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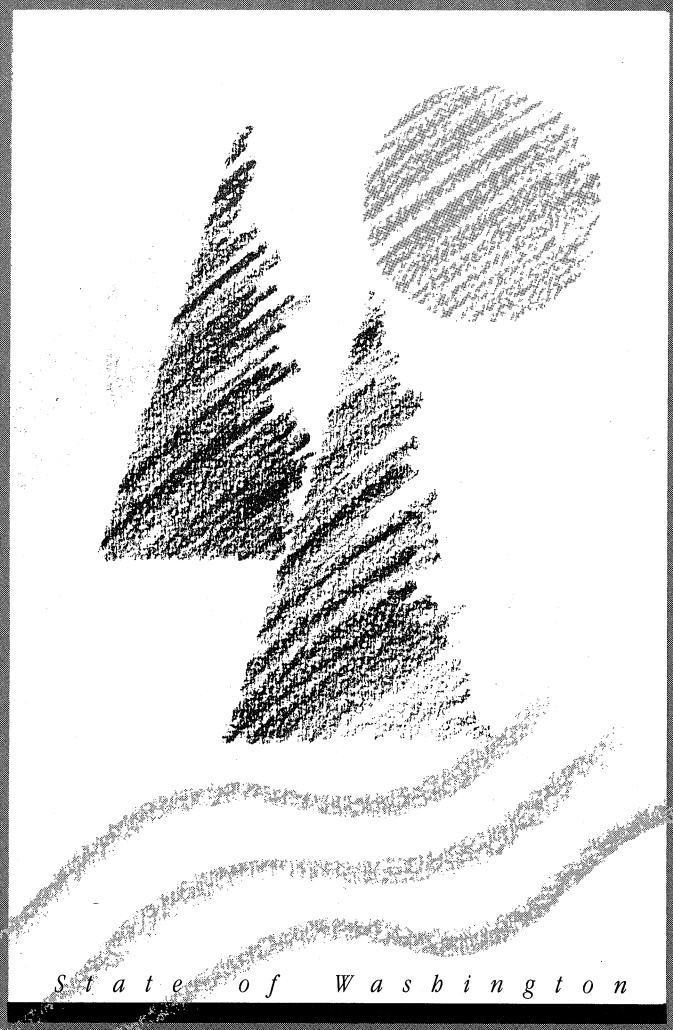

Washington State Trails Plan

Policy and Action Document

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COMMITTEE
FOR
OUTDOOR
RECREATION

The IAC has important responsibilities in guiding the wise use of Washington's recreational resources for the future. As the state's principal recreational grants and planning agency, the IAC assists local, state, and federal governments in planning, acquiring, and developing recreational resources. Project funding comes from state and federal sources.

All IAC activities are intended to comply with federal guidelines for non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Anyone who feels they have been discriminated against by any IAC program may express concern to the IAC or the Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington D.C. 20013-7127.

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Washington State Trails Plan

Policy and Action Document

An Element of Washington's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) Program

Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
4800 Capitol Boulevard, KP-11
Tumwater, Washington 98504-5611

June, 1991

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Adopted by the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
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Approved by Governor Booth Gardner
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Introduction

Trails in Washington

Trails are important to outdoor recreation in Washington State. According to a study conducted in 1986-87, 76 percent of all state households walk or hike for recreation, and 26 percent use vehicles off-roads for recreation (IAC, 1987).

Trails have only recently emerged from an extended period of benign neglect. At the end of the Second World War, for example, the Olympic National Forest managed over 900 miles of trail, trails used primarily for Forest administration. By 1987, with primary use of the trail system having already shifted to recreation, the Olympic was managing less than 300 miles of trail.

At the same time that these trail miles were disappearing, the State's population had more than doubled: from 1,736,191 in 1940 to 4,132,353 in 1980.

Simultaneously, new kinds of trail use have appeared. Thirty years ago, there were virtually no off-road vehicles used on recreational trails. In 1974, 11,306 off-road vehicles were registered statewide; in 1989, the Department of Licensing reported 34,919 off-road vehicle registrations. Ten years ago, a bicycle on a mountain trail would have been an oddity. In 1989, an estimated 10,000 to 14,000 mountain bicycles, many of which are used on trails, were sold in the state.

Growing public interest in trails and in the many issues surrounding recreational trails has been recognized by the State Legislature. The Legislature has directed the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to "prepare a state trails plan as part of the statewide outdoor recreation and open space plan" under Chapter 67.32 RCW.

The Trails Plan

The *Washington State Trails Plan* is an element of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) program. The *Plan* is made up of three documents:

- A Policy and Action Document, which provides background information, establishes State policies, and presents the Findings, Goals, and Actions of the *Plan*;
- A Process Document, which describes how the *Plan* was developed; and
- A Technical Assistance Manual, which provides technical information and guidance on trail projects with emphasis on the needs of local agencies.

The Policy and Action Document provides statistical data and research findings, and discussion of key issues surrounding trail-based recreation. The list of key issues was developed in consultation with the State Trails Advisory

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Committee. Many of the issues are controversial. The text attempts to find a balance and common ground among sometimes opposing points of view.

Discussion of the key issues (Chapter Four) forms the foundation for the Findings and Actions of the *Plan*. The Actions following each issue have been designed to focus attention, answer fundamental questions, and keep objectives realistic and specific. The Actions convey important information on how to meet the challenges confronting trail-based recreation. Each Action contains a:

- Problem statement based on text found in the preceding issue;
- Solution stating how to resolve the problem;
- Participant list, or actors, that will play an important role in solving the problem;
- Time frame during which solution activities should occur; and
- Strategies and tasks describing means to implement the solution.

The language in each of these Actions has been reviewed by representatives of listed participants. In every case, a special effort has been made to ensure that solutions and strategies are supported by, and consistent with, the mission of each participant.

The *Washington State Trails Plan* has been developed in consultation and cooperation with agencies, user groups, and trail enthusiasts from the public at large. These same agencies, user groups, and enthusiasts are invited to use this *Plan* as a tool for advocacy, a foundation on which to build a shared agenda, and a blueprint for action.

Trail Definition

A trail...

... is a path, route, way, right-of-way, or corridor posted, signed, or designated as open for travel or passage by the general public but not normally designated as open for the transportation of commercial goods or services by motorized vehicles.

...is an opportunity to experience solitude or companionship, recreation or challenge; an opportunity for the appreciation of nature; a means of achieving renewal of body, mind, and spirit.

Abbreviations Used

BLM	USDI Bureau of Land Management
DNR	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
IAC	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
NOVA	Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities program
NPS	USDI National Park Service
ORV	Off-Road Vehicle
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
ROS	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
RTC	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning
STAC	State Trails Advisory Committee
TRIS	Trail Information System (computer database)
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDI	United States Department of the Interior
USFS	USDA Forest Service
WDW	Washington Department of Wildlife
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

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Chapter One

An Agenda for Trails

Vision Statement

This Vision Statement has been developed to integrate the findings, actions, and priorities of the *Washington State Trails Plan*. The intent is to establish, protect, and maintain this preferred future for trails in Washington State.

A significant statewide network of trails connects trail systems within population centers with trail systems within natural areas. The network includes a variety of public routes created from abandoned railroad rights-of-way, utility corridors, greenbelts, open spaces, and other natural corridors. The network makes it possible to travel border to border within the state by way of trails located in predominantly natural settings. The network takes into account a spectrum of trail uses. Further, the network connects with the trail systems of Idaho, Oregon, and British Columbia and is available year-round for both transportation and recreation.

Appropriations are made to protect and maintain existing trails and to construct new trails as opportunities expand and populations and trail use grow. Agencies and advocates take advantage of opportunities to conserve rights-of-way and open space corridors. Trail planning and implementation is coordinated at all levels of government. User groups and managers work in partnership to develop and implement strategies to promote the protection and proper stewardship of trails and the many settings traversed by them, while minimizing use conflicts.

Findings

Finding 1. Previous efforts at trail planning on a statewide basis have not produced tangible results.

Finding 2. Most trails are not where people are, often located at higher elevations and inaccessible during the snow season, or are located where users do not find them convenient to use. Existing trails are often discontinuous, not interconnected with other trails or trail systems.

Finding 3. Trail miles have not increased significantly for decades while the state's population has grown three-fold. Many trails are already overcrowded, and trail use is projected to grow 34 percent in the next ten years.

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Finding 4. Some trail uses are incompatible with others.

Finding 5. There is inadequate funding for right-of-way acquisition, trail construction, reconstruction, and maintenance at all levels of government. At the same time, trail users and managers have not discovered how to work together effectively in the trail budgeting and funding processes. The communication links between and among users and managers are weak.

Finding 6. Management of resources including timber often result in the loss of trail miles and trail opportunities.

Finding 7. Trails are becoming more important to urban and rural mobility and transportation, yet planning fails to include trails in transportation and new development.

Finding 8. Settings, corridors, and rights-of-way available and critical to trails, and access to water by way of trails, are being lost to urbanization and land development.

Finding 9. Virtually all managers report large maintenance backlogs.

Finding 10. Many opportunities for trail use on or adjacent to private land have not been realized.

Finding 11. Opportunities for trails in utility corridors often go unrealized.

Finding 12. Existing processes to convert abandoned railroad rights-of-way to trails present as many obstacles as opportunities.

Finding 13. Users have a need for better information on trails.

Finding 14. People using trails prefer a "nature" experience (that is, the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the outdoors) in virtually all settings.

Goals

To address the Findings listed above, the following Goals have been established, including objectives with which to measure progress:

Goal 1. Develop new trails and paths in city and county jurisdictions.
Objective: Add fifty percent more city and county trail miles statewide by the year 2000.

Goal 2. Connect trail systems and populated areas via trails and paths.
Objective: Establish appropriate corridors and rights-of-way for trails, including an additional 450 miles of rail-trails where rail corridors are not needed for existing or future freight rail service consistent with the state's Freight Rail Plan. Complete the Cross-State Trail by the year 2000.

Goal 3. Reduce state and federal trail maintenance backlogs.
Objective: Decrease backlogs by a minimum of thirty percent per agency by 1995.

Goal 4. Increase the miles of trail available in semi-primitive and other remote settings.
Objective: Implement and fund trail elements of National Forest Plans and other federal agency plans at preferred alternative levels.

Goal 5. Strengthen existing funding sources and create new funding sources for trail maintenance, construction, and reconstruction.
Objective: Establish major new funding either from higher appropriations through existing programs or new programs.

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Chapter Two

Management

Inventory

Though trail miles are used as a measure, miles alone do not convey the adequacy of the trail inventory (Tables 2-1, 2-2). The trail setting is important, too. The setting provides the experience that one seeks on a trail. However, the adequacy of the trail setting is difficult to measure in absolute or objective terms. In some instances (mountain bicycling, for example), the miles shown are legally open and available to a given use but may in reality be unsuitable for a variety of reasons.

Map 1 (inside back cover) depicts the distribution of trails statewide. The map clearly indicates that although major trail systems exist in various locations, many systems are isolated and have many disconnected individual trails.

The predominance of trails at a significant distance from populated areas underscores Finding 2, "Most trails are not where people are."

Federal Agencies

The **Forest Service** is guided by the mandate of multiple use of public land. The Forest Service manages more trail miles than any other agency in Washington.

Under the guidance of the National Recreation Strategy, the Forest Service is emphasizing partnerships with other agencies and groups as a way to expand and improve its trail program. Currently, Region 6, which includes Washington and Oregon, has predominantly horse and hiker trails, but it is seeking to offer the full range of opportunities: primitive, mechanized, all-season, barrier-free, short and extended, loops, and interpretive (Petersen, 1989).

The significant holding of large blocks of public land makes it possible for the Forest Service to provide such an extensive and diverse trail program.

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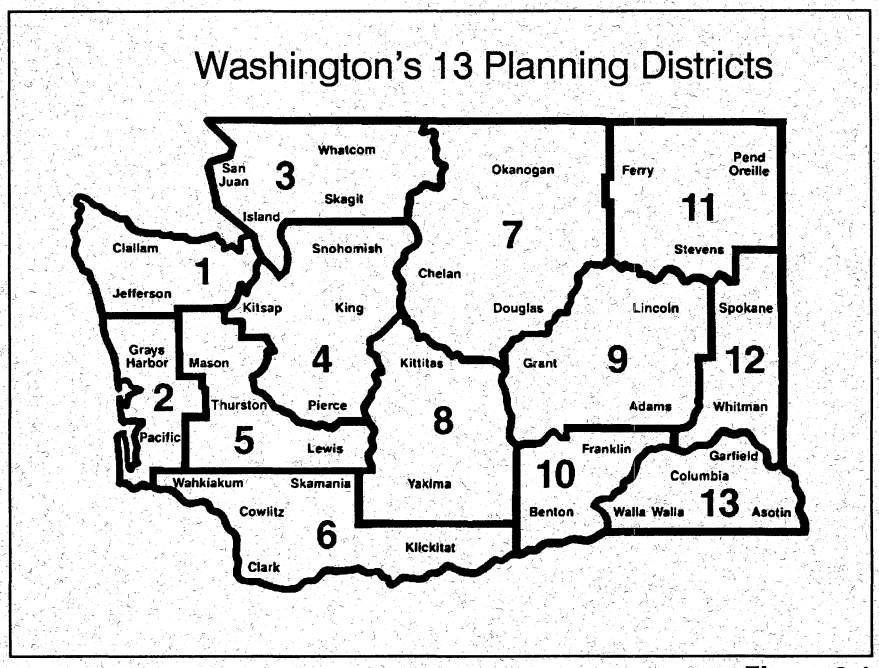

Figure 2-1

Miles of Trail Open to Various Trail Uses by Planning District

Planning District	Hike/ Walk	Mountain Bicycle	ORV	X-C Ski	Pack & Saddle	Snow-mobile
1	734	28	38	15	356	0
2	97	19	30	0	45	0
3	897	31	44	42	376	118
4	1,436	59	83	148	612	107
5	582	241	241	14	547	31
6	706	362	362	144	508	155
7	2,691	1,079	638	153	2,558	508
8	1,348	644	644	84	1,201	546
9	80	80	0	0	80	0
10	16	0	4	0	0	0
11	366	147	188	45	354	418
12	96	1	3	38	77	162
13	295	199	199	0	242	87
TOTAL	9,344	2,890	2,474	683	6,956	2,132

Table 2-1

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The Forest Service has an extensive inventory of unmaintained trail miles: up to 40 percent of its trails go without maintenance each year. Lack of adequate funding has contributed to this backlog (General Accounting Office, 1989).

The **National Park Service** (NPS) mission is to manage its land to conserve natural resources for use and enjoyment. NPS provides trails predominantly for hiker and horse use in North Cascades, Mt. Rainier, and Olympic National Parks. Motorized or mechanized use of its lands are limited to road systems. A small area is available to all-terrain vehicles in the Coulee Dam National Recreation Area.

The NPS Regional Office, through the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program, provides technical assistance to managers or interest groups planning or developing trails.

The **Bureau of Land Management** (BLM) manages land under a multiple-use mandate. Most of its acreage is in Eastern Washington. These lands receive significant off-road vehicle (ORV) use, most often related to hunting and fishing (BLM, 1989).

The **Fish and Wildlife Service** manages certain wildlife species in 10 national wildlife refuges throughout Washington State. Emphasis is on the needs of wildlife and its habitat. Recreation, including trails, must be compatible with the purpose for which each wildlife refuge was established. A typical trail opportunity offered by Fish and Wildlife would be walking or hiking oriented and interpretive in character.

State Agencies

The **Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) manages State trust lands to return revenue to the State's trust holders, such as the common school construction fund. Chapter 79.68 RCW authorizes the agency to manage its lands under a multiple-use concept, as long as the multiple uses are in the best interest of the State and consistent with applicable trust provisions.

DNR offers a variety of trail experiences from hiking and equestrian to motorized. A priority for DNR is to secure funds to adequately maintain and operate trails. DNR manages the Aquatic Land Enhancement Account (ALEA), funds which may be used for trails accessing water.

The **State Parks and Recreation Commission** (State Parks) manages 107 developed parks and recreation facilities statewide. Thirty-five of these parks have designated trails or trail systems. Typically, trails are used in conjunction with other activities, leading to points of interest within a park.

In partnership with several counties, the Forest Service, two citizen advisory committees, and user groups, the State Parks and Recreation Commission provides outstanding winter trail opportunities for both motorized and nonmotorized users.

The **Department of Transportation** (WSDOT) is a provider of paths and routes for pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists. Under Chapter 47.30 RCW, WSDOT directs a minimum of three-tenths of one percent of its construction program to paths and trails, usually in the form of widened highway shoulders (used predominantly by bicyclists). These facilities are constructed under WSDOT contracts and upon completion are usually transferred to other agencies for management and maintenance.

WSDOT is responsible for the State's Transportation Plan, and seeks to provide for various modes of transportation. WSDOT works with a Bicycle Advisory Committee on a variety of bicycle-related issues.

The **Department of Wildlife** (WDW) manages game and nongame wildlife in a variety of settings. The Department of Wildlife's mission is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate Washington's diverse wildlife and wildlife habitat while maximizing the recreational and aesthetic benefits of wildlife for all citizens. The Department does not have a multiple-use mandate.

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Inventory of Trail Miles by Manager and User Type

Manager	Type of Trail	Miles of Trail
Forest Service	Hiking/Walking	7,187
	Bicycle (Mountain)	2,460
	Off-Road Vehicle	2,207
	Ski/Snowshoe	549
	Pack and Saddle	5,898
	Snowmobile	1,980
	TOTAL, ALL TYPES[1]	8,515
National Park Service	Hiking/Walking	1,298
	Bicycle (Road)	8
	Off-Road Vehicle	2
	Ski/Snowshoe	86
	Pack and Saddle	573
	Snowmobile	66
	TOTAL, ALL TYPES[1]	1,524
State Parks and Recreation Commission	Hiking/Walking	305
	Bicycle	0
	Off-Road Vehicle	0
	Ski/Snowshoe	33
	Pack and Saddle	138
	Snowmobile	40
	TOTAL, ALL TYPES[1]	493
State Forests (DNR)	Hiking/Walking	162
	Bicycle (Mountain)	348
	Off-Road Vehicle	235
	Ski/Snowshoe	0
	Pack and Saddle	123
	Snowmobile	0
	TOTAL, ALL TYPES[1]	387
Counties	Hiking/Walking	104
	Off-Road Vehicle	9
	Ski/Snowshoe	2
	Pack and Saddle	54
	Snowmobile	0
	TOTAL, ALL TYPES[1]	118

Table 2-2

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Inventory of Trail Miles by Manager and User Type (Cont.)

Manager	Type of Trail	Miles of Trail
Cities, Districts	Hiking/Walking	249
	Bicycle	32
	Off-Road Vehicle	21
	Ski/Snowshoe	9
	Pack and Saddle	34
	Snowmobile	0
	TOTAL, ALL TYPES[1]	317
GRAND TOTAL[2]		11,340

[1] The figure for "TOTAL, ALL TYPES" indicates that some trails are open to more than one type of use. Miles are not "double counted."

[2] In addition to this total are 640 miles of designated bicycle routes on roads and highway shoulders. The Washington State Department of Transportation takes an active role in providing routes for bicycling along public highways, including the Interstate System. A total of about 38,000 miles of county roads, city streets, and state highways are open to bicycle use. Chapter 47.30 RCW defines the shoulders of many of these roads and highways as "trails and paths."

Table 2-2 (Cont.)

The Department provides trail opportunities on some of its land in its Wildlife Area Program. One management goal is to ensure that trail locations and uses do not conflict with wildlife and habitat goals. Another role that the Department plays is to provide public information to trail user groups about wildlife and wildlife habitats.

The **Department of Ecology** (Ecology) manages few trails, but has an interest in providing public access to shorelines when developments are proposed under the Shoreline Management Act.

The Department's Coastal Zone Management 306A grant program uses some monies from federal sources to pay for short trails and pathways to improve public access to shorelines. This program is limited to 15 coastal counties.

The **Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation** (IAC) is a planning and grant-managing agency distributing recreation funds from various sources, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). IAC does not manage trails, but it does provide grant money for trail projects. IAC maintains several plans as part of the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) program. *Washington Outdoors: Assessment and Policy Plan* is the State's five-year outdoor recreation and open space agenda. RCW 67.32.050, the

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"State Recreation Trails Act," directs IAC to prepare a state trails plan. IAC also publishes a *State Trails Directory*, and an *Off-Road Vehicle Guide*.

Local Agencies

Counties, cities, and towns provide fewer trail miles than other agencies, yet directly serve the majority of the state's population.

Many **counties** are in a strategic position to carry out a two-fold mission: 1) to provide trails and trail corridors serving populated areas, and 2) linking otherwise separate trail systems managed by other agencies.

Although a number of counties have trail plans, many counties lacking resources such as planning staff do not. However, it is not necessary to have a separate plan for trails. Trail planning can be accomplished effectively by including trails in transportation planning and parks and recreation planning. Often, a public works department can be instrumental in providing trails and paths. For this reason, communication between recreation managers and public works or engineering managers is important.

As in counties, trails in **cities or towns** can be part of a transportation or park/recreation plan. The importance of trails for transportation in population centers cannot be overemphasized.

The vast majority of nonmotorized trail demand appears to be in population centers. Simply put, people want trails near home. Acquisition of trail corridors, open space, and greenbelts is a critical issue in rapidly growing communities.

"Piggy-backing" trails onto other projects such as utility routes, sewer projects, or road improvements has proven to be highly successful in some cities. In Seattle, a $120,000 annual trail budget for bicycle and pedestrian pathways is augmented each year by literally millions of dollars through this approach (City of Seattle, 1989).

Populated and rapidly expanding counties, cities or towns wishing to expand trails and parks must compete with other interests, often private developers, for remaining corridors, open spaces, greenbelts, and other parcels of land. Since these lands are often quite expensive in relation to limited agency budgets, workable strategies must be developed and implemented. Four strategies that have been proven effective include:

- Acquiring an easement or right-of-way instead of outright purchase;
- Requiring trails and related facilities as mitigation for private developments. Developers working through the permit process may be required to provide open spaces, greenbelts, or pathways. Many developers are learning that such "concessions" become in fact amenities that make their properties more desirable;
- "Piggy-backing" trail projects onto utility corridors; and
- Seeking gifts and bequests from private parties.

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Chapter Three

Users

How User Needs Were Determined

Trail needs and user demands have been determined by a variety of methods.

Literature review included the draft and final Forest Plans of the seven national forests in Washington State. Public comment on these documents proved to be especially valuable.

A vital link between the planning process and the views of trail users is the State Trails Advisory Committee (STAC). This volunteer advisory committee has provided firsthand trail knowledge and expertise, as well as a zeal for creating and protecting trails for the future.

STAC is a team of managing agency representatives, user group representatives, regional representatives (individuals with general interest in outdoor recreation and a knowledge of trails within their respective region); and a private landowner representative selected from major landowners with sufficient acreage to provide public trail use on their lands.

IAC staff met with STAC in numerous meetings over a period of nearly two years. In addition, staff met individually with each of the 18 members of the Committee. STAC's guidance has been instrumental in the production of this Plan.

In 1990, IAC conducted a series of public meetings. The meetings were held in the home towns of the regional STAC representatives (Port Angeles, Seattle, and Yakima) and in Spokane and Vancouver. A wide range of comments were heard from trail users and managers, private landowners, and other interested people.

In addition, IAC staff attended and made presentations to meetings of various user groups, published articles on the *Plan* in user group newsletters, mailed nearly 10,000 informational brochures, and issued press releases to every newspaper in the state to advise of the planning process and inviting public participation.

Statistics used to reflect household participation, users' preference for various trail settings, and projected growth of demand are from a study conducted by IAC in cooperation with the Pacific Northwest Regional Recreation Committee

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Household[1] Participation in Trail-Related Recreation

Activity	Percent of Households Participating	Total Number of Households
Walk or Hike	76%	1,323,616
Walk in Neighborhood Parks	55%	957,880
Bicycle on Roads	50%	870,800
Day Hike on Trails	46%	801,136
Hike/Backpack Overnight along Trails	19%	330,904
Use 4-Wheel Drive Vehicles Off Roads	15%	261,240
Bicycle Off Roads	14%	243,824
Cross-Country Ski or Snowshoe	13%	226,408
Climb/Mountaineer	12%	208,992
Motorcycle Off Roads	12%	208,992
Ride Horses	12%	208,992
Use All-Terrain Vehicles (3- and 4-Wheel)	10%	174,160
Snowmobile	7%	121,912
Bicycle Tour	5%	87,080
Camp with Packstock	2%	34,832

[1] "Household" means that at least one person in a surveyed household took part in the activity during the survey period. There were 1,741,600 households in the state during the study period (OFM, 1987).

Table 3-1

(PNRRC). The PNRRC is composed of representatives from state recreation planning agencies and universities from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and seven federal agencies.

Washington's data were gathered by the Northwest Recreation Research Center at Western Washington University between February 1986 and January 1987. Washington's portion of the study examined, through a telephone survey, the recreation profile of 1,885 households. Additionally, 1,171 of these households participated in a mail-return survey.

Study results indicate that three-quarters of Washington households participate in some form of trail-related recreation (Table 3-1). Participation in some of these activities is expected to increase as much as 44 percent between 1987 and 2000 (Table 3-2).

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Household Trips in 1987 and Projected Growth to 2000

Activity	Trips in 1987 (1000s)	Projected Growth to 2000
Walk in Neighborhood Parks	8,756	44%
Bicycle on Roads	5,527	35%
Day Hike on Trails	3,218	37%
Hike/Backpack Overnight along Trails	1,273	30%
Use 4-Wheel Drive Vehicles Off Roads	737	35%
Bicycle Off Roads	1,096	37%
Cross-Country Ski or Snowshoe	379	27%
Climb/Mountaineer	254	35%
Motorcycle Off Roads	691	32%
Ride Horses	707	17%
Use All-Terrain Vehicles (3- and 4-Wheel)	467	28%
Snowmobile[1]	192	16%
Camp with Packstock	37	18%

[1] 1988 State Parks and Recreation Commission survey indicated 15.6 average annual per-household trips (State Parks, 1990).

Table 3-2

The IAC study also measured user preferences, by Activity Category, for certain recreation settings. These settings were based on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) as developed by the Forest Service (Figure 3-1). Because each Activity Category included several trail activities (for example, nonmotorized riding included equestrian and bicycling activities), discussions of preferences for specific trail user groups should be interpreted with caution.

Hiking/Walking

Participation

Seventy-six percent of all Washington State households hike or walk for recreation. More specifically:

- 75 percent walk along neighborhood streets or roads;
- 55 percent walk in neighborhood parks;
- 46 percent day hike on trails;
- 19 percent hike/backpack overnight along trails; and
- 12 percent climb or mountaineer.

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Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Setting Descriptions

Primitive: Natural setting little influenced by the works of people. The most remote parts of the forest where you will meet few if any people. Access is by cross-country travel or by trails. No motorized use is allowed. Woodsmanship skills are important. Recreation facilities are generally not provided.

Semi-Primitive: Mainly natural setting where you will occasionally meet other people. Access is by trails, although some primitive roads may exist. Motorized vehicles are generally prohibited. Few recreation facilities are provided, and those that exist are minimal and rustic.

Roaded Modified: Nature has obviously been altered by logging, mining, farming, or grazing. Many roads and some developed campgrounds exist. You will meet other people in cars, trucks, and motorbikes. You may be able to get away from others in remote camp spots.

Roaded Natural: Forest, range, and coastal settings that look natural or slightly altered. Access is by trail, road, and highway. Recreation facilities such as developed campgrounds may exist. There may be opportunities to camp away from other people with no facilities.

Rural: Farms, forests, and other managed lands that provide a sense of open space but not necessarily with a natural appearance. Access is by trail, road, and highway. There will be many fences, with moderate to sparse populations.

Urban: Cities, towns, large resorts, and major ski areas with buildings, paved roads, and lots of people. Many developed recreation facilities and easy vehicle access.

Figure 3-1

Inventory by Setting

Statewide, hikers/walkers have access to about 9,300 miles of trail (Table 3-3). The total miles of trail, however, tends to overstate the true availability of trail opportunity. A significant number of the miles in the national forests and parks are in higher elevations, thus inaccessible during the snow season. In some years, snow will close trails for eight to nine months.

Preferred Settings

The IAC study shows strong hiker/walker preference for less developed settings, especially the semi-primitive and primitive (Figure 3-2). However, the

Hiking/Walking Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
Urban/City	249	2.7%
County	104	1.1%
State Parks	305	3.3%
State Forests	162	1.7%
National Parks	1,298	13.9%
National Forests	7,187	76.9%
Other	39	0.4%
TOTAL	9,344	100.0%

Table 3-3

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setting last used tended to be close to home.

Desire for local access, time constraints, seasonal restraints on use of a majority of trail inventory, and other factors would appear to prevent hikers from leaving population centers to use trails in preferred settings. This would explain why 38 percent of hikers/walkers used urban settings on their last outing; settings which account for less than four percent of the trail inventory.

Discussion

Many hikers and walkers have expressed the desire for close-in (local) facilities. This desire, coupled with the lack of local facilities, shows the need for more trails and paths in these settings.

Because of the strong preference shown for the natural or natural-appearing setting, the importance of greenbelts, parks, and open spaces in more developed areas is clear. Equally clear is the strong preference for semi-primitive and primitive settings and the need to retain such settings for trail-based recreation.

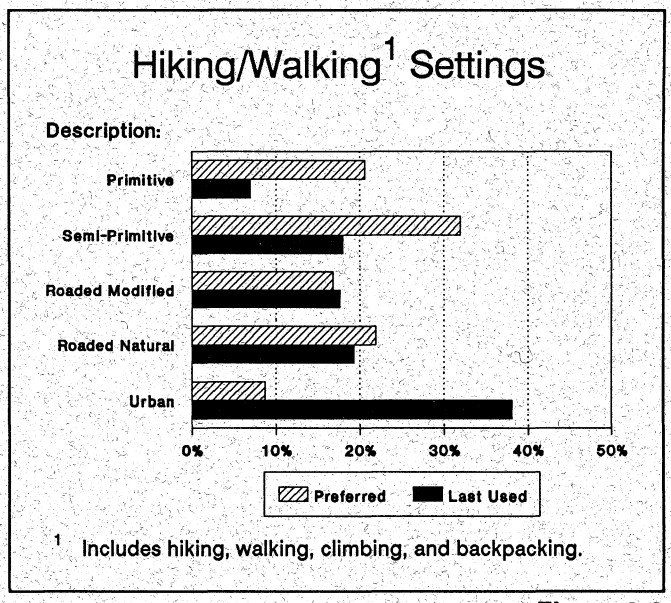

Figure 3-2

Bicycle Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
Urban/City	640	57.3%
County	432	38.7%
Misc. (WSDOT)	35	3.1%
National Parks	8	0.7%
Other Federal	2	0.2%
TOTAL	1,117	100.0%

Table 3-4

Road Bicycling

Participation

About 50 percent of all households surveyed reported riding bicycles on roads or paths for a trip one day or less in duration. Overnight or bicycle touring was enjoyed by five percent of state households.

Inventory by Setting

Bicyclists have access to about 1,100 miles of bicycle trail (designated facilities including signed bicycle paths and routes)(Table 3-4). In addition, a total of about 38,000 miles of city street, county road, and state highway are open to bicycle use. This includes 6,970 miles of state highway and 626 miles of Interstate Highway (WSDOT, 1989). Most often, the bicyclist uses a roadway shoulder.

Preferred Settings

Bicyclists and other nonmotorized riders appear to prefer roaded settings outside of cities and other developed areas where there is less vehicular traffic (Figure 3-3). Although most developed facilities are in urban settings, it would

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appear that a rural or country setting is often the setting of choice.

Discussion

More experienced bicyclists and those in organized clubs are interested in retaining the right to use streets, roads, and highways. These bicyclists are adept at riding in traffic. They desire route continuity (not necessarily separate paths) from one jurisdiction to another. Continuity provides for continuous travel from one jurisdiction to another on adequate shoulders or facilities.

Organized bicycling events tend to use county roads. Extensive use of state highway shoulders is often undesirable for such events because of high volumes of vehicular traffic.

Providing shoulders on county roads with moderate to low traffic volume would be of great benefit to the experienced bicyclist.

The less experienced, young, or casual bicyclist would greatly benefit from trails and paths which are separated from the road system. While the more experienced or serious bicyclist is adept at riding in traffic or along roads, the casual or inexperienced bicyclist often prefers the perceived safety of riding out of traffic on a separate facility (Abraham, 1989). At the same time, however, the right of all bicyclists to use streets and highways should by no means be restricted.

Urban trails successfully providing a separate facility include Seattle's Burke-Gilman and the Yakima Greenway Noel Pathway; these are very popular with bicyclists.

Popular long-distance routes connect a variety of facilities including city streets, county roads, and state highways. The highly popular Seattle to Portland annual riding event takes advantage of such a route. It would be beneficial to bicyclists to have such routes permanently marked or signed. Other examples of popular routes that could be marked or signed include a cross-state route following Highway 20, another cross-state route following U.S. 2, and Highway 101 with its connectors around the Olympic Peninsula.

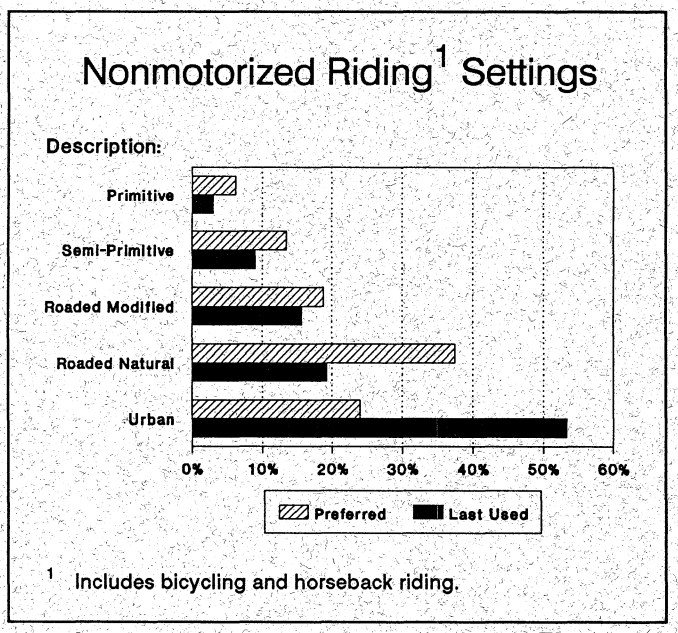

Figure 3-3

Mountain Bicycling

Participation

In 1986-87, about 14 percent of all households engaged in bicycling off the road at least once. In 1989 an estimated 10,000 to 14,000 mountain bicycles were sold in the state (REI, 1989). Additionally, there is consensus among retailers and manufacturers that the popularity of the mountain bicycle for uses of all kinds is expected to continue to grow (Hemsworth, 1989).

Mountain bicycling appears to be among the fastest-growing segments of trail use. The 1986-87 data used here may not accurately reflect the rapid growth of the activity.

Inventory by Setting

Statewide, about 2,900 miles of trail are open for mountain bicycling (Table 3-5).

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Uncounted numbers of mountain bicyclists ride many of the more than 20,000 miles of nonhighway roads, such as logging roads, available throughout the state. However, mountain bicycles are appearing on a variety of trails in increasing numbers.

Preferred Settings

Many mountain bicycles are purchased for in-town uses such as commuting and riding for pleasure in parks or in neighborhoods because of the enhanced comfort offered by the mountain bicycle's wide, low-pressure tires and upright riding position. Also, new riders who might wish to have an off-road experience are often unaware of trail opportunities in less developed settings, or may have limited time or resources with which to pursue these interests. This would reflect the urban setting as that most "last used" of the "Nonmotorized Riding Settings" (see Figure 3-3).

The growing demand for mountain bicycle trails in other settings is indicated by the high sales of mountain bicycle guides and the increasing number of organizations and clubs for mountain bicycle riders.

Discussion

Mountain bicycling is a legitimate use of public trails, subject to the appropriate regulation of managing agencies. In the spectrum of trail users, mountain bicycling appears to fall somewhere between foot and motorized travel.

Some managers and organizations have tended to direct mountain bicycles to off-road vehicle trails. While welcoming the opportunity to ride these trails, mountain bicyclists seem to prefer closer association with the hiking community, stressing the quiet, nonpolluting nature of their activity.

Mountain bicycling organizations have expressed the desire for trails near populated areas. A variety of trails, from the easy to the challenging, is desired. Mountain bicyclists have resisted the idea that their activity can simply be relegated to nonhighway roads.

Many mountain bicyclists are experienced road bicyclists and have participated in road events for which routes are marked. Satisfactory routes can be established for mountain bicycles on existing facilities by connecting trails to roads (paved, unpaved, and primitive) and back to trails, through directional signing. See "Management Options for Mountain Bicycling" in the Technical Assistance Manual for further discussion of this concept.

Mountain Bicycle Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
City/Urban	32	1.1%
County	48	1.7%
State Forest	348	12.0%
National Forest	2,460	85.1%
Other Federal	2	0.1%
TOTAL	2,890	100.0%

Table 3-5

Pack and Saddle

Participation

Twelve percent of all Washington State households went horseback riding during the 1986-87 survey period. Two percent of all households reported camping with packstock. Very small numbers of people use packstock such as llamas, donkeys, and burros for trail trips.

Inventory by Setting

Statewide, about 7,000 miles of trail are open to pack and saddle use (Table 3-6). The total miles of trail, however, tends to overstate the availability of trail opportunity. Many of the

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trail miles in the national forests and national parks are at higher elevations and inaccessible during the snow season. Following spring thaws, additional time may be required to allow trails to dry and harden before heavy pack use is permitted. Further, inventory does not address party size limitations found in some administrative settings which may inhibit trail use.

Preferred Settings

As previously mentioned, nonmotorized riders appear to prefer roaded settings outside of cities and other developed areas where there is less vehicular traffic (see Figure 3-3). Members of organized pack and saddle groups have communicated a strong preference for semi-primitive and primitive settings. However, lack of time, problems of transportation, and seasonal trail inaccessibility tend to contribute to the actual use of the more developed setting.

Discussion

In rapidly growing counties, informal or owner-tolerated paths or trails on private lands once used by the public are becoming inaccessible due to development and landowner fears of liability. Most often, developers have no incentive to provide an equestrian trail. At times, simply paving a trail will preclude use by equestrians.

In backcountry settings, horse users would like trailheads with facilities capable of handling trucks with trailers. These trailheads should include a watering facility and campsites. Loop or destination-oriented trails are preferred by many.

There has been concern among organized equestrian groups on administratively-imposed party size limitations in less developed settings, including Wilderness. Commercial outfitter and guide services which depend on trails in such settings have been especially concerned. Managers have been attempting to balance the needs of these organized groups with the need to protect the trail resource and trail setting.

Pack and Saddle Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
City/Urban	34	0.5%
County	55	0.8%
State Parks	138	2.0%
State Forests	252	3.6%
National Parks	573	8.2%
National Forests	5,898	84.8%
Other Federal	6	0.1%
TOTAL	6,956	100.0%

Table 3-6

Other groups have expressed the need for "horse only" trails on which to train green horses and provide experience for novice riders.

Off-Road Vehicles

Participation

During 1986-87, 26 percent of Washington State households reported use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) for recreation. This includes the following sub-groups:

- 15 percent used four-wheel drive vehicles off roads;
- 12 percent used motorcycles off roads; and
- 10 percent used all-terrain vehicles (3- and 4-wheel).

Inventory by Setting

About 2,400 miles of trail are open to various forms of off-road vehicle (ORV) use in Washington State (Table 3-7). This total includes about 1,800 miles of trail open to off-road motorcycles and about 600 miles open to all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), with less than 200 miles available for wide-base, 4-wheel drive vehicles.

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The total miles of trail actually tends to overstate the true availability of trail opportunity. Many of the trail miles in national forests, especially those in semi-primitive settings, are at higher elevations, thus closed during the snow season. Following spring thaws, additional time may be required to allow trails to dry and harden before heavy motorized use is permitted.

Preferred Settings

A balance of preference and use exists in the roaded modified and roaded natural setting for ORV riders (Figure 3-4). A number of factors contribute to this balance, including the preference of some users for roads, relative ease of access to the roaded setting, restrictions on access to unroaded settings, and lack of facilities in the urban or rural setting.

Even in the roaded setting, however, trails are important to ORV users. Roads will often be used for interconnection between trails to complete loops. Members of organized ORV groups have expressed strong preference for the semi-primitive, or roadless setting.

Discussion

Off-road vehicle use, including demand and need for trails, is examined in detail in the *Washington State Off-Road Vehicle Plan* (IAC, 1987).

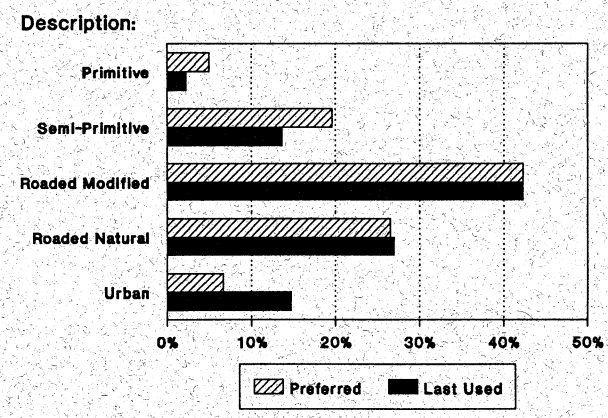
As with other user groups, a supply of facilities close to population centers appears to be desirable, especially for juvenile riders.

Off-Road Vehicle Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
Urban/City	21	0.8%
County	9	0.4%
State Forests	235	9.5%
National Forests	2,207	89.2%
Other Federal	2	0.1%
TOTAL	2,474	100.0%

Table 3-7

Motorized ORV[1] Settings



1 Does not include snowmobiling.

Figure 3-4

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Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

Participation

During 1986-87, about 13 percent of all households reported participation in cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Cross-country skiing is the more popular activity.

Inventory by Setting

Inventory work on snow trails revealed hesitation on the part of some managers to identify formal, or signed and marked snow trails. These managers cited the unpredictability of annual snowfall and fluctuation of the snow line as factors precluding precise measurement of snow trail miles (Table 3-8).

Many skiers and snowshoers do not need a marked, signed trail—they simply travel cross country utilizing navigation skills, while others use nonhighway roads when the roads are snow covered.

However, the State Parks and Recreation Commission recently noted:

> "Up to about 20 years ago, cross-country ski advocates were predominantly backcountry oriented...The majority of today's cross country skiers expect and demand, at least in high use areas, trails that are properly signed, mapped, and groomed." (State Parks, 1988)

Preferred Settings

The "Snow Activities Settings" chart (Figure 3-5) includes a variety of snow activities such as downhill skiing and sledding. This would account for the preference shown for the urban (that is, developed) setting. Cross-country skiing is increasing in popularity at developed ski sites that offer groomed trails.

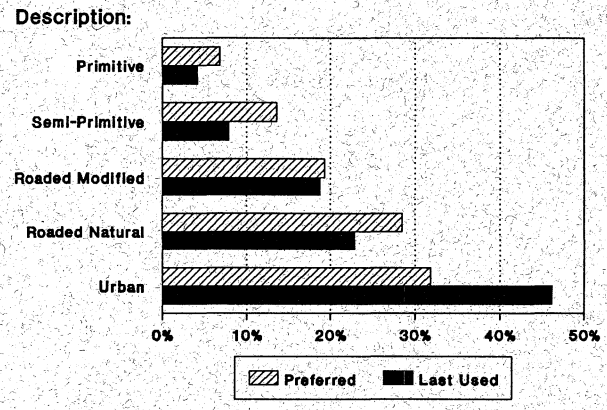
Ski/Snowshoe Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
City/Urban	9	1.3%
County	2	0.3%
State Parks	33	4.8%
National Parks	86	12.6%
National Forests	550	80.5%
Other Federal	3	0.4%
TOTAL	683	99.9%[1]

[1] Total not equal to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 3-8

Snow Activities[1] Settings



[1] Includes downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, sledding, ice skating, snowmobiling, and general snow play.

Figure 3-5

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Low use of, and preference for, the semi-primitive and primitive settings may reflect the difficult winter access of these settings, as well as the rigors of winter use. Short days and harsh conditions deter all but the most hardy users.

Discussion

As noted by State Parks and Recreation Commission (1988):

> "Along with changing user needs, the explosive growth in participation in cross-country skiing in the 1980s has been remarkable and is expected to continue.
>
> "Major retailers... report an average 20 percent annual increase in cross-country ski sales. Use at private facilities such as the trails provided by the Methow Valley Ski Touring Association has increased by 22 percent annually (14,500 user days in FY 88)."

Another indicator of the growth of participation is the annual sales figure for Sno-Park permits. In 1976, 1,305 permits were sold; in 1989, this figure had grown to 18,049 (State Parks, 1990).

Snowmobiling

Participation

In 1986-87, seven percent of state households reported use of snowmobiles for winter recreation. About nine percent also reported all-terrain vehicle (ATV) driving in snow.

Inventory by Setting

Statewide, about 2,100 miles of trail are available for snowmobiling (Table 3-9). In inventory collection, some managers cited seasonal snow fluctuations as a hinderance to accurate reporting.

Preferred Settings

It appears that the settings available satisfy most needs of this user group, though opportunities close to population centers need to be considered where possible (see Figure 3-5).

Snowmobile Trail Inventory by Manager

Manager	Miles	Percent of Total
State Parks	40	1.9%
State Forests	46	2.2%
National Parks	66	3.1%
National Forests	1,980	92.9%
TOTAL	2,132	100.1%[1]

[1] Total not equal to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 3-9

Discussion

Most groomed snowmobile miles are available because of the snowmobile program administered by the State Parks and Recreation Commission. Working with the Forest Service, the State provides funding for parking facilities and groomed trails through snowmobile registration fees and snowmobile fuel tax revenues.

Winter pedestrians (cross-country skiers and snowshoers) often share parking facilities (Sno-Parks) with snowmobilers. Shared use of parking facilities is acceptable to users where necessary; however, shared use of trails is not preferred by either skiers or snowmobilers. State Parks does not encourage cross-country ski use on groomed snowmobile trails for user safety reasons.

Some snowmobilers have requested additional loop trails, as well as destinations with some kind of overnight accommodations. Areas where new operators can be trained have also been requested.

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Chapter Four

Issues

Access

How users get to a trail can be as important as actual use of a trail. Modes of transportation impact trail access, whether in urban or remote backcountry settings.

Urban residents who wish to experience a trail activity in town, as in a neighborhood park, often find that the easiest way to get there is to drive. This apparent contradiction is often the result of designing primarily for auto access.

Trails in many urban settings need to be planned and designed to minimize dependence on access via private vehicle. It should be possible to access a trail by foot, bicycle, or horse without having to first drive to the trailhead or cross a busy internal park road or parking lot. In some cases, this would mean a short trail segment connecting to an existing sidewalk or bike lane on the perimeter of the park.

Trails in urban settings should be provided for access between neighborhoods and community services, as trails can offer alternative transportation routes. Connecting neighborhoods to business areas, schools, and parks by means of trails or paths, including widened road shoulders for bicycles, could help alleviate traffic congestion. Further, the urban trail user would benefit if certain barriers such as a freeway or busy street can be overcome.

For all settings, trails need to be located in proximity to a public transit line. Even users of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) benefit by public transit access, as this trail is crossed by major highways six times in Washington State.

Backcountry trails such as the PCT usually require access by way of a private vehicle. This is especially true for equestrians and motorized users who require trailers and a great deal of heavy equipment.

Some managers are concerned that vehicles can sometimes make access so easy that trails and their settings receive more use than can be accommodated. For example, the Snow Lakes Trail in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is one of the most popular Wilderness trails in the state. Its proximity to Interstate 90 and the Seattle-Bellevue area has led to tremendous numbers of visitors entering the Alpine Lakes Wilderness,

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with accompanying high impact on trails, lakeshores, and other resources in the Wilderness.

In high alpine settings it may become necessary in the near future to adopt more aggressive management techniques to minimize the impact or actual use of private vehicles.

The Forest Service may at times consider closing a forest road some distance from a Wilderness boundary to lessen the kinds of impacts described above. The popular trails at Paradise in Mt. Rainier National Park are accessed via private vehicles. Because of the mandate to protect the park, any expansion of parking facilities would require a significant review. Use of in-park shuttles may soon come about.

Rather than blaming vehicles for bringing too many people to trails, it has been suggested that there are not enough trails and trailheads to accommodate demand. By offering more dispersed opportunities, managers could help solve some of the "overuse" pressures brought to bear on trailheads, parking lots, and trails. (Also see "Capacities.")

Barrier-free trails provide unlimited opportunities for many users, including people with permanent and temporary disabilities, elderly people, children, and people with limited mobility.

Barrier-free standards should be considered for every trail, but not every trail should be barrier-free. An individual's self-assessment of capabilities is important. Information is crucial to help people with self-assessment, including information on trail difficulty, length, and available facilities. With sufficient information, those with special needs can identify suitable trails and experiences.

Wherever possible, representative samples of an area's unique natural features and experiences should be accessible via a barrier-free opportunity.

One example of this kind of barrier-free trail opportunity is the Lava Cast Trail, providing the experience of a unique geologic feature of the Mt. St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. Not all barrier-free trails need to be built in the boardwalk style of the Lava Cast Trail, nor do barrier-free trails need to be paved. Width, grade, length, support facilities, and a smooth surface are primary design considerations.

Action 1.

Problem: Trails and nonmotorized modes of travel are often overlooked in transportation planning.
Solution: Trails need to be incorporated into transportation plans at state and local levels.
Participants: WSDOT, IAC, local agencies, USFS, NPS, user groups.
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: Trail and transportation planners should work to ensure that: a) access to trails is incorporated into transportation plans, and b) trails are recognized as a means of transportation and are integrated into transportation plans. User groups must be willing to work with planners to establish needs and priorities for trails.
Task 1: WSDOT should include bicycle, equestrian, and walking trails and paths as appropriate facilities in the Washington State Transportation Policy Plan.
Task 2: WSDOT will complete the Washington State Bicycle Policy Plan in cooperation with its Bicycle Advisory Committee by 1991.
Task 3: IAC will send a copy of the *Washington State Trails Plan* to all metropolitan and regional planning organizations in the state, along with a letter of transmittal discussing this issue by June 1991.

Action 2.

Problem: Traditional park and recreation planning assumes trail access is via automobile.
Solution: Plan for access via trail modes: foot, bicycle, horse.
Participants: IAC, NPS, State Parks, WSDOT, local agencies.
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: Coordination among transportation, park, and trail planners should provide direct access by hikers-walkers, bicyclists, and equestrians to trails from existing or proposed

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transportation routes (sidewalks, bike lanes, road shoulders, etc).

Task 1: IAC will incorporate this action in its review of park plans.

Task 2: IAC will complete the Trail Technical Assistance Manual, including discussion of alternative access, by December 1991.

Task 3: IAC and NPS will schedule trail workshops for local agencies beginning in 1991.

Action 3.

Problem: Many trails and trailheads are overcrowded.

Solution: Provide more trail opportunities to disperse use. Publicize existing opportunities on less crowded trails.

Participants: Managing agencies, IAC, user groups, WWRC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Assist local agencies in developing trails. Accelerate trail construction in semi-primitive settings. Accelerate rail-to-trail conversions. Provide information through Trail Information System (TRIS), publications, meetings with user groups. Continue support for Outdoor Recreation and Habitat Conservation Accounts, continue to fund local trail projects by way of Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

Task 1: IAC staff and STAC meet annually with USFS Region 6 staff and Forest Trail Coordinators to review the Region 6, 5-year, Trails Capital Investment Plan to determine how well the program meshes with the *Washington State Trails Plan*, and to develop a strategy for how the Region 6 program can complement the *Plan*.

Task 2: USFS should ask guidebook authors and publishers to continue to publicize non-Wilderness trails to help disperse use and to encourage recreation in semi-primitive settings.

Task 3: IAC will work with participants to develop and implement strategies which will result in the establishment of a stable source of funds for outdoor recreation including trails.

Capacities

Do we need more trail miles? If so, where can these trails be built? Does available land have the capacity to carry more trail miles per acre and withstand the impacts of additional visitation? If more trails are built, who will pay for them, and how? And who will take care of them once they are built?

In the urban setting, the need for additional trails is clear. Cities and counties manage less than four percent of the total inventory of walking and hiking trails, yet serve the majority of the user population. As populations grow in our state, demand for trail opportunities will also grow (see Table 3-2).

In some urban areas, however, there could be difficulties in finding corridors or routes for new trails. Some creative solutions include use of existing corridors or rights-of-way by piggy-backing trails onto roadway and utility projects; using the permit process to encourage or require developers to preserve greenbelts or trails corridors; and converting abandoned railroad rights-of-way to trail use.

Trail systems in "urban forests" such as the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and Tiger Mountain State Forest also serve population centers. These trails can be reached in an hour or less from populated areas. (RCW 43.51.380 defines urban center as any incorporated city of 5,000 or more people and any county with 250 or more people per square mile.)

Many users prefer the less developed, more remote settings found in the national forests and parks. This preference appears to be resulting in overuse of many attractive sites and trails. A review of the Forest Plans for each of the state's national forests reveals that recreation is at or near capacity in virtually all settings of the ROS.

New facilities are needed, but not all settings can carry more facilities. For example, current management direction indicates that few new trails will be built in designated Wilderness areas. Therefore, other Forest lands need to be examined for new trail opportunities.

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Many miles of Forest Service trail are found on land under intensive timber management. While some users do not object to trails in these settings, others wish to recreate in undeveloped areas. Further, trails in these settings are subject to disruption.

The Forest Service land "in between" Wilderness and commodity use is classified "semi-primitive." Sometimes called roadless areas, semi-primitive areas can be managed for both motorized and nonmotorized recreation. Semi-primitive areas should be fully utilized for new trail construction.

There is less semi-primitive land than any other in the ROS. In the early 1980s, there were about 2.6 million acres of semi-primitive land in the national forests of Washington. Currently, there are approximately 1.8 million acres (Forest Service, 1989). The decline reflects a shift from semi-primitive to roaded natural and roaded modified by timber harvest activity. Examination and analysis of draft Forest Plans indicate that this total could drop to less than 1.2 million acres in the next three decades.

A balanced spectrum of recreation settings needs to be established and maintained. Therefore, there should be no net loss of semi-primitive land.

The National Park Service reconstructs and constructs new trails as funds become available. Trail development competes with other needs and activities at each park. The National Park Service coordinates with adjacent land managers in trail projects. For example, new trails may be built along the North Cascades Highway Corridor from the road to the Park boundary to provide viewpoints into the Park; these new trails would often be on Forest Service land.

A key constraint on new trail construction is the lack of funds for trail maintenance. Trail managers and trail users agree that there is little to be gained by building trails that cannot be adequately maintained. The Department of Natural Resources is one important trail manager that does not have sufficient funds to maintain its trail inventory. Both the National Park Service and the Forest Service have extensive backlogs of trail maintenance needs statewide, and have closed trails because they cannot be maintained.

Funding for the reconstruction of substandard trails also remains below management needs. Reconstruction of substandard trails could be an important means of reducing maintenance needs.

In spite of such constraints, new construction in all settings is still desirable. New construction can reduce pressure on overused trails, draw people away from highly impacted areas, and reduce user conflicts.

Many creative proposals for new trail construction have been brought forward by responsible user groups. These proposals need to address the need for long-range maintenance, including realistic appraisals of the ability of volunteers to maintain new trails.

When considering new trails, carrying capacity for both land and trails needs to be established by managing agencies in consultation with user groups. Limits of acceptable change and use densities need to be established to safeguard the quality of the trail environment, as well as the quality of other resources that trails might impact. Management tools including permit systems, access fees, and trail objectives are appropriate in order to protect the integrity of trails and their environment.

A variety of trail experiences needs to be available, from the urban to the primitive, recognizing that each trail cannot accommodate all users.

Action 4.

Problem: Growing populations and user demands are increasing pressure on all trail systems.
Solution: Provide more trail opportunities in populated areas including cities and counties.
Participants: Local agencies, DNR, WSDOT, State Parks, user groups, land trusts; assisted by IAC and NPS's Rivers and Trails Technical Assistance Program.
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: Construct new trails to serve populated areas. Provide technical assistance to local agencies. Utilize local option vehicle

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and fuel taxes to fund nonmotorized transportation trails and corridors.

Task 1: DNR should complete recreation plans for land managed in King, Snohomish, Pierce, Mason, Clark, and Skamania Counties by 1994.

Task 2: IAC and NPS will schedule trail workshops for local agencies beginning in 1991, and will bring information on trail funding options, methods of identifying appropriate corridors, and success stories from cities and counties.

Action 5.

Problem: Semi-primitive areas, highly prized by trail users, are rapidly disappearing under the pressure of resource extraction.

Solution: Retain semi-primitive settings with no net loss.

Participants: USFS, IAC, user groups, conservation groups, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Promote recreational use of semi-primitive settings through means such as publicity, signing, mapping, and new trail development. Encourage partnerships with private organizations and nonprofit groups.

Task 1: IAC staff and STAC should meet annually with USFS Region 6 staff and Forest Trail Coordinators to review the Region 6, 5-year, Trails Capital Investment Plan to determine how well the program meshes with the *Washington State Trails Plan*, and to develop a strategy for how the Region 6 program can complement the *Plan*.

Task 2: IAC staff should meet by December 1991 with USFS Region 6 recreation staff and all Region 6 Forest Trail Coordinators to present findings and recommendations of this *Plan*, and to discuss implementation.

Task 3: USFS will ensure that all Forest trails that are entered into the Trail Information System (TRIS) will have location maps available with other TRIS information.

Task 4: USFS should ask guidebook authors and publishers to continue to publicize non-Wilderness trails to help disperse use and to encourage recreation in semi-primitive settings, and encourage volunteer organizations

to help build and maintain trails in semi-primitive settings.

Communication

A wealth of information exists for the trail user to answer the question, "Where can I go to recreate on trails?" Among available sources are:

- The *Washington State Trails Directory*, published by IAC, which lists agencies managing trails.
- The *Washington Off-Road Vehicle Guide*, a directory of areas open to motorized recreation.
- Department of Natural Resources' *Guide to Camp and Picnic Sites* including trailheads, and "state forest" maps.
- Forest Service and National Park Service guides to facilities including trails. These two agencies also operate the joint Information Center in Seattle.
- Commercially published guides such as those published by Mountaineers Books.

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- Publications from user groups, such as the Washington Trails Association's *Signpost* magazine.
- The Trail Information System (TRIS), a computer database managed by the Forest Service with a number of terminal/outlets statewide.

In spite of this wealth of information, up-to-date, trail specific information continues to be elusive. It's relatively easy to answer the question, "Where can I go?" It's sometimes nearly impossible to answer the question, "What will I find when I get to the trail?"

Is there snow on the trail? Are there blowdowns or other barriers on the route? Is the access road washed out or otherwise difficult to travel? Are bridges in place, or are there water courses that will require fording?

Some users will not know whom to call for information, not knowing who manages the land and trails they wish to use.

Although some managers believe that users need to accept risk and discovery as part of the trail experience, many people do demand precise information.

In even the most aggressive information publications, there is roughly a four to six week lag time in reporting on-the-ground information.

Many users will telephone managers for information. Sometimes agency personnel are worried about liability by providing information or advice and will be evasive or less than informative. At other times, personnel will overstate dangers or constraints to "be on the safe side."

Action 6.

Problem: Information on trail opportunities and conditions is often not available in a timely manner.

Solution: Establish a state-federal partnership in cooperation with user groups to expand the capacity of the Trail Information System (TRIS).

Participants: IAC, State Parks, DNR, USFS, NPS, user groups (such as: Washington Trails Association, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington).

Time Frame: 1991-1993.

Strategies: Include information on as many different agency trails as possible. Expand TRIS software distribution network. Encourage participation by user groups and nonprofit organizations.

Task 1: By May 1991, IAC should meet with USFS Region 6 recreation staff to develop a strategy for inputting and providing current updates of trail information for existing and planned trails.

Task 2: IAC and USFS will contact user groups and non-profit organizations by the end of 1991 to identify project partners.

Task 3: IAC will investigate feasibility of publishing a newsletter devoted to trails in Washington State by the end of 1993.

Action 7.

Problem: Agency-provided maps and guides are often inadequate for user needs.

Solutions: Work in consultation with user groups to ensure that information is usable and accurate.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: USFS, WSDOT), user groups (such as: Mountain Bike Task Force, Pacific Northwest Four-Wheel Drive Association), IAC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Encourage agencies to form partnerships with nonprofit and commercial organizations to produce and distribute maps and guides as efficiently as possible.

Task 1: IAC will revise and publish the *Washington Off-Road Vehicle Guide* in consultation with users, and will investigate the feasibility of publishing guides for other trail uses such as mountain bicycling, horseback riding, and nonmotorized boating by the end of 1992.

Task 2: IAC will share the Geographic Information System (GIS) trail database with other agencies and organizations.

Task 3: NPS will complete the regional (Washington, Oregon, Idaho) trail map and trail guide by the end of 1995.

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Household Trail Equipment Investment by Activity

Activity	Household Investment	Households Participating	Investment Statewide
Walking	$ 50	1,323,616	$ 66,180,800
Day Hiking	530	801,136	424,602,080
Backpacking	720	330,904	238,250,880
Mountaineering	850	208,992	177,643,200
Bicycling	450	870,800	391,860,000
Bicycle Touring	1,110	87,080	96,658,800
Motorcycling Off Roads	3,630	208,992	758,640,960
Skiing or Snowshoeing	740	226,408	167,541,920
Snowmobiling	6,070	121,912	740,005,840
Camping with Packstock	$11,070	34,832	385,590,240
			$ 3,446,974,720

Table 4-1

Task 4: USFS will ensure that all Forest trails and other trails mapped in the *Washington State Trails Plan* will be added to Forest recreation maps when the maps are annually updated.

Economics and Funding

Trail users invest not only time but money, which makes trail use important to the state's economy. Specialized equipment is usually needed for comfort and safety on the trail. Based on information provided in equipment lists submitted by the user group representatives of STAC, it is estimated that trail users in Washington State have a current investment in outdoor equipment of over $3.4 billion dollars (Table 4-1).

This dollar figure may not reflect those who invest in highly sophisticated gear and who may have multiple items. Further, it is assumed that only one person per household participates in a given activity. For these and other reasons, the estimate is conservative.

Dollar amounts for the purchase of passenger vehicles are not included in this estimate, although there is an intuitive connection between one's recreation behavior and purchase decisions for cars and trucks. The decision to purchase a particular vehicle is influenced by a variety of factors not limited to recreation choices. Vehicles are not usually used exclusively for access to trail recreation.

It is true that much of the equipment purchased for trail use will not be used exclusively for recreation. Gore-Tex™ raincoats are seen in town as well as on the trail. However, it is assumed here that the primary motivation for the purchase of the equipment was trail use. Also, equipment purchased will be used in more than one activity. For example, it is assumed that day hiking equipment is the foundation for backpacking and mountaineering, that bicycling is the foundation for bicycle touring. In other words, a backpacker is assumed to have the day hiker's equipment investment of $531, with an additional investment of $716 for overnight gear, for a total investment of $1,247. A mountaineer will have the investment of both day hiking and backpacking

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plus another $850 of specialized gear such as ropes, crampons, carabiners, and ice axes. Equipment has not been "double counted."

Equipment included in the STAC-provided lists ranged from coats, boots, hats, and other items of clothing; bicycles; sleeping bags, tents, stoves, and cookware; motorcycles, helmets, and trailers.

Equipment does not last forever, and changes in technology will make replacement or upgrading desirable. A certain amount of replacement cost is to be expected, depending on the amount of equipment use. Given this, it is reasonable to predict that 10 percent of all the items will be replaced or upgraded per year. At this rate, yearly retail sales of about $345 million a year would be generated.

The investment in trail equipment is subject to state and local sales taxes (Table 4-2). Further growth in investment can be anticipated based on the projected activity growth (see Table 3-2).

Another way to look at the economic impact of trails is the amount spent by users for the trail trip itself. Anecdotal figures on actual cost per trail trip have been provided by user group representatives of STAC (Table 4-3). Most costs reported are gasoline and food (usually in a restaurant), though some reported lodging and other costs.

A National Park Service study concluded that visitors to Mt. Rainier National Park in 1985 spent $13 million on goods and services in the vicinity of the Park, and nearly $37 million in the State of Washington (Aldwell, 1986).

At the very least, the figures demonstrate that people are willing to invest a great deal of money for trail-based recreation.

Throughout Washington State and at all levels of government, recreation funding has not competed well in the budgeting process (IAC, 1989a). Other interests have succeeded in commanding greater shares of budget allocations in recent years. The popularity of trail use and its importance to the lifestyle enjoyed by Washington residents, in addition to the attraction that trails have for visitors and tourists, indicate that regular appropriations for trail recreation is an appropriate government action. This is especially true in view of the large contribution that trail users make to the state's economy.

Sales Tax from Annual Equipment Sales of $345 Million

Tax Rate of	Generates
4%	$ 13.8 million
5%	17.3 million
6%	20.7 million
7%	24.2 million
8%	27.6 million

Table 4-2

Federal agencies rely on Congressional appropriations. The appropriations for trails within a given agency compete with all other activities. The annual budgeting process is a political process, with competing interests clamoring for the attention and money of Congress.

Those programs that return money to the treasury fare better than those that do not. In the Forest Service, for example, trail appropriations often compete poorly with timber-related road building appropriations. Some user and conservation groups have suggested cutting Forest Service road building appropriations in order to fund a higher level of trail and recreation appropriations (National Trails Coalition, 1990).

National forests in Washington State have invested many years in producing Forest Plans to guide future management decisions. Draft and final Forest Plans have recognized the importance of recreation, with special attention to trails. Future funding of trails in national forests, as a minimum, should be at the levels detailed in these Plans.

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Household Trip Cost of Selected Trail Activities

Activity	Household Trips, 1989	Cost[1] Per Trip	Total Cost of Trips
Day Hiking	3,218,000	$ 25	$ 80,450,000
Mountaineering	254,000	40	10,160,000
Motorcycling Off Roads	691,000	75	51,825,000
Skiing or Snowshoeing	379,000	29	10,991,000
Snowmobiling	192,000	124	23,808,000
Camping with Packstock	37,000	50	1,850,000
			$ 179,084,000

[1] As reported by STAC.

Table 4-3

In the national parks, trails compete with all other facilities for funding. Each park superintendent will review facility needs and make priority decisions concerning the distribution of limited funds. Naturally, the most pressing needs will receive the most attention.

The federal **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**, appropriated by Congress, has provided Washington State and local agencies with more than $50 million since 1965. Federal agencies in the state have received direct LWCF appropriations of over $78 million in the same period. Trails have often been a component of the projects funded through LWCF.

State agencies face a similar appropriations process. Actual dollars for appropriation begin at the State Legislature and work their way down to various agencies and programs.

One reliable source of trail money has proven to be the IAC-managed **Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Grant Program.** This program, allocating between $2 and $3 million a year in grants for recreation projects, is funded through a portion of fuel taxes returned to recreationists as directed in RCW 46.09.170, Refunds from Motor Vehicle Fund. The original "refund" went exclusively to off-road vehicle projects, but since 1986 has been apportioned to include nonmotorized trail activity. In 1989, 385 percent more nonhighway funds were requested than were available.

For the most part, funding for the NOVA Program comes from a legislatively mandated one percent gasoline fuel tax refund. This amount was established after considering a 1974 Department of Licensing study which revealed that during the study period 4.61 percent of the state's motor vehicle fuel was consumed for nonhighway and off-road vehicle recreation. Obviously, if a higher tax refund percentage were to be made available, the funding shortage in the NOVA Program might be eliminated.

The **Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)** was created by an act of the Legislature in 1990. Building on the work of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition (WWRC), the Legislature established the program with an initial appropriation of $53 million to the IAC-managed Outdoor Recreation and Habitat Conservation Accounts. Trails are recognized through a specific application category in the Outdoor Recreation Account. Eight specific trail projects managed by state agencies were earmarked in the legislation, for a total appropriation of approximately $3.9 million. In addition, another $3.45 million for local trail projects funding in fiscal years 1991-92 was

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recommended to the Governor through the IAC-managed review process in 1990.

The magnitude of the funding need for local, close-to-home trails was underscored by grant applications from local agencies which totaled more than $8 million. Future appropriations to the WWRP account are important to the future of trails, especially for trails in urban areas and trails that connect populated areas.

Another **state funding source** of interest is the provision of Chapter 47.30 RCW, Trails and Paths. This directs the Department of Transportation to expend, as a minimum, three-tenths of one percent of all transportation funds, both state and federal, on facilities for pedestrians, equestrians, or bicyclists. According to RCW 47.30.020 these facilities are to be incorporated into the design of highways and freeways along corridors where such facilities do not exist.

Chapter 47.30 RCW also directs local agencies, with certain exceptions, to expend as a minimum one-half of one percent on trails and paths. Here again, the trails and paths must be part of the local agency's comprehensive trail or transportation plan to be eligible for funds from this source. Unfortunately, it often takes smaller local agencies many years to accumulate sufficient funds to pay for meaningful projects.

RCW 47.30.030 allows for separate nonmotorized facilities in order to increase motor vehicle safety where such nonmotorized facilities are a part of an agency's comprehensive trail and path plan.

For bicyclists and others who are willing to engage in a long-term process of planning and budgeting, this represents an excellent opportunity to fund trails and paths for transportation uses.

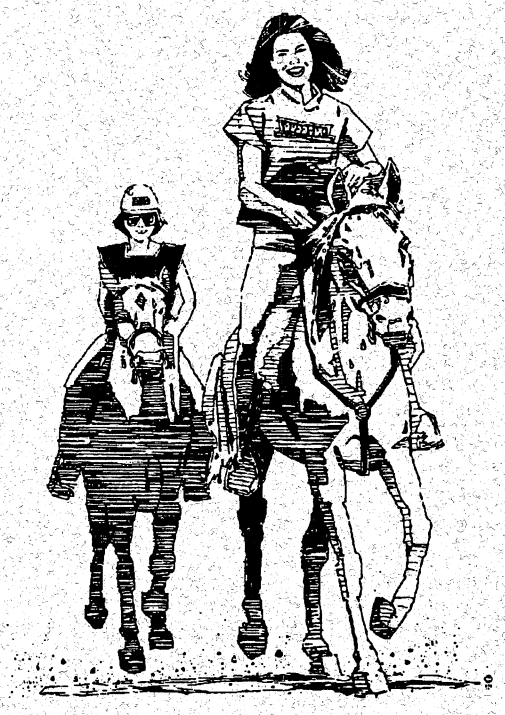
For example, the bicycle interests of a given community could work with planners to ensure that a system of trails and paths is designed into the community's transportation plan. With the design in hand, the same interests could then make the trail/path plan a part of the budget process for funding through WSDOT sources.

It is possible that an interconnecting route such as an abandoned railroad right-of-way could be funded in this manner, assuming that such a route was made part of an agency's comprehensive plan and that the route increases transportation safety by segregating motorized and nonmotorized uses.

New sources of revenue for trails have been discussed for years. Proposals from user groups have included trail use permits or licenses, taxes on trail equipment, additional fees on horse or ORV trailers, and additional gasoline taxes.

A tax on outdoor equipment was examined by the 1989 Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition report (WWRC, 1989). The report points out the difficulty of appropriately defining what should be taxed, uniformly imposing the tax, and high costs associated with collecting the tax.

Many years of discussion has produced no broad consensus on the issue of trail use permits. Some people argue that permit systems would be



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unrealistic and unmanageable. Summer-use trails are widely scattered at great distances and sometimes in very remote sites, unlike Sno-Park system trails which tend to be close to major highways or roads. The result, according to this point of view, would be a system that would prove to be time-consuming, inefficient, and expensive.

People countering this argument suggest that a permit system controlling parking and trail access could be effective. It would not be necessary to monitor every trailhead, but only the larger or more popular trailheads that tend to concentrate people and vehicles. An attractive feature of parking permit enforcement is the presence of agency personnel at popular trailheads which in recent years have increasingly become the target of vandalism and theft; the presence of agency personnel could deter such crimes. Additionally, those favoring a pay-for-play trail use permit contend that an administrative mechanism exists (Sno-Parks) that could be either overlaid or copied.

Whatever the source of funds, trail managers at all levels need the support of user groups when competing for budget dollars. User groups, in turn, require channels of communication to managers to ensure that budgets address on-the-ground needs.

Further, there is a critical, ongoing need to educate and inform the Legislature and Congress on the importance of trails to the people of Washington State—trails that need regular appropriations.

Action 8.

Problem: The state's Congressional delegation and Legislature are not adequately educated and informed on the need for increased funding for trails.

Solution: Educate budget makers on the value and economic contribution of trails and the need for trail funding.

Participants: User groups (such as: National Trails Coalition, Blue Ribbon Coalition), conservation groups, WWRC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Gather statistical evidence, prepare information to educate legislators. Stress the economic contribution of trails, including sales and gasoline taxes generated by trail use. Develop coordinated, comprehensive and ongoing efforts based on common user needs. Continue funding support from the state's Outdoor Recreation and Habitat Conservation Accounts. Continue to seek support for higher federal appropriations to NPS, USFS, BLM, and other federal trail managers.

Task 1: IAC should present this *Plan* to the Washington Congressional delegation, the Governor, the Secretary of State, key Legislators, and other officials to establish need and goals by the end of 1991.

Task 2: IAC will coordinate a STAC meeting with trail advocacy groups including the National Trails Coalition, Public Land Users Society, and others to identify areas of agreement and needed consensus by the end of 1992.

Action 9.

Problem: User groups and managers have not discovered how to work together effectively in the trail funding and budgeting process.

Solution: Establish processes to allow user groups and managers to meet regularly concerning budget needs.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: USFS, NPS), user groups (such as: Northwest Motorcycle Association, Washington Trails Association, Mountaineers), IAC, WWRC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: STAC should meet quarterly and act as a forum for managers and user groups to discuss budgeting priorities.

Task 1: IAC, in cooperation with STAC, will compile agency budget process information for review and coordination by December 1991.

Task 2: IAC will work with participants to develop and implement strategies which will result in the establishment of a stable source of funds for outdoor recreation including trails.

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Long-Distance Trails and a State Trail Network

A long-distance trail is a single trail or a series of connected trails requiring three or more days to travel by foot, or a day and a half to travel by a motorized vehicle or bicycle.

Long-distance trails are important to the trail community. A key function of the long-distance trail is to connect otherwise distinct or isolated trail systems. The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (commonly called the PCT) is the one trail link between systems of two national parks and four national forests. The John Wayne Pioneer Trail, following the route of the east-west Milwaukee right-of-way (sometimes referred to as the Cross-State Trail), is the trail link between the Idaho border and the Puget Sound Basin.

Further, long-distance trails provide a focus for the trails community. A trail like the PCT or the "Cross-State" trail captures the imagination and presents a challenge, not only in terms of actual use but in terms of creating the long-distance route, as well.

Development of long-distance trails should emphasize an evolution that begins at the local level. Local trails connected to other local trails by way of county or regional corridors would create long-distance opportunities without the need to plan and execute the entire length of a long-distance trail all at once.

Rail-to-trail conversions offer an excellent opportunity to add to the long-distance trail inventory. Rail-to-trail conversions help connect population centers, are useful for commuting, and have a positive environmental impact. (See "Railroad Rights-of-Way.")

Coordination of this evolution of trail systems would result in a true state trails network, with the existing regional systems linked by county and regional corridors.

Motorized trail users have expressed concern that there are no formal long-distance routes for their use. It may be possible to identify existing informal routes that can be mapped and signed to provide long-distance opportunities for this group.

Action 10.

Problem: Long-distance trails are needed as links in a state trail network, but creating new long-distance trail corridors is costly and time-consuming.

Solution: Develop local projects that emphasize interconnections with other local projects.

Participants: Local agencies, user groups (such as: Washington State Chapter of the RTC, Rails to Trails Coalition, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, Cascade Bicycle Club), IAC, STAC, NPS Rivers and Trails Technical Assistance Program, State Parks.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Accelerate rail-to-trail conversions that offer connecting links. Develop partnerships with interest groups to promote local trails. NPS, IAC, State Parks to provide coordinated local assistance. Hold trail workshops for local agencies. Hold a biennial trail conference for all managers and user groups.

Task 1: IAC and NPS will schedule trail workshops for local managers beginning in 1991, to assist local agencies in planning and development of trail systems and to encourage appropriate "linkage" between local agency trail systems.

Task 2: IAC staff will consult with STAC, American Trails, NPS, other organizations to begin conference planning by the end of 1991.

Task 3: NPS will coordinate regional (Washington, Oregon, Idaho) trail planning and mapping by the end of 1995.

Action 11.

Problem: Development of local and regional trails is taking place without coordination or adequate statewide perspective, preventing linkage and hindering creation of a state trail network.

Solution: Coordinated planning and information sharing following the policies established by the *Washington State Trails Plan*.

Participants: IAC, State Parks, DNR, NPS, USFS, local agencies, user groups (such as:

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King County Executive Horse Council, Bicycle Federation of Washington), STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Provide technical assistance programs for local agencies including handbooks or manuals, workshops, conferences, interagency meetings to coordinate planning and on-the-ground action.

Task 1: IAC and NPS will schedule trail workshops for local agencies beginning in 1991, to assist local agencies in planning and development of trail systems and to encourage cooperative trail planning among local agencies.

Task 2: IAC staff will consult with STAC, American Trails, NPS, other organizations to begin conference planning by the end of 1991.

Maintenance

All users impact trails and contribute to the need for maintenance. However, the most important consideration for trail maintenance is whether or not a trail has been built correctly to begin with. Many trails were never designed or constructed for the type or amount of use they currently receive. Often, trails were created by miners, herders, and firefighters who simply wanted to "get from here to there" the quickest way possible, never mind the fragile meadow or the steepness of the grade or the absence of water-bars.

Appropriate trail design and construction, including route location, will do more for the life of a trail than any amount of maintenance. Redesign and reconstruction of "substandard" trails is often needed to prevent resource damage and to enhance user safety and enjoyment. At the same time, it is usually important to retain the trail's original objective.

Many users have suggested that new trail construction levels are often set at too high a standard. One popular guidebook referred to the Pacific Crest Trail as the "Pacific Crest Freeway" (Manning, 1980). Users need to work with managers at the planning stage to prevent "overbuilt" trails.

Action 12.

Problem: Federal and state managers have extensive trail maintenance backlogs.

Solutions: Emphasize reduction of maintenance backlog in next five years, with equal emphasis on reconstruction of "substandard" trails.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: USFS, NPS, DNR), IAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Set maintenance and reconstruction as federal and state agency priorities, considering new construction when it would support the goal of linking systems into a statewide trail network. (Also see Action 15 under "Multiple-Use Trails.")

Task 1: USFS Regional office will ensure that increments of the 1991 through 1993 trail program budgets for Region 6 include emphasis on trail reconstruction and maintenance within the constraints of the 1990 Renewable

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Resources Plan (RPA) alternatives and the Region's budgeting process.

Task 2: IAC's Trail Technical Assistance Manual will include a sample maintenance schedule and suggested maintenance levels.

Multiple-Use Management

Multiple-use management is management of the same land base for two or more objectives.

Until recently, trails have suffered under the multiple-use concept. Trails were often a minor consideration in management decisions. Only those trails protected by certain designations could reasonably be expected to escape disruption, abandonment, or destruction.

Multiple Use in National Forests. At the end of the 1940s, the Olympic National Forest managed over 900 miles of trail, used primarily for management of the Forest. By 1987, trail use had shifted to recreation, yet the number of trail miles had dropped to less than 300 (Olympic National Forest, 1987). Most of these trail miles were replaced by forest roads.

It is current Forest Service policy to replace trails disrupted by timber harvest. The policy of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest reads, in part, "Trails interrupted by logging or road construction will be restored or substitute trails provided so that mileage of trails in a given area is not diminished. Trails will be kept open, and clear directions for users provided during interrupting activities." (Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, 1989)

This policy is sometimes overlooked in harvest management, resulting in a public perception that trails are treated as secondary in management decisions. From the user perspective, trails in or adjacent to timber harvest settings present negatives including mileage lost to roads, trail segmentation when a trail is intersected or "cut" by a road, viewshed destruction, and increased noise pollution. Many users have suggested that timber and other resource management should not dictate what happens to trails; rather that trails should guide timber management decisions.

This problem may be nearing solution. A whole new focus for Forest Service trails has been created through the Service's Recreation Strategy. This Strategy was developed to acknowledge the overwhelming response of citizens to proposed Forest Plans, a response that made it clear that the general public sees recreation as one of the many important uses of forest lands nationally. Public response was confirmed by the *Report of the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors* (1987).

This is a bold, creative, and promising change of direction. One of the most important features of the Strategy is its strengthening the position of recreation in integrated resource management decisions. While some continue to be concerned with the lack of regular appropriations for this Strategy, it's important to recognize that the Strategy represents a change in attitude. The Strategy has given recreation managers the ability to better compete for often limited resources.

Multiple Use in State Forests. Lands managed by the state's Department of Natural Resources are viewed by many as "multiple-use" lands. More precisely, DNR manages trust lands on which multiple use can be accommodated as long as the uses are consistent with trust land management. In order to accommodate multiple use such as recreation, the trust lands must be leased or purchased from a trust.

Tiger Mountain and Capitol State Forests are excellent examples of a strong role for recreation in multiple use of DNR land.

DNR policy is to replace by relocating or rebuilding those trails disrupted by timber harvest or other trust activities. In effect, there is no net loss of trail miles. However, this policy has not always been communicated to the public. Many users perceive that the temporary disruptions are permanent. Further, users do not always understand that DNR lands are managed for trust purposes, not for retention of the natural landscape users prize.

Multiple Use in Other Settings. Other managers not formally recognized as "multiple use" managers can, in fact, practice multiple use.

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These managers include local agencies that must make decisions through zoning for multiple uses of limited land resources.

In a local setting, the public might use an informal trail or route that crosses private land, while believing that the trail is in the public domain. When the land is later developed and the trail obliterated, the public can form an impression that government has somehow failed to protect the trail.

To help prevent these kinds of situations, trails must be integrated into land use decisions at the local level.

Action 13.

Problem: Management activities including timber harvest and road building often disrupt system trails in many settings.
Solution: Recognize trails as an equal factor in integrated resource management.
Participants: Managing agencies (such as: USFS, BLM, DNR), user groups (such as: Northwest Motorcycle Association, Washington Trails Association, Backcountry Horsemen), IAC.
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: Utilize USFS "Recreation Strategy" to strengthen the status of recreation and trails. Communicate and enforce DNR and USFS policy to restore and/or replace trails disrupted by management activities. Design harvests and roads to avoid physical impacts on trails. Provide buffers or corridors for trails by leaving standing trees whenever possible.
Task 1: DNR will complete and begin implementation of a trail sign plan by the end of 1992.
Task 2: USFS Region 6 will revise its Recreation Trail Handbook including a vision statement with a provision that new trails will be constructed only in Forest Plan land allocations or corridors having prescriptions that complement and protect the recreation trail investment.

Action 14.

Problem: Informal trails and paths in cities and counties are frequently disrupted by development activities.
Solution: Establish and protect formal trails and corridors.
Participants: Local agencies, user groups, development interests.
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: Trails should be an element of both recreation and transportation planning. Local agencies should have a policy similar to that found in Action 13. Utilize fee simple, lease, easements, or development mitigation to establish corridors and trails.
Task 1: User groups need to map or inventory informal trails and present the information to appropriate managers beginning in 1991.
Task 2: Local agencies should work with developers to identify and retain informal trails as system trails and to provide open space and corridors through new developments.

Multiple-Use Trails

A "multiple-use" trail is a trail that provides for more than one type of use. For example, a Wilderness trail can provide recreational and administrative uses and is therefore a multiple-use trail. Multi-mode trails provide for more than one mode of travel; a horse-hiker trail is multi-mode, as is a motorized trail open to mountain bicycles and hikers.

In any setting, multiple use does not have to mean all uses at all times on all trails. It can mean seasonal, apportioned, or sometimes limited uses. An example of seasonal multiple use is a winter trail used exclusively for cross-country skiing that in summer becomes a trail for mountain bicycles or all-terrain vehicles in snow-free months.

Multiple-use trails appear attractive to managers and users alike. They give the perception of fairness and efficient allocation of sometimes scarce resources. However, by allowing more than one use without regard to compatibility, safety, and user expectations, a trail manager can create a scenario for user conflict which can ultimately lead to limitations on some users.

Further, there can be differing expectations created by the term multiple-use trail. For

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example, many nonmotorized users object to the presence of motorized vehicles on the same trail, while many motorized users perceive the multiple-use trail as the only type available for motorized use. Some motorized users express the opinion that "multiple use" does not exist without motorized use.

Trails can accommodate otherwise incompatible uses when the levels of use are relatively light. More heavily used trails, however, are most successful when use is among generally compatible user groups. Incompatible use leads to user conflict, usually resulting in the loss of opportunity for a given user.

Too often, the design of a multiple-use trail is at best a compromise between the needs of different uses, a compromise which can reduce some users' enjoyment. For example, a trail "armored" with concrete blocks to prevent undue wear by wheeled vehicles is uncomfortable for walking and will discourage hiker use.

At times, reconstruction of trails to differing standards may result in displacement or recreational succession. Displacement is when a given user group chooses to go elsewhere because of perceived undesirable changes. The displaced group may be replaced, or succeeded, by a different group. This is especially true when the level of trail reconstruction is not aimed at established uses.

Unless use levels are light, trail management on a generic "multiple use" basis is not recommended. Instead, trail management should be by **primary objective**, including primary use, for both trail systems and individual trails. Once the primary use objective is set for a trail, other compatible uses can be determined. Agencies including the Forest Service are already managing trails on a primary objective basis.

Action 15.

Problem: Users are often unaware of management goals such as maintenance standards and primary trail objectives, which often leads to user dissatisfaction or unmet user needs.

Solution: Publicize trail objectives and maintenance standards.

Participants: Managing agencies.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Augment trailhead sign programs to inform users about trail objectives, difficulty level, and maintenance standards. Provide information to educate the public on trail objectives including maintenance levels. Promote user-management cooperation to establish objectives and standards.

Task 1: DNR will complete and begin implementation of a sign plan to address these strategies by the end of 1992.

Task 2: USFS Region 6 engineering group will revise the Trails section of its Regional Sign Handbook to ensure that current recreational trail objectives are reflected in the signs to be used on trails in the region, and will encourage IAC to coordinate signing techniques to match or resemble Region 6 signing.

Action 16.

Problem: Reconstruction of established trails can result in unanticipated and undesirable displacement or succession of established trail uses.

Solution: Provide new or substitute trails.

Participants: Managing agencies.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Provide new trails or new routes for new uses to avoid reconstruction of established trails with established uses. Utilize existing facilities, including roads, to establish routes whenever possible. Target trail reconstruction standards by primary objectives to avoid compromise standards. (Also see Actions 22 and 23 under "Use Compatibility.")

Task 1: IAC will conduct a workshop on identifying and marking routes on existing facilities for uses including mountain bicycles, off-road vehicles, and horses by the end of 1991.

Task 2: USFS Region 6 will complete revision of recreation trail management objectives, primary recreation trail uses, trail settings and opportunities by the end of 1991. USFS computerized Trail Information System

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(TRIS) will sort trails on these uses, settings, and objectives.

Natural Resources and Resource Corridors

Natural resources are often the reason why a trail exists: for access to a lake, a fishing stream, the enjoyment of a forest ride or walk. Use of a natural resource, however careful, will always result in impacts of some kind. Some impacts can have serious environmental consequences.

Trail management must take into account the needs of natural resources of all kinds. Some wildlife habitat areas may not be appropriate for trails. A wetland or riparian area may be excluded from trail planning because of the need to protect water or fish resources.

At times, trail uses may compete with natural resources. The same forest that is popular with trail users might be earmarked for timber harvest. Until recently, trails usually lost in the competition for limited resources (see "Multiple-Use Management").

A natural resource corridor is a greenbelt or linear open space. As such, a natural resource corridor could include an abandoned railroad right-of-way, a wildlife migration corridor, or a watercourse. If new trail opportunities are to be made available in natural settings, such corridors need to be preserved.

Preservation mechanisms include purchase, conservation easements, and mitigation as part of the permit process in which developers are required to set aside corridors.

Action 17.

Problem: Needs of natural resources such as wildlife and wetlands are sometimes perceived as exclusive of trails.
Solution: Balanced management through cooperation between trail managers and natural resource managers.
Participants: Managing agencies (such as: Ecology, WDW, USFS, DNR), IAC, user groups (such as: King County Executive Horse Council, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington).
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: The interdisciplinary management style used by USFS can be a model for others.
Task 1: IAC will interface electronically GIS trails map with Department of Ecology wetland maps, Department of Wildlife habitat maps, and other databases as feasible, making the maps available to trail planners on an at-cost basis.
Task 2: IAC will integrate "Wildlife Evaluation Process" into application procedure for all state-funded trail programs and will recommend the evaluation process to trail managers.

Private Lands, Private Concerns

The inventory for this *Plan* does not include trail miles on private land. IAC's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) process has not surveyed trail miles on private land since 1979. While it's true that most trail recreation in Washington takes place on public land, some uses, sanctioned or not, and some proposals for new trail opportunities impact the private landowner.

Significant acreage in private ownership is closed to trail-related recreation. Private owners are concerned about litter, vandalism, fences, theft, fire, the spread of weeds, and other problems. In many instances where a public trail is bordered by private land, however, these concerns have not materialized in a significant way. Examples include the urban Burke-Gilman Trail in Seattle and the rural Iron Horse State Park in Kittitas County.

In other instances, property owners have expressed concern about trail projects where there are questions about adequate compensation for purchase or use of their property.

Methods that have proven successful in minimizing impact on private land include: "Cornering" in which a route goes across the smallest possible area, usually a corner of a given property; land exchanges to consolidate public holdings;

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purchase of an easement; and gifts or donation of land.

Action 18.

Problem: Poor communication and misunderstanding often leads to obstacles to establishing needed trails adjacent to private land.

Solution: Establish partnerships between managers and user groups to enhance communication with private landowners.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: DNR, State Parks), landowners, user groups (such as RTC).

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Meet early and often with private owners to understand concerns. Give direct notice to affected landowners prior to general public notice. Provide information on similar projects in which private concerns were successfully met.

Task 1: IAC should include information on "success stories" in the Trail Technical Assistance Manual by the end of 1991.

Railroad Rights-of-Way (Rail-Trails)

Washington State is considered a national leader in the rail-trail movement. Rail-trails are managed by a number of agencies, including cities, counties, and State Parks.

Since 1970, over 1,700 miles of railroad rights-of-way have been abandoned in this state (Rails to Trails Conservancy, 1989). Statewide, there are 21 rail-trails providing 347 miles for a variety of uses. The 1300-mile difference between abandonments and actual trail conversions represents the loss of a significant opportunity to expand the number of trail miles in Washington State.

According to WSDOT, approximately 350 miles of railroad rights-of-way are expected to be abandoned by 1993. Conversion of appropriate segments of these rights-of-way to trails would tie together population centers, provide alternative transportation routes, and interconnect regional recreational trail systems to create a true statewide trail network. This would help realize a major goal of the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, which called for converting abandoned rail lines to paths and trails (President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, 1987).

Not all abandonments are suitable for trail use. Some abandonments may prove to be of continued value as transportation corridors. Currently there is no state plan or policy to guide state agency decisions on abandonment issues including conversions to trails. A plan needs to be developed to consider the best use of abandonments. Further, a plan must recognize the transportation use of trails, thereby allowing use of "Trails and Paths" funds under Chapter 47.30 RCW to pay for acquisition, development, and maintenance of routes deemed suitable as trails.

A variety of uses, both mechanized and non-mechanized, could be accommodated by rail-trails. Appropriate uses need to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The Washington State Chapter of the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) has issued its *Washington State Rail-Trail Plan* (Rails to Trails Conservancy, 1989). This *Plan* documents rail-trails in use, those being planned, and those proposed.

Main-line railroads are regulated by the United States Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). After a railroad decides that it does not want to continue to provide commercial service over a particular line, it must request that the ICC grant abandonment of that line. Railroad abandonments can follow two different legal processes. The regular abandonment process is lengthy and allows ample time for notice and action by a recreation agency that would like to consider a rail-trail conversion. The Exempt Abandonment process, however, is much different. If a railroad feels that it meets the test of an Exempt Abandonment, it must follow a complicated course of action within strict guidelines.

First, at least ten days prior to a filing of a Notice of Exemption with the ICC, the railroad must

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notify the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) of its intent to do so.

The ICC must publish the Notice of Exemption in the Federal Register within 20 days after receipt from the railroad; though no formal notice to WSDOT is required, WSDOT "watches" the Federal Register and will notify interested agencies (usually within one week) when abandonment notices of interest are published.

Within ten days of publication in the Federal Register, an agency wishing to convert the right-of-way to trail use must file with the ICC a Protest Petition to Stay the Abandonment. If the ten day window is missed, or if the ICC does not honor the Protest Petition, the trail agency then has an additional ten days to file a Petition for Reconsideration.

Under Chapter 47.76 RCW, the State Legislature has established a state policy of preserving freight rail lines where they are now in use or may be needed in the future. A Freight Rail Plan is to be prepared by WSDOT to guide the state in its preservation program. In order to be consistent with this policy, recreation rail-trail conversions should only be considered for lines not identified in the state's Freight Rail Plan for continued or future freight service.

Action 19.

Problem: Timely recreation agency response to Exempt Abandonments is difficult because recreation agencies do not know when WUTC or WSDOT are notified.
Solution: Notify park and recreation agencies of all railroad notices of intention to file for Exempt Abandonment.
Participants: WUTC, WSDOT, State Parks, IAC, DNR, WDW, local agencies, user groups (such as: RTC , Bicycle Federation of Washington).
Time Frame: 1991-1992.
Strategies: Contact WUTC to request notification to park and recreation agencies.
Task 1: By the end of 1991, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission should request that the WUTC notify Parks staff of all railroad notices of intention to file for Exempt Abandonment.
Task 2: IAC should cooperate with State Parks to establish procedure for notification of local park and recreation agencies by the end of 1992.

Action 20.

Problem: No single agency in Washington State coordinates rail-trail information, projects, and funding.
Solution: Establish a lead agency for rail-trail projects.
Participants: State Parks.
Time Frame: 1991-1992.
Strategies: Pursuant to RCW 43.51.040 (8) and RCW 43.51.050 (1) and (3), State Parks staff should make a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission to accept this role.
Task 1: Parks staff should develop recommendation by the end of 1991.

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Action 21.

Problem: No state plan exists for the development and management of rail-trail projects statewide.

Solution: Develop state policy and plan.

Participants: State Parks, WSDOT, IAC, local agencies, user groups (such as: RTC , Volunteers for Outdoor Washington), conservation groups, STAC, the general public.

Time Frame: 1991-1992.

Strategies: Pursuant to RCW 43.51.040 (8) and RCW 43.51.050 (1) and (3), State Parks staff will make a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission to accept this role.

Task 1: State Parks staff should develop a recommendation by the end of 1991.

Task 2: State Parks should begin the process of establishing an Interagency Task Force on railroad abandonments before the end of 1992. The Task Force would be charged with developing and coordinating recreational policy and planning with WSDOT's freight/rail planning and activities mandated by Chapter 47.76 RCW.

Use Compatibility

Use compatibility is a critical issue if more recreationists are to enjoy trails. Incompatibility (or conflict) degrades the quality of a trail experience. Incompatibility can occur among a variety of users. For example:

- Snowmobilers using routes on the Okanogan National Forest have objected to operation of 3-wheeled vehicles on groomed snow trails, citing damage to trail surfaces (Okanogan National Forest, 1989).
- Mountain bicycle use on state park horse trails has resulted in injury accidents (State Parks and Recreation Commission, 1985).
- Operators of four-wheel drive vehicles have expressed safety concerns about meeting off-road motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles, especially if the drivers encountered are juveniles (Olympic National Forest, 1989).
- The hiking community has objected to the presence of motorcycles on backcountry trails; at the same time, motorcyclists have complained about the "low tolerance" of hikers for motorized uses (Wenatchee National Forest, 1990). DNR recently noted that its Tahuya Multiple-use Area on the Kitsap Peninsula is dominated by motorized use as "hikers tend to stay away from [the] site due to [its] history of motorized use" (DNR, 1989). Some equestrians have also expressed hesitation to use the Tahuya because of high levels of off-road vehicle use (Larabee, 1990). In turn, motorcyclists have attributed lost opportunities to the low tolerances of others.

Compatibility is an important issue. Without compatibility there is the constant threat of the loss of a recreational opportunity for one or more user groups.

Trail etiquette is essential in all settings. In urban settings, for example, etiquette may be mandatory to allow a diversity of uses, mechanized and non-mechanized, on the same trail. Users of these shared trails must be willing to accept responsibility for "policing" themselves. Etiquette alone, however, cannot ensure compatibility.

The key to maximizing compatibility is management in cooperation and consultation with user groups. By doing so, the manager can become familiar with the needs, expectations, and limitations of the different types of travel. This coupled with the manager's knowledge of the constraints of the trail facility and of the trail's environment will allow decisions to be made on a sound basis.

Managers must also consider the origin/destination patterns of trail users on a statewide basis. Since these users leave the population centers to use trails, managers must be willing to go to population centers to gather data and ideas. A trail proposal in the Okanogan National Forest will be as important to ORVers and hikers in Everett as in Omak.

Users have the responsibility of communicating their needs to managers. As part of the communication process, it is important that users be informed about the managers they work with. Informed user comment will temper demands,

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make proposals more realistic, and contribute to a more productive relationship.

Many plans and studies are in place to help guide managers and users toward maximizing compatibility. One such plan is the 1987 *Washington State Off-Road Vehicle Plan* (IAC). In this plan's review of needs by planning district, several observations were made on actions that have reduced motorized/nonmotorized conflict. The Colville National Forest added to its inventory of motorized trails without adding "many of the problems that often accompany new or increased levels of use on older, long established multiple-use trails. This results from the fact that they were *planned and built for motorized use*" [emphasis added].

The 1987 *Plan* also cites separation of uses and parallel trails. Obviously, if there is a single use of each trail, conflict would not be a problem. Realistically, as discussed under "multiple use," it is not usually feasible to provide separate facilities for every type of use or mode of travel.

Manager/user cooperation in trail decisions have proven to be successful in a number of instances. Notable examples include:

- The State Parks and Recreation Commission's Sno-Park and Snowmobile Advisory Committees both allow for user representation, balancing the needs of snowmobilers and skiers. In the field, uses have been separated, although there will be shared use of parking areas.
- The Department of Natural Resources has assembled a Recreation Advisory Committee composed of motorized and nonmotorized users. The Committee has been a forum for users to express themselves and understand the point of view of others. Current planning direction is to zone or separate incompatible types of trail use while minimizing user displacement.
- The Gifford Pinchot National Forest formed a Trails Task Force, active in 1987-88, to provide direct input on management of trails Forest-wide. Broad consensus was achieved on enough issues to give the Forest confidence to move forward in several areas, enhancing opportunities for user groups and strengthening the ability of trails to compete for limited resources Forest-wide.
- The Olympic National Forest has studied the need for additional off-road vehicle recreation facilities peninsula-wide. A citizen advisory committee was formed to provide input. Nonmotorized users including hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists enjoyed equal representation with ORV users, and all agreed to the need for providing quality recreation for the ORV community.

These successes prove the value of user groups and trail managers working together to resolve conflict and increase compatibility. (Also see related discussion under "Multiple-Use Trails.")

Action 22.

Problem: Managers and user groups alike make assumptions about compatibility that are not always accurate, leading to dissatisfaction and conflict. Multiple-use trail management can overlook the importance of identifying compatible uses.

Solution A: Managers should consult with user groups in key trail use decisions.

Participants: Managing agencies, user groups, IAC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Form volunteer citizen advisory committees to promote user compatibility. Advisory committees should be formed for each national forest, DNR, and other agencies as appropriate.

Task 1: USFS Region 6 will encourage forests and districts to work with and form partnerships with user groups to ensure user input is reflected in trail objectives.

Task 2: IAC will include a chapter on how to form and work with volunteer advisory committees in the Trail Technical Assistance Manual by the end of 1991.

Task 3: DNR will publish a description of its Recreation Advisory Committee structure and

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function for distribution to agencies as needed by the end of 1991.

Solution B: Provide on-the-ground management presence during peak use times such as weekends.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: DNR, USFS, BLM).

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Use different modes of travel as allowed by the trail goal to gain perspective on difference user experiences. Observe and evaluate interactions of different user groups.

Task 1: NOVA funds will be available for education-enforcement projects emphasizing field work during peak use periods.

Task 2: USFS Region 6 will encourage forests and districts to continue to use volunteer and seasonal help in trail planning, construction, and reconstruction, and maintenance, and as hosts or contact people at trailheads and on trails.

Solution C: Experience different modes of trail use to understand points of view so as to be able to work together to achieve the goals and objectives of this *Plan*.

Participants: User groups (such as: Pacific Northwest Four-Wheel Drive Association, Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club, Mountaineers, Backcountry Horsemen), IAC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: Interactive workshops, on-the-ground experiences including travel by different modes on different trails. ORVers should hike ORV trails; hikers should take part in 4-wheel drive meetings; bicyclists need to share their sport with others.

Task. USFS will work with American Hiking Society or similar trail user group to sponsor in 1992 or 1993 an integrated workshop for trail managers and users.

Action 23.

Problem: Management often fails to effectively seek out and address concerns of major interests.

Solution: Projects must be viewed from a regional or state perspective, recognizing origin and destination patterns of recreationists.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: DNR, BLM, USFS), user groups (such as: Mountaineers, Northwest Motorcycle Association), conservation groups, IAC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1995.

Strategies: More broadly address notices for public comment utilizing a variety of media. Contact user group newsletter editors, outdoor editors, and the State Trails Advisory Committee. Keep updated club/organization mailing list. Seek out regional and state perspective on projects.

Task 1: IAC will compile and regularly update a mailing list of individuals, clubs, and organizations interested in trails by the end of 1991.

Utility Corridors

Utility corridors sometimes offer the opportunity to create recreational trail routes. Utility corridors are especially attractive in areas that are heavily developed or are under development, where locating a trail right-of-way might otherwise be impossible.

An excellent example of a trail doubling as a utility corridor is the rail-trail route proposed for Burlington Northern's corridor from Snoqualmie Pass west into King County. On this route, American Telegraph and Telephone was willing to help acquire the right-of-way for public ownership in exchange for use of the right to lay a fiber optic cable. AT&T's involvement included funds for acquisition of the land and actual trail surface construction after cable placement.

In a more urban setting, King County had success in locating a portion of the Green River Trail along a corridor needed by Metro for its Renton effluent sewage line. The County "piggy-backed" portions of trail onto this project.

Canals and dikes make excellent corridors for paths and trails in rural settings. Horseback riders and others in populated areas find routes under power lines; however, the use of power line

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rights-of-way for trails is not encouraged because of possible adverse health effects.

These rights-of-way are not usually owned by the utility itself. Easements over public and private lands are usually required. For the trail user, this means that at least two levels of management must be considered if a trail is proposed along a utility corridor: one, the utility and two, the landowner.

Action 24.

Problem: Recreation managers and advocates are often unaware of opportunities presented by utility rights-of-way.
Solution: Recreation managers need to contact utility managers to explore shared use of corridors.
Participants: Managing agencies (such as: State Parks, USFS, local agencies), user groups, IAC, private landowners.
Time Frame: 1991-1995.
Strategies: Managers need to examine examples of trails successfully sharing utility corridors. Monitor and review Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and other utility proposals and permit applications to seek provision of recreation facilities including trails in mitigation measures for hydroelectric projects.
Task 1: IAC will continue to monitor and review FERC programs and proposals, alerting local agencies when appropriate.
Task 2: IAC will bring examples of trail-utility corridors to regional workshops and conferences beginning in 1991.

Volunteers

Volunteers play an essential role in trail planning, development, and maintenance. From advisory committees to work parties, volunteers can significantly augment the resources of trail managing agencies.

Volunteers for Outdoor Washington, a nonprofit organization advocating the volunteer stewardship of Washington's outdoor recreation resources, reported in 1988 that 3,315 volunteers worked 106,043 hours on a variety of outdoor projects (Volunteers for Outdoor Washington, 1988). Individuals, clubs, organizations, and advocacy groups have achieved notable successes.

There are concerns and limitations associated with volunteers. Although tort claim insurance coverage is often available to protect volunteers, managers will worry about liability. What happens, for example, if a volunteer is injured while helping with trail maintenance and decides to sue the agency?

Managers also express concern that volunteers often lose interest quickly, appearing with great enthusiasm one day—yet gone the next. Many volunteers prefer high-visibility building or construction projects, when the most pressing management need can be for maintenance. Training can be a problem, with managers perceiving volunteers as unskilled and perhaps too much trouble to bring "up to speed." Some managers have difficulty accepting that volunteers can supervise themselves or perform complex tasks.

Volunteers, in turn, can find their best efforts thwarted by indifference on the part of managers. An all-too frequent complaint is from a potential volunteer who says he or she "never heard back" on an offer to help. Often, volunteers simply do not know how to volunteer—perhaps an agency has no mechanism for inviting, accepting, and processing volunteers, whether individuals or groups.

Action 25.

Problem 1: People often do not know whom to contact regarding volunteer opportunities.
Problem 2: Managers sometimes lack skills and expertise to take advantage of volunteer resources.
Solution: Improve mechanisms to promote volunteerism.
Participants: Managing agencies (such as: USFS, State Parks), Department of Community Development's Center for Voluntary Action; user groups (such as: Mountaineers and Pacific Northwest Four-Wheel Drive Association,

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Volunteers for Outdoor Washington), IAC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1993.

Strategies: Create a state-federal-private partnership to develop a clearinghouse for volunteer needs and opportunities. Seek agency commitment to expanded utilization of volunteers. Provide agency managers with training and education on effective volunteer programs.

Task 1: By the end of 1991, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington (VOW) will meet with the Center for Voluntary Action to begin discussion of a possible clearinghouse structure, encouraging the Center to actively promote and publicize its role in placing volunteers in trail jobs.

Task 2: By the end of 1991, VOW, with the assistance of IAC, will contact agencies concerning assistance with preparation of detailed annual agency plans for volunteer training and projects.

Water Trails

A water trail is a trail that provides a route or path to, on, or along a body of water (RCW 67.32.080, Washington State Recreation Trails System).

Water trails have a distinguished place in the rich history of Washington and the Pacific Northwest. From the journey of Lewis and Clark to the establishment of virtually every major city in the state, water offered early explorers and settlers some of the best available routes for exploration, trade, and settlement.

Today, trails to or along water—whether a river, stream, lake, or ocean—appear to be in great demand. A 1985 study indicated that 85 percent of the state's population visits a shore several times a year (Ecology, 1989).

The geography of Washington State includes eight thousand lakes, fifty thousand miles of streams, and three thousand miles of saltwater shoreline. While numerous agencies (local, state, and federal) provide parks and trails to and along water, only 17 percent of the state's marine shore is accessible to the public; excluding ocean beaches, the figure drops to 10 percent (Ecology, 1989.).

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition stated in its 1989 report:

> "Loss of public access to water is one of the most pressing outdoor recreation problems facing Washington residents in the near future. In fact, this was the most common single concern expressed to the Coalition during its statewide public meetings...."

Although water trails have been designated (for example, a portion of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, following the Snake and Columbia Rivers), there is no managed trail on fresh or salt water. Without managed water trails, one must self-guide a route by taking advantage of existing camp sites for rest stops or havens (campsites accessible only by water and sheltered from wind and waves).

Some bodies of water such as large lakes offer the opportunity to create a self-guided route—Lake Chelan and Ross Lake, both centerpieces of national recreation areas, are examples. For the most part, however, water-accessible camps and havens for nonmotorized water trails are lacking at appropriately spaced distances throughout the state. Nonmotorized boat travel on salt water routes can be especially difficult and dangerous without havens.

An initial inventory and assessment of "River Recreation in Washington" was completed in 1986 by the National Park Service, in connection with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Pacific Northwest Rivers Study. Although significant recreation data were gathered, no designated water trails resulted from the project.

Action 26.

Problem: The supply of public access trails to water does not meet demand.

Solution: Acquire additional access sites on which to develop trails.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: DNR, State Parks), user groups (such as: Washington

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Water Trails, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington), IAC, STAC, private landowners, conservation groups.

Time Frame: 1991-1995

Strategies: Involve user groups to identify sites. Utilize existing fund sources for acquisition and development, including: 306A grant program (Ecology), Aquatic Land Enhancement Account (DNR), NOVA or other grant funds (IAC), Land and Water Conservation Funds (IAC, federal agencies), WSDOT funding and rights-of-way for access sites along highways and freeways where safety and traffic flow will not be compromised.

Task 1: IAC will develop a map of existing trails to water including lakes, streams, rivers, and ocean by the end of 1992.

Task 2: IAC funding will continue to give priority to projects enhancing water access.

Task 3: Ecology will coordinate efforts to increase federal Costal Zone Management Act funds for the 306A program.

Task 4: New USFS trails will emphasize water access via trail whenever possible in Forest Plan implementation.

Action 27.

Problem: There are no managed trails on water, and self-guided routes lack facilities including havens.

Solution: Identify and publicize water trails.

Participants: Managing agencies (such as: DNR, State Parks), user groups (such as: Washington Water Trails, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington), conservation groups, IAC, STAC.

Time Frame: 1991-1992.

Strategies: Encourage proposals from user groups and agencies. Work with the FERC process to ensure consideration of water trails.

Task 1: IAC will appoint a water trails representative to STAC by the end of 1991.

Task 2: STAC and user groups will cooperate to review "River Recreation in Washington" (NPS, 1986) for potential water trails by the end of 1991.

Task 3: A list of proposed water trails on both fresh and salt water will be presented to agencies by STAC and user groups in 1992.

Task 4: IAC, STAC, and user groups will investigate potential funding sources for non-motorized boating facilities and water trail management and issue a report by the end of 1993.

Task 5: A statewide lead agency for trails on fresh and salt water will be identified by 1994.

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Chapter Five

Actions Summary

Actions Matrix

Action is needed if trails are to be protected from the threats facing them, and if trail advocates are to compete successfully in securing necessary resources including adequate funding.

The potential of trails in our state is reflected in part in Map 2 (inside back cover), which depicts corridors of statewide significance for future trail development. The 27 Actions which evolved from the trail planning process will assist in reaching this potential. While not a panacea, they represent an agenda which will help maintain and enhance the quality of a statewide system of trails for current and future generations.

Some Actions involve technical assistance, education, and policy. All require partnership between interest groups and agencies.

The Actions found throughout the preceding chapter have been designed to focus attention, answer fundamental questions, and keep objectives realistic and specific. They convey important information on how to meet the challenges confronting trail-based recreation.

The language in each of these Actions has been reviewed by representatives of listed participants. In every case, a special effort has been made to ensure that solutions and strategies are supported by, and consistent with, the mission of each participant.

The matrix on the pages which follow summarizes what the *Washington State Trails Plan* is all about—actions and participants. Use the matrix to relate participant roles to agreed upon actions, and to find the page in this *Plan* that describes solutions, strategies, and tasks.

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ACTIONS: / PARTICIPANTS:	(1) Incorporate trails into transportation plans (page 24)	(2) Plan for access via trail modes (page 24)	(3) Publicize less crowded trails (page 25)	(4) Provide more trail opportunities in populated areas (page 26)	(5) Retain semi-primitive settings with no-net-loss (page 27)	(6) Expand the Trail Information System (TRIS) (page 28)	(7) Consult with user groups to ensure accurate trail information (page 28)
Local Agencies							
Cities/Counties/Districts/Tribes	■	■	■	■			■
State Agencies							
IAC	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
State Parks		■	■	■		■	■
Natural Resources			■	■		■	■
Wildlife			■				■
Fisheries							■
Ecology							
Transportation	■	■		■			■
Federal Agencies							
National Park Service	■	■	■	■		■	■
Forest Service	■		■		■	■	■
Bureau of Land Mgmt.			■				■
Fish & Wildlife Service			■				■
Army Corps of Engineers							
Associations							
Private Landowners							
Cities/Counties/Ports							
WA Recreation & Park							
Other Associations							
Recreation & Conservation Groups							
WA Wildlife & Rec. Coalition			■				
Recreation User Groups	■		■	■	■	■	■
Conservation Groups					■		
TPL/Land Trusts				■			
Others							
Development Interests							
STAC					■		■
State Legislature							
Governor's Office							
U.S. Congress							

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ACTIONS: / PARTICIPANTS:	(8) Educate budget makers about trail needs (page 33)	(9) Establish user group/ manager budget process (page 33)	(10) Interconnect local trail projects (page 34)	(11) Coordinate trail planning and information sharing (page 34)	(12) Reduce maintenance backlog in next five years (page 35)	(13) Recognize trails in integrated resource management (page 37)	(14) Make informal trails regular system trails (page 37)
Local Agencies							
Cities/Counties/Districts/Tribes		■	■	■			■
State Agencies							
IAC		■	■	■	■	■	
State Parks		■	■	■	■		
Natural Resources		■		■	■	■	
Wildlife		■			■	■	
Fisheries		■			■	■	
Ecology					■	■	
Transportation		■			■		
Federal Agencies							
National Park Service		■	■	■	■	■	
Forest Service		■		■	■	■	
Bureau of Land Mgmt.		■			■	■	
Fish & Wildlife Service		■			■	■	
Army Corps of Engineers		■				■	
Associations							
Private Landowners							
Cities/Counties/Ports							
WA Recreation & Park		■					
Other Associations							
Recreation & Conservation Groups							
WA Wildlife & Rec. Coalition	■	■					
Recreation User Groups	■	■	■	■		■	■
Conservation Groups	■	■				■	
TPL/Land Trusts							
Others							
Development Interests							■
STAC	■	■	■	■		■	
State Legislature	■						
Governor's Office	■						
U.S. Congress	■						

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ACTIONS: / PARTICIPANTS:	(15) Publicize trail objectives and maintenance standards (page 38)	(16) Provide new or substitute trails for new uses (page 38)	(17) Encourage cooperation between trail managers and nat. resource managers (page 39)	(18) Enhance communication with private landowners (page 40)	(19) Notify park & recreation agencies of Exempt Abandonment filings (page 41)	(20) Establish a lead agency for rail/trail projects (page 41)	(21) Develop state policy and plan for rail-trails (page 42)
Local Agencies							
Cities/Counties/Districts/Tribes	■	■	■	■	■		■
State Agencies							
IAC	■			■	■		■
State Parks	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Natural Resources	■	■	■	■	■		■
Wildlife	■	■	■	■	■		
Fisheries	■	■	■	■			
Ecology	■	■	■	■			
Transportation	■	■	■	■	■		■
Federal Agencies							
National Park Service	■	■	■	■			
Forest Service	■	■	■	■			
Bureau of Land Mgmt.	■	■	■	■			
Fish & Wildlife Service	■	■	■	■			
Army Corps of Engineers	■	■					
Associations							
Private Landowners				■			■
Cities/Counties/Ports							■
WA Recreation & Park							
Other Associations					■		
Recreation & Conservation Groups							
WA Wildlife & Rec. Coalition							■
Recreation User Groups			■	■	■		■
Conservation Groups			■				■
TPL/Land Trusts							
Others							
Development Interests				■			■
STAC							■
State Legislature							
Governor's Office							
U.S. Congress							

ACTIONS: / PARTICIPANTS:	(22) Identify compatible trail uses (page 43)	(23) Include regional and state perspectives in trail management (page 44)	(24) Contact utility managers to explore shared use of corridors (page 45)	(25) Improve mechanisms to promote volunteerism (page 45)	(26) Acquire additional water access sites (page 46)	(27) Identify and publicize water trails (page 46)
Local Agencies						
Cities/Counties/Districts/Tribes	■	■	■		■	■
State Agencies						
IAC	■	■	■	■	■	■
State Parks	■	■	■	■	■	■
Natural Resources	■	■	■	■	■	■
Wildlife	■	■	■	■	■	■
Fisheries	■	■	■	■	■	■
Ecology	■	■	■	■	■	■
Transportation	■	■	■	■	■	■
Federal Agencies						
National Park Service	■	■	■	■	■	■
Forest Service	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bureau of Land Mgmt.	■	■	■	■	■	■
Fish & Wildlife Service	■	■	■	■	■	■
Army Corps of Engineers			■		■	■
Associations						
Private Landowners			■		■	
Cities/Counties/Ports						
WA Recreation & Park						
Other Associations						
Recreation & Conservation Groups						
WA Wildlife & Rec. Coalition		■			■	■
Recreation User Groups	■	■	■	■	■	■
Conservation Groups		■		■	■	■
TPL/Land Trusts					■	
Others						
Development Interests						
STAC	■	■		■	■	■
State Legislature					■	
Governor's Office						
U.S. Congress						

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Action Priorities by Agency

To further clarify participant roles, this section conveys priorities for specific agencies and organizations. A given agency or organization also may be associated with actions other than the priorities shown here.

USDA Forest Service

1. Emphasize trail construction to serve population centers and to link to other trail systems (Findings 1-3, Actions 3 and 5).
2. Retain natural settings, especially semi-primitive, to maximize trail miles in these settings (Finding 8, Actions 5 and 17).
3. Utilize the Recreation Strategy to strengthen the position of recreation and trails in integrated management decisions (Finding 6, Action 13).
4. Take the lead in expanding the Trail Information System (TRIS) (Finding 13, Action 6).
5. Reduce maintenance backlog (Finding 9, Action 12).
6. Establish trail user or citizen advisory groups for each National Forest (Findings 4 and 5, Actions 15, 16, and 22).
7. Adopt information and sign plans to inform users of trail objectives (Finding 13, Action 15).

USDI National Park Service

1. Develop well-planned trails to enhance and reinforce the user's experience (Finding 14).
2. Utilize the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program to assist local communities and agencies (Findings 1 and 2, Actions 4, 10, and 11).
3. Reduce maintenance backlog (Finding 9, Action 12).
4. Adequately mark trails to warn users of limitations and restrictions and to guide users along the trail (Finding 13, Actions 7 and 15).
5. Maximize cooperative planning to facilitate trail use and access to Parks (Finding 1, Action 11).

USDI Bureau of Land Management/ Fish and Wildlife Service

1. Emphasize trail construction to serve population centers and to link to other trail systems (Findings 1-3, Actions 3 and 5).
2. Reduce maintenance backlogs (Finding 9, Action 12).
3. Adopt information and sign plans to inform users of trail objectives (Finding 13, Action 15).

Department of Natural Resources

1. Emphasize trail construction to serve population centers and to link to other trail systems (Findings 1-3, Actions 3 and 5).
2. Utilize partnerships to strengthen the position of trails in resource management decisions (Finding 6, Action 13).
3. Reduce maintenance backlogs (Finding 9, Action 12).
4. Adopt information and sign plans to inform users of trail objectives (Finding 13, Action 15).

State Parks and Recreation Commission

1. Provide technical assistance to communities and local agencies. Provide trail management or management assistance in areas where local government cannot fill the role (Findings 1-3, and 5, Actions 4, 10, and 11).
2. Take the lead for the State in railroad rights-of-way abandonment issues, convene a State Interagency Task Force to set State policy, and develop a State rail-trail plan (Finding 12, Actions 19-21).
3. Reduce maintenance backlogs (Finding 9, Action 12).
4. Take the lead for the State in trail projects, especially long-distance trails, that cross management and public/private boundaries (Findings 8 and 12, Actions 10 and 11).
5. Continue lead role in development and maintenance of winter recreation trails statewide (Findings 1-3, and 5).

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State Department of Transportation

1. Include trails as part of transportation policy and planning (Findings 1, 7, and 8, Actions 1 and 2).
2. Work on an Interagency Task Force on railroad abandonment issues to help develop State policy and a rail-trail plan (Finding 12, Action 21).

Department of Wildlife

1. Continue to work with all agencies in coordination of wildlife issues related to trails (Finding 14, Actions 13 and 17).
2. Consider additional trail miles on DOW lands where compatible with its objectives for wildlife management and habitat maintenance (Finding 3, Actions 3, 4, and 17).

Department of Ecology

1. Continue Coastal Zone Management 306A grant program, with emphasis on Finding 8 and Actions 26 and 27.

Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation

1. Coordinate trail planning statewide and provide technical assistance to local agencies on trail projects, including development of the Local Agency Trail Technical Assistance Manual, trail workshops, and biennial trail conference (Findings 1, 7, and 8, Actions 1, 2, 4, 10, and 11).
2. Coordinate STAC to enhance user-manager communication (Finding 5, Action 9).

Local Agencies

1. Emphasize trail construction with connections to city, county, and regional trail systems (Findings 1-3, and 8, Actions 1-4, 10, and 11).
2. Seek opportunities for trails in utility corridors (Finding 11, Action 24).
3. Incorporate trails as facilities in transportation planning, as well as park and recreation planning (Finding 7, Actions 1, 2, and 14).

State Trails Advisory Committee

1. Meet regularly to coordinate budget and information needs among managers and users (Finding 5, Action 9).
2. Provide advice and/or guidance on plans and proposals for trails, as well as the Findings, Recommendations, and Actions of this *Plan*.

User Groups and Trail Advocates

1. Educate/inform Congress and the State Legislature on trail issues and budget needs (Finding 5, Actions 8 and 9).
2. Help improve mechanisms to promote volunteerism (Finding 5, Action 25).
3. Work with agencies on task forces and advisory committees to provide advice and/or guidance on plans and proposals for trails, as well as the Findings, Recommendations, and Actions of this *Plan*.

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