenic driving tours such as Hat Point, Hells Canyon Byway, Highway 3, Lostine Canyon, Cow Creek and others.
25. The County will promote the tourism potential of the newly reactivated railroad line.
26. The County will promote heritage tourism and will tie into special events such as the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Also, the County would benefit from the promotion of other forms of tourism such as performing arts and driving tours.

Hunting and Fishing

27. Private property owners, and all levels of government continue to cooperate in road closures during deer and elk hunting seasons.
28. That spawning grounds and overall habitat of anadromous fish and other species be protected and enhanced via the adopted Salmon Habitat Recovery Plan.
29. The adopted Wallowa County/Nez Perce Salmon Habitat Recovery Plan with Multi-species Emphasis be used for stream corridor management and natural resource management.
30. Wallowa County will work to overturn the ban on cougar and bear hunting with dogs, will work to keep wolves from being introduced into the County, and will work with ODF&W and others

to increase the supply and harvest of fish, deer, elk and other game species in the County.

31. Wallowa County will work to maintain public access to hunting and fishing sites