

Appendix I

Comprehensive Parks Plan, 2014 – 2020

Benton County

Comprehensive Parks Plan

2014-2020

July 2014

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Introduction

In 2008, creation of the Benton County Comprehensive Parks Plan marked the first major comprehensive planning effort for the County's parks system in over twenty years. The standard in Washington State is for cities and counties to update their parks plans every *six years*, even though the planning horizon is twenty years. With this 2014 update to the Plan, Benton County is getting itself onto that regular revision schedule. The Plan gives guidance to Commissioners, the Park Board, staff, and park patrons as the system continues to develop. The Plan is the result of a rigorous public process, and Benton County thanks all of the participants who provided input and direction.

This Plan addresses both the conditions and needs of the existing parks, as well as future needs and desires expressed by the community that may involve the creation of new parks or development of new facilities within existing parks in coming years. The existing parks, of which there are nine, are referred-to administratively as "park units", and are loosely-organized in two general tiers: the "Tier One" parks are the larger, more developed, and more heavily used sites; the "Tier Two" parks are smaller facilities with less use and visibility. The tiers are described in more detail later in the document.

Conditions and management philosophy make the County's parks different from the more numerous and accessible "city parks" that most of the public sees more regularly. Benton County's parks tend to be larger, less-developed sites in more rural settings. Overall, the County's parks emphasize diffuse, passive recreational uses in "natural areas" such as horse riding and wildlife observation; as opposed to more traditional uses and facilities like playgrounds and sports fields that would be found in manicured municipal parks. In general, Benton County's parks offer a transition, contrast, and balance between intensely-developed and highly-managed city parks; and remote, undeveloped public lands such as those managed by the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management. The Plan discusses levels of service and types of parks in detail.

Finally, Benton County emphasizes teamwork and partnerships – themes that are reprised often in this document and that were a focus of the public process. The Park Board and staff have benefited from the numerous corporate, non-profit, and public sector partnerships that have been crucial to the development and management of the parks. Benton County will use this Comprehensive Parks Plan to continue to share its parks vision and partnership philosophy with the community.

Setting, Purpose, and Need

This 20-year Comprehensive Parks Plan is the guide for future decisions related to the Benton County parks system and park facilities. The Benton County Park Board uses the Plan to advise the County Commissioners on matters of policy, programs, and projects for the development and operation of Benton County's park system. The Plan must be updated at least every six years to remain eligible for Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grant funding. This Parks Plan is also prepared in accordance with requirements specified in RCW 36.70A (Growth Management Act) after being adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Benton County began developing a park system in the early 1960s. Today, the County manages nine park properties, with five owned outright, two leased from the US Army Corps of Engineers, and one that is partially owned by the County and partially leased from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Benton County park property totals over 2,300 acres with river frontage at four of the parks and significant public land adjoining some of the properties. The parks range in size from the very small (less than one acre) to the significantly larger (over 500 acres). The park facilities have

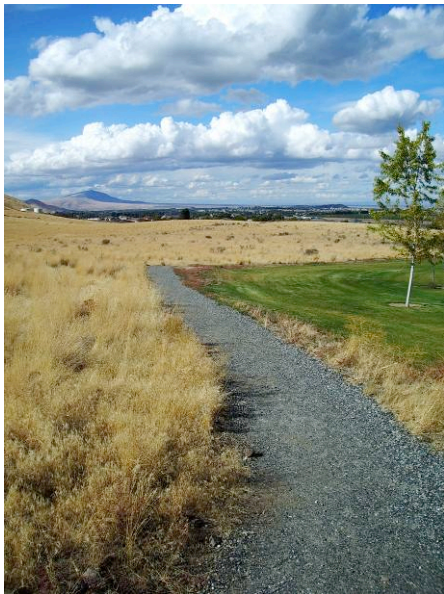


Figure 2 - The shared trail between a city park and a county park at Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve shows the potential collaboration between the various agencies and user groups. Trails at the Preserve are built and maintained by the Friends of Badger Mountain.

many functions including lawn activities and picnicking, water and swimming, natural open space and habitat conservation, boat launches, a model airplane facility, an RV campground, an equestrian camp, developed shooting facility, and even a pioneer cemetery. Benton County subleases all or portions of two parks to non-profit entities.

Benton County has two full-time park rangers assigned year-round with one stationed at Two Rivers Park and one based at Horn Rapids Park. The park system is administered from the County Commissioners' Office by the Sustainable Development Coordinator in collaboration with the Benton County Park Board, whose volunteer members are appointed by the Commissioners. There are also a number of user groups who advocate for and volunteer at specific parks.

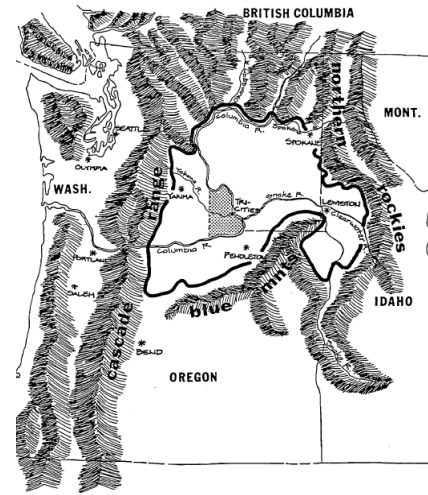


Figure 1 - Benton County is located in the center of the Columbia Basin

Benton County Public Lands

- County Boundaries
- US Bureau of Land Management
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- City Boundaries
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Dept. of Energy
- Highways
- State
- US Department of Energy Hanford Site

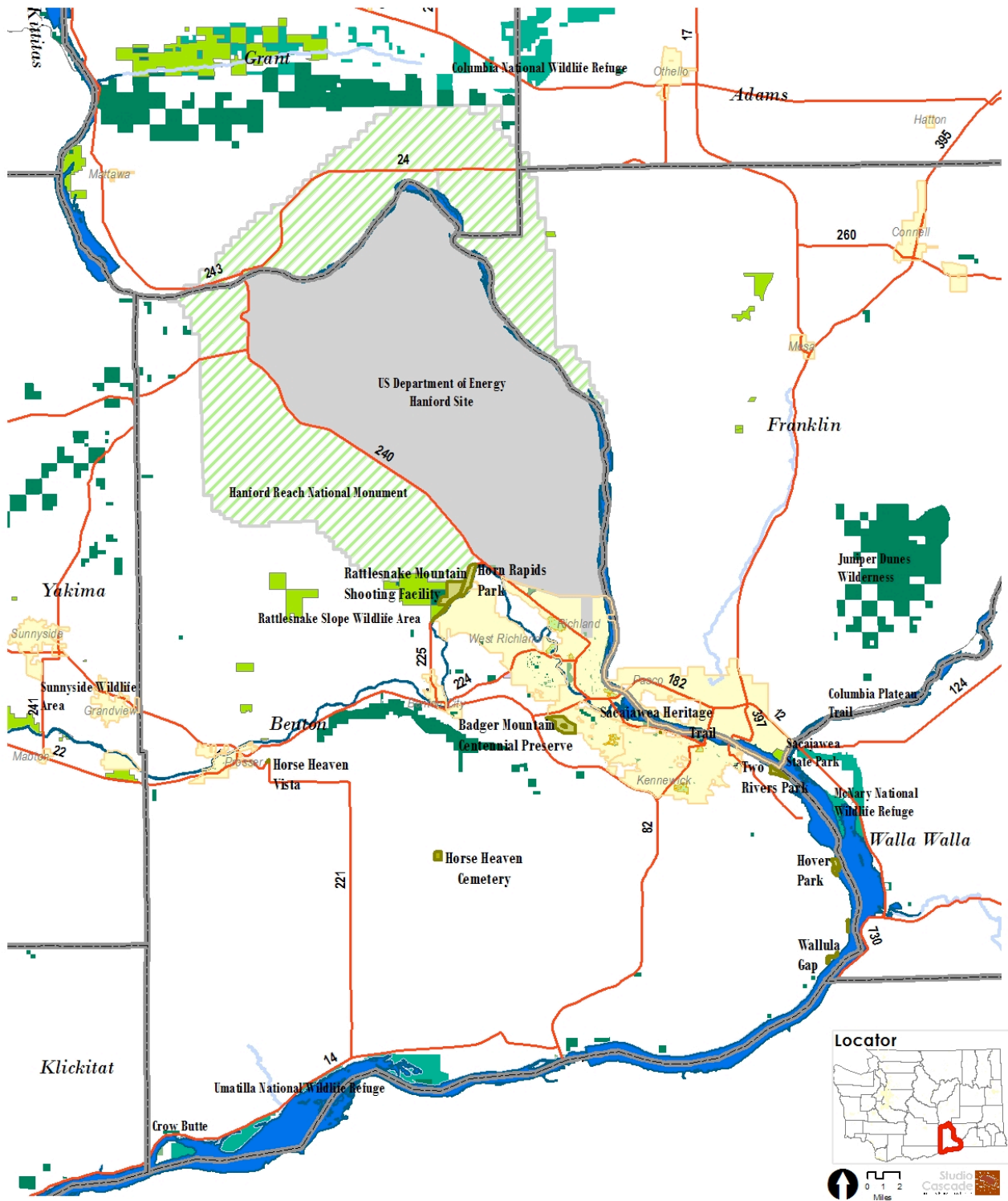


Figure 3 - The Benton County region offers several park and open space opportunities

Benton County's Parks

The current system includes nine sites as outlined in the following table and as depicted on the following map. Benton County manages a total of 2,314.5 acres of land.

Table 1 - Benton County Parks and Acreage

Site	Calculated Acres
Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve	627.1
Horn Rapids Park	564.5
Horse Heaven Cemetery	2.0
Horse Heaven Vista	6.3
Hover Park	175.0
Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility	740.0
Two Rivers Park	159.0
Vista Park	0.3
Wallula Gap Preserve	110.0
TOTALS	2,384.2

**Land was calculated using a Geographic Information System (GIS) and sometimes differs from historic acreage calculations*

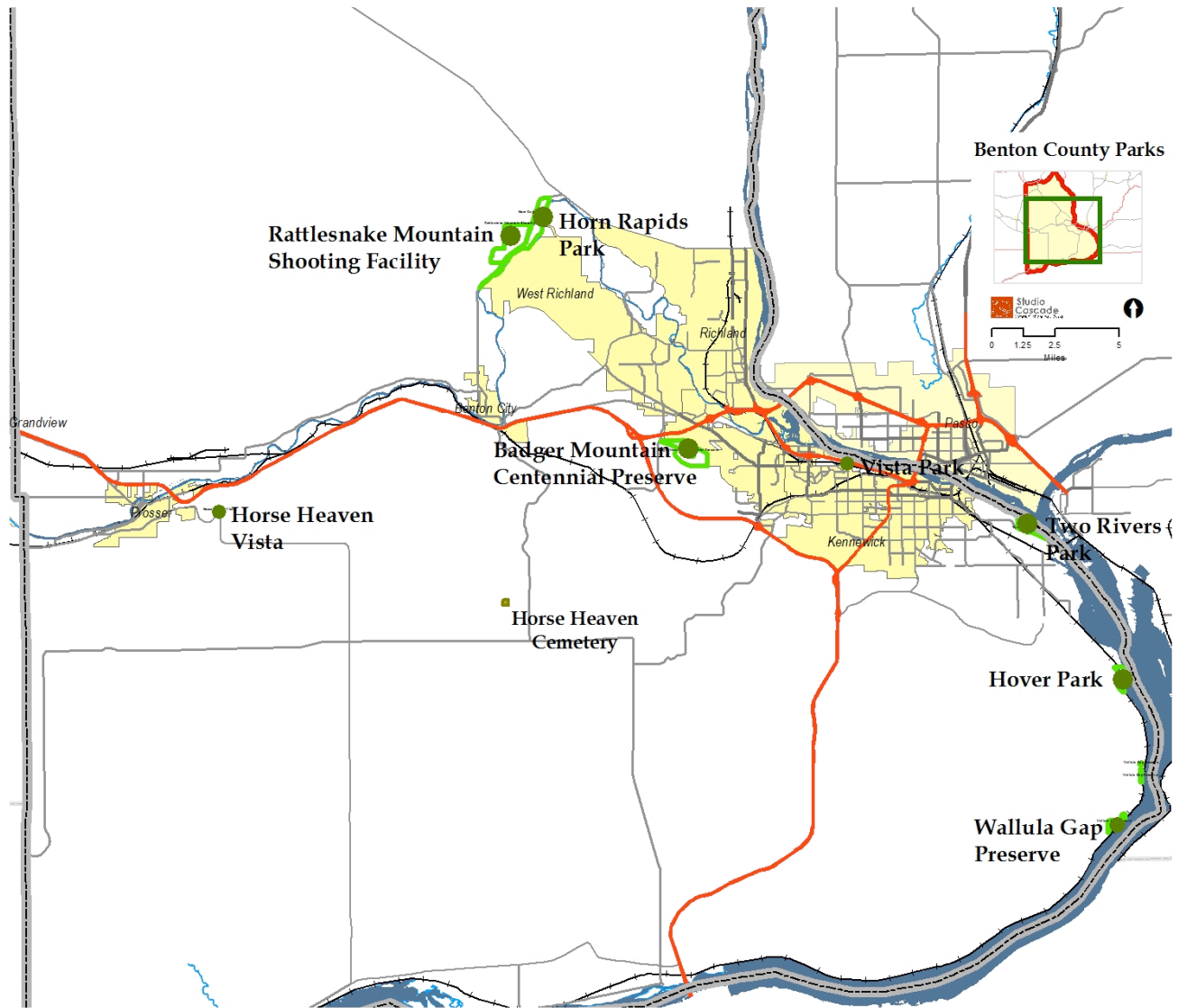


Figure 4 - Benton County park locations

Horse Heave Cemetery

The cemetery is the most recent addition to the County's parks portfolio, having been added in 2012. The two-acre site was developed south of Benton City in the Horse Heaven Hills as a private pioneer cemetery beginning in 1893. The last burials were in the 1940s, and Benton County took possession of the parcel through a property foreclosure in 1954. Recent improvements include a perimeter driveway and fence, and some sitting benches. Plans call for some interpretive signage in the future.



Figure 5 - The Shooting Facility offers target opportunities in multiple disciplines, with an emphasis on youth programs and hunter education (photo: uncredited)

Horse Heaven Vista

First developed in 1960 and substantially renovated in 2009, Horse Heaven Vista sits above Prosser along State Route 221 on the crest of the Horse Heaven Hills overlooking the Lower Yakima Valley. The site offers a sheltered view point, paved parking area, restrooms, and historical signage.

Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility

Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility (RMSF) is the County's largest park unit at about 740 acres. A portion of the property is owned by the State of Washington and used through an agreement with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The remainder of the property was formerly leased from the Bureau of Land Management but was purchased by the County in 20XX. Benton County subleases the entire property to its concessionaire -- the Tri-Cities Shooting Association (TCSA) -- who oversees maintenance, administration, and operations of the facility. TCSA is responsible for all capital improvements, though the County occasionally assists financially with certain projects at the discretion of the Park Board. The RMSF is large enough to contain several separate shooting ranges designed and managed for different disciplines. The facility is open to the public several days per week.



Figure 6 - Horn Rapids Park offers five miles of shoreline and a hard-ramped boat launch for family fishing access to the Yakima River (photo: uncredited)

Horn Rapids Park

Horn Rapids has been owned by Benton County since 1964 and is a major natural area of the park system with about 565 acres of riparian areas and upland shrub-steppe. Previous to the County's acquisition of the park; the site was a fording location across the Yakima River for wildlife and Native Americans traveling along Rattlesnake Ridge, a campsite for the pioneering Longmire Wagon Train, an internment camp for conscientious objectors during

World War II, and a Hanford Site contractor camp and field office. Named for the shallow rapids that are now the site of Wanawish Dam, the park is located six miles north of Benton City and has over five miles of Yakima River along one side and the public lands of the Hanford Reach National Monument, Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility, and Rattlesnake Slope Wildlife Area on the other. The park has an improved campground with full recreational vehicle hookups, showers, restrooms, a horse camp, a model airplane facility, a boat launch, and several miles of multi-use trails. Horn Rapids Park is used as an outdoor educational center by areas schools and scouting troops; and has evolved into a bit of an outdoor events center.

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve has 627 acres of mostly-intact shrub-steppe landscape located on the upper ridges and slopes of Badger Mountain in south Richland. The preserve was purchased in 2005 through a partnership using County, private, and state funds with goals to preserve views, protect upland shrub-steppe habitat, and provide for hiking, biking, and horse riding opportunities. The Preserve was later expanded the addition of three more parcels on the south face of the mountain. A series of multi-use trails lace the Preserve, mostly leading to the summit where sweeping 360-degree views of the Columbia Basin are the reward. The park is designated as a natural preserve, with plans to keep it as public undeveloped open space for passive recreational use, habitat preservation, and for outdoor education and interpretive opportunities. Per Resolution 05-27 that created the Preserve in 2005, the acreage is also “banked” by Benton County for possible use as mitigation for shrub-steppe disturbances that may occur elsewhere in the County.



Figure 7 - Badger Mountain is not only a popular hiking, biking, and horse riding destination; it is also the scenic backdrop for the Tri-Cities

Vista Park

Vista Park is located in the Tri-City Heights neighborhood of northwest Kennewick. It is a half-acre neighborhood park with picnic tables and swing sets that was originally developed by the local Vista Junior Women’s Club in 1970. County staff maintains the park including general repair of play equipment, irrigation, and general care of the park. It is the only small park owned by the County in an urban environment.

Two Rivers Park

Two Rivers Park is leased from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is located about two miles east of Kennewick near the community of Finley. The developed portion of the park is centered around two large sheltered lagoons on the west end, while the east end of the park is a 100-acre Natural Area of beaver ponds, riparian woodlands, and marshes. Two Rivers is home to the last downstream developed boat launch in the Tri-Cities which is used heavily throughout the year. The developed portion of the park features a playground, extensive picnicking areas, and a disc golf course that was added in 2009.

Hover Park

Hover Park is located about six miles downstream of Two Rivers Park on the Columbia River, and is also a Corps of Engineers property operated by Benton County under the same lease as Two Rivers. The first wagon train into the area, the Longmire Party, crossed the Columbia River on rafts in 1853 near where the park is located today. The first major ferry crossing from Wallula was also in the vicinity, and the original Hover town site -- established in 1898 -- is part of the park.

The undeveloped and open park has good potential for future use with a sandy beach area in a protected lagoon and shoreline with dense stands of trees. The open areas are crisscrossed with dirt roads and active railroad tracks bisect the property, which creates somewhat of an access and development challenge.



Figure 8 - With three lagoons sheltered from the main channel of the Columbia River, Two Rivers Park is an ideal setting for passive water activities such as swimming, fishing, and kayaking (photo: AJ Fyall)



Figure 9 - Hover Park has management issues connected to access, dumping, and vandalism; but also has many scenic, habitat, and recreation opportunities (photo: AJ Fyall)

Wallula Gap Preserve

Wallula Gap Preserve is located at the eastern end of Benton County, where the Columbia River splits Horse Heaven Hills. The park unit consists of three disconnected parcels that are approximately 110 acres which have remained unchanged since the properties were deeded over to the county in 1984 by the U.S. Department of the Interior. The parcels are remote and generally inaccessible, with one parcel not much more than the sheer basalt cliffs of Wallula Gap itself. Current legal access to the property is by water only, although the railroad corridor limits that access. In order to access the property by land an easement would have to cross about 5 miles of privately owned property.



Figure 10 - Unreachable by automobile, Wallula Gap Preserve is used mostly by birders and naturalists on foot or horseback (photo: B Lake)

The properties are managed as part of the National Natural Landmarks program of the National Park Service; and Benton County provides regular reports to the Park Service on the status and condition of the site.

Planning Area History

Lewis and Clark landed on Blalock Island near Richland during their expedition on the Columbia River in 1805. That expedition opened the region to more exploration, and fur trading was established between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Native American tribes of the area. This temporary settlement grew when the Northern Pacific Railroad started construction of its main line up the Yakima Valley in 1883. Benton County and the current county boundaries were created in 1905 from the eastern portions of Yakima and Klickitat Counties with Prosser designated as the county seat.

As is the case with much of Eastern Washington, agriculture is at the core of Benton County's social and economic history since European settlement. The climate of the region, combined with the ability to add water mostly when and where the farmer's will wants it, are key to Eastern Washington's place among the elite agricultural areas of North America. Benton County showcases a balance of dryland and irrigated farming, with wheat and ranching dominating the higher elevation areas above water conveyance infrastructure, with row crops, orchards, and vineyards prevalent in the irrigated areas.

The 1940s saw the most dramatic change to life in the Mid-Columbia region since settlement itself. As a part of the nation's World War II effort, the Hanford Site was developed across parts of four southeastern Washington counties, mostly in Benton County. Hanford Site defense-oriented missions, non-military research, and cleanup operations have fueled the Tri-Cities economy for over seventy years since the initial Manhattan Project. Hanford inexorably changed the physical, social, and economic landscape of the region.

The middle of the 20th Century was the halcyon era of dam-building throughout the American West. The completion of the John Day (1971) and McNary (1954) projects on the Columbia River impacted communities in Benton County in a number of ways, and in ways specific to the parks that the County would later manage and that this plan addresses. The pool behind McNary Dam creates the calmed, steady-elevation river level that characterizes Two Rivers and Hover Parks, and because of the dam projects, the Army Corps of Engineers expropriate properties along the rivers which later became the basis for these and other parks along the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

More recently, population growth and economic expansion have been the drivers that continue to reshape the character of the region. The 'critical mass' of the Tri-Cities metropolitan area is now such that it is able to support a diversifying spectrum of economic sectors and industries that were historically exclusively the province of larger metro areas. The Tri-Cities has become the second-largest retail hub in all of eastern Washington and Oregon behind Spokane, and has also become a more established retirement and tourism destination.

Geography and Climate

Benton County covers 1722 square miles along Washington's border with Oregon. The Columbia River defines the northern, eastern, and southern boundary; with the Yakima River bisecting the county from west to east. Rattlesnake Ridge separates the Pasco Basin and the Yakima River Valley running from the northwest to the southeast through the County to where it collides with the Horse Heaven Hills south of Finley. This ridge includes Rattlesnake, Red, Candy, and Badger Mountains. Rattlesnake Mountain is the highest point in the County (elevation of 3629 feet), and the lowest elevation (265 feet) is along the Columbia River near Plymouth.



Figure 11 - The Horse Heaven Hills plateau terminates dramatically near Hover Park and Wallula Gap Preserve

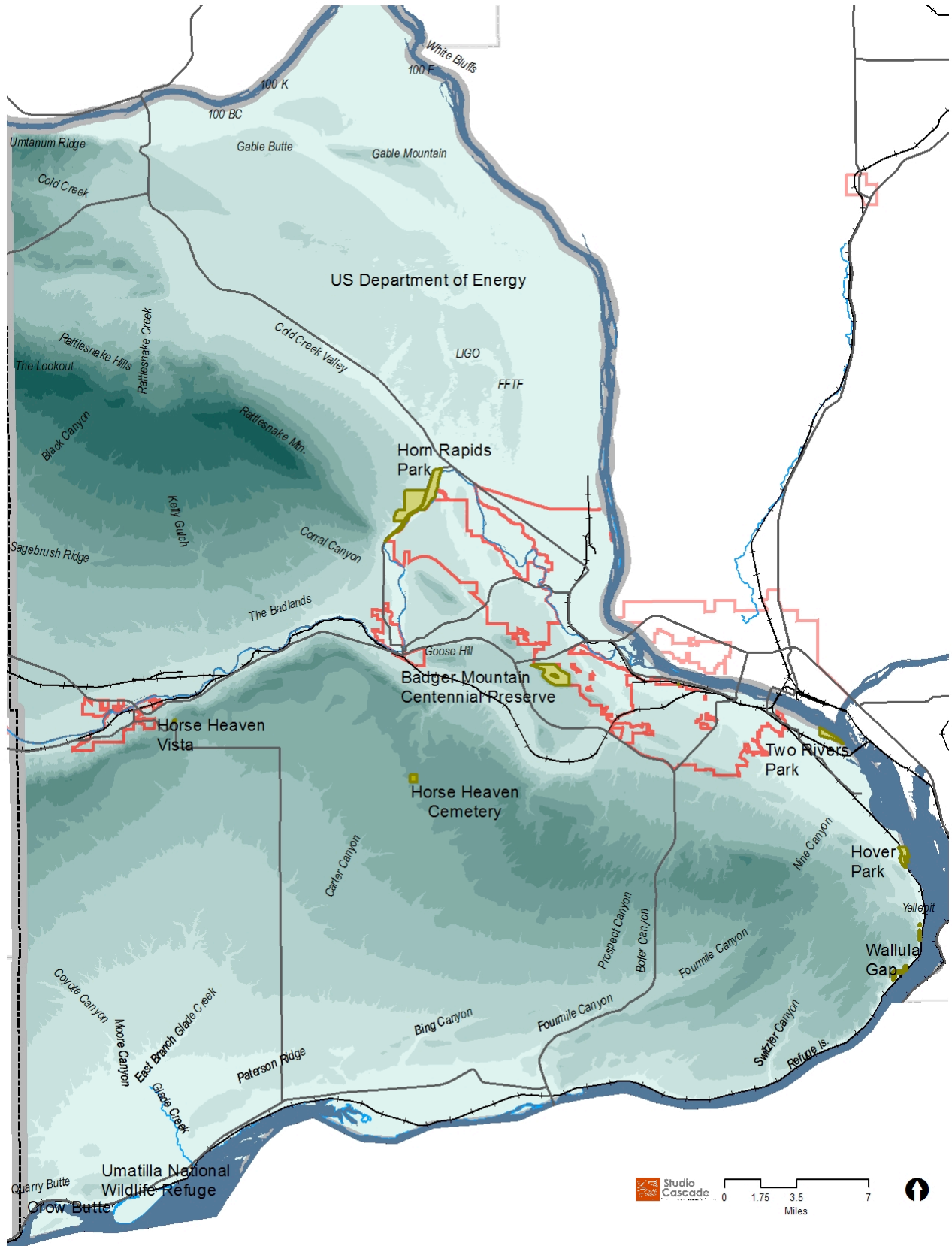


Figure 12 - There are a number of canyons and peaks in Benton County and a wide river valleys through the center of the County. The color bands in the above map depict elevation differences of about 270 feet for each gradient

The county has several basins and valleys with plateaus and ridges separating them. The Pasco Basin (mostly the Hanford Site) is fairly flat with some hills. The Yakima Valley slices through the County east-to-west, and is where most of the population, agriculture, and transportation infrastructure is located. The Horse Heaven Slope defines the plateau that makes up the southern half of the county. This monocline rises from the Columbia River along the southern edge of the County to the Horse Heaven Hills ridgeline running east to west. Jump Off Joe Butte to the south of Kennewick is the highest point on this ridge.

These mountains and ridges defined the path of the Ice Age Floods that scoured and defined the region from northern Idaho all the way to the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of the Columbia River. The valleys became inundated with only the tops of the buttes and ridges sticking out above the floods. Wallula Gap was a constriction point where the water backed up and slowly drained down-river. This back-up allowed large boulders and other debris called "erratics" to be rafted into the region and randomly scattered within the County as seen in many of the County's parks. This interesting geologic event is part of the proposed Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail which would be a network of marked touring routes across parts of Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon, with interpretive centers located across the region.

The region has a relatively arid climate because of the Cascade Range to the west and the rain shadow it creates with annual

precipitation between 5 and 15 inches depending on the area of the County. Daytime summer temperatures often exceed the 100 degrees but evenings cool down even during the hottest

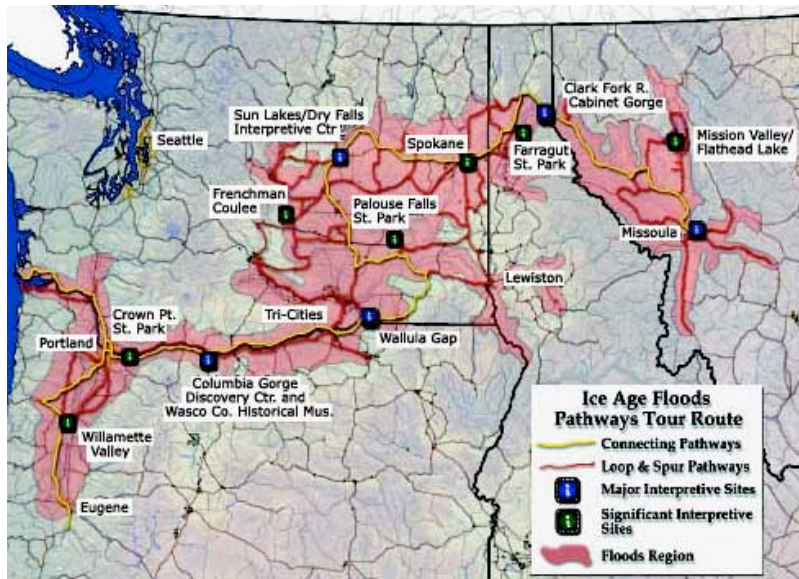


Figure 13 - The proposed Ice Age Flood touring route (from the National Park Service report and the Ice Age Flood Institute includes much of Benton County)

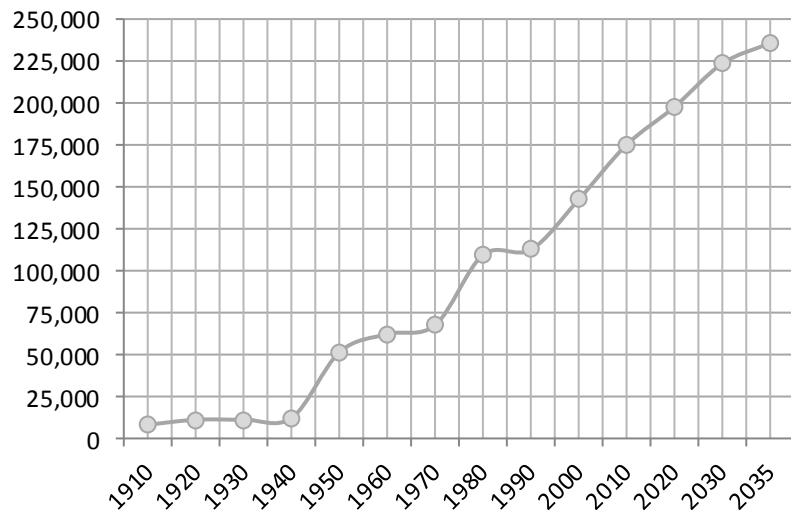


Figure 14 - OFM and the US Census Population Trends and Projections

months of July and August. Winter weather can be relatively mild although prolonged cold spells do occur. Daytime January temperatures average just above the freezing point.

Demographics and Economy

Benton County had a population of 183,400 according to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimates for 2013. This was an increase of about 8,000 people since the 2010 US Census. The population of the incorporated areas was 149,690 people while the population of unincorporated areas, including Paterson, Plymouth, and Whitstran, was 33,710. The projections for the County, as seen in figure 14, estimate a population of 236,007 in the County by 2035.

The primary economic engines in Benton County are Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Waste Management and Remediation, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade. Other industries include accommodation and food services and educational services. The world's largest irrigated experiment station, Washington State University Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center, is located in Benton County 10 miles north of Prosser. The wine industry is a rapidly growing industry with many established and new wineries opening in recent years. Columbia Crest, the state's largest winery, is located in Paterson, overlooking the Columbia River.

In 2010, there were 65,304 households in Benton County with an average household size of 2.66 people. Eighteen percent of the people living in Benton County were foreign born and 17.6 percent of people over 5 years old spoke a language other than English at home. Of those people who spoke other than English at home, 74 percent spoke Spanish and 46 percent reported that they did not speak English "very well".

Table 3 - Benton County's 2012 Demographic Summary American Community Survey

Demographic Estimates	Estimate	Percent	U.S.
Total population	175,177		
Male	87,486	49.9	49.2%
Female	87,691	50.1	50.8%
Median age (years)	35.6	(X)	37.2
Under 5 years	13,071	7.5	6.5%
18 years and over	127,513	72.8	76%
65 years and over	20,586	11.8	13%
One race	168,955	96.4	97.1%
White	144,418	82.4	72.4%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	32,696	18.7	16.3%

School enrollment in Benton County was 46,349 in 2012 including nursery schools and kindergarten to 12th grade. Kindergarten enrollment was 2,319, elementary school from 1st to 8th grade was 21,482, and high school 9th to 12th grade was 11,217. College or graduate schools had 8,880 students enrolled. Eleven percent of non-institutionalized people reported a disability,

with the breakdown varying by age (4 percent of people under 18 years old, 9 percent of people 18 to 64 years old, and 33.5 percent of those 65 and older reported a disability).

Table 4 - Benton County's 2012 Social Summary American Community Survey

Social Characteristics	Estimate	Percent	U.S.
Average household size	2.69	(X)	2.64
Average family size	3.25	(X)	3.25
Population 25 years and over	112,007		
High school graduate or higher	(X)	90.9	86.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	(X)	29.5	29.1%
Civilian veterans (civilian population 18 years and over)	14,811	11.1	8.9%
Disability status	19,721	10.90	12.2%
Foreign born	16,431	9	13%
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over)	32,303	19	21%

In 2012, Seventy-eight percent of Benton County workers over 16,drove to work alone, 13 percent carpooled, 1.3 percent took public transportation, 2.5 percent walked, 1.4 percent used other means and 3.7 percent worked at home. Commuters took an average of 21 minutes to get to work.

Table 5 - Benton County's 2010 Housing Summary American Community Survey

Housing Characteristics	Estimate	Percent	U.S.
Total housing units	68,896		
Occupied housing units	64,660	93.9	87.5%
Owner-occupied housing units	44,674	69.1	65.5%
Renter-occupied housing units	19,986	30.9	34.5%
Median value (dollars)	174,800	(X)	181,400

Also in 2012, the most common occupations included: Management, business, science, and art occupations, at 37.5 percent; Sales and office occupations at 22.2 percent; Service occupations at 16.4 percent; Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations at 12.8 percent ; and Production, transportation, and material moving occupations at 11.1 percent. 76.8 percent of the people employed were classified as private wage and salary workers; 17.7percent were government workers; and 5.4 percent were self-employed or non-incorporated business workers. The median income of households in Benton County was \$60,300. The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$1,385, non-mortgaged owners \$399, and renters \$779.

Table 6 - Benton County's 2012 Economic Summary American Community Survey

Economic Characteristics	Estimate	Percent	U.S.
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	86,457	64.8	64.7%
Mean travel time to work in minutes (workers 16 years and over)	21.3	(X)	25.4
Median household income (in 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars)	60,300	(X)	53,046
Median family income (in 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars)	74,791	(X)	73,034
Per capita income (in 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars)	28,171	(X)	28,051
Families below poverty level	(X)	9.4	10.9%
Individuals below poverty level	(X)	12.9	14.9%

Process

Framework

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) is a major source of park grant funding and provides specific planning guidelines for eligibility. RCO park planning requirements differ from the Growth Management Act (GMA) but are compatible with it. This document is meant to fulfill all state requirements for parks planning.

The guidelines as specified by the RCO ask for the inclusion of several elements within a comprehensive parks plan.

- Community **goals** are broad statements of intent based on an overall vision.
- **Policies** implement goals, directing day-to-day agency behavior in a manner designed to achieve specific and measurable actions.
- An **inventory** of the planning area and community reveals its identity and strengths within the context of the County's geography, along with the current parks and conditions including facilities, lands, programs, and the policy environment impacting parks and recreation activities.
- **Public involvement** provides opportunity for input in plan development and adoption.
- **Demand and need analysis** defines priorities for acquisition, development, preservation, enhancement, management and other park system management strategies based on public input and inventory.
- Projects for acquisition, development and renovation are the basis of the **Capital Improvement Program** including a projected timeline, budget and funding sources for each over at least a six-year period.
- The final step is **adoption**, which creates the final approval of the plan and process required to apply for grants.



Figure 15 - Benton County is following the state guidelines for a parks plan allowing for potential state grants and funding.

Participation

Citizen involvement for parks planning is the backbone of this planning process. Benton County appreciates the high level of public participation that was crucial to generating a great Comprehensive Parks Plan. In particular, our "Partners in Parks" were instrumental to this planning process, as they are to so many parks projects and functions. The Partners in Parks have chosen to take-on high levels of responsibility in the parks over the years, and they make-up the heart of our volunteer corps. The Partners include:

- Backcountry Horsemen of Washington - Purple Sage Riders
- Backcountry Horsemen of Washington - Rattlesnake Ridge Riders
- Friends of Badger Mountain
- Native Plant Society – Columbia Basin Chapter
- Tapteal Greenway Association
- Tri-Cities Miniature Aircraft Association
- Tri-Cities Shooting Association

In addition to our Partners and the public at large, several representatives from other organizations and agencies participated in the plan process, including:

Benton Conservation District	
Benton City Economic Development Council	Pacific NW Fjord Horse Group
Benton County Emergency Services	Paterson Schools
Benton County Fire District 1	
Benton Franklin Health District	Prosser Schools
Benton-Franklin Council of Governments	Richland Parks and Recreation
Chinook Cycling Club	Richland Rod and Gun Club
Desert Kayak and Canoe Club	Richland Schools
Finley Schools	Tri-City Bicycle Club
Inter-Mountain Alpine Club	US Bureau of Land Management
Kennewick Parks and Recreation	US Army Corps of Engineers
Kennewick Schools	West Richland City Council
Kiona-Benton City Schools	West Richland Parks Board

The outline for plan development has followed a meeting schedule designed for interaction, input, and participation. The events included:

Date	Event	Location
Nov 21, 2013	Scoping Workshop	Bethel Church, Richland
Dec 12, 2013	Trails Summit	Bethel Church, Richland
May 13, 2014	Policy & Projects Workshop	Justice Center, Kennewick
Jun 10, 2014	Draft Plan Meeting	Horn Rapids Park, Benton City
Jul 08, 2014	Plan Roll-Out	Two Rivers Park, Finley
Jul 22, 2014	Plan Adoption	Benton County Courthouse, Prosser

The public participation process included first, integrating the research and information from the 2007-2008 process, which updated the community research done previously in 1982 and 1994. Next, input was gathered at two public meetings facilitated by the consultant that focused on Badger Mountain, Candy Mountain, and connecting trails systems. At this point, the Park Board took over the process and gathered additional input from the public, Partners in Parks, and users to generate the draft CPP. After two rounds of review and revision, the 2014 Comprehensive Parks Plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners at the recommendation of the Park Board in July.



Figure 16 - Participants had many great ideas shared during workshops and on the website

Parks and Recreation Trends

There are trends that can be seen within Benton County. Several assessments were distributed to the population to get feedback over the years.

Questions focused on the existing system, potential demand, and funding. The full text of the 2007-2008 Benton County Parks Questionnaire and a report is included in the appendix of this parks plan along with information from the previous survey/questionnaires conducted in 1982 and 1994.

2007-2008 Parks Questionnaire Findings

Benton County administered an online questionnaire to county residents in 2007 as part of the public participation program to engage the public in the parks planning process. The questionnaire was intended to reach park users and residents to learn about what they liked about Benton County Parks, what needed to be improved, what activities are most popular, and an idea of what kinds of parks should be provided in the park system. The questionnaire was a tool for input for people who did not have time or inclination to come to scheduled public meetings. In this way, the questionnaire attracted people to the process that wouldn't normally participate but whose ideas helped shape policy development and project prioritizing.

The 2007-08 questionnaire was administered and processed by an online survey distributor. The program restricted completed questionnaires to one IP address, to reduce the chance of duplicate respondents. Essentially, each computer could only complete the questionnaire one

time. The questionnaire was available to the public between November 2007 and January 2008. Links to the questionnaire were posted on the project website and made available via email through the steering committee and various stakeholders. The website was also advertised in the Tri-City Herald, on local television news programs, and on talk radio.

The results were consistent with the responses from public meetings and other opportunities for public comment. Most respondents to the questionnaire were from Richland (47 percent) and Kennewick (25 percent) and were between 45 and 59 years of age. The majority of respondents indicate they are satisfied with the parks system. The questionnaire provides some key findings including:

- **Facility Demand** - Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve and Horn Rapids Park are used by a majority of respondents and Badger Mountain has the highest percentage of weekly users. Hiking and walking were the activities the majority of respondents participated in most frequently during an “in season” month. Bicycling and nature activities were also frequent activities for respondents. The responses show a high need for facilities to support these activities and continued maintenance of the most frequently used parks.
- **Project Types** - Trails topped the list of needed parks facilities. Trails were closely followed by preserves and waterfront parks. All facility types, except athletic play fields, showed high level of support. Coupled with the activities that people do most in their free time, these questions show an increased desire for trails, preserves, and waterfront parks. These projects will take precedence in future planning efforts.
- **Project Priorities** - Collaboration and safety received the highest ratings when respondents were asked to prioritize various attributes of parks projects. Future projects will reflect the desires of residents to have parks that are safe and that were designed, funded, built and maintained through a process of collaboration.
- **Funding** - An overwhelming 90 percent of respondents said they believed land should be set aside in new developments for future parks facilities. Respondents said they would like parks to be funded through various means including but not limited to development impact fees, by a bond issue, or through a property tax increase. Knowing how residents feel parks should be funded helps the parks department make better choices about how to pay for maintenance, acquisitions and improvements.

State and National Trends

There are emerging park and recreation trends at the state and national level which relate to Benton County. These trends should be considered as part of the assessment. The following trends were highlighted by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and include both state and national surveys and research. Those trends relate to specific opportunities within the County. People are busy and have to weigh the time available for work, live, and play. Key trends to consider include:

- **Increasing population:** The County is growing rapidly with more growth in urban areas than rural areas

- **Aging population:** Older and retired populations continue to grow within the county with many expected to stay active and likely demanding more recreation opportunities
- **Ethnic diversity:** The growing population in Benton County is diverse with many non-native speaking residents that should be considered in marketing and services
- **Changing lifestyles:** Changing work patterns are creating off peak demand on facilities and less structure for activities while multi-generational demand increases demand for diverse activities
- **Physical activity:** An increased interest in physical activity has emerged as obesity rises in children and adults throughout the country
- **Infill development:** Urban areas are being filled in and higher density housing development is increasing demand for more urban facilities and connectivity to rural opportunities
- **Convenient recreation:** People are getting busier and costs for travel are increasing interest in recreating closer to the home and work
- **Recreation choices:** An increase in trail activity and winter recreation interests including indoor winter activities and an emerging interest in activities like community gardens, mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, adventure sports and disk golf.

The RCO, in 2003, identified outdoor recreation activities and the projected change in participation levels in the next 10 and 20 years. The following table highlights those activities and the increase or decrease for each activity. At the statewide level walking and hiking are the highest interest area. Sport related activities come in at a close second.

Table 7 - Washington State's future participation in outdoor activity

Participation in Washington	10 Year	20 Year
Walking	+23%	+34%
Hiking	+10%	+20%
Outdoor team and individual sports	+6%	+12%
Nature activities	+23%	+37%
Sightseeing	+10%	+20%
Bicycle riding	+19%	+29%
Picnicking	+20%	+31%
Motor boating	+10%	No estimate
Non-pool swimming	+19%	+29%
Visiting a beach	+21%	+33%
Canoeing/kayaking	+21%	+30%
Downhill skiing	+21%	No estimate
Cross-country skiing	+23%	No estimate
Snowmobile riding	+42%	No estimate
Fishing	-5%	-10%
Camping - primitive dispersed	+5%	No estimate
Camping - backpacking	+5%	+8%
Camping - developed (RV style)	+10%	+20%
Off-road vehicle riding	+10%	+20%

Hunting-shooting	-15%	-21%
Equestrian	+5%	+8%
Air activities	No estimate	No estimate

Source: RCO 2003- Statewide data

In 2013, the RCO updated the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, which included an assessment of demand for outdoor recreation in Washington State, which shows that across the state, people were interested in nearby and affordable activities. Walking and hiking continue to be popular activities in Washington, but also near the top are outdoor team and individual sports (which includes fitness activities like jogging), nature activities, and picnicking and BBQing.

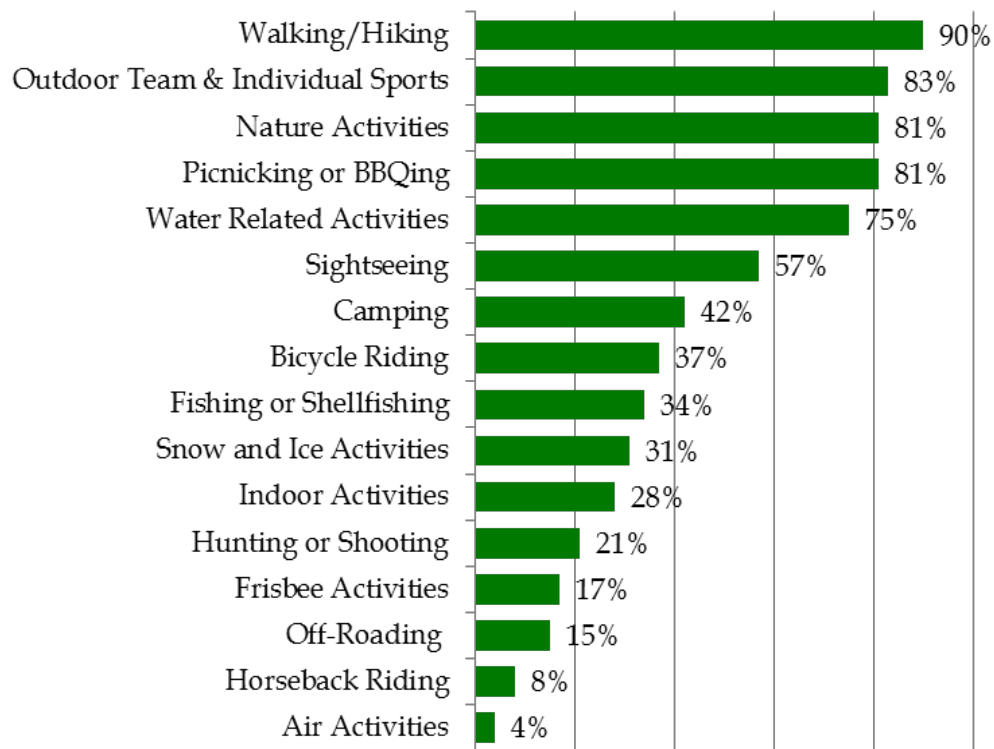


Figure 17 - Statewide participation in recreation may not reflect Benton County trends perfectly but should be considered as part of the picture as overall state demand impacts county facilities

Vision and Issues

What would the Benton County park system look like in 20 years? When asked that question, residents said that, *“Benton County provides a connected system of parks, trails, and nature preserves that balance the community’s priorities to provide environmental stewardship, public access, diverse opportunities, and healthy options.”* This vision describes that park system 20 years from now, creating a picture of what will be. The vision is supported through a policy framework that provides the steps for achieving the vision.

Issues are points of contention, missing pieces, and general concerns that focus the vision and policy framework. Some identified issues include:

- **Partnerships** – are the backbone of improvements, expansion, and recreation oriented activities
- **Connectivity** - is lacking between parks and throughout the county
- **Misuse** - could diminish access to sites and disrupt the natural areas, and damages property
- **Coordination** - is crucial to make a complete system and keep conversation alive
- **Conflicts** - between interest and users groups could disrupt partnerships and viability of the park system
- **Information** - is not available about the current park system or the amenities offered
- **Funding** - is hard to obtain for continued maintenance and for the many competing projects
- **Development** - is occurring at a fast pace within and near unique landscapes and key corridors
- **Access** - is not provided or developed for some parks within the system while other areas are to easily accessed



Figure 18 - The park vision can be broken down into component parts which guide goal and policy development

Demand and Needs Assessment

The park system is meant to provide desired and needed opportunities for Benton County residents to recreate and participate in different outdoor activities. The system should provide enough opportunities to users, and those opportunities should be in the right locations within the County. There is also an opportunity for the park system to help provide regional recreation opportunities and protect or enhance the environment.

Level of Service, Level of Management, and Park Types

The 2014 Benton County Comprehensive Plan adopted level of service standards for parks from the 1982 Comprehensive Parks Plan. Those plans specify that the standards are meant to be used as guidelines, not absolutes. The following table modifies those standards to fit with the current population and feedback during the workshop sessions and questionnaire.

Table 8 - Current Level of Service Standards

Park Type	Service area	Level of Service
Regional Parks	15 mile radius and within an hour drive	5 acres per 1000 population
Natural Park Designation	20 mile service radius	5 acres per 1000 population
Trails	NA	1.37 miles per 1000 population`
Special Use	NA	Case by Case

To better understand the types of parks within the system, the following “level of service” (LOS) descriptions were created in 2008 using the 1982 Parks Plan and the current system features and revised in 2014 based on further refinement of the organization.

Regional Parks are intended for more passive outdoor uses and serve a large region including rural county residents. These parks are meant to preserve large areas of natural space and typically include amenities like wooded areas, varied topography, water features, but can also provide campgrounds, picnic areas, nature centers, trails, waterfront access, boating, and sometimes athletic fields. These parks should not be used to relieve pressure for urban park uses. In the Benton County portfolio, Horn Rapids Park and Two Rivers Park would be considered the “regional parks”.

Natural Parks (Preserves) are undeveloped areas mostly in their natural condition that are managed for educational or recreational purposes that preserve native plant and wildlife habitat and promote passive recreation. They generally can provide non-consumptive uses including interpretive trails, historical points, viewpoints, educational centers, picnic areas, and case by case primitive camping. Benton County has two preserves – Badger Mountain and Wallula Gap.

Trails (Linear Parks) are intended to provide circulation between parks, cities and rural areas. Trails can follow roadways, waterways, wooded areas, historic or scenic routes, and should consider points of interest, scenic views and existing rights of way. Benton County does not currently own or manage any linear parks or trails within the parks system, however the County is working with other entities to promote trails between existing and possibly future (Candy Mountain) holdings.

Special Use areas include sites that are either smaller and have focused uses or are managed for specific uses and may be subleased and managed by other organizations.. At Benton County, examples include: Horse Heaven Cemetery, Horse Heaven Vista, Hover Park, Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility, and Vista Park.

In addition to LOS designations, Benton County organizes its nine parks by “level of management” (LOM). This results in a two-tiered system. The Tier One parks have daily operational oversight, either by an assigned County park ranger or by concessionaires or volunteers. These four parks are by far the most heavily used in the system. The Tier Two parks are smaller, have significantly less use overall, and do not have daily active management.

Tier One	Tier Two
Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve	Horse Heaven Cemetery
Horn Rapids Park	Horse Heaven Vista
Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility	Hover Park
Two Rivers Park	Vista Park
	Wallula Gap Preserve

Benton County had 183,400 residents in 2013 with a forecast population of 236,007 in the year 2035. The current level of service standards would call for a total 1,834 acres of parkland and an additional 526 acres by 2035 for a total of 2,360 acres. There are currently 1,460 acres of regional and natural park land in the system, although Hover Park is currently not developed in any way.

The current park system is not meeting the level of service standards by 374 acres, and will need a total of 900 more acres of land to meet those standards 20 years from now. This acreage analysis does not include special use parks, trail connections, or community desire for preservation of open space lands in certain sensitive and view corridors.

Table 9 - Level of Service requirements by 2035 for Benton County parks

Park Type	Current LOS (Pop. 183,400)	2035 LOS (Pop. 236,007)
Regional Parks	917 acres	1,180 acres
Natural Parks	917 acres+	1,180 acres+
Special Use	Case basis	Case basis
Total Parkland to meet LOS	1,834 acres	2,360 acres
Trails	253 miles	323 miles

*within a 20 mile service area

+within an hours drive

Table 10: Park Acreage by Park Type

Site	Calculated Acres
Regional Parks	
Horn Rapids Park	564.5
Two Rivers Park	159.0
<i>Regional Parks Total</i>	723.5
Natural Parks	
Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve	627.1

Wallula Gap Preserve	110.0
<i>Natural Parks Total</i>	<i>737.1</i>
<i>Subtotal of Natural and Regional</i>	<i>1,460.6</i>
Special Parks	
Vista Park	0.3
Horse Heaven Cemetery	2.0
Horse Heaven Vista	6.3
Hover Park	175.0
Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility	740.0
<i>Special Parks Total</i>	<i>923.6</i>
GRAND TOTAL	2,384.2

**Land was calculated using a Geographic Information System (GIS) and sometimes differs from historic acreage calculations*

Table 11 - Park system needs by 2035

Park Type	2013 Acres			2035 Acres		
	Target	Current	Desired	Target	Now	Desired
Regional	917	723.5	193.5	1,180	723.5	456.5
Natural	917	737.1	179.9	1,180	737.1	442.9
Total	1,834	1,460.6	373.4	2,360	1,460.6	899.9
Special Use	NA	923.6	NA	NA	923.6	NA

Other Facilities

Many of the cities within Benton County provide recreation opportunities and park land, including an extensive trail network provided through coordinated efforts of multiple jurisdictions. Benton County has no control over these city park facilities but recognizes they provide recreational opportunities for residents in the County.

State and Federal Lands in Benton County

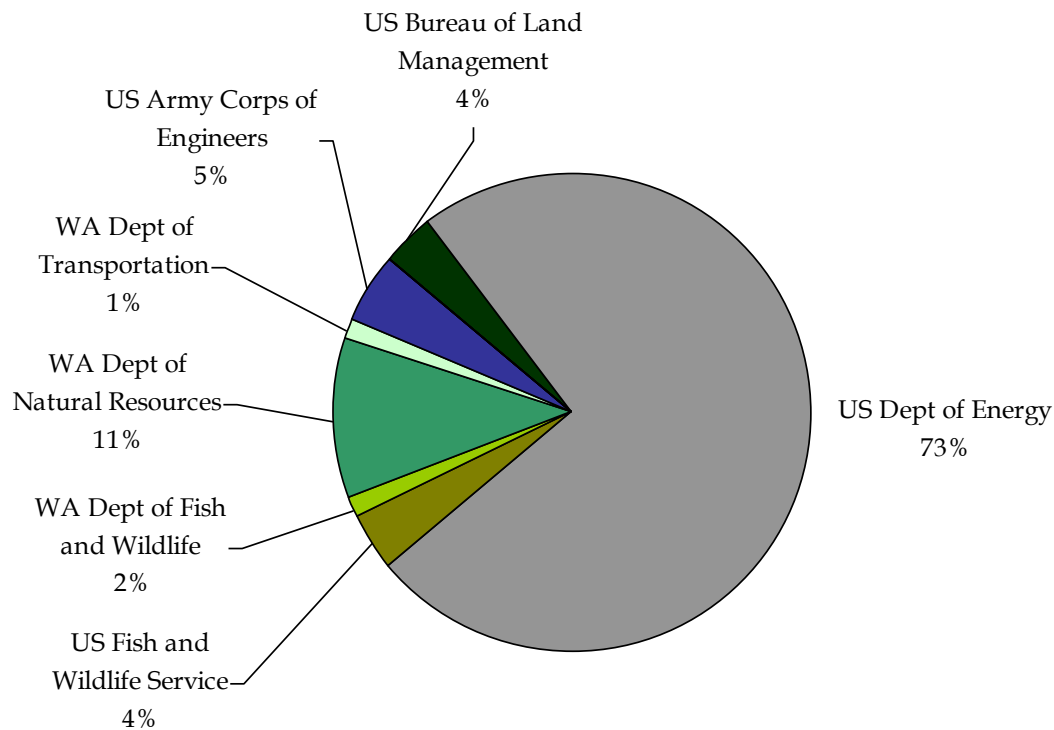


Figure 19 - Approximately 384,500 acres of public lands are managed by the state or federal government although most of this land does not provide public access (Hanford Site)

Park Land and Critical Areas

The park system provides larger tracts of open space preserves for native wildlife and plant species while still allowing passive activities. There are other lands within the County that are limited because of natural conditions (this land has been identified as critical resource lands by the County). Some of this land could have a potential use within the park system as trail corridors or as additions to open space preserves that provide natural habitat and viewshed corridors. Much of this land is already owned by public or quasi-public entities although there are privately owned lands in these areas, as well. This private land is difficult to use or develop. Land owners should be approached about easements along corridors or within identified areas while still allowing the full use of their properties. In other cases this land could be acquired or easements could be obtained within identified critical area land. Preserving some of this land (through conservation easements, with trusts, or as park land) could create needed corridors and preserve valuable environmentally sensitive areas and ecological function system-wide while providing diverse and needed recreation opportunities.

Critical area lands identified in the County's Comprehensive Plan include wetlands, critical aquifer protection areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife conservation areas. Those areas support natural and resource functions or are potential hazardous areas. Some benefits of protection include water quality, habitat, natural flood control, groundwater replenishment, natural hazard protection; historical, archaeological, and aesthetic value protection, and recreation.

The map identifies potential critical areas, and existing public and quasi-public lands. From this conceptual map, linkages and sites can be identified by connecting critical areas and public lands. These sites and corridors play a larger role for open space preserve identification, partnerships, and could provide potential locations for acquisition or easements.

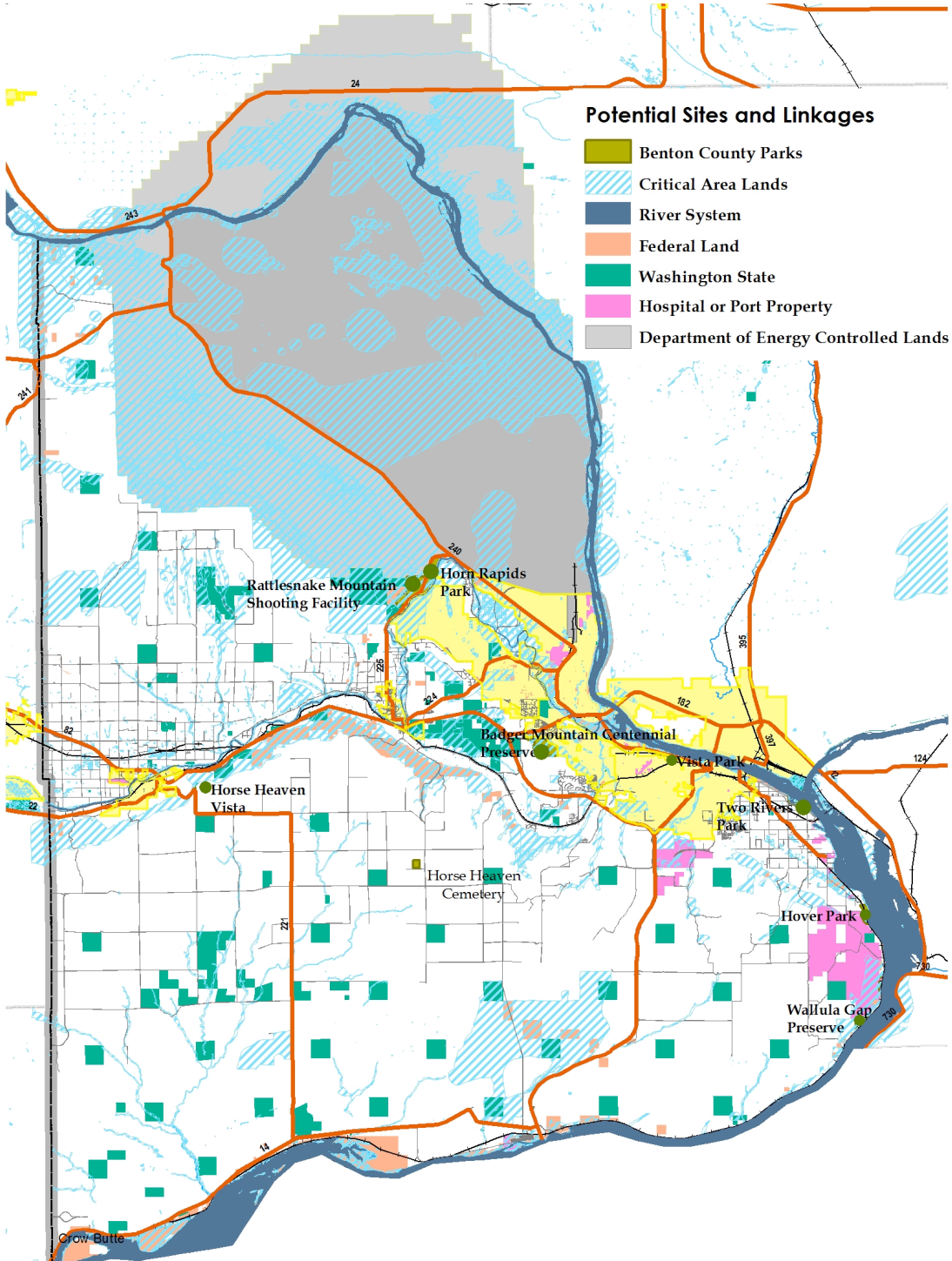


Figure 20 - A map showing approximate critical area, public, and quasi-public lands in Benton County

Workshop Participant Project Ideas

During the 2008 and 2014 planning cycles, participants identified many projects and project areas that could be beneficial as improvements or additions to the Benton County park system. There is not enough money or manpower to follow through with all of the project areas that came up during brainstorming but it is important to consider the ideas as part of the long-term plan. Final projects are identified which fit within the overall vision and goals of this plan and are included in the implementation section of the Plan. The following are paraphrased and summarized ideas generated during the planning meetings or from comments received:

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve	Two Rivers Park
<i>Welcome sign kiosk, sign, and parking on back side,</i>	<i>Long term master plan and landscape plan</i>
<i>Pave access for parking lot and horse trailer access</i>	<i>Gazebo in open area, disc golf course, boardwalk trail along river, paved boat parking, update restrooms</i>
<i>Continued restoration of natural areas</i>	<i>Improve policing</i>
<i>Signs on major roads for directions and trail signs pointing at interesting things</i>	<i>Improved trail along shoreline</i>
<i>Another hiking trail to make a loop and more mutli-use trails</i>	<i>Multi-use trail including connectivity to Hover Park and Kennewick</i>
<i>Trail links to other ridges and trails</i>	<i>Improve/maintain ramp and dock and access for safety</i>
<i>Restroom at trailheads (Westgate)</i>	<i>Trailer parking and restrooms for boat area</i>

Horn Rapids Park & Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility	Hover Park
<i>Restroom for Meacham Hall. Shade trees around facilities, remove lawn</i>	<i>Limit vehicle access, native vegetation</i>
<i>Water access trail development and improves loop trails within park</i>	<i>Day use parking and interpretive information</i>
<i>Trail connecting to BLM, DOE and WA Fish and Wildlife lands</i>	<i>Improve railroad crossing (over/under railroad)</i>
<i>Acquire property or easements to connect Benton City with Horn Rapids Park</i>	<i>Multi-use trails in and to Two Rivers and Wallula Gap</i>
<i>Abandoned RR (potential bike/pedestrian path)"</i>	<i>Camping and boat-in beach access (swimming)</i>
<i>Parking access on Horn Road (south end)</i>	<i>RV and restroom area</i>
<i>Continue and expand revegetation with native plants</i>	<i>Area patrolled, limit access points to help control illegal dumping</i>

The public input also produced a wide variety of system-wide ideas through brainstorming during the workshop process. These ideas may go beyond the scope of the Benton County Park System but the ideas are summarized below. Generally, they include:

Countywide or new park project ideas

Ridge top preservation and trail (Candy Mountain, Red Mountain, Rattlesnake Mountain)

Waterfront acquisition, trails

Horse Heaven rim trail corridor with McBee overlook

New park in Red Mountain area

Access point at end of Ayers Road (preservation and restroom etc.)

Consistent signage for hunter/other access

ADA improvements

Multi-use trails and expanded equine trails

Trails on both sides of Yakima River

Parking areas suitable for horse trailers

Non-motorized trails for Wallula Gap with trailhead parking, restroom, water

Trail system (by permit only) to top of rattlesnake-nonmotorized (monitored)

Brochure listing all of the parks, directions and equestrian route maps

Set aside land for park in Badger Road area

Continue (Keene) corridor abandoned RR for bike-ped trail extension (City of Richland)

Coordinate w USFWS and DOE for potential future uses of Hanford Reach lands and ALE

Support a county park for the Plymouth area

Creation of access point at the end of Hamilton Road (north of Benton City)

Creation of better river access point in the Twin Bridges area (near West Richland)

Park Specific Assessment and Recommendations

Each park has specific issues that should be addressed. These issues are focused on improving the parks to a level that creates a safe and sustainable park for long term use and enjoyment of the users while keeping with the mission and use philosophies of the County and the Park Board. The assessment was developed through park visits, interviews with user groups and staff, public meetings and comments received. The following improvements are incorporated into the Implementation Section of this Plan.

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve Improvements

The existing park has multiple trails and many recreation opportunities. The primary issues in this park include abundant use on a relatively undeveloped property. The intent of the site is to preserve the natural setting but also provide for the users. Without further planning and improvements, this park's trail system has the potential for conflicts between user types and over use leading to deterioration of the natural preserve. The observed volume of users and the predicted increase in use of the park points to a need for better facilities and a defined trailhead for each entry into the park. Park improvements should include:

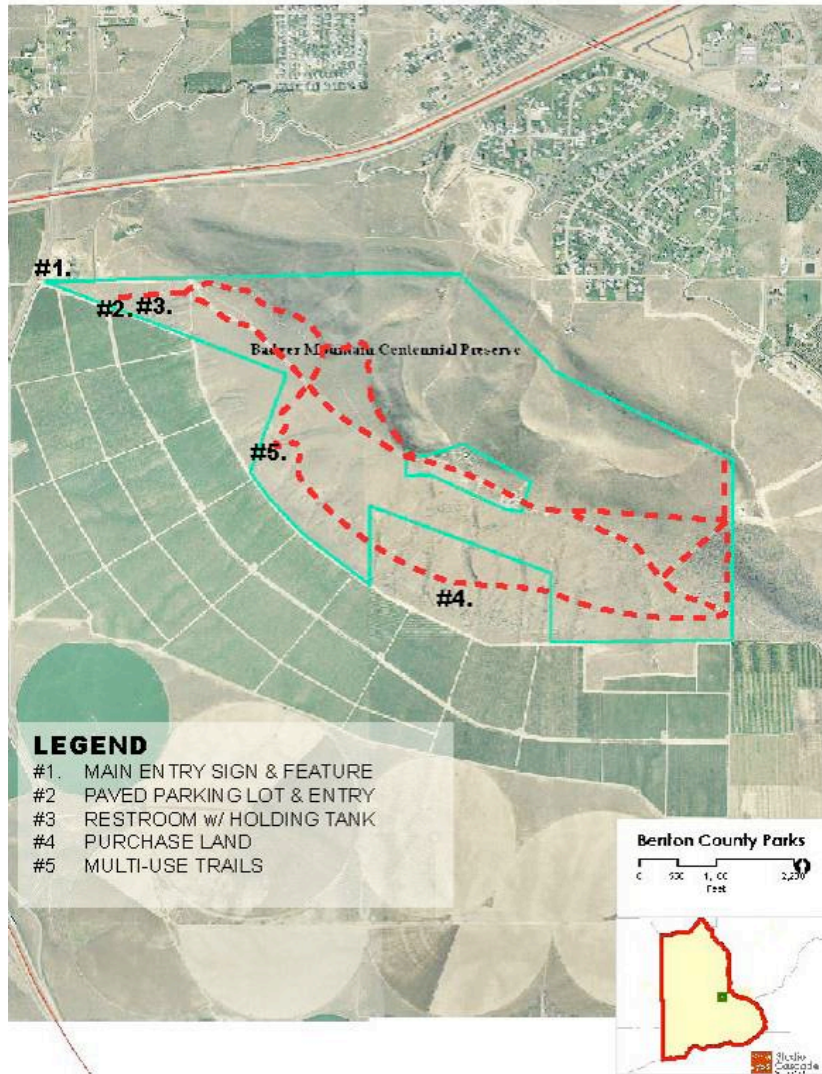


Figure 21 - Badger Mountain has a popular multi-use trail system and other opportunities that should be further explored with a master plan

- A park master plan and trail plan with consideration of expansion through collaborations and partnering. *(Adoption expected in fall 2014)*
- Improved access and parking at the Westgate trailhead with a restroom facility. *(The parking area has been upgraded once.)*
- Work toward creating connections offsite – to the east onto Badger Butte (Little Badger Mountain), and to the west to Candy Mountain and Red Mountain, possibly through the creation of a new preserve on Candy Mountain.
- Investigate and begin if feasible, remediation of abandoned roads, utility trenches, scratch trails, and other scars on the mountain.

Horse Heaven Cemetery

The Cemetery is a Tier Two, minimal improvement site. The biggest issue concerning the Cemetery is occasional vandalism. Minimal improvements have been proposed:

- Addition of historical interpretive signage.
- Addition of a monument to all persons known to be buried on the premises. Many original headstones have disintegrated or been destroyed. A single, headstone with names of all interrees engraved upon it has been proposed for the site.

Horn Rapids Park Improvements

Horn Rapids Park sees a lot of use but also gets abuse in the form of off-road vehicle use and dumping due to the park's isolation and the large internal network of informal roads. The park also has a lot of riverfront needing better designed access for safe and proper use of the river and shoreline.

Recommendations to resolve issues and provide solutions include:

- Park boundary clarification and reconfiguration which would afford better management by all entities involved in ownership of the proposed properties. Thus far, the park's main neighbor – the US Department of Energy, has not shown much interest in addressing this issue.
- Park and trail master plan with site survey to show preferred boundaries of the

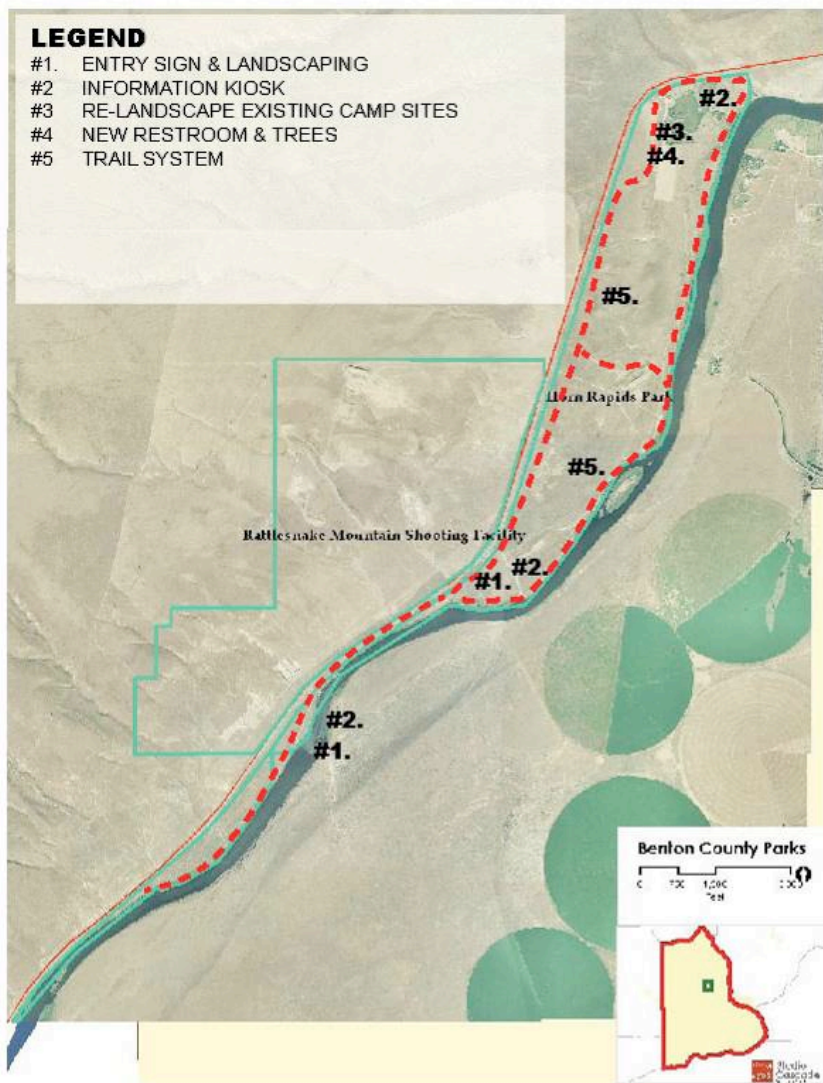


Figure 22 - Horn Rapids Park and Rattlesnake Shooting Facility are divided by Horn Road but are adjoining properties

park.

- Update road and entry signs and landscaping.
- Identify native areas for rehabilitation.

Horse Heaven Vista Improvements

Horse Heaven Vista had a major renovation that occurred after the 2008 CPP. There are some improvements proposed for the site, but no additional major projects are foreseen at this time:

- Install main entry sign.
- Install information kiosk.
- Demarcate park boundaries.
- Remove large debris pile(s) from site.
- Work to make HHV a node along the suggested "Horse Heaven Rim Trail".



Figure 23 - Landscaping could help blend improvements into the surroundings in Horn Rapids and other parks

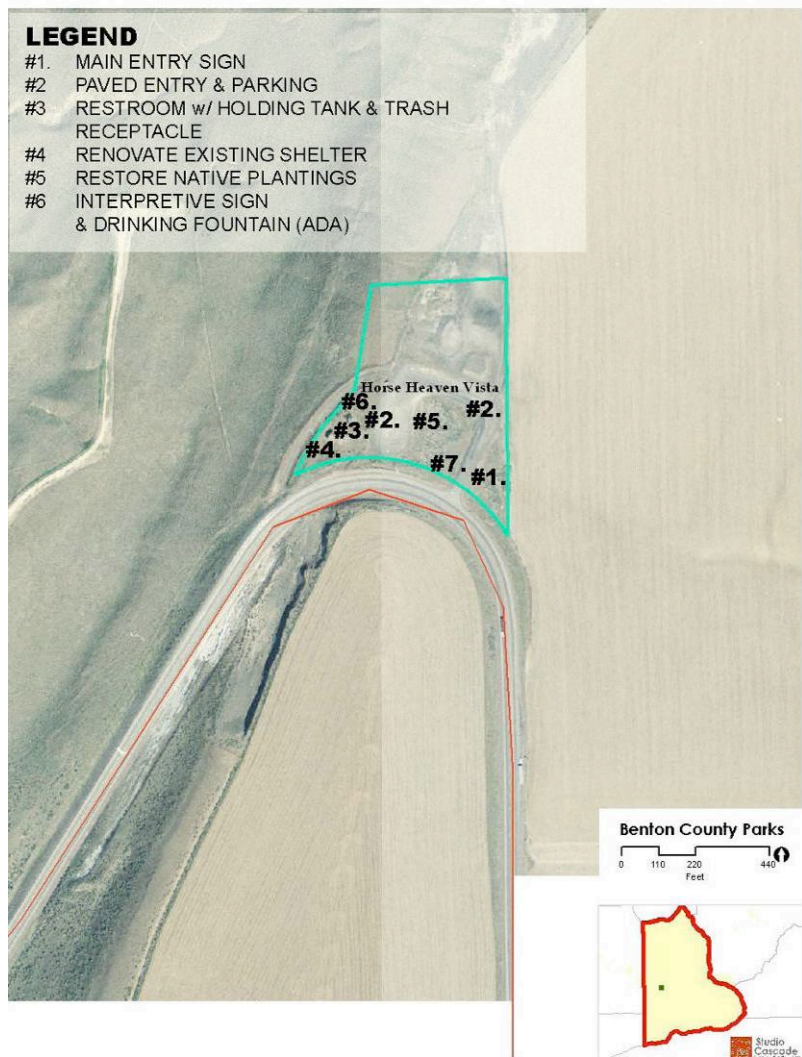


Figure 24 - Horse Heaven Vista has funding for most of the proposed improvements

Hover Park Improvements

Hover Park is located in a rural area without controlled access. The area is undeveloped and has some signs of the original town site. This property has a lot of potential but also has a lot of issues. The park currently has unauthorized and indiscriminate (often illegal) use by off-road vehicles and for dumping of junk cars and other garbage. Current users enjoy the fishing and trail opportunities but the overall perception of the park in the community is low. A strong interest was expressed for keeping the park under lease and management by the County by users who enjoy fishing, horseback riding, bicycling, and walking.

The Park Board should look into options and decide what the next step will be for this property. The following are some options that could be taken. The first step should be considered as highest priority.

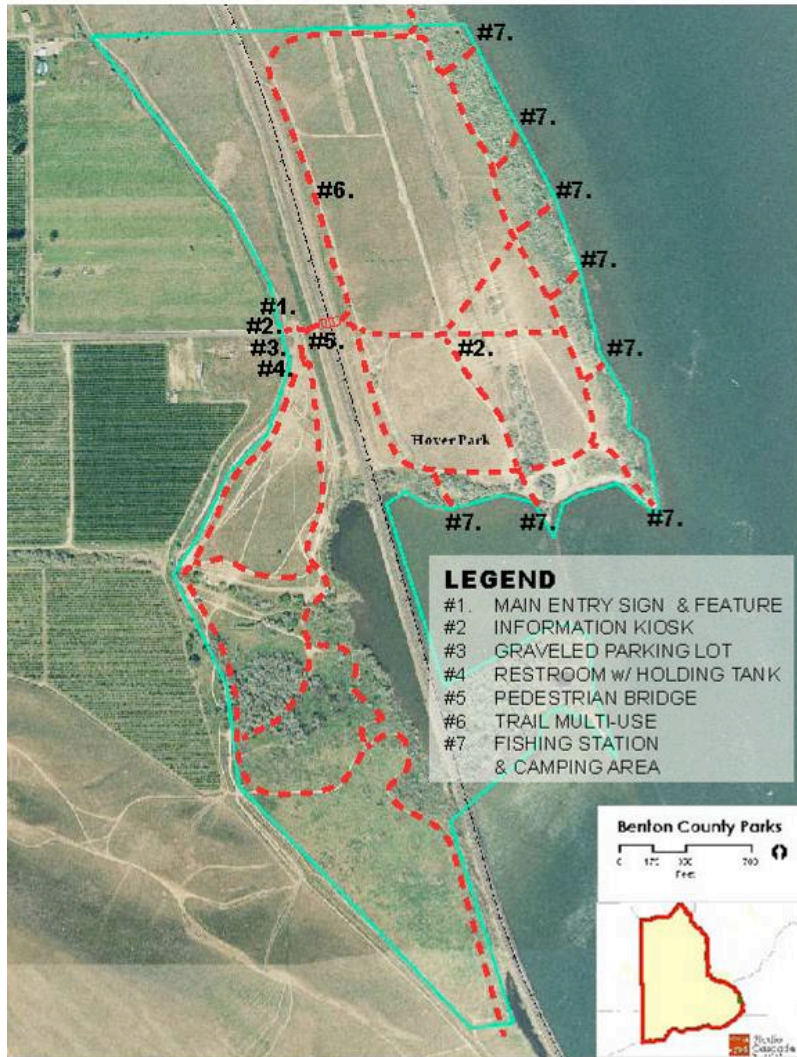


Figure 25 - Hover park has many opportunities for water sports but needs access.

- Control vehicle access into the site and parking options (Updated welcome sign and limited vehicle access)
- Railroad crossing options either on existing crossing north of property or with a new over pedestrian bridge



Figure 26 - The uncontrolled access to Hover Park is a gravel road without a railroad crossing to the main parkland

Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility Improvements

Since the 2008 CPP, Benton County has purchased the property formerly owned by the Bureau of Land Management, has extended its land use agreement with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and has completed a master plan for the park in conjunction with its concessionaire partner, the Tri-Cities Shooting Association (TCSA). New projects at the site are primarily the responsibility of TCSA. The County may consider assisting financially, logistically, or otherwise on future projects on a case-by-case basis.

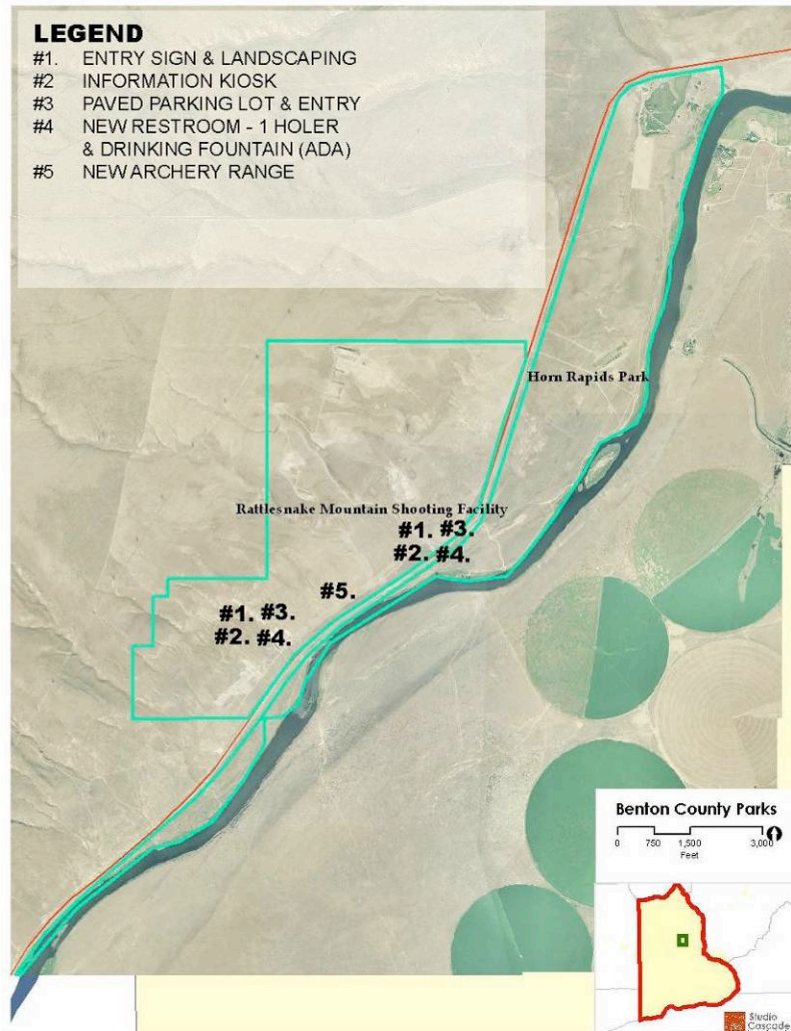


Figure 27 - Rattlesnake Shooting Facility is a subleased property with several proposed improvements and expansions

Two Rivers Park Improvements

Two Rivers Park has great opportunities for formal and passive recreation. The improved areas provide large expanses of grass for informal team sports, swimming, picnic areas, and boat launching. Unimproved areas provide for bird watching and relaxation and natural shoreline opportunities.

The disc golf course that was installed in the park in 2009 has generally been considered to be the last major improvement or use change in a park that is essentially matured and built-out. There are other smaller projects and renovations that have been proposed, however:

- Consider a native plants interpretive path through the detached quadrant on the south side of Finley Road.
- Update park and trail master plan.
- Boat Launch: address long-term strategy at the launch slips themselves, as well as restroom and parking situation.
- Boat Launch: remove old dock floats from park property.
- Consider group picnic shelters or large covered facility as part of master plan.
- Upgrade or replace restroom in main park area.
- Interpretation for trail system.
- Extension of Nature Trail out onto the rivershore of the Natural Area, including crossing of wetlands area likely in the form of a boardwalk.
- Consistent road signs.

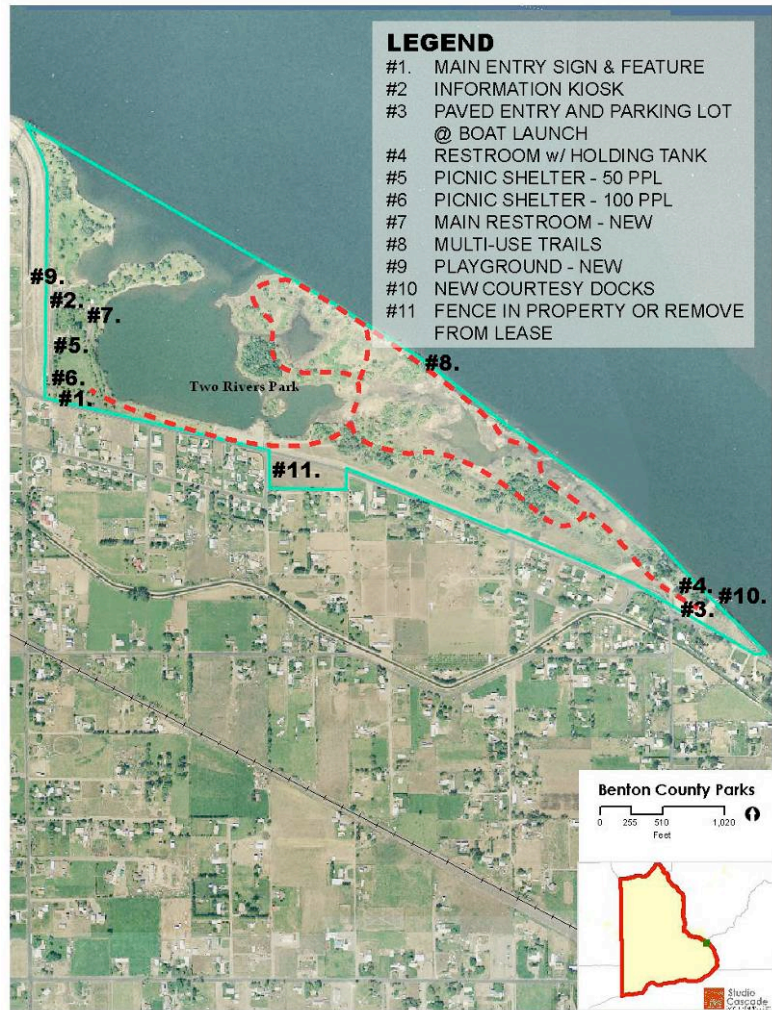


Figure 28 - Two Rivers has many water focused areas with potential for a riverfront trail system in the natural area.



Figure 29 - Two Rivers has many recreation choices and flexible spaces

- Assess and redevelop Playground.

Vista Park Improvements

This neighborhood park is an urban area that does not fit easily into the vision of the County’s park system. The County has had discussions with the City of Kennewick about possibly transferring the property. The City has expressed willingness in taking over the park if and when the area is annexed. In the meantime, any improvements or modifications should be done in collaboration with the City. The following improvements are considered:

- Remove existing outdated play structures.
- Install new playground equipment with modern cushion and edging.
- Update and repair irrigation.
- Update retaining wall on the south side of the park.

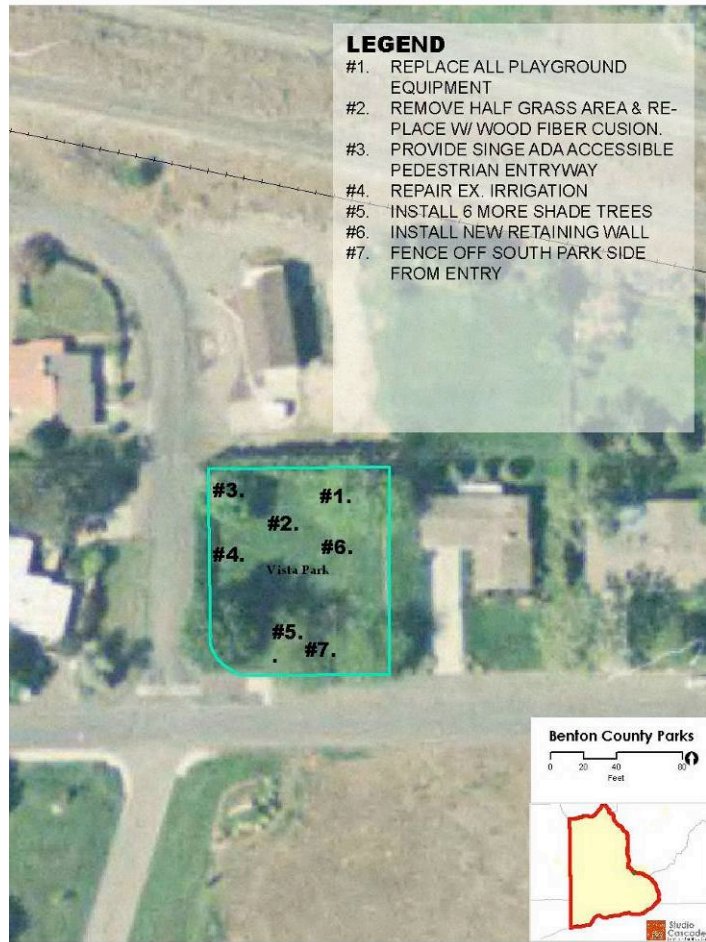


Figure 30 - Vista Park is Benton County's only small neighborhood park.



Figure 31 - The bank between the parking areas and Vista Park is hard to traverse

Wallula Gap Preserve Improvements

This Preserve is located in a very difficult area of the county to access. The site is primarily an aesthetic and view property from the Columbia River corridor. There is a large section of private land adjoining the properties, separating it from other accessible public lands.

- The County should continue to look at ways to access the properties through easements or other options.



Figure 32 - Wallula Gap is not accessible so any improvements would depend on gaining access through neighboring property

System-wide

Through the public process, the community has expressed an interest in some system-wide improvements. There are opportunities to better communicate the County's park-related activities to the public and for expanding park and recreation opportunities in certain parts of the County. Suggestions included:

- Improved information distribution by providing kiosks at key park access points, publishing a brochure, and utilizing the website.
- A user-friendly capital improvements summary document that showcases improvements to the park system as they are completed.
- A formal trail connection between Columbia Park (the Sacajawea Heritage Trail in Kennewick) and Two Rivers Park, at a minimum, and possibly on to Hover Park. This has been a back-burner project in Benton County's Capital Facilities Plan for several years, a project formerly known as the "Interlock".
- Support for a County-sponsored community-type park in Plymouth.

Community-wide

The process also produced ideas from the community in a number of larger, regional-scale projects that may or may not be led-by or directly involve Benton County. There may be opportunities for multiple jurisdictions to collaborate on concepts such as:

- A "Rattlesnake Ridge Trail", connecting Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve with Red Mountain via Candy Mountain.

- A “Rattlesnake Mountain Trail” connecting Horn Rapids Park to the Vernita area via the crest of Rattlesnake Mountain and through the Hanford Reach National Monument.
- A “Horse Heaven Rim Trail” along the crest of the Horse Heaven Hills.
- A trail connection between Prosser and Benton City/Red Mountain via the Yakima River corridor.
- Preservation of lands on and around Candy Mountain as a preserve in the same fashion as Badger Mountain has already been preserved, either by the County or by some other appropriate entity.
- Protections of important habitat and recreational lands either through acquisition or easement in the Jackrabbit Ridge area near Richland and areas south and east of Horn Rapids Park.
- Creation of better access point(s) along the Yakima River below Benton City for non-motorized use (floaters, kayakers, etc), particularly in the Twin Bridges area.

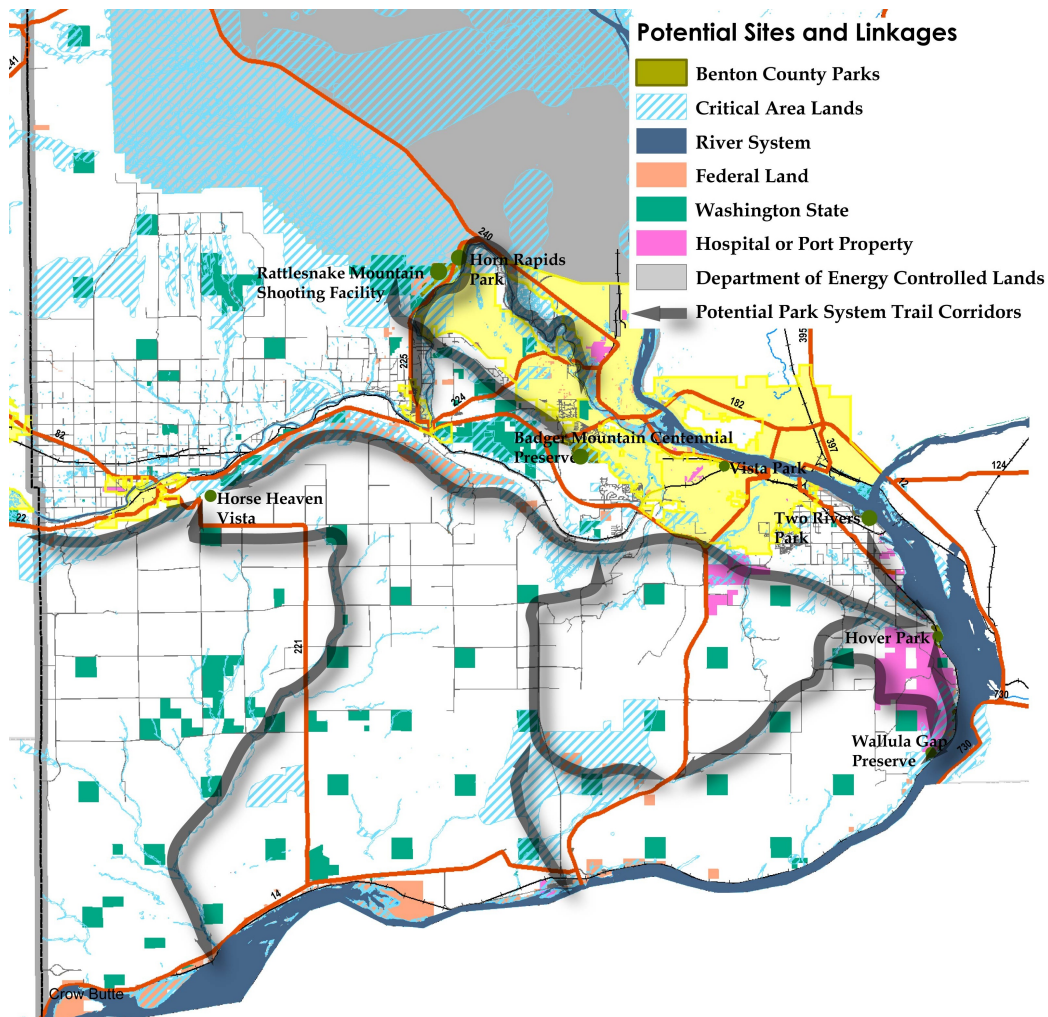


Figure 33 - Identifying potential properties and links with a trail system would allow user access to the entire system

Goals and Policies

The framework for making the vision a reality involves the development of goals and policies. A goal is an end result of which policies are directed. A policy is the means and guidelines by which one will accomplish the goals.

The goals and policies reflect public input and ideas generated throughout the plan process. The policies are meant to ensure that decisions relating to parks represent the most current ideas regarding park facilities and services within the County.

Both residents and tourists benefit from the recreational opportunities and the natural amenities offered by Benton County and other parks providers within the region. Trails create the network to better connect the regional system and also offers corridors for recreational, commute, and wildlife travel. Open space preserves are an important component of the natural environment and supports the natural system, aesthetics, recreation and the economy. The system also provides transitions from the urban landscape of the Tri-Cities to the surrounding rural landscapes.

System and Access

Goal 1-Have a connected system of parks, trails and open space

Policies	
1.	Using a collaborative system-wide perspective, consider best routes and missing links between the county's park facilities, urban park systems, rural communities and surrounding jurisdictions.
2.	Make trails multiple-use or compatible-use for walkers, runners, bikers, and equestrians for recreating and commuting.
3.	Limit access to natural areas through signage, vehicular barriers, education and enforcement.
4.	Identify and map the trail system.
5.	Approach specific owners to consider trail corridors along existing and proposed canal right of ways and for access to remote areas.
6.	Assist in the development of a Yakima and Columbia River water trail system with pullouts and stopping points within riverfront parks.
7.	Work with the Army Corps of Engineers and municipalities in expanding the levee trail network as part of the trail system.
8.	Identify property that would better connect the County park system and request access to and through those properties (i.e. Kennewick Public Hospital District).
9.	Work with jurisdictions and advocate to identify and create a regional trail system.

-
10. Continue to support the efforts of the Tapteal Greenway Association to complete the Tapteal Greenway Trail, five miles of which go through the Horn Rapids Park.
-
11. Update or create master plans for the larger parks within the system.
-
12. Evaluate access options for Wallula Gap.
-

Use and Expansion

Goal 2-Provide access and opportunities for a broad spectrum of recreational pursuits

Policies

1. Ensure that the park system remains affordable and available to all potential users.
-
2. Consider ADA design guidelines for access in all improvements, maintenance and acquisition to the extent possible.
-
3. Develop horse mounting platforms for individuals with physical limitations.
-
4. Maintain and expand water oriented opportunities for day-use, camping, fishing, and motorized and non-motorized boating.
-
5. Identify and preserve historic resources with interested partners.
-
6. Provide sufficient facilities for all residents and visitors without overuse using adopted levels of service.
-
7. Identify future sites that will provide diverse opportunities for recreation users and serve all areas of the county.
-
8. Plan for park system acquisitions and development in cooperation with regional and local entities.
-
9. Consider donations of property for the Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve.
-
10. Work with the City of Kennewick to develop a trail that connects Columbia Park to Two Rivers Park and on to Hover Park.
-
11. Consider water rights in the acquisition or development of future park land.
-

Ecology, Aesthetics, Education, and Health

Goal 3-Promote environmental stewardship

Policies	
1.	Identify and consider acquisition of natural open space preserves – such as Candy Mountain, for example – for current and future benefits.
2.	Coordinate efforts with other jurisdictions and organizations to protect ecological diversity and systems.
3.	Identify, protect, and include critical areas in the park system as natural preserves and corridors (examples include wetlands, shorelines, habitat as defined in state law).
4.	Consider identified wildlife corridors (Washington Department of Natural Resources) when looking at new property acquisition.
5.	Low-impact uses should have a priority in existing parks and new park designs but higher impact use areas should be accommodated as appropriate.
6.	Develop a fire and medical response plan as a part of each master plan. Develop fire control policies for the park system in cooperation with the fire districts considering impacts (fire lines, retardants, motorized vehicle use, heavy equipment, aircraft, medical response, and rehabilitation planning).
7.	Consider view corridors including ridgelines and peaks if a conservation easement program is developed
8.	Protect shoreline and water access points within the park system.
9.	Provide social spaces for gatherings (i.e. group picnic areas, plazas, and amphitheaters).
10.	Support partners who provide environmental and natural education programs in the parks.
11.	Educate the public on the benefits of protecting fragile ecosystems and critical areas through signage and publications.
12.	Consider dedicated sites and facilities for outdoor classrooms within the park system, where suitable, for interested group activities.
13.	Encourage frequent use of the park system for improved health, well-being and outdoor activity by hosting special events.

Management, Maintenance, and Funding

Goal 4-Maintain and improve park facilities

Policies	
1.	Determine accurate park boundaries and maintain that data for mapping and site planning, especially for Horn Rapids Park.
2.	Create efficient park maintenance standards and programs that are sustainable over the long term.
3.	Upgrade and standardize sites improvements for ease of maintenance.
4.	Use consistent, quality building construction and low impact lighting in remodels and new building within the park system (i.e. green building, dark sky, water efficiency).
5.	Use an Integrated Pesticide Management program to minimize, or eliminate where possible, pesticide application and use.
6.	Use native species, where possible, in park plantings for lower maintenance and cost.
7.	Develop criteria for prioritizing improvements for parks.
8.	Pursue a variety of funding strategies including new revenue generating ideas for the acquisition, development and maintenance of the park system.
9.	Update capital improvement plans annually.
10.	Measure community needs and update the Comprehensive Parks Plan at least every six years.
11.	Include ADA accessibility, where possible, when upgrading or renovating park components.
12.	Continue to build volunteers into the parks program.
13.	Continue to build on the “Partners in Parks”.
14.	Continue to build the relationship with the Sheriffs’ Work Crew.
15.	Improve and integrate a system to combat and reverse the spread of invasive and noxious weeds.

Goal 5-Support the department's needs and priorities

Policies	
1.	Promote and market the park system and raise awareness of available facilities using outreach (special events, user groups, area websites, public places, kiosks).
2.	Create outreach materials, brochures, and maps promoting the parks and their benefits.
3.	Develop and implement a consistent map, signage and wayfinding program for the park system with thematic interpretive signing.
4.	Develop signage for water access points within the county.
5.	Develop public involvement strategies for planning and development projects.
6.	Provide leadership, management and expert advice on planning, design, acquisition and implementation of park and open space projects.
7.	Continue to develop a good work environment for staff and volunteers.
8.	Provide adequate staffing for maintenance, safety, and security and evaluate the organizational model for necessary changes.
9.	Provide program training and development opportunities for staff to ensure best practices.
10.	Develop a department policy manual in collaboration with the Park Board to address issues including but not limited to: parks and facilities naming standards, vehicle access and control standards, signage standards, construction and lighting standards, trail etiquette, use of domestic animals in the parks, and donation acceptance protocols.
11.	Evaluate established partnerships for viability and identify areas needing improvement.
12.	Coordinate parks planning with other agencies, jurisdictions, and user groups.
13.	Assist the Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility and the Miniature Aircraft Association in identifying improvements to their subleased areas. Master plan each facility.
14.	Maintain and recruit volunteers for outreach, education, preservation, maintenance, trail improvements, and plantings programs.
15.	Consider private partners for services, vending, amenities, and specific events.
16.	Consider alternate funding options for the park system.

Implementation

There are many exciting ideas and projects in Benton County being developed and implemented by various groups. It became apparent during the park planning process that residents wanted many parks and recreation opportunities in the County. Some of these ideas focused on urban areas of the County while others focused on areas that are in the transition zone between the urban and rural landscape. Other project ideas specifically related to the rural county.

The County maintains the park system and also considers expansions on a case by case basis. These actions have created a strong regional parks system but have not created priorities or direction for decisions pertaining to the future park system. The vision sets a clear role to provide a connected system of parks through collaboration while protecting and providing access to Benton County's natural areas.

Fiscal Portrait

In order to maintain and support a parks system for a growing population, funding is needed. This funding will make the implementation of Benton County's parks plan a reality. Revenue can be obtained from a combination of taxes, licenses and permit fees, state and federal grants, user service charges, fines and forfeits, miscellaneous interest earnings and sales, and pass-through federal revenue sharing monies. Major funding sources for park and recreation facilities could include property taxes, general obligation bonds, real estate excise taxes, grants and pass-through monies, and park mitigation fees. Benton County has not relied much upon grant funding in recent years, but has been the recipient of substantial donations of cash, land, and volunteer labor.

Some funding options could be implemented by the County, while others would require partnerships. Some sources have specific application and qualification requirements that the County will need to meet prior to receiving available grants or loans.

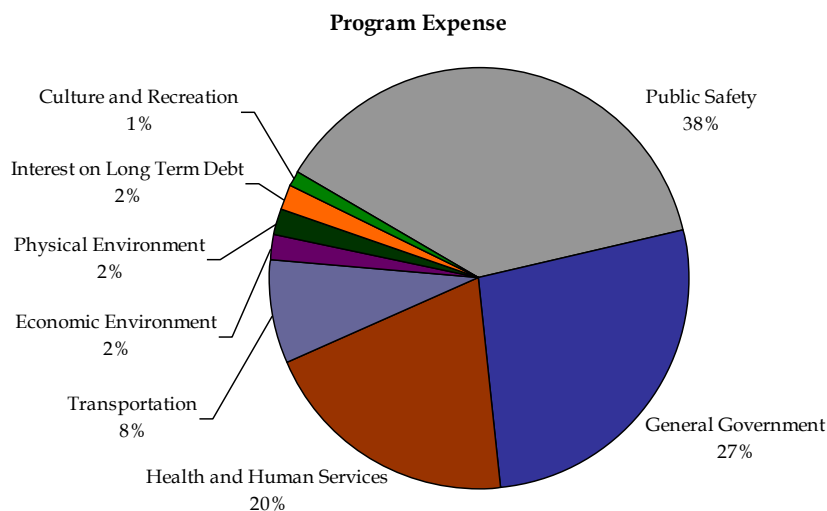


Figure 34 - Benton County spent less than 1% of funds on culture and recreation in 2006

Revenue

The services and programs within Benton County are supported through various revenue sources which are then placed into specific funds. The primary fund that revenue is placed in is the Current Expense Fund. This fund’s revenue is one-third from property tax, one-third from intergovernmental revenue, and one-seventh from sales tax. The Park Development Fund, which comes from the general fund, is used for capital improvements within the Benton County Park System which totals about one percent of the County’s spending per year.

The County had total expense revenues of \$113,560,428 in the 2013-2014 biennial budget and total expense expenditures of \$113,636,766. The total fund ending balance of \$76,338.

The Current Expense budget for the Park Department supports two full-time employees, a part-time director, and part-time office staff. The County does not have plans to expand the budget in the next 6 years for increased staffing.

Table 12 - Current expenses and planned expenses through 2018

Current Expense-Parks	2013-2014 Budget
Salaries & Wages	\$180,488
Benefits	75,900
Supplies	\$44,552
Other	\$77,770
Total	\$378,710

Summary of Capital Projects from Park Fund

	2013-2014		2015-2016		2017-2018	
Estimated Beginning Balance (Jan 1 st)	206,000	155,000	56,500	60,500	(26,500)	(274,000)
Revenue	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
CIP Projects	(71,000)	(118,500)	(16,000)	(107,000)	(276,500)	(157,000)
Other Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-	-
Estimated Ending Balance	155,000	56,500	60,500	(26,500)	(274,000)	(411,000)

Table 13: Park Development Fund 2008 Budget Breakdown

Account-Park Development	2013-2014 Budget Breakdown
Supplies	\$25,000
Other Services and Charges	\$62,400
Capital Outlay	\$275,000
Total	\$362,400

The path and trail fund accounts for the county’s share of the motor vehicle fuel tax distributed by the state and can be used for pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle paths and trails. This fund may continue to decrease if fuel prices continue to rise.

Table 14 - Paths and Trails Fund

Paths/Trails Reserve			2011-2012	2013-2014
Beginning Balance			70,139	63,750
Revenues			100,889	93,881

The current staffing for the park system is enough to maintain the current system with support of many volunteer hours and a volunteer Park Board. Even with this small staff, the department was able to move beyond maintaining the status quo. The Park Department orchestrated the acquisition of the Badger Mountain Preserve property, and is now looking at adding another major preserve at nearby Candy Mountain. Many more options for improving the park system have been identified in this plan, in jurisdictional planning, and from partners; but the current staff level makes little time for any other projects or administrative capacity. This means that grant identification and applications, and other funding sources would have to be obtained through volunteer efforts or come from another department within the County unless the staffing budget was increased.

Debt

Benton County had bonded debt of \$37,400,000 as of December of 2006 which was an increase of approximately \$5,500,000 since 2005. There was a remaining capacity for non-voted debt (1.5 percent of assessed valuation) of approximately \$116,000,000. There is about \$100,000,000 more in voted debt capacity (2.5 percent of assessed valuation) for a total capacity of over \$200 million for voted and non-voted bonds. The best option for increasing funding for park acquisition and maintenance would be to consider the conservation futures program as detailed in the funding sources table below.

Funding Sources

The following is a list of potential funding sources.

Funding Sources

Capital Improvement Fund - Money allocated from the County’s General Fund to finance major capital projects.

Certificates of Participation - A lease-purchase approach in which the County sells Certificates of Participation (COPs) to a lending institution. The County then pays the loan off from revenue produced by the facility or from its general operating budget. The lending institution holds title to the property until the COPs are repaid. This procedure does not require a vote of the public.

Conservation Futures Levy - The County can levy, by resolution, up to \$.0625 per \$1,000 assessed valuation for the acquisition of open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land (RCW 84.34). This money may only be used for acquiring rights and interests (easements) in real property with a portion used for maintenance. As of the summer of 2014, the County is examining this option very closely and has been working with citizen advocates and the Trust for Public Land on a possible Conservation Futures strategy.

Fee in Lieu of Parks and Open Space - A voluntary option for developers (RCW 82.02.020)

General Fund--General funds allocated to the Park and Recreation Budget.

General Obligation Bond - Property tax for the sale of construction bonds.

- ❑ Unlimited - The tax assessment can be levied up to 30 years with a bound counsel hired. Requires a 60% majority approval of 40% of the voters who voted at the last election.
- ❑ Limited Tax (Councilmanic) Bonds - Bonds that can be issued by the County Commissioners. Does not require a vote of the people but must be paid out of the annual operating budget.

Park Impact Fees - The County does not currently have impact fees for open space and parks. The fees could be imposed on new development based on a set share of the impact but can not be used for maintenance and must be for projects in the capital facilities plan and has restrictions as identified in the Growth Management Act. RCW 82.02.050

Park and Recreation Districts or Service Areas - With citizen interest, the County could explore the possibility of creating Parks and Recreation Districts/Service Areas for park needs. Districts are independently managed and could meet some of the need for facilities in defined areas. RCW 36.69 and 36.68. Citizens have raised the specter of a possible Tri-Cities area "metropolitan park district" on multiple occasions over the years.

Park Revenue - Revenue from park operations used to pay for capital improvements.

Payment in Lieu of Tax - Federal government payments substitute for property taxes on the land base of federal land managing agencies (e.g., Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) RCW 82.46--Levied on all real estate sales measured by the full selling price, including the amount of any liens, mortgages, and other debts given to secure the purchase.

- ❑ First 0.25 percent projects identified in the capital facilities element and housing relocation assistance which would include parks improvements. RCW 82.46.010
- ❑ Second 0.25 percent REET 2 - An additional excise tax on each sale of real property at a rate not exceeding 0.25 percent of the selling price restricted to projects in a capital facilities plan and could be used for "planning, construction, reconstruction, repair, rehabilitation, or improvements to parks" (requires an ordinance and approval of the voters). RCW 82.46.035(2)
- ❑ 0.50 Percent Affordable Housing REET *in lieu* of Optional Sales Tax - the County can not use this option because of timing and it also does not apply to parks unincorporated areas. RCW 82.46.075
- ❑ 1.0 percent Conservation Area REET-The County may submit a ballot proposition to the voters for an added REET on each sale of real property at a rate not to exceed 1 percent of the selling price for acquisition and maintenance of Conservation Areas. RCW 82.46.070

Revenue Bonds- Revenue from the operation of the facility pays for the capital cost and debt service. Does not require a vote of people unless required by local ordinance.

Special Levy - A property tax for construction and/or operation levied for a set number of years. It is usually short term, 1-3 years. A special levy requires a 60% voter approval.

Another source for funding comes through grants. The best funding source is through Washington State (Recreation and Conservation Office). The County has not utilized a grant through the state since the development of Horn Rapids Park in 1998, but as of the summer of 2014 is applying for an RCO grant to assist with the purchase of available private properties on Candy Mountain that would be used to create a new preserve. The State offers several programs that would fit with improvements and acquisitions the County is interested in pursuing.

State Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Grants

Aquatic Land Enhancement Fund (ALEA) - This program, funded by the State Department of Natural

Resources, can finance acquisition, restoration, or improvement of aquatic lands for public purposes, and to provide interpretation and access to those lands and waters with 50 percent in matching resources required.

Boating Facilities Program (BFP) - Grants to acquire, develop, and renovate boating facilities like boat ramps, guest moorage, and support facilities

Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) - Grants to help with guest boating facilities for 26 feet and larger boats (25 percent match).

Firearm and Archery Range Recreation (FARR) - Aiming at acquiring, developing, and renovating firearm ranges and archery training and practice facilities with a 33-50 percent match required.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) - Grants to buy land and develop outdoor facilities for parks, trails, and wildlife lands. Grants require a 50percent match

National Recreational Trails Program (NRTP) - Federal funding through the RFCB to maintain backcountry trails and facilities with a required 20 percent match. Examples of eligible projects include maintenance and rerouting of trails, trailside and trailhead facilities, environmental education, and trail safety programs.

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) - To develop and manage opportunities for backcountry trails and non-highway roads, grants can be used for planning, capital improvements, maintenance, operation, land acquisition, education, and law enforcement.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) - Acquisition and development parks, water access, trails. Funding is also available for critical wildlife habitat, natural areas, urban wildlife habitat, farmland preservation and protection of riparian areas, with at least a 50 percent match.

Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) - Grants to acquire, develop, maintain, and improve youth and community athletic facilities with a 50 percent match required.

The last option for funding is actually not monetary in nature. Benton County currently has strong working relationships with volunteer groups and partners. This teamwork could be promoted as an option for many types of improvements within the system. The following are some options for non-monetary choices for development including:

Non-Monetary Options

Density Bonus and Clustering - Consider density bonuses for open space and critical areas preservation or affordable housing. Clustering could focus on conserving resource lands and promoting larger open space areas consistent with rural character.

Dedication Requirement - A typical requirement of subdivisions.

Development Agreements - SEPA mitigation agreements including deferral of improvements or future dedication of land not subject to the five-year limitation in RCW 82.02.020.

Conservation Easements - a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. Conservation easements can use a purchase or transfer of development rights program or donations.

Current Use Assessment - The Washington Open Space Taxation Act allows property owners to have their open space, farm and agricultural, and timber lands valued at their current use helping to preserve private land in open space, farm and timber use. RCW 84.34

Partnerships - Cooperative partnerships with agencies and citizen groups could be pursued by the county. The state and federal governments including the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR seeks better managed land through consolidation of land holdings using trades or sales. The

county should continue to work with DNR and other state and federal agencies to identify opportunities to meet county open space needs.

Purchase of Development Rights -A process where the development rights of a specific parcel of desired open space land is purchased. A funding source, such as a bond, would need to be identified for a purchase of development rights program.

Transfer of Development Rights - A process where development rights of a specified parcel is transferred to a second parcel of land more suitable for development. The second parcel is then permitted a higher level of development. If the two parcels are owned by two different landowners, the increased value of the second parcel is given to the owner of the first parcel.

Volunteer Efforts - Strengthening volunteer efforts could help with contributions of cash, materials or labor. Playgrounds, community gardens, and farmers markets have been developed through volunteer efforts. Adopt-A-Trail and Adopt-A-Greenway programs are examples of volunteer programs successfully implemented in other areas. Volunteer hours can also count toward in-kind funding for some grants and funding applications.

Prioritizing Criteria

Overarching criteria are based on input during meetings, stakeholder interviews, questionnaire responses, and other input received during the completion of projects since the 2008 Plan. Priorities also considered trends of users within the park system.

Through questionnaire responses, the most important focus areas for new projects include in order of importance:

1. Trails for pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian use
2. Preserves
3. Waterfront parks
4. Overnight camping

This list provides general preference for types of projects to develop in the park system. Specific projects should then be evaluated using the following criteria. This set of criteria was also derived from questionnaire responses and responses obtained during the meetings. The individual projects can then be placed in the capital improvement program with relative priority determining the timeframe for implementation.

General Priorities for Project Funding		Weight
Safety - project will create a safer environment for users on an appropriate site		4
Collaboration - project involves the community and has partners in developing and maintaining the site		4
Quality - project is viable, well-designed, and enhances or protects the environment long-term		3
Access -project provides better or new public access incorporated into the surroundings		3
Affordability - project will squeeze the most value and provide opportunity for all users		3
Multi-Use - project serve more than one function with an educational component included		2
Funding - project is timely and has funding from sources such as grants or other resources		2

Project Scoring Guide: <i>Projects are scored from 0 to 5 with 0 not meeting criterion and five exceeding criterion.</i>	Safety	Collaboration	Quality	Access	Affordability	Multi-Use	Funding	Seasonality	Raw Score	Weighted Score	Priority
Relative Importance (Weight)	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	1			
Badger Mountain Master Planning and Improvements	4	5	4	4	4	4	2	3	30	64	1
Horn Rapids Master Plan Update and Improvements	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	31	63	1
Hover Park Controlled Access	5	2	5	2	3	2	5	1	25	51	3
Hover Park Master Plan and Improvements	4	2	4	4	4	4	5	1	28	56	2
Rattlesnake Shooting Range Expansion	5	4	1	1	3	2	5	3	24	49	3
Two-Rivers Park and Trail design	3	2	3	4	5	4	5	3	29	55	2
Vista Park Improvement	4	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	13	30	3
Columbia River Trail (Kennewick, Two-Rivers Park, Hover Park)	1	3	4	4	4	3	2	3	24	47	3

20-Year Capital Improvement Program

Biennium	Project	Funding	Category	Facility	Cost
2015-16	Establishment of Candy Mountain Preserve	D, M	A	OS, TP, TB, I, EQ	\$1,500,000
2015-16	Two Rivers Park Nature Trail Boardwalk	L	D	WF, P, F, I, SB, B	\$75,000
2017-18	Horn Rapids Park Compound Expansion	L	D	WF, OS, TP, TB, EQ, F	\$75,000
2017-18	Vista Park Remodel	L	R	PE	\$50,000
2019-20	Two Rivers Park Playground Remodel	L	R	WF, P, F, I, SB, B	\$80,000

2019-20	Two Rivers Park Restroom Replacement	L	R	WF, P, F, I, SB, B	\$200,000
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*Category Acquisition, Renovation, Development, Restoration

**Funding: Local, General Obligation Bond, Unknown, Donation, Revenue Bonds, Matching Grant, Other Bonds

The CIP includes all facility types that apply for each project with the primary use listed first. Facility types specify what funding options can be considered use the following categories:

Facility Type	Symbol	Facility Type	Symbol
Aquarium	A	Open Space, Greenway	OS
Administration, Maintenance	AM	ORV Facility, Trail	ORV
Boating Facilities	B	Picnic, Day Use	P
Basketball, Other Courts	BB	Play Equipment	PE
Botanical Garden	BG	Open Play Field	PF
Baseball, Softball Fields	BS	Swimming Beach	SB
Camping Facility	C	Swimming, Indoor Pool	SI
Community, Senior Center	CC	Swimming, Outdoor	SO
Equestrian Facility/Trail	EQ	Tennis Court	T
Fishing Area	F	Trail, Bicycle	TB
Football/Soccer Fields	FS	Trail, Pedestrian	TP
Golf Course	G	Winter Sports Facility	W
Interpretive/Nature Study	I	Waterfront/Beach Access	WF
Neighborhood Park	NPK	Zoo	Z

Appendices

Appendix A - Recommended Department Policies and Development Criteria

Appendix B - Cost Estimates for Park Improvements

Appendix C - 2007-2008 Parks Questionnaire and previous Park Surveys

Appendix D - Comments



The Burrowing Owl (Athene cunicularia), with its laser-focused gaze and peculiar habits, is an iconic summer visitor to the Columbia Basin and an unofficial mascot of Benton County Parks. The Parks System's missions of recreation, conservation, and education are represented and facilitated by the Burrowing Owl. Habitat restoration projects, such as those targeting these charismatic birds, promote wildlife tourism, volunteer participation, and inter-agency cooperation in our community (photo: Don Baccus, <http://donb.furfly.net>).