Kittitas County Commissioners
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Laura Osiadacz, District 2
Obie O’Brien, District 3

Yakima River Access Citizen Advisory Committee
Paul Jewell - Former Kittitas County Commissioner
Calvana Carper - Development Services Office Assistant
Donald Bechard - Fisherman
Dave Bouta - Fisherman
Ryan Gausman - Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation/Mule Deer Foundation
Judy Hallisey - Kittitas Chapter of the Audubon Society
Theo Leonard - Upper County Resident
William Meyer - Washington Department Fish & Wildlife
Clay Meyers - Kittitas County Sheriff’s Office/Public Safety
Mike Milligan - Outdoorsman
Scott Nicolai - Yakama Nation Staff
Gary Cox - Landowner
Nicky Pasi - Mountains to Sound Greenery Trust
Joe Rotter - Fly Fishing Guide
John Schultz - Fisherman/Hunter
Jack Seth - River Rescuer
Kyle Thayer - Landowner
Todd Thayer - Landowner
Steve Worley - Fly Fishing Guide

Public Lands Advisory Committee
Laura Osiadacz - Chair, Kittitas County Commissioner
Rachel Kane - Development Services Permit Technician
Gary Berndt - Former Chair of Public Lands Advisory Committee
Anita Boyum - Former School Board Member
Chris Cruise - Small Business Owner, Outdoorsman
Dave Duncan - Washington Cattlemen's Association, Outdoorsman
Bill Essman - Outdoorsman, Former WDFW Enforcement
Marc Eylar - Outdoorsman, Noxious Weed Control Board
Jim Hanson - Farmer, Teanaway Resident, Outdoorsman
Greg Parker - Small Business Owner, Mountain Bike Enthusiast
Rory Savage - Business Owner, Realtor, Outdoorsman
Justin Vincett - Farmer, Outdoorsman
Keith Winter - Business Owner, Outdoorsman
Steve Worley - Outfitter, River Guide, Outdoorsman

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Executive summary

Chapter 1: Participants
The planning process was chaired by Paul Jewell, District 1 County Commissioner and overseen by the 17-member Yakima River Access Citizen Advisory Committee and the 12-member Public Lands Advisory Committee during a series of extensive workshops in April, May, and June 2018. Committee members, who were recruited through a public selection process, have extensive recreational and economic interests in the Yakima River including wildlife viewing, fishing, boating, picnicking, hiking, camping, and hunting activities as well as conservation, agriculture, forestry, fishery, and retail endeavors.

Chapter 2: River context
The Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers are used for fishing, wading, tubing, kayaking, canoeing, recreational floating, guided river rafting, fish rafting, drift boating, and jet boating, especially during the summer months. The Yakima River is ranked between Class I and Class II rapids in the Upper Canyon and Class I in the Lower Canyon, depending on the circumstances and season.

The Yakima River corridor is also used for hiking, particularly on the Palouse to Cascade Trail (PCT – formerly the Iron Horse Trail) and adjacent trails into Cle Elum, Ellensburg, and the Lower Canyon, as well as wildlife viewing, scenic sightseeing, picnicking, camping, and seasonal hunting. The upper and lower canyons provide significant aesthetic opportunities of diverse geological and ecological features.

Chapter 3: Recreation demands and economic impacts
Kittitas County’s principal market are counties served by major roadways including Interstate 90 serving King and Pierce Counties to the west and Grant County to the east, US-2 and US-97 serving Snohomish and Chelan Counties to the northwest and Douglas County to the northeast, and Interstate 82 serving Yakima and Benton Counties to the south.

Given the significantly larger populations residing in western Washington, even minor increases in tourist attraction from western Washington could easily generate greater tourist visitation volumes than major increases from the smaller populations in central and eastern Washington.

The Kittitas County geotourism demand and economic analysis results indicate the Yakima River contains attributes and assets that currently and potentially generate considerable resident and tourist activities of the most interest and economic potential. Whether this demand and economic potential can be effectively managed to the betterment of the river’s environmental and recreational prospects will depend on the insights incorporated into this public access plan’s proposals and implementation.

Chapter 4: Public access goals
Public accessibility goals include statements governing river safety conditions, safe access on the rivers, emergency response capabilities, changing river conditions, river access gaps, multiple use capabilities, access to other public lands, wildlife habitat conservation, wildlife interpretive trails and exhibits, scenic attributes and viewpoints, ADA access, low impact development methods, comprehensive branding and promotion, joint ventures, and multiple, synergistic funding sources and opportunities.

Chapter 5: Public access sites and river classifications
The resulting inventory of publicly accessible sites consists of 43 existing and 5 proposed or a total of 48 sites along the 85 miles of the Yakima River, 7 miles of the Cle Elum River, and 11 miles of the Teanaway River.
The existing inventory of 43 sites includes 7 owned by local jurisdictions (Kittitas County, Cle Elum, and Ellensburg), 14 by state agencies (Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission - P&RC, Fish & Wildlife - WDFW, and Transportation WDOT), 13 by federal agencies (US Forest Service - USFS, Bonneville Power Administration - BPA, and Bureau of Land Management - BLM), 1 by Kittitas Reclamation District - KRD, 2 by Suncadia, and 6 by other private parties.

The proposed inventory of 5 sites includes 2 by local agencies (Kittitas County and Ellensburg), 1 by Suncadia, and 2 to be acquired from private landowners.

River hazards include permanent restrictions such as dams or fixed structures, launching impediments, and landslide zones. Natural and sometimes relatively permanent hazards include reservoir water releases, shallow water with overhanging trees, rapids or swift water stretches, logjams, and sweepers, among others.

There are numerous permanent and natural hazardous restrictions that require different skill levels and watercraft and determine which river segments are safely usable for specific watercraft and river uses.

This public access plan includes a series of maps identifying public access sites and the river stretches affected by hazards and safely usable for emergency response launches, shoreline fishing and wading, fishing tube floating, kayaking, and canoeing, recreational floating, river guided rafting, fishing rafting and drift boating, and jet boating as well as wildlife trails, trail connections, day-use and picnicking, camping, hunting, and sightseeing.

**Chapter 6: Existing and proposed public access sites**
The proposals in this public access plan are based on the results of initial Google map and aerial inventory, Washington Hometown/Manastash Maps interactive maps, aerials, and property maps, field verification, workshops with user and interest groups and state and federal agencies, and finally by site verification with the knowledgeable members of the Yakima River Access Citizens Advisory and Public Lands Advisory Committees.

The proposals are **CONCEPTUAL**, in some instances, subject to further study and coordination with public and private participants that may modify the eventual project particulars.

**Chapter 7: Illustrative development concepts**
There are key existing public sites that need to be improved and new public access sites that should be acquired and developed to resolve river safety issues, fill gaps in access, and increase multi-use opportunities.

Illustrative development concepts were created for these 10 key public access sites to determine if and how they could be improved to meet the goals listed above. The concepts were based on workshops with user and interest groups and state and federal agencies, and finally by site verification with the knowledgeable members of the Yakima River Access Citizens Advisory and Public Lands Advisory Committees.

The proposals are **CONCEPTUAL**, in some instances, subject to further study and coordination with public and private participants that may modify the eventual project particulars.

**Chapter 8: Implementation program**
The implementing actions are comprehensive, **but not inclusive of all possible options** that may implement Yakima River public access potentials or that could be submitted and funded under competitive project applications.
1: Introduction

Purpose

The Kittitas County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) commissioned this Yakima River public access planning effort to determine:

- **River geology, ecology, and history** - including the geological features that define the river corridors and canyons and native wildlife habitats that resulted from natural occurrences - as well as the impact and importance of human settlement and utilization of river features.

- **River hydrology** - including the flood control and water reservoir measures that have been installed and managed on the hydrological characteristics of the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers and the impacts these improvements have on public recreational use.

- **Recreation demands and economic potentials** - including the volume of future county residents and tourists who will seek to access the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers for wildlife viewing, shoreline fishing, kayaking and canoeing, recreational floating, river guided rafting, fishing from a raft or drift boat, jet boating, picnicking, camping, hunting, and other activities - and the economic opportunities to be generated by such activities.

- **Public access sites** - including the location, improvements, ownership, and utilization of the numerous public and private shoreline riverfronts that are publicly accessible on the navigable stretches of the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers in Kittitas County.

- **River hazards** - including diversion dams, irrigation flume, water releases, logjams, sweepers, rapids, and other seasonal and permanent hazards that affect safety and requirements for public emergency responses including the number and location of jet boat launch sites.

- **Access site enhancements** - including improvements to existing sites and the need for potential acquisition and development of new sites to support safe and accessible access that reduce high risk sites and situations, road and railroad conflicts, river, and Palouse to Cascade Trail (PCT) gaps - and increase wildlife and conservation opportunities, scenic viewpoints, day use activities, trail connections, and multiple public access sponsors and funding.

- **Implementation** - including illustrative designs for strategic access site projects, criteria to rank capital project funding applications, sponsoring organization assignment and participation in public education, marketing, and promotion of the public access recreation and economic potentials within the extent of the Yakima and Cle Elum River corridors.

Participants

The planning process was chaired by Paul Jewell, District 1 County Commissioner and overseen by the 17-member Yakima River Access Citizen Advisory Committee and the 12-member Public Lands Advisory Committee during a series of extensive workshops in April, May, and June 2018.

Committee members, who were recruited through a public selection process, have extensive recreational and economic interests in the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers including wildlife viewing, fishing, boating, picnicking, hiking, camping, and hunting activities as well as conservation, agriculture, forestry, fishery, and retail endeavors.

In addition to biweekly meetings, committee members hosted a series of user and interest group workshops, conducted an on-line survey, participated in a day-long tour of strategic public access constraints and opportunities in May, and hosted open houses in Cle Elum and Ellensburg in June during the development of this public access plan.

Public outreach

**User and interest group workshops**
The consultant team conducted a series of workshops at the beginning of the process to identify issues, concerns, proposals, and priorities with various river user and interest groups including:
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<th>Wildlife</th>
<th>Hunting</th>
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<td>Fishing and guides</td>
<td>State and tribal agencies</td>
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<td>Rafters</td>
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<td>Camping and hiking</td>
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The 90-minute workshops involved 47 persons representing various interest groups as well as their own opinions - the results of the workshops and a list of attendees are provided in Appendix A.

**On-line survey**
The consultant team and committee members designed and the county hosted and promoted a river use on-line survey to solicit the behaviors, opinions, and priorities of county residents and tourists during the planning process. The survey was publicized on the county website, distributed to interest groups by committee members, and promoted at the workshops and open houses.

A total of 373 respondents completed the survey. The respondents were self-selected and do not necessarily represent the behavior and opinions of all county residents or tourists - the results of the on-line survey are provided in Appendix A.

**Open houses**
Open house events were conducted by the consultant team and committee members in the Upper Kittitas County Courthouse in Cle Elum and Manastash Room in the Kittitas Valley Event Center on 19 June to preview proposals and obtain feedback from the public.

The consultant team exhibited maps for each type of river use ranging from shoreline fishing to recreational floating to rafting to wildlife trails; photo sheets for each of the existing and proposed 46 publicly accessible sites on the Yakima, Cle Elum, and Teanaway Rivers, and illustrative development concepts for 10 proposed specific enhancements to existing sites and new site acquisitions and developments.

Over 40 people attended and participated in the open houses - comments and the names for those that signed in are provided in Appendix A.
Climate

The Kittitas Valley is located in the arid eastward side of the Cascade Mountains at an elevation about 3,170 feet above sea level. Mean temperatures vary from a high of 82 degrees in July to a low of 20 degrees Fahrenheit in January with extreme variations recorded at -3 to a high of 102 degrees Fahrenheit.

Average annual precipitation is about 18 inches of rain and 65 inches of snow over 101 days with a mean growing season with temperatures above 32 degrees Fahrenheit for about 170-190 days. Approximately 80% of the precipitation occurs from October through March with less than 6% falling during June, July, and August. The valley receives about 201 sunny days per year making it a popular recreation area.

Earth

The Kittitas Valley is located within the western edge of the North Rocky Mountain System. The Cascade Mountains were created by continuous volcanic activity along the border of the underlying continental plates. The mountains were in turn, subject to the action of periodic glacial intrusions - the most recent being the Pleistocene glacial period more than 15,000 years ago.

The Pleistocene glacial intrusion created a series of glacier dams in Missoula, Montana that subsequently breached and flooded the eastern portions of the state a number of times creating the Columbia River drainage channels.

The Kittitas Valley is composed of a series of alluvial benches filled in by the Columbia River during the Missoula Floods. The benches are in turn bisected by a number of tributary drainage corridors created by the Columbia and Yakima Rivers. Over time, the rivers and tributary drainage streams created dramatic hillsides and overlooks, particularly of the Columbia River basin.

Water

Four rivers and a number of minor streams drain the Kittitas Valley:

- **Yakima River** - the longest river in Washington State, drains the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains beginning in Keechelus Lake, at an elevation of 2,449 feet and extending through Lake Easton, merging with the Cle Elum River, Teanaway River, Naches River, and eventually merging with the Columbia River in Richland. The river flows through Easton, Cle Elum, around Ellensburg and Yakima, and southeast to Richland, where it flows into the Columbia River at a distance of 214 miles, an elevation of 340 feet, and an average drop of 9.85 feet per mile. About 85 miles of the river is located in Kittitas County beginning at Keechelus Lake and ending at Roza Dam at the Yakima County line. Average daily streamflow varies from 648 cubic feet per second (cfs) below Keechelus Lake to 2,468 cfs at Thorp Bridge to 3,206 cfs in the Lower Canyon.
- **Kachess River** – drains the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains beginning at Chickamin Ridge in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness region at an elevation of 4,857 feet then into Kachess and Little Kachess Lakes merging with the Yakima River at Lake Easton.
- **Cle Elum River** – drains the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains beginning in the 8-mile long Cle Elum Lake and merging with the Yakima River west of Cle Elum 28 miles later. Average daily streamflow is about 268 cubic feet per second (cfs) when the Dam is not releasing water. The river’s name derives from the Yakama phrase tie-el-lum meaning “swift waters”.
- **Teanaway River** – drains the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains beginning at about 5,000 feet in elevation in Teanaway Community Forest and merging with the Yakima River east of Cle Elum. Average daily streamflow is about 116 cubic feet per second (cfs). The river’s name derives from the Yakama phrase Shaptin meaning “drying place”.

**Floodplains**
Floodplains and flooded areas include alluvial soils - which are former river and stream beds, tidal pools and retention ponds, that fill during heavy rainfall, sometimes infrequently, often for extended periods during rainy seasons. There are numerous, sizable flood prone areas in the lowlands adjacent to the Yakima River mitigated by a series of dikes.

Some segments along the river shoreline may be potentially affected by the floodwaters possible during the worst storm in an average 100-year period. In such instances, due to the dams and dikes, floodwater depths are shallow and not very extensive.

**Lakes**
Lakes are water bodies greater than 20 acres in size or more than 6 feet in depth. There are 4 major lakes within the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers drainage areas:

- **Keechelus Lake** – is located at Snoqualmie Pass at an elevation of 2,521 feet with a lake surface of 2,408.5 acres. Although a
natural lake, Keechelus Lake’s capacity and discharge is controlled by Keechelus Dam, a 128-foot high earthfill structure built in 1917. The US Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) manages Keechelus Lake’s storage reservoir capacity of 157,800 acre-feet.

- **Kachess Lake** - Kachess Lake is a lake and reservoir along the course of the Kachess River. The upper part of the lake, north of a narrows, is called Little Kachess Lake. The Kachess River flows into the lake from the north, and out from the south. The lake is used as a storage reservoir for the Yakima Project, an irrigation project run by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). Although a natural lake, Kachess Lake's capacity and discharge is controlled by Kachess Dam, a 115-foot high earthfill structure built in 1912. As a storage reservoir, Kachess Lake's active capacity is 239,000 acre-feet. The name Kachess comes from an Indian term meaning "more fish", in contrast to Keechelus Lake, whose name means "few fish".

- **Lake Easton** – the Kachess River flows into the lake from the north and out from the south through the 1929 Easton Diversion Dam at an elevation of 2,165 feet. Lake Easton is located south of Interstate 90 and northwest of Easton and is the primary attraction of Lake Easton State Park. The Palouse to Cascade Trail (PCT – formerly Iron Horse Trail) is located immediately south of the lake. The Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) operates Lake Easton as a storage reservoir.

- **Cle Elum Lake** - is a lake and reservoir along the course of the Cle Elum River located at an elevation of 2,223 feet. Cle Elum Lake is used as a storage reservoir for the Yakima Project, an irrigation project run by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). Although a natural lake, Cle Elum Lake’s capacity and discharge is controlled by Cle Elum Dam, a 165-foot high earthfill structure built in 1933. As a storage reservoir, Cle Elum Lake's active capacity is 436,900 acre-feet.

The total storage capacity of these lakes on the Yakima River in the upper Kittitas Valley is 1,031,700 acre-feet.

**Wetlands**

Small wet spots, bogs, peat and muck deposits of from 1 to 3 acres and larger ponds and water bodies are scattered throughout the river eddies and back channels located along the Yakima River drainage corridor supporting diverse wildlife habitat.

**Wildlife**

Habitat conservation areas are critical to the survival of the Yakima River’s diverse plant and wildlife communities. Habitats encompass a variety of areas including large parcels of contiguous undeveloped land, special areas like streams or wetlands, and structural elements like rocky shorelines or standing dead trees.

The ecological value of these areas depends on the quantity, quality, diversity, and seasonality of the food, water, and cover that are provided wildlife species. A particular site's value also depends on proximity to other usable habitats, the presence of rare species, and the rarity of the habitat type.

Wildlife habitats are generally classified as marine, estuarine, freshwater, and terrestrial categories. Many wildlife species rely upon most, even all, of these habitat categories for survival. The Yakima River has 2 categories of wildlife habitat.

**Freshwater habitat**

Freshwater bodies include lakes, rivers, creeks, wetlands, riparian areas, and all other types of water bodies not included in estuaries or marine habitat that have a low ocean salt content. Freshwater habitat supports different wildlife than saltwater systems, particularly species that depend on wetland vegetation. However, 87% of all wildlife and fish species are estimated to depend on streams, wetlands, or other freshwater bodies during some part of their life cycle for drinking water, foraging, nesting, and migratory movements.

**Riparian areas** - are the wooded or vegetated corridors located along the Yakima River’s streams and springs. These riparian corridors support free flowing water or moist conditions that support high water tables, certain soil characteristics, and vegetation that are transitional between freshwater and terrestrial habitat zones. The transitional edges are usually defined by a
change in plant composition, relative plant abundance, and the end of high soil moisture content. Yakima River riparian corridors transport water, soil, plant seeds, and nutrients to downstream areas - and thereby serve as important migration routes for many wildlife species. These riparian areas, though small in overall size, are one of the most important sources of wildlife bio-diversity in the Yakima River landscape.

Freshwater wetland habitats are water bodies less than 20 acres in size or less than 6 feet in depth and include marshes, swamps, bogs, seeps, wet meadows, shallow ponds, and lakes along the Yakima River corridor. Like riparian areas, these wetlands support species in great diversities, densities, and productivity. The wooded areas that are located adjacent to these wetlands provide nesting areas, forage, and other cover that is critical to wetland-dependent species, such as most waterfowl or small mammals like beaver.

**Wetlands** - there are 2 principal wetland types along the Yakima River:

- **Scrub/shrub wetlands** - with seasonal flooding, characterized by hardhack, willow, red alder or redosier dogwood,
- **Shallow marsh** - deep marsh, and open water wetlands.

Generally, these riparian zones and wetlands provide substantially more important wildlife habitat than forested areas. These riparian zones are also passageways for wildlife migrating between or around developed areas adjacent to Easton, Cle Elum, and Ellensburg. These riparian vegetation also maintain optimum fish spawning conditions by providing shade, bank stabilization, a breeding ground for insects, and a source of organic material for the stream.

**Wildlife species** - urban and agricultural developments within the Kittitas Valley have substantially reduced wildlife habitat through the years. However, valuable habitat qualities still remain in the undeveloped, large native vegetation tracts and around the remaining wetlands and riparian (streamside) forests of the Yakima River.

Yakima River wetlands and riparian zones support muskrat, mink, otter, beaver, raccoon, and weasel. Water bodies, wetlands, and adjacent agricultural fields also provide suitable nesting and feeding habitat for mallard ducks, American widgeons, green-wing teal, common coot, common merganser, blue-winged teals, great blue heron, and lessor and greater Canadian goose.

The plateaus and cliffs that overlook the Yakima River provide habitat for the bald eagle and osprey. The northern bald eagle and the northern spotted owl are listed as a potentially threatened or endangered species on Washington State’s endangered and threatened lists. No other endangered or threatened species are known to occur in the Kittitas Valley.

**Fisheries** – Yakima River streams provide freshwater habitat for species of anadromous fish, including coho, chinook, chum salmon, and steelhead species that live in saltwater but return to spawn in freshwater. These fish species have evolved over time to fit the specific characteristics of Yakima River streams of origin - and are uniquely imprinted compared with other members of the same species.

Anadromous fish require cool, uncontaminated water with healthy streambeds and insect populations. Vegetated riparian areas maintain stream habitats by stabilizing water temperature, producing an insect supply, controlling erosion, and providing woody debris.

Naturally occurring or established species include smallmouth bass, yellow bullhead, common carp, channel catfish, crawfish, northern pikeminnow, suckerfish, walleye, and mountain whitefish. These species spawn and rear in medium sized gravel beds that are provided medium velocity water flow along the Yakima River creek channels, swamps, marshes, perennial and seasonal streams.

The Yakima River historically supported large runs of anadromous salmonids with estimated runs of 300,000 to 960,000 fish a year in the 1880s. These numbers have declined drastically, and 3 salmon species were extirpated (eliminated) - sockeye, summer Chinook, and coho.
While still well below historic levels, in more recent years anadromous fish populations improved through a combination of fisheries management, habitat, facility improvements, hatchery supplementation, and reintroduction efforts. Habitat conditions are improving for steelhead. Yakama Nation efforts using hatchery fish re-established naturally reproducing coho salmon. Yakama Nation and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) have begun reintroduction of sockeye and summer Chinook salmon.

Terrestrial habitat
Terrestrial areas are the upland lands located above the Yakima River freshwater water zones. The zones may extend from the level lowlands that border marsh or creek banks to the tops of the bluffs, hills, or foothills located around the river corridor.

Plants - Washington plant communities are divided into 3 major vegetation groupings including:
- Forests
- Grasslands and shrub/grass communities
- Timberline and alpine areas

The upper reaches of the Yakima River include some forested vegetation zones. The zones are defined by the different climates created by different elevations and the distinctive vegetation type that becomes dominant in a climax forest after the forest has progressed through successive stages of natural development. The dominant species defined by the zone usually reproduces to maintain dominance until some disturbance, such as fire, alters the zone’s environment.

Deciduous tree species such as red alder or big leaf maple or golden chinkapin are generally dominant on the lands that have been cleared for urban and agriculture uses in the lower reaches of the Yakima River. Black cottonwood and Oregon ash, along with red alder and big-leaf maple, tend to grow along the Yakima River’s major watercourses.

Portions of the Yakima River corridor include several second growth lowland forested cover types including coniferous, deciduous, and mixed coniferous/deciduous forests. This forest type has marginal value as commercial timber or as unique vegetation. The majority of commercially important timber resources have been harvested, usually along with associated residential land development.

The Yakima River’s lowland areas are covered by grasses, agricultural crops, and riparian vegetation that is prevalent along creek floodplains and at the edge of wetlands or open bodies of water. Deciduous hardwood trees including red alder, cottonwood, Oregon Ash, willow, and associated understory species are dominant within the wetland areas.

Animals - urban and agricultural developments within the Kittitas Valley substantially reduced wildlife habitat through the years. However, valuable habitat qualities still remain in undeveloped, large native vegetation tracts and around the remaining wetlands and riparian (streamside) forests along the Yakima River.

The Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers wooded areas support a wide variety of large and small mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. The most common mammals include chipmunks, rabbits, marmots, skunks, and raccoons. A small number of larger mammals including mule deer, elk, mountain goat, coyote, wolf, bobcat, and cougar likely occur at the edge of the upper reaches of the Cascade foothills where large contiguous forested areas remain. Bighorn sheep inhabit the high cliffs overlooking the Yakima River in the Lower Canyon.

Crows, jays, nuthatches, woodpeckers, sparrows, winter wrens, ruffed grouse, blue grouse, quail, band-tailed pigeon, turtle dove, pheasant, partridge, Merriam’s turkey, owls, hawks, Osprey, and eagles find suitable habitat for feeding and nesting in the upland forested areas and stream valleys along the Yakima River. Many of these species can tolerate adjacent urban developments in and around Easton, Cle Elum, and Ellensburg so long as some habitat and connecting migration corridors remain undisturbed.

Important terrestrial habitat elements include tall trees along the Yakima River shorelines, mature forests with snags and fallen trees, and undisturbed mature forest near or surrounding wetlands. These habitat elements are primarily important to bird species that nest
Nuttall's cottontail
River otter
Mule deer
Elk
Bighorn sheep – Lower Canyon
Beaver
Fisher
Coyote
Wolf
Bobcat
Cougar
and perch in the trees, and to small mammals like beaver and river otter that rely upon an interface between the undisturbed terrestrial and aquatic areas.

**Birding habitats** - Audubon of Washington maintains a series of birding trails for different regions of the state including the “Sun & Sage Loop” that highlights portions of Kittitas County. Audubon lists the following sites on the Kittitas County portion of the birding trail that represent diverse birding opportunities:

- **City of Ellensburg Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park** - 117 acres of grass, floodplain, riparian woods along the Yakima River. The 1-mile trail loop through the park attracts lots of birds, particularly in the spring including American Goldfinches, Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Western Tanagers, Tree, Violet-green, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows, and occasional Wood Ducks. Summers feature Ospreys, Yellow Warblers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and House Wrens. On winter ponds host Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, Common Mergansers, Canada Geese, Pied-billed Grebes; and American Dippers on the river. Year-round inhabitants include Black-capped Chickadees, Belted Kingfishers, Northern Flickers, and Downy Woodpeckers.

- **BLM’s Ringer Loop Nature Trail** - 200 acres of meadows, cottonwood groves, and ponderosa pines including WDFW’s restoration of 176 acres along the Yakima River at the entry into the Lower Canyon. The braided 0.5-mile nature trail to the shoreline in the spring hosts Tree, Violet-green, Bank, and Cliff Swallows. Blue-winged Teal, Wood Ducks, Western Sandpipers, Western Wood-Pewees, Wilson’s Snipes, and Ospreys and Red-tailed Hawks in the summer. American Dippers and Common Mergansers float by on swift Yakima River in the fall and winter.

- **BLM’s Umtanum Creek Recreation Area** – over the river on the suspension bridge and up the 8-mile trail into the canyon supports talus slopes, meadow, creek, and riparian shrubs. In the spring and summer cottonwood trees hosts Bullock’s Orioles and Red-naped Sapsuckers, blue elderberry bushes hosts Spotted Towhees, bare branches host Lazuli Buntings and Yellow-breasted Chats. Eastern Kingbirds visit the north river shore along with Golden Eagles, Prairie Falcons, Red-tailed Hawks, and Violet-green and Tree Swallows. See Bald Eagles in winter. Year round inhabitants include Chukars, California Quails, Northern Flickers, Mourning Doves, Rock and Canyon Wrens. Bighorn sheep and mule deer are frequent visitors.

**Historical development**

**Indian settlements**

The first inhabitants of the Kittitas Valley were the Psch-wan-wappams (stony ground people) also known as the Kittitas band of the Yakama or Upper Yakama. Although the Kittitas were distinct from the Yakama, settlers and the federal government grouped the Kittitas with the larger Yakama Tribe for treaty purposes.

Interpretations of the meaning of the word Kittitas vary from shale rock, white chalk, or white clay probably referring to the region’s soil composition. Another interpretation is that the bread made from the root kous was called kit-tit that grew in the Kittitas Valley. “Tash” is generally accepted to mean “place of existence.”

The Kittitas Valley was one of the few places in Washington where both camas (sweet onion) and kous (a root used to make a bread) grew. These were staples that could be dried, made into cakes, and saved for winter consumption. Yakama, Cayous, Nez Perce, and other tribes gathered in the valley to harvest these foods, fish, hold council talks, settle disputes, socialize, trade goods, race their horses, and play games.

Fur trader Alexander Ross entered the Kittitas Valley in 1814 to trade for horses and stumbled upon an enormous tribal gathering that he described in Fur Traders of the Far West:

“This mammoth camp could not have contained less than 3,000 men, exclusive of women and children, and treble that number of horses. It was a grand and imposing sight in the wilderness, covering more than 6 miles in every direction. Councils, root gathering, hunting, horse-racing, foot-racing, gambling, singing, dancing, drumming, yelling, and a thousand other things which I cannot mention, were going on around us”.

Ross called this valley in which he encountered the encampment “the Eyakema Valley” but subsequent histories of the region identify the location as the Kittitas Valley.

**Early settlements**
Beginning in 1847 Catholic Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate established missions in the lower Yakima Valley. In 1848 Oblate Father Charles Pandosy founded the Immaculate Conception Mission on Manastash Creek near what would become Ellensburg. Pandosy served at the mission until 1849.

On March 2, 1853, Isaac Stevens the newly appointed Territorial Governor established the Washington Territory. On June 9, 1855, Yakama Chief Kamiakin and other tribal leaders signed a treaty with Stevens ceding claim to all 16,920 square miles of the tribe's lands except a 1,875-square-mile portion of land to be used for a reservation.

The future Kittitas County was part of the ceded land, along with the present Chelan, Yakima, Franklin, Adams, and large portions of Douglas and Klickitat Counties, about one-fourth of the present state of Washington. Although the treaty was not scheduled to be ratified and go into effect until 1859, within one month of obtaining Kamiakin’s signature, Territorial Governor Stevens advertised in the Puget Sound Courier that the ceded lands were open to settlement.

**Gold and the Indian Wars**
Gold miners crossing the Kittitas and Yakima Valleys on the way to northeastern Washington combined with the threat of imminent white settlement angered the Indians. Kamiakin and other tribal leaders, having signed the treaty reluctantly, rejected it almost immediately. The Yakama Indian Wars of 1855-1856 and of 1858 followed.

From May to September of 1856, Major Granville O. Haller directed a military encampment in the Kittitas Valley. It was not until after 1859 that many of the Yakamas were forced onto the reservation near Fort Simcoe. Congress ratified the Treaty of Yakama and President James Buchanan signed the ratification proclamation on April 18, 1859.

Gold miners crossing the Kittitas region continued in volume as they had been during the Indian Wars. Cattlemen brought herds to graze in the Kittitas Valley almost immediately, and within a few years non-Indian settlement in the area began in earnest.

**Cattle of Kittitas Valley**
The Kittitas Valley became a stopping place for cowboys driving herds north toward mining camps in Canada and northwest toward the Seattle-Tacoma market. By the late 1860s, cattle ranchers established land claims and cattle became the area’s foremost industry.

By the late 1890s, the beef cattle ranching industry was somewhat eclipsed by farming, especially growing hay and wheat. Better rail transportation to get herds to market stimulated resurgence in the region’s cattle industry shortly thereafter. From the early 1870s to the 1960s many farmers also kept dairy cows and sold milk to local creameries and shipped to Seattle. The Kittitas Valley also produced a commercial wool crop.

On November 24, 1883, Territorial Governor William Augustus Newell signed the act creating Kittitas County. The land had been part of Yakima County (established January 21, 1865). Residents of the Kittitas area petitioned the Washington Territorial Legislative Assembly demanding that Yakima County either be divided into two counties or that, if the county were not divided, Ellensburg rather than Yakima City become Kittitas’s county seat. As a result, Kittitas County was split off from Yakima County and Ellensburg was named the new county’s county seat.

**Irrigating the Valley**
The farming potential of the rich Kittitas Valley bottomland was apparent to early settlers, who dug simple irrigation ditches. In 1885, the Ellensburg Water Company began surveying canal routes and building simple canals. By the early 1900s the Cascade Canal and Town Ditch on the east side of the Yakima River in Ellensburg and the West Side Ditch on the west side of the river were irrigating more than 26,000 acres in the lower part of the Kittitas Valley.
spurring the growth of the region’s commercial fruit industry.

In 1911 the Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) began preliminary surveys and cost analysis for what would become the High Line Canal, the Kittitas Valley’s largest irrigation project. Lack of funding caused the project to lie dormant until 1925 when the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) became involved in what was called the Kittitas Project. In 1926 construction on the canal (officially called the Kittitas Division of the Yakima Project) commenced. The canal was completed in 1932.

The High Line Canal diverts water from the Yakima River just above the town of Easton and transports it into irrigation canals completely encircling the Kittitas Valley, terminating where Turbine Ditch spills into the Yakima River. Water storage reservoirs were created at Kachess in 1912, Keechelus in 1917, and Cle Elum in 1933.

Once full irrigation became available, irrigated farmland began producing pea seed for commercial growers, sweet corn, potatoes, tree fruit, and hay. Wheat, however, continued to be largely dry land farmed.

Beginning in the 1950s Kittitas-grown timothy hay (high protein grass-hay) was exported to other states, to Japan as horse and dairy feed, and to Europe as feed for thoroughbred racehorses. Timothy hay is now the largest single cash crop in Kittitas County.

**Towns along the Yakima River**
The logging industry in the Kittitas area began in the late 1870s concentrated in the western end of the county. Lake Keechelus, Lake Kachess, and Lake Cle Elum all had logging camps.

The discovery of gold in Swauk Creek in 1873 prompted a gold rush, the creation of a mining district, and the growth of Liberty and Swauk. Placer-mined gold nuggets are the most common form of gold found in the region, but the Swauk Creek area is also one of the few locations in the world where crystalline gold wire has been found - a highly unusual formation valued not for its weight but for its delicate wire-like sprigs of filigreed gold. It is so rare that most specimens are in museum collections.

Thorlp, a quiet farming town 9 miles northwest of Ellensburg, was home to a gristmill, 2 sawmills, and a creamery. Thorp served as an important community hub for farmers throughout the county.

Located at a traditional gathering spot for Indians and settlers alike, Ellensburg became the major town in the Kittitas region. The arrival of the Northern Pacific (NP) Railroad in 1886 and the establishment of the Washington State Normal School (now Central Washington University - CWU), a teacher’s college, in 1891 spurred growth in Ellensburg.

Roslyn and Cle Elum prospered because of their large coal deposits. Coal mining in the Kittitas region was initially developed by the Northern Pacific (NP) Railroad in 1886 to fuel steam locomotives. The Northern Pacific (NP) owned the Roslyn town site and many area mines.

Easton, originally a sawmill town, was the last station for the Northern Pacific (NP) Railroad before it crossed the Cascades through Stampede Tunnel and the last stop for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul (CM&SP) Railroad before it crossed Snoqualmie Pass to Puget Sound.

**Trails, roads, and rails**
The main Indian routes into the Kittitas Valley were the Squaw Creek Trail (up Selah Canyon and over Selah Mountain, entering the Kittitas Valley at the head of Badger Pocket, then across the Valley) and the Snoqualmie Trail, heavily used by Indians traveling east to west across the mountains. Indians used a lower trail over Snoqualmie Pass for foot traffic and a higher trail over Yakima Pass for horse traffic.

Before 1867 all supplies to the Kittitas area came by wagon from The Dalles, Oregon. A wagon road between Seattle and Ellensburg across Snoqualmie Pass was completed in 1867. Once goods could be shipped by rail, the wagon route over Snoqualmie pass fell into disuse until it was improved in the early 1900s to accommodate cars.
The main line of the Northern Pacific (NP) Railroad was completed through Kittitas County in 1887. The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul (CM&SP) Railroad (since converted for the Palouse to Cascade Trail - PCT) reached Kittitas County in 1909 and on July 10, 1910, established daily local service. Several small logging railroads operated within the county from 1916 until the mid-1940s.

By the 1920s motor routes through Kittitas County were well established, if not always well paved. The Sunset Highway (SR-2) crossed Snoqualmie Pass through Easton and Cle Elum before exiting Kittitas County over Blewett Pass. Beginning in 1930, Snoqualmie Pass was plowed during the winter to accommodate skiers.

The Inland Empire Highway (SR-3) connected Cle Elum with Ellensburg and then north with Quincy in Grant County. Interstate 90 is now the main route from Snoqualmie Pass through Kittitas County continuing eastward to Spokane and beyond. Interstate 82 extends from Ellensburg south into Yakima County, and Interstate 97 extends from Virden over Swauk Pass toward Wenatchee.

**Current conditions**

Kittitas County today remains strongly agricultural. All available water has long been harnessed. Sagebrush-covered arid land (known as shrub-steppe) contrasts sharply with lushly irrigated crop acreage. The county’s gold mining and coal mining past are echoes of an earlier and wilder west, but the passage of time has not obscured the region’s pioneer heritage. Cowboy and cattle ranching culture and history continue to be celebrated on a grand scale at the yearly Ellensburg Rodeo.

Today the main industries are agriculture (including timothy hay to feed racehorses), manufacturing (food processing, lumber, and wood products), government (including employment at Central Washington University - CWU), and tourism (including recreation).

**Recreation**

The Yakima River is used for fishing, wading, kayaking and canoeing, recreational floating, guided river rafting, fishing from a raft or drift boat, and jet boating, especially during the summer months. The Yakima River is ranked between Class I and Class II rapids in the Upper Canyon and Class I in the Lower Canyon, depending on the circumstances and season.

The Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers are Washington State’s most famous fly-fishing streams for rainbow, westslope cutthroat, brown, and some lake or hybrid trout, especially large trout up to 20 inches. The Cle Elum River below Cle Elum Lake Dam and the Yakima River between Lake East Dam and Roza Dam are no-kill, no-barbs, no-bait, catch-and-release, selective-gear WDFW designated fisheries for all trout except brook trout which are not native.

The Yakima River corridor is also used for hiking, particularly on the Palouse to Cascade Trail (PTC Trail - formerly the Iron Horse Trail) and adjacent trails into Cle Elum, Ellensburg, and the Lower Canyon, as well as wildlife viewing, scenic sightseeing, picnicking, camping, and seasonal hunting. The upper and lower canyons provide significant aesthetic opportunities of diverse geological and ecological features.
3. Recreation demands and economic potentials

The Kittitas County Board of Commissioners commissioned and adopted the Kittitas County Tourism Plan in 2015, the Kittitas Valley Event Center Master Plan in 2016, and the Kittitas County Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan in 2016. The following is summarized from these documents and highlighted where there are specific findings appropriate to this public access plan.

Kittitas County market area population projections

Kittitas County’s principal market area is deemed to be counties best served by major roadways including Interstate 90 serving King and Pierce Counties to the west and Grant County to the east, US-2 and US-97 serving Snohomish and Chelan Counties to the northwest and Douglas County to the northeast, and Interstate 82 serving Yakima and Benton Counties to the south.

- **Kittitas County population** - increased from 9,704 persons in 1900 to 42,670 persons by 2015 fluctuating between a high of 10.3% average annual rate of growth between 1900-1910 to a low of 0.9% between 1970-1980. Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimates Kittitas County will increase to a population of 55,436 persons by the year 2040 averaging 1.2% between 2015-2025 then declining to 0.9% by 2035-2040.

- **Population projections 2015-2040**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2040</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kittitas</td>
<td>42,592</td>
<td>55,436</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td>2,052,800</td>
<td>2,418,850</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>93,390</td>
<td>138,337</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snohomish</td>
<td>757,600</td>
<td>997,634</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce</td>
<td>830,120</td>
<td>1,042,341</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelan</td>
<td>75,030</td>
<td>92,486</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yakima</td>
<td>249,970</td>
<td>318,494</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>39,990</td>
<td>54,762</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benton</td>
<td>188,590</td>
<td>247,856</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,380,684</td>
<td>5,362,956</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM)

- **Market area population** - increased in the combined Kittitas, King, Snohomish, Pierce, Chelan, Yakima, Douglas, and Benton Counties from 221,541 persons in 1900 to 4,380,684 persons by 2015 fluctuating between a high of 9.8% average annual rate of growth between 1900-1910 to a low of 1.2% between 1930-1940. OFM estimates the combined market area will increase to a population of 5,362,956 persons by the year 2040 averaging 0.7% per year from 2015-2020 then declining to 0.7% by 2035-2040.

- **By market area jurisdiction in 2015** - King County has the greatest proportion of market area population at 2,052,800 persons or 47% of the total, then Pierce County at 830,120 or 19%, Snohomish County at 757,600 or 17%, Yakima County at 249,970 or 6%, Benton County at 188,590 or 4%, Grant County at 93,930 or 2%, Chelan County at 75,030 or 2%, Kittitas County at 42,592 or 1%, and Douglas County at 39,990 or 1%.
- **By market area jurisdiction in 2040** – King County will have the greatest proportion of market area population at 2,418,850 persons or 45% of the total, then Pierce County at 1,042,341 or 19%, Snohomish County at 997,634 or 19%, Yakima County at 318,494 or 6%, Benton County at 247,856 or 5%, Grant County at 138,337 or 3%, Chelan County at 89,246 or 2%, Kittitas County at 55,436 or 1%, and Douglas County at 54,762 or 1%.

- **Website tourist survey residence** – conducted for the Kittitas County Tourism Plan indicated 33% of survey respondents primarily live in Puget Sound (Tacoma, Seattle, Everett) and other western Washington State (18%) for 51% total from the west side of the state, Central Washington State (29%), Eastern Washington State (12%), Oregon (3%), California (1%), other states in the US (4%), and Canada (0.1%).

**Implications:**
The results of the website tourist survey generally reflect population distributions within Washington State and possibly the impact of major travel corridors on I-90 and US-2 to major metropolitan areas in western Washington. Given the significantly larger populations residing in western Washington, even minor increases in tourist attraction from western Washington could easily generate greater tourist visitation volumes than major increases from the smaller populations in central and eastern Washington.

**Washington State RCO SCORP surveys**
Washington State’s Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO) develops a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every 6 years to help decision-makers better understand recreation issues statewide and to maintain Washington’s eligibility for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funds.

RCO conducted a series of 12-month diary surveys of a random sample of Washington State residents in 2000, 2006, and 2012 to determine the type of indoor and outdoor recreation activities residents engaged in over the year including the resident’s age, gender, ethnicity, income, and regional place of residence.

The RCO SCORP surveys recorded what residents participated in of 140 different indoor and outdoor activities and special spectator events including the participation rate and number of occasions per year by season, month, week, and type of environment (urban, rural, mountain). The surveys did not record the location of the activity.

In 2014, RCO commissioned a study to determine what participants typically spend on an average day outing to support their activity but not including equipment purchases that could occur anytime or anywhere other than the activity location during the year. The study’s projected day outing expenses were based on metadata from industry expenditure surveys for like categories of activities.

**Washington State tourist oriented recreation activities in 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Partic</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>$/Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking, barbequing, or cooking out</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>$54.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking without a pet</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing, photographing</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending outdoor spectator events</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking with a pet</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving for pleasure</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>$56.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending outdoor concerts, plays</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle riding</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming in natural waters</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>$19.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing or shellfishing</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>$41.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating - general, except whitewater</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>$83.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beachcombing</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting nature interpretive center</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering/collecting things in nature</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shooting</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>$58.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner tubing or floating</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>$43.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sledding, inner tubing, snow play</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-roading for recreation</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>$43.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking with a pet - off leash dog park</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skiing downhill</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>$151.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Activity Participation Rates and Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Partic</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>$/Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climbing or mountaineering</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>$58.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback riding</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water skiing</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>$29.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowboarding</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>$151.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowshoeing</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>$44.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skiing cross country</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>$51.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snorkeling</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>$29.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice skating</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating – whitewater rafting</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>$126.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobiling</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>$43.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATV riding on snow or ice</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>$43.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfboarding</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>$92.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuba or skin diving</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>$150.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying gliders, ultralights, aircraft</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind surfing</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>$92.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky diving, parachuting from plane</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungee jumping</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragliding or hang gliding</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot air ballooning</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking chartered sightseeing flight</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participation rate = percent of the population that participates in the activity

Frequency = the number of times per year a participant engages in the activity

Source: Outdoor Recreation Trends and Futures, RCO SCORP 2012 Survey

- **Participation rates** were highest for picnicking, barbequing, or cooking out (80.9% of the survey respondents) and walking without a pet (71.3%) compared with taking a chartered sightseeing flight (0.2%) or hot air ballooning (0.2%), or paragliding or hang gliding (0.2%).
- ** Frequencies** were highest for walking without and with a pet (97.8 times per year) compared with hot air ballooning (1.1 times per year).
- **Day outing expenditures** were highest for skiing downhill and snowboarding ($151.26 per day outing), scuba or skin diving ($150.09), and boating whitewater rafting ($126.60) compared with walking with or without a pet ($5.00).

### Composite Impacts

- **Composite impacts** were highest for wildlife viewing or photographing (59.0% participation x 45.4 times per year x $44.87 per day outing = $120,188), picnicking, barbequing or cooking out (80.9% x 20.5 x $54.62 = $90,584), and lowest for windsurfing (1.0% x 0.1 x $92.91 = $9.29) for a population of 100 people.

Kittitas County is located straddling 4 of the SCORP regions for which the diary surveys were collated including the:
- **North Cascades** - extending north through Chelan and Okanogan and west through Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties
- **Seattle-King** - including all of King County
- **South Central** - including Yakima, Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla Counties
- **Columbia Plateau** - including Douglas, Grant, Adams, and Lincoln Counties

### Participation Rates for Top 5 Tourist Oriented Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>SeaKng</th>
<th>NoCas</th>
<th>SoCntl</th>
<th>ColPlt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking, bbqing, cooking</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking w/o pet</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Frequencies for Top 5 Tourist Oriented Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>SeaKng</th>
<th>NoCas</th>
<th>SoCntl</th>
<th>ColPlt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking, bbqing, cooking</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking w/o pet</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
<td>102.3</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Outdoor Recreation Trends and Futures, RCO SCORP 2012 Survey

Participation rates and frequencies vary significantly by region depending on whether the region is located next to Puget Sound,
western Washington, in or adjacent the Cascade Mountains, in urban versus rural populations, with different age group concentrations.

**Estimated geotourism expenditures 2014-2040**

Kittitas County’s tourist related recreation activity expenditures were estimated from 2014 to 2020 and 2040 by comparing Kittitas County’s composite (Seattle-King County, North Cascades, South Central, and Columbia Plateau) market area population, participation rates, and frequencies with that for Washington State to determine Kittitas County’s draw or capture rate.

Kittitas County’s composite weighted average draw or capture rate was determined by comparing the composite with the projections for Washington State’s tourist related recreation activity potential estimated in Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO)’s 2012 Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State. An index or ratio of 100% or higher indicates
Kittitas County is a higher level of participation and frequency use per person while less than 100% is the Washington State average.

The projections exclude activity double count, where a respondent may participate in two or more activities, and equipment expenditures that occur anywhere inside or outside the reporting region. The projections do not assume geotourism recreation expenditure ratios will change appreciably from 2014-2020 but will change between 2014-2040 as populations increase in each of the four regions contributing to Kittitas County’s weighted draw.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Draw</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>%Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>102.5%</td>
<td>$8,167,000</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting nature centers</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>$2,217,000</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife viewing/photo</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>$27,837,000</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting in nature</td>
<td>108.3%</td>
<td>$4,371,000</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing/shellfishing</td>
<td>146.5%</td>
<td>$7,583,000</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim natural waters</td>
<td>107.8%</td>
<td>$2,707,000</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsurfing (incl behind boat)</td>
<td>155.7%</td>
<td>$510,000</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner tubing/floating</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
<td>$2,172,000</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorized boating</td>
<td>97.4%</td>
<td>$7,646,000</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-motorized boating</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>$2,414,000</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafting including whitewater</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>$179,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowshoeing</td>
<td>118.9%</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowboarding</td>
<td>105.1%</td>
<td>$3,187,000</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skiing downhill</td>
<td>129.4%</td>
<td>$5,136,000</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-country skiing</td>
<td>158.6%</td>
<td>$765,000</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATV snow and ice</td>
<td>108.7%</td>
<td>$313,000</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
<td>$9,043,000</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing/mountaineer</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
<td>$951,000</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
<td>$7,392,000</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle riding total</td>
<td>118.0%</td>
<td>$16,989,000</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback riding total</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
<td>$3,218,000</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-roading for recreation total</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>$3,130,000</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting/shooting total</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>$3,926,000</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic/BBQ/cooking outdoors</td>
<td>101.7%</td>
<td>$12,966,000</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note – includes activities comparable to RCO’s 2012 Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State
Source: ED Hovee & Company

- **Kittitas County’s highest 2040 weighted average draws or captures** – include cross-country skiing (158.6% of Washington State’s average per person participation), then windsurfing (155.7%), **fishing** (146.5%), skiing downhill (129.4%), snowshoeing (118.9%), and bicycle riding of all kinds (118.0%) compared with the lowest captures for surfboarding (57.8%).

- **Kittitas County’s greatest 2040 day-trip expenditure volumes** – consist of **wildlife viewing and photographing** ($27,837,000), bicycle riding of all kinds ($16,989,000), and **picnicking, barbequing, and cooking outdoors** ($12,966,000) compared with the lowest expenditures for surfboarding ($169,000) and **rafting** ($179,000).

- **Kittitas County’s greatest percent of all 2040 expenditures** – includes **wildlife viewing and photographing** (20.8%), bicycle riding of all kinds (12.7%), and **picnicking, barbequing, and cooking outdoors** (9.7%) compared with the lowest percentages for surf boarding (0.1%) and **rafting** (0.1%).

**Implications**
Projected expenditures partly reflect the different participation rates typical between activities, with niche activities with low participation rates like surfboarding and rafting generating low expenditure volumes, and partly the geographic location of sites with characteristics supportive of the activity, like skiing and fishing.

The projections do not distinguish between geotourism activities that are already attracting a high percentage of the participants of the activity, like skiing or fishing, however, from geotourism activities with high potential participation and expenditure volumes where Kittitas County has not established a strong market draw or capture.
Kittitas County geotourism expenditures 2014-2040

- Picnicking/BBQing/Cooking outdoors: $12,996,000
- Hunting and shooting total: $3,926,000
- Off-roading for recreation total: $3,130,000
- Horseback riding total: $3,218,000
- Bicycle riding total: $16,989,000
- Camping: $7,392,000
- Climbing/mountaineering: $951,000
- Hiking: $9,043,000
- ATV snow/ice: $313,000
- Crosscountry skiing: $765,000
- Skiing: $8,167,000
- Snowboarding: $3,187,000
- Snowshoeing: $179,000
- Rafting: $2,414,000
- Non-motorized boating: $2,172,000
- Motorized boating: $7,646,000
- Scuba diving: $645,000
- Inner tubing/floating: $169,000
- Windsurfing: $350,000
- Surfboarding: $2,172,000
- Swimming in natural waters: $10,000,000
- Fishing or shellfishing total: $7,583,000
- Gathering/collecting things in nature: $4,371,000
- Wildlife viewing/photographing: $2,217,000
- Visiting nature interpretive centers: $8,167,000
- Sightseeing: $169,000

2040 vs 2014 expenditures.
Tourism plan’s visitor survey follow-up

A web-based survey collected of visitors to the Cle Elum, Ellensburg, and Kittitas County Chambers of Commerce as well as through postcard handouts and other printed materials at various locations throughout the county generated 359 survey responses. Survey respondents indicated their areas of geotourism interest (historical, cultural, environmental, agriculture, and recreation) and their interest in receiving more detailed information on each interest area.

### Would like more information on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Return</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 378 98 26%

Note: most respondents had more than one interest area.

Follow-up surveys were conducted for each geotourism interest that included mapped destinations and attractions along with specific questions whether additional information would generate an increased interest in visiting Kittitas County.

Will you visit Kittitas County more now that you are aware of the extent of destinations and attractions in your geotourism area of interest?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical tourists</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical districts and landmarks</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barns and farmsteads</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic railroads and roads</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining sites</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logging areas and sites</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums and Native American sites</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive centers, kiosks, trails</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural tourists</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barn quilts</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art galleries, studios, performances</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental tourists</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public lands</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique wildlife habitat areas</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of wildlife species</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive centers, kiosks, trails</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agricultural tourists</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farms, markets, and produce stands</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wineries and breweries</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn quilts</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreational tourists</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter trails</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public accesss/boating access</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse trails</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking trails</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain bike trails</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-road vehicle (ORV) trails</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog trails and hotels that allow dogs</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic facilities - groups</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent and RV campgrounds</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing access sites</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting and shooting sites</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Geotourism activities generating MOST likely visitation after being provided information on Kittitas County attractions include historical districts and landmarks (60% of the follow-up respondents will visit more now that aware of attractions), farms, farmers' markets, and produce stands (60%), public lands (55%), wildlife habitat areas (55%), extent of wildlife species (55%), fishing access sites (53%), museums and Native American sites (53%), historical railroads and roads (53%), hiking trails (53%), art galleries, studios, and performances (50%) suggesting that outreach will be most effective for these attractions since the survey respondents do not know or have not visited these destinations. The expenditure projections indicate these...
activities also generate the largest potential expenditure volumes in Kittitas County through 2040.

- **Geotourism activities generating LEAST likely visitation after being provided information on Kittitas County attractions** – include horse trails (11%), off-road vehicle (ORV) trails (16%), all-terrain vehicles (ATV) trails (16%), hunting and shooting sites (16%), barns and farmsteads (20%), and barn quilts (25%) suggesting that participants of these activities currently know of Kittitas County attractions suggesting that outreach will be least effective for these attractions since they know or have already frequented these destinations. The expenditure projections indicate these activities also generate the least potential expenditure volumes in Kittitas County through 2040.

**Public access implications**
The Kittitas County geotourism demand and economic analysis results indicate the Yakima River contains attributes and assets that currently and potentially generate considerable resident and tourist activities of the most interest and economic potential. Whether this demand and economic potential can be effectively managed to the betterment of the river’s environmental and recreational prospects will depend on the insights incorporated into this public access plan’s proposals and implementation.

**Yakima River public access user survey**
The purpose of the on-line survey was to verify resident and tourist demand and economic impact of a potential Yakima River public access plan. The consultant team and committee members designed and the county hosted and promoted a river use on-line survey to solicit the behaviors, opinions, and priorities of county residents and tourists during the planning process. The survey was publicized on the county website, distributed to interest groups by committee members, and promoted at the workshops and open houses.

A total of 373 respondents completed the survey. The respondents were self-selected and do not necessarily represent the behavior and opinions of all county residents or tourists. Following are summary findings from the survey – detailed results are provided in Appendix A.

**Characteristics in general:**
- About 51% of all survey respondents resided in eastern Washington, 46% resided in western Washington, and 3% elsewhere in the US and Canada.
- Survey respondents were of all age, income, and educational groups though predominantly older, middle-upper income, and with college degrees.

**Sources of information:**
- Primary sources of information were previous personal knowledge, social media, and friends and family.
- Major website sources of information were private (Red’s Fly Shop) and the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW).

**Volume of activity:**
- Survey respondents were very active (more than 26 times per year) participants of fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking and biking on a trail, touring scenic areas, biking on-road, and camping in all county, state, and national locations.
- Survey respondents were active in similar activities on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers in Kittitas County but of less frequency in comparison to all annual activity at county, state, and nation sites.

Survey respondents were asked **how often they participated in the following activities during an average year at any location in the county, state, or nation** – listed in rank order of response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>21-25</th>
<th>26+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing wildlife</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking/biking on trail</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touring scenic areas</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking on-road</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey respondents were asked **how often they participated in the following activities during an average year on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers in Kittitas County** – listed in rank order of response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>21-25</th>
<th>26+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rafting/tubing/floating</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power boating, jet skiing</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating of non-fishing</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing or kayaking</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing with a guide</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River boarding</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specific site use and quality:
- The City of Ellensburg’s Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park was the most frequently used public access site in the inventory, at least for multiple times per year.
- Rill Adventure Takeout on SR-10 and Kias Elk Trail ROW were the least utilized probably due to their private concession lease and gated community status.
  - BLM’s Roza Campground, Red’s Fly Shop, and BLM’s Big Pines Campground were rated of the highest quality of all public accessible sites in the inventory.
  - The Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam Overlook, Teanaway River Bridge on SR-10, and City of Ellensburg’s Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park were rated of the lowest quality of all public accessible sites in the inventory.
- In general, survey respondents use publicly designated sites the most and private landowner sites the least although all types of sites are utilized to significant degrees.

Specific site recommendations:
- Survey respondents indicate there were too few fishing, hiking and biking on trail, camping, picnicking, and wildlife viewing sites in the existing publicly accessible inventory.
- In particular, survey respondents indicated more sites should be added for fishing, fishing with a guide, canoeing or kayaking, rafting or floating, picnicking, and biking on-road in the river segment between Cle Elum and Ellensburg.
- Conversely, survey respondents indicated new sites do not need to be added for fishing, fishing with a guide, or touring scenic areas in the river segment below Ellensburg.

Economic impact
- A significant percent of all survey respondents indicated they stay overnight, generally for 1-2 days.
- Most survey respondents stay in RV and tent campgrounds, hotels and motels, and other accommodations.
- Survey respondent groups include kids under age 18 to a large extent (50%), 2 or more adults age 19-64 (84%), and senior citizens over age 65 (52%).
- Average daily expenditures are significant ranging from $56.71 for outfitting supplies to even $5.66 for artworks and craft items indicating the economic potential of recreational activities on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers by residents and out of county tourists.
Survey respondents were asked **how much they spend in Kittitas County on an average day on the Yakima or Cle Elum Rivers** – listed in rank order of response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily Cost</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outfitting supplies – fishing, boating, photo</td>
<td>$56.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto – gas, rental, repairs</td>
<td>$40.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food – restaurants, coffee shops</td>
<td>$36.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodations – hotel, B&amp;B, RV parks, campgrounds</td>
<td>$35.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating related – rentals, gas, fees</td>
<td>$25.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>$23.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinks – bars, taverns</td>
<td>$19.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other recreation – fees, tours</td>
<td>$17.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol – brew pubs, wineries, distillers</td>
<td>$16.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other retail – clothing, gifts</td>
<td>$16.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artworks and craft items</td>
<td>$5.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implications**

The results of the on-line survey, though based on self-selected samples, indicate the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers are significant recreational and environmental attractions to residents and tourists alike that currently and potentially generate considerable economic impact in Kittitas County if properly development and managed.
4: Public access goals

The following principals guide the development and implementation of this public access plan:

**Goal 1: Monitor safety conditions on the rivers** - identify and continuously update hazardous conditions on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers, including dams and diversions, logjams, snags and sweepers, swift water, and other non-safe conditions of concern to all river users and interests on websites, maps, brochures, and site kiosks hosted by Kittitas County Sheriff’s Office and Chamber of Commerce, Cle Elum, Ellensburg, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and private parties such as Red’s Fly Shop.

**Goal 2: Improve safe access on the rivers** - designate which river segments are of safe passage for all types of watercraft for all user skills levels from river segments that should only be accessed by frame boats and skilled users during different seasons of the year, special events like the Epic Float, and dam and flume water release schedules.

**Goal 3: Improve emergency response capabilities** - improve existing launch ramps such as WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout site and Irene Rinehart’s Umptanum Bridge launch, and develop new emergency launch capabilities at strategically placed sites such as Bullfrog Road Bridge, Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek, and Thrall Road/Wilson Creek that reduce emergency response travel time and provide direct access to hazardous areas on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers.

**Goal 4: Anticipate changing river conditions** - identify public access sites that will be affected by and may need to be replaced with alternative sites due to changing river channels, higher water flows, and other hydrological impacts such as the continuing flooding of Ringer Loop Road and the WDFW Ringer Loop Road South launch site.

**Goal 5: Eliminate gaps in river access** - develop additional public access sites to reduce long inaccessible river stretches, increase takeout and put-in options, and implement advisory and possibly mandatory takeout requirements at unsafe segments such as the proposed public access sites at Bullfrog Road Bridge, Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek, City Wells, and Thrall Road/Wilson Creek.

**Goal 6: Increase multiple use site capabilities** - add wildlife trails, picnic areas, river bridge crossings, parking capacity, and toilets to existing sites with multiple use interests and opportunities such as Easton Acclimation Ponds, King Horn Slough-Hundley Road, Bullfrog Road South, Cle Elum Hanson Ponds, Lambert Road on Teanaway River, Teanaway River Bridge, Clark Flat Acclimation Ponds, Thorp/Green Bridge, Gladmar Road Conservancy, Thorp Highway Bridge South, Mile Post 20/19, and Big Pines Campground, as well as new potential sites such as Bullfrog Road Bridge, Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek, City Wells, and Thrall Road/Wilson Creek.

**Goal 7: Increase access to other public lands** - across the Yakima River that link shoreline, trail, picnic, and camping opportunities for public access as well as other upland interests at existing public access sites such as a trail bridge crossings at Easton Acclimation Ponds to BPA conservancy lands and Big Pines Campground to BLM and WDFW west ridgeline trails as well as trail bridge and trail crossings at new sites such as Old Church Camp to Washington State Department of Natural Resource (DNR) lands and to the Palouse to Cascade Trail (PCT) at Old Church Camp and Swauk Creek.

**Goal 8: Conserve and restore significant wildlife habitat** - for fish, birds, and mammals in and around existing public access sites and properties such as U-Fish Road/NF-4823 End of Road, Hanson Ponds/Kiwani’s Fishing Pond – Whispering Pines Drive, Gladmar Road Conservancy, Hanson Pits/Tjossem Ditch, and Ringer Loop Road as well as around new potential properties at Bullfrog Road Bridge, Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek, and Thrall Road/Wilson Creek.
Goal 9: Install wildlife interpretive trails and exhibits - in, around, and between existing publicly accessible sites and significant wildlife conservancies on all suitable sites but particularly to BPA conservancy lands across from Easton Acclimation Ponds, to Kittitas County lands in Gladmar Road Conservancy and Hanson Pits/Tjossem Ditch, to WDFW and BPA lands around Ringer Loop Road, and to BLM and WDFW west ridgeline lands and shorelines across from Lmuma Creek Campground and Big Pines Campground, as well as trail bridge and trail crossings to new sites such as Washington State Department of Natural Resource (DNR) lands across from Old Church Camp.

Goal 10: Identify scenic attributes and viewpoints - with signage, kiosk directories, and other interpretive exhibits at safe vehicular and pedestrian access points along SR-10 in the Upper Canyon and Canyon Road in the Lower Canyon.

Goal 11: Increase disability (ADA) access - reduce trail and ramp grades, trail paving material density, picnic table and toilet dimensions, sensory and auditory signage contents, and other features for mentally and physically disabled users.

Goal 12: Utilize low impact development methods - include permeable surface paving materials, native and drought resistance vegetation, recycled building materials, stormwater bio-swales, and other applications when enhancing existing and developing new public access sites.

Goal 13: Design and implement a comprehensive branding and promotional program - of the Yakima River’s public access with logos, website splash pages, brochures, maps, signage, and kiosk directories on all educational, marketing, promotional platforms, websites, publications, and at all publicly accessible sites hosted or sponsored by Kittitas County, Cle Elum, Ellensburg, the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission (WAP&RC), Departments of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), Natural Resources (DNR), Transportation (WDOT), US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Yakama Nation as well as private parties like Red’s Fly Shop.

Goal 14: Promote joint ventures with other public, nonprofit, and private parties - such as Kittitas Environmental Education Network (KEEN), Forterra, Nature Conservancy, Mountain to Sound Greenway, Trust for Public Land, Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD), Suncadia, Bristol Flats, KOA, Bighorn Campground, and Red’s Fly Shop, among others, to educate and promote the unique environmental, historical, and recreational potentials of the Yakima River’s public access and acquire, develop, maintain, and operate public access site activities and facilities.

Goal 15: Utilize multiple implementation funding sources and synergistic opportunities - to use existing programs such as Kittitas County’s Lodging Tax, Washington State Recreation Conservation Office’s (RCO) state and federal grant programs, Washington State Department of Transportation (WDOT) paths, trails, and roadway funds, Washington State Legislature capital grants, as well as develop and apply innovative strategies to possibly include Conservation Futures taxes, General Fund levy lid lifts, and/or agents such as a Public Facilities District or the expansion of the Kittitas Park & Recreation District boundaries and responsibilities, among others.
5: Public access sites and river classifications

Existing and proposed publicly accessible sites

The entire Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers and lower stretch of the Teanaway River were initially inventoried using Google maps and aerials, then interactive maps and aerials developed by Washington Hometown/Manastash Maps, then by field verification, then in workshops with user and interest groups and state and federal agencies, and finally by site verification with the knowledgeable members of the Yakima River Access Citizens Advisory and Public Lands Advisory Committees.

The resulting inventory of publicly accessible sites consists of 43 existing and 5 proposed or a total of 48 sites along the 85 miles of the Yakima River, 7 miles of the Cle Elum River, and 11 miles of the Teanaway River.

The existing inventory of 43 sites includes 7 owned by local jurisdictions (Kittitas County, Cle Elum, and Ellensburg), 14 by state agencies (Washington Parks & Recreation Commission – P&RC, Fish & Wildlife - WDFW, and Transportation WDOT), 13 by federal agencies (US Forest Service - USFS, Bonneville Power Administration - BPA, and Bureau of Land Management - BLM), 1 by Kittitas Reclamation District - KRD, 2 by Suncadia, and 6 by other private parties.

The proposed inventory of 5 sites includes 2 by local agencies (Kittitas County and Ellensburg), 1 by Suncadia, and 2 to be acquired from private landowners.

Existing – 43 sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>KRD</th>
<th>BPA</th>
<th>BLN</th>
<th>USFS</th>
<th>WDFW</th>
<th>WDOT</th>
<th>Other private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kittitas County</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Cle Elum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Ellensburg</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;RC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDFW</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDOT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed – 5 sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>City of Ellensburg</th>
<th>Acquire from private parties</th>
<th>Suncadia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kittitas County</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Ellensburg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The existing and proposed sites are shown on the map on the page following and itemized in Appendix B.

River hazards

River hazards include permanent restrictions such as dams or fixed structures, launching impediments, and landslide zones. Natural and sometimes relatively permanent hazards include reservoir water releases, shallow water with overhanging trees, rapids or swift water stretches, logjams, and sweepers, among others.

Structural impediments

Lake Easton Diversion Dam - is a concrete gravity ogee weir, movable crest structure with a fish ladder. This dam is 66 feet high and contains 5,800 cubic yards of concrete. The Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) operates Lake Easton as a storage reservoir diverting water into the High Line Canal that was developed by the KRD in 1932. The High Line Canal transports water into irrigation canals that completely encircle the Kittitas Valley, terminating where Turbine Ditch spills into the Yakima River. Buoyed supported cables and lines restrict watercraft access to the dam from Lake Easton.
Existing and proposed public access sites

Public Access Sites
- Existing Facility
- Proposed Facility

Ownership
- Private
- Federal
- State
- Other
- Yakima Training Center
- Cities

Reach Recommendations
- Generally safe for all users
- Qualified for fishing rafts/rowing frame
- Hazardous for all users
Lake Cle Elum Dam - is an earthfill dam 165 feet high and, including the dam, a main dike, and 3 smaller saddle dikes sited along the crest of a terminal moraine, contains 1,411,000 cubic yards of material. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) operates the dam to provide water storage and flood control on the Cle Elum River. BOR releases water from the dam in the fall to provide lake capacity for winter and spring snowmelt and when the lake fills to storage capacity. Water released into the river increases volume and velocity that can overturn floats, rafts, canoes, and kayaks when unexpected.

KRD High Line Canal flume - Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) installed a flume on the High Line Canal that drains into the Yakima River across from Bristol Flats. KRD also developed the boat launch facility across from the flume in Bristol Flats for flume maintenance purposes. The flume discharges water from the canal into the river for 1-2 days in mid-April when KRD is charging the system and after Labor Day when water is discharged constantly to aid in flip-flop - the process of modifying irrigation operations to allow the upper Yakima River levels to drop to a more natural value during spawning season so that the fish eggs remain covered with water through the winter.

KRD may also discharge water into the flume during the summer if there are any operating problems that arise that create a need to bypass the canal – an event that happens very rarely.

Water discharged into the river by the flume creates a surge or wave that can upend any watercraft in the vicinity of the flume including recreational floaters, rafters, canoes, and kayaks. KRD monitors activity on the river to make sure there will be no impacts on recreational users before discharging any water into the flume.

Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam and Fish Ladder - is operated by the privately owned Ellensburg Water Company that began operation in 1885 and currently supplies water from the Yakima River to fill 24 miles of canals with 225 lateral ditches. The dam diverts water from the Yakima River into the canal, known as the Town Ditch, that flows through Ellensburg to the southeast before terminating at the Wippel Wasteway (known as the Government Ditch) about 1 mile east of the confluence of Wilson and Cherry Creeks.

Reecer, Cooke and Parke Creeks augment water flow in the Town Ditch as well as return flow from the Cascade Irrigation District and the Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) systems. Today, the Town Ditch is the largest single water diverter in Washington State, irrigating more than 10,000 acres, half of which produces timothy hay, and providing water for lawns in Ellensburg. When properly treated to meet Department of Ecology (DOE) standards, Ditch water will eventually help recharge the aquifer that provides Ellensburg’s potable water.

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) operates an automated hydronet station near the diversion dam that automatically transmits flow data every 15 minutes by satellite to BOR offices to determine
whether the Ellensburg Water Company exceeds its allotment affirmed through recent water right adjudication.

Water flowing over the 6-foot tall diversion dam causes considerable turbulence below the dam creating extremely hazardous navigation for all watercraft particularly when encountered by unsuspecting parties. Hazardous warning signs are posted above the dam and on the river to warn rafters and boaters, but there are no restrictive cables or lines above the diversion dam. WDFW developed a last safe takeout above the dam on SR-10 for all watercraft.

**Cascade Irrigation District (CID) Diversion Dam** - is located downriver below the Ellensburg Water Company diversion dam on the main stem of the Yakima River. The Cascade Irrigation District was formed in 1913 to provide additional irrigation service to areas in Kittitas County as the county’s farms and population increased beyond the capacity provided by the Ellensburg Water Company’s Town Ditch.

The dam diverts water from the main stem of the Yakima River into canals serving the agricultural lands and residential lawns located in the north valley areas. The resulting rapids created by the dam are not particularly dangerous to canoes, kayaks, and other non-frame boats. However, the river continues to cut new channels through this and the adjacent Gladmar Road Conservancy area that can be hazardous with swift currents, logjams, and sweepers if river users are not advised beforehand. River conditions must be continuously monitored in this area to inform river users which channels are safe to navigate.

**KRD Bull Ditch irrigation diversion** - is a rock jetty that extends into the Yakima River on a side channel on the left bank of the river at the Bull Diversion to funnel water into Bull Ditch at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) originally constructed the Bull Ditch in 1886 to irrigate 1,300 acres of farmland.

The jetty originally extended across the river but was subsequently cut back. Although the jetty provides an open passage in the center of the river it still extends above water creating a significant hazard to unsuspecting frame boaters.

**Roza Dam** - is a diversion dam and fish ladder located below Roza Campground just north of the Kittitas County line with Yakima County about 10 miles north of Yakima. The dam, built in 1939, is a concrete weir, movable crest structure, 486 feet long at the crest, 67 feet high, and contains 21,700 cubic yards of concrete impounding approximately 100 acres of water. The dam also has a 12,000 kW power production capacity online as of 1956.

In 2010, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) modified the 110-foot long west roller gate to reduce the amount of water leakage under the gate, and to provide improved downstream passage for juvenile salmonids of all species, as well as adult steelhead kelts.
The dam is hazardous for watercraft and floating cable lines restrict river users from approaching the dam.

**Natural impediments**

**Shallow water with sweepers and overhanging trees** - are located on the Yakima River from its origins below Lake Keechelus Dam to Lake Easton and then below Lake Easton Dam to just above the confluence with the Cle Elum River. The water in these stretches of the river are very shallow, rapid, and too cluttered to safely support canoes, kayaks, rafts, drift, and other frame boats in all seasons.

Long stretches of these river segments are relatively isolated and difficult to respond to in emergencies.

**Sharp bends and logjams** - are permanent features on the Yakima River stretch just above the confluence with the Cle Elum River making this river segment impassable and extremely dangerous for all river uses. The numerous sharp and blind bends and logjams in this stretch of the river as well as its remoteness make it very difficult to respond to emergencies by boat.

**Braided channels and logjams** - are permanent features on the Yakima River from just above Ellensburg at the KOA Campground to just below the Ringer Loop Road and the entry into the Lower Canyon. The river has cut, and continues to modify, numerous side and braided channels in the river through this stretch with hazardous swift currents, overhanging trees, and logjams on most of them.

This stretch of the river is extremely dangerous for fishing tube floats, canoes, kayaks, and all non-frame rafts and boats, and hazardous even for frame boats if the users are not familiar with the river’s numerous side channels.

**River use classifications**

Based on the preceding assessments, the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers segments are classified as follows:

**Hazardous for all users due to shallow water, rapids, braided channels, logjams, diversion dams**

- Yakima River from below Keechelus Dam to Lake Easton
- Lake Easton Dam to WDFW’s King Horn Slough-Hundley Road access site
- P&RC’s Bullfrog Road South access site to the Cle Elum River confluence
- Just below Cle Elum's Memorial/Fireman’s Park to just above WDFW's Teanaway Junction access site
- From WDFW SR-10 Takeout to the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam

**Hazardous for all users except frame boats due to shallow water, rapids, braided channels, and logjams**

- City of Ellensburg’s Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park at Umptanum Bridge to below WDFW’s Ringer Loop Road South access site

**Qualified for fishing rafts and drift boats with frames as a result of braided channels and logjams**

- Yakima River from Cle Elum River confluence to just above WDFW’s Teanaway Junction access site
- Proposed City of Ellensburg’s City Wells access site below the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam to the proposed takeout at the slough in the upper portion of the City of
River hazards and emergency launch sites

River Status
- Green: Generally safe
- Yellow: Not generally boated
- Red: Hazardous
- Dam
- Frequent log jams
- Hazards near launch
- Landslide zone
- Emergency Launch
- Proposed Emergency Launch

Ownership
- Private
- Federal
- State
- Other
- Yakima Training Center
- Cities

Map features include:
- Lake Easton Dam
- Bull Frog Road Bridge on Cle Elum River
- KRD Flume
- Swauk Creek Access
- Thorp/Green Bridge
- SR-10 Takeout
- Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam
- Cascade Diversion Dam
- Partial diversion dam
- Lower Rinerhart/Umptanum Bridge
- Thrall Road/Wilson Creek
- Roza Campground
- Roza Dam

River Status:
- Generally safe
- Not generally boated
- Hazardous

Hazards:
- Frequent log jams
- Hazards near launch
- Landslide zone
- Emergency Launch
- Proposed Emergency Launch

Ownership:
- Private
- Federal
- State
- Other
- Yakima Training Center
- Cities

River hazards and emergency launch sites
Ellensburg’s Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park

**Qualified for fishing rafts and drift boats with frames as a result of water release**
- Cle Elum River from below the dam to the confluence with the Yakima River

**Generally safe for all users**
- Yakima River from WDFW’s King Horn Slough – Hundley Road to P&RC’s Bullfrog Road South access
- Proposed Old Church Camp to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout above the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam
- Proposed Kittitas County’s Thrall Road/Wilson Creek access site to Roza Campground

**Emergency response capabilities**

The Kittitas County Sheriff’s Office balances education, rescue, and enforcement on the water with other law enforcement and emergency management responsibilities.

The Sheriff's Office currently has 15 deputies cross-trained as Marine Patrol Officers and Boat Operators including 8 who are also cross-trained in Swift-Water Rescue. Deputies specialize in responding to all incidents involving moving water such as rafters caught in logjams, spillways, and siphons.

Four Deputies are trained in Public Safety Diving to recover the bodies of drowning victims, investigate water related deaths, and to recover vehicles, stolen property, and other items beneath the surface.

The Sheriff’s Office has 4 boats specifically designed to meet the demands of emergency responses on the Yakima River including:

- **20-foot class I patrol boat** - used for Patrol and Rescue on the Columbia River and the larger lakes in the upper county.
- **18-foot rescue jet boat** - used for patrol and rescue as well as diving operations on the small lakes and rivers.
  - **18-foot flat bottom jet sled with an outboard jet** - used primarily on the Yakima River for rescues.
  - **12-foot inflatable jet boat** - staged in the upper county for rescue on the smaller lakes, ponds, and sections of river in the upper county where the larger boat cannot operate.

The Sheriff’s Office partners with other local fire services to expand water rescue by creating technical rope rescue teams and shoreline support teams that reduce response times and increase rescuer safety.

On major holidays, the Sheriff provides a multi-agency enforcement presence on the water with the Grant County Sheriff’s office and the US Coast Guard strictly enforcing laws relating to safety, such as negligent operation, boating under the influence, and not having required safety equipment such as ski flags and lifejackets.

**Note** - an approved lifejacket is required for all persons on board any vessel designed to transport persons on the water. Children under the age of 12 are required to have the lifejacket on. This includes all boats and rafts with rowing frames or motors, or pontoon boats and canoes.

The Sheriff’s Office Marine Patrol Unit conducts pre-season vessel inspections, equipment safety inspections, and classes on boating safety. The Sheriff’s Office has maintained an approved Boating Safety Program for over 40 years providing annual education programs on water related recreation. The education programs cover boating safety, swimming safety, and the laws relating to ecology and human impact.

The Sheriff also partners with WDFW Officers to address increased impacts on the Yakima River’s aquatic marine life.

**Existing and proposed emergency launch sites**

The following existing and proposed launch sites will provide the Sheriff’s Office effective and quick response to on-water emergencies on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers:
• **Proposed Bullfrog Road Bridge on the Cle Elum River** – will provide access for on-water emergencies for the 18-foot inflatable jet boat upriver the complete extent of the Cle Elum River to the Lake Cle Elum Dam, upriver on the Yakima to Lake Easton Dam and downriver to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout if necessary. The proposed launch will be located on Suncadia property between the well sites adjacent to the original Bullfrog Road Bridge where the river is deep enough to accommodate boat trailers. The Sheriff currently launches from WDFW’s Teanaway Junction access site that is considerably downriver from most emergencies and involves a BNSF Railroad crossing.

• **Proposed Swauk Creek Access** – will provide access for the 18-foot inflatable and flat bottom jet boats on the Yakima River upriver to the Cle Elum River confluence or beyond if necessary and downriver to the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam. The site is readily accessible from SR-10 Highway but involves an existing BNSF Railroad crossing.

• **Existing WDFW Thorp/Green Bridge** – provides access for the 18-foot inflatable and flat bottom jet boats on the Yakima River upriver to the Cle Elum River confluence or beyond if necessary and downriver to the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam or the same river stretch as the proposed Swauk Creek Access. The Swauk Creek Access site is readily accessible from SR-10, a low volume high-speed highway, while Thorp/Green Bridge is located on a rural road involving lower speeds and potential traffic congestion during emergencies.

• **Existing WDFW SR-10 Takeout** – provides access for the 18-foot inflatable and flat bottom jet boats on the Yakima River upriver to the Cle Elum River confluence or beyond if necessary or the same river stretch as the proposed Swauk Creek Access. However, the launch ramp is not properly aligned for jet sled and boat launch or trailering and is located at the end of the emergency response river stretch.

• **Existing City of Ellensburg Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park/Umptanum Bridge** – provides access for the 18-foot flat bottom jet boat on the Yakima River upriver to the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam or downriver past Ringer Loop Road and into the Lower Canyon if necessary. However, the launch ramp is being undercut by the river’s swift current and needs to be rebuilt to accommodate the jet sled and boat trailers as well as launch into the current away from the bridge supports and debris buildups. Boulders could be inserted into the river above the launch to redirect the current and the ramp could be moved north on the site to provide sufficient launch space.

• **Proposed Kittitas County Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access** – will provide a launch for the 18-foot flat bottom sled jet boat on the Yakima River as far upriver to the Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam if or downriver into the Lower Canyon to Roza Dam if necessary. The Sheriff currently uses the launch at WDFW’s Ringer Loop Road South that will eventually be undercut and flooded by river currents. This site and WDFW’s site involve an existing BNSF Road crossing at Ringer Road for the WDFW site and a proposed crossing at about Thrall Road for the Kittitas County site.

• **Existing Roza Campground** – provides a launch for the 18-foot flat bottom jet boat for emergency access downriver to the Roza Dam and upriver past Ringer Loop Road if necessary. However, the BLM campground is at the end of most emergency calls and requires navigating heavy recreation and tourist traffic on Canyon Road during summer months and the Epic Float river event.

**River uses**

Recreationalists utilize a variety of shore and watercraft that require different skill levels, river knowledge and experience, and appropriate river conditions on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers including:

**Fishing from shore**

Fly-fishing where the shoreline can be accessed from public sites, or public lands, or on private properties where owners are agreeable along the complete length of the Yakima, Cle Elum, and Teanaway Rivers including:
Fishing from shore
River wading
Tube floating
Kayaking
Canoeing
Recreational floating
River rafting
Fish rafting, drift boating, other frame boating
Jet boat rescuing
• Every publicly accessible site in the rivers inventory suitable and used by fly-fishing enthusiasts
• Lands owned and managed by USFS, WDFW, DNR, P&RC, BPA, BOR, and BLM as well as Kittitas County, Cle Elum, Ellensburg
• Suncadia and a number of other private properties along the riverfronts

**River wading**
Fly-fishing in hip to upper body watertight waders where slower river currents allow from public sites, or public lands, or on private properties where owners are agreeable along the complete length of the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers including:

• Most of the publicly accessible sites in the rivers inventory suitable and used by wading fly-fishing enthusiasts
• Lands owned and managed by USFS, WDFW, DNR, P&RC, BPA, BOR, and BLM as well as Kittitas County, Cle Elum, Ellensburg
• Suncadia and a number of other private riverfront properties.

**Kayaking and canoeing**
Kayaking in single or double occupant inflatable, high-density polyethylene, or other materials in mild current river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams anywhere in the:

• Yakima River from the proposed Old Church Camp Access to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout
• Yakima River from the proposed Ellensburg City Wells Launch to the proposed Ellensburg Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park Takeout
• Yakima River from the proposed Kittitas County Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access to BLM Roza Campground

**Recreational floating**
Floating in lifejackets in single or multiple occupant inflatables or nylon or rubber floats in very mild current river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams or confusing side channels **only in the:**

• Yakima River from the proposed Old Church Camp Access to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout

**River rafting with guides**
River rafting in lifejackets in multiple occupant inflatables or nylon or rubber framed rafts navigated by river guides on river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams in the:

• Yakima River from the proposed Old Church Camp Access to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout
• Yakima River from the proposed Ellensburg City Wells Launch to Ellensburg’s Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park Takeout
• Yakima River from the proposed Kittitas County Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access to BLM’s Roza Campground

**Fishing in rafts, drift boats, and other frame watercraft**
Fish rafting in single or multiple occupant urethane or rubber or PVC pontoon boats, aluminum-alloy framed rafts, flat bottom aluminum, fiberglass, plastic, or wood drift boats, and other framed watercraft powered with manual oars or small outboard motors **(except motorized craft are not allowed between Mile Post 146.1 and BLM’s Roza Campground)** on river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams in the:

• Yakima River from the proposed Suncadia Bullfrog Road Bridge launch on the Cle Elum River to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout
• Yakima River from the proposed Ellensburg City Wells Launch to Kittitas County’s proposed Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access
• Yakima River from BLM’s Roza Campground to Roza Dam

**Jet boating**
Jet boating in welded aluminum flat bottom hulls powered by a water-pump engine that creates propulsion as an alternative to a sterndrive, outboard, or inboard method of propulsion that requires an exposed propeller. A jet boat can run in very shallow water for emergency responses or upriver fishing on river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams. County ordinance allows motor-powered watercraft in the:
Bank Fishing Access
- Existing
- Proposed

Ownership
- Private
- Federal
- State
- Other
- Yakima Training Center
- Cities

Reach Recommendations
- Generally safe for all users
- Qualified for fishing rafts/rowing frame
- Hazardous for all users
River wading

Fly-fishing in hip to upper body watertight waders where slower river currents allow from public sites, or public lands, or on private properties where owners are agreeable.

All sites are probably ok if waders use caution on those sites with fast current conditions.
Kayaking & Canoeing

Kayaking or canoeing in single or double occupant boats made of inflatable, high-density polyethylene, fiberglass, metal, wood or other materials in mild current river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams.
Tube Floating

Floating in lifejackets in single or multiple occupant inflatables or nylon or rubber floats in very mild current river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams or confusing side channels.

Recreational floating

Floating in lifejackets in single or multiple occupant inflatables or nylon or rubber floats in very mild current river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams or confusing side channels.
River rafting with guides
River rafting in lifejackets in multiple occupant inflatables or nylon or rubber framed rafts navigated by river guides on river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams.
Fish rafting in single or multiple occupant urethane or rubber or PVC pontoon boats, aluminum-alloy framed rafts, flat bottom aluminum, fiberglass, plastic, or wood drift boats, and other framed watercraft powered with manual oars or small outboard motors on river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams.
Jet boating

Jet boating in welded aluminum flat bottom hulls powered by a water-pump engine that creates propulsion as an alternative to a sterndrive, outboard, or inboard method of propulsion that requires an exposed propeller. A jet boat can run in very shallow water for emergency responses or upriver fishing on river stretches that are free of overhanging trees, sweepers, or logjams.
- Cle Elum River from proposed Suncadia Bullfrog Road Bridge Access upriver to the Cle Elum Dam
- Yakima River from the proposed Suncadia Bullfrog Road Bridge Access on the Cle Elum River to the Yakima River to WDFW’s SR-10 Takeout
- Yakima River from the proposed Ellensburg City Wells launch to Kittitas County’s proposed Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access
- Yakima River from BLM’s Roza Campground to Roza Dam

Jet boats can create hazardous conditions for other smaller watercraft on the river given the jet boat’s speed and the wake the boats create that can swamp other watercraft. **County ordinance prohibits the operation of motor-powered watercraft on the Yakima River from Mile Post 146.1 to Roza Campground.**

**River shoreline activities**

Recreationalists engage in a variety of activities on the shore that involve different supporting facilities including:

**Wildlife trails**
Short walks or hikes, including ADA enhanced, to view fish, birds, mammals, and other wildlife on dirt, gravel, or asphalt paths through woodlands, wetlands, and other habitat areas within a public access site's boundaries including:

- Every publicly accessible site in the rivers inventory suitable and improved or proposed to be improved with paths and trails through wildlife habitat areas
- Lands owned and managed by USFS, WDFW, DNR, P&RC, BPA, BOR, and BLM as well as Kittitas County, Cle Elum, Ellensburg
- Suncadia and a number of other private properties along the riverfronts

**Multipurpose trail connections**
Extended day hiking, biking, and in some instances, horseback riding on multipurpose trails that exist or are proposed to be connected to publicly accessible sites or adjacent lands including:

- **Palouse to Cascade Trail (PTC Trail – former Iron Horse Trail)**

- a 285-mile reuse of the former Chicago Milwaukee & Saint Paul (CM&SP) Railroad corridor from North Bend to Spokane with numerous existing trailheads or roadside accesses at Stampede Pass Road south of Stampede Pass Bridge Access, Monahan Road at Cabin Creek Access, Lake Easton State Park, Cabin Creek Road in Easton, Three Bridges Access on Pebble Beach Drive, Bullfrog Road South Access, Lower Peoh Point Road in South Cle Elum, East Taneum Road in Thorp, Goodwin and Thorp Depot Roads in Thorp, Gladmar Road Conservancy in Thorp, US-97 in Ellensburg, Faust and Sinclair Roads in Ellensburg, Reecer Creek Road in Ellensburg, West 14th Avenue in Ellensburg, and Alder Street at the Kittitas Valley Event Center.

- **Proposed PTC Trail connections** – by river crossing suspension bridges to the remote 18-mile stretch of PTC Trail from South Cle Elum to Thorp at the proposed public access sites at the proposed Old Church Camp Access across DNR lands and Swauk Creek Access.

- **Cle Elum Skyline Trail connections** – between the 5.0-mile Coal Miners Trail (CMT) from Roslyn south through Wye Park and Memorial/Fireman’s Park to the PCT at Peoh Point Road, and potentially on the levy and Whispering Pines Drive on the north shore of the Yakima River through Hanson Ponds/Kiwanis Fishing Ponds.

- **Ellensburg City-to-Canyon Trail connections** – extending from the PCT Trail at Reecer Creek Road then through Rotary Park to Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park Access then south in various alignments through the Hanson Pits/Tjossem Ditch Access, then the combined BPA, BLM, WDFW, Ellensburg, and Kittitas County conservancy lands to the proposed Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access.

**Picnicking and day-use areas**
Day-use facilities for individual, family, and group picnics, gatherings, and events activities are currently provided at scattered public access sites in Easton, Cle Elum, Ellensburg, and the Lower Canyon. Day-use facilities with picnic tables, shelters, and toilets are proposed on existing and proposed new public access sites to close gaps and increase access to day-use opportunities between Cle Elum and Ellensburg:
WA P&RC Palouse to Cascade Trail (PTC Trail)

Ellensburg City-to-Canyon Trail

Cle Elum Skyline Trail (ST)
• **Existing day-use improvements** – are provided at Stampede Pass Bridge and the USFS’s former Crystal Springs Campground facilities, P&R’s Lake Easton State Park, BPA’s Easton Acclimation Ponds, P&R’s Bullfrog Road South Access, WDFW’s Teanaway Junction Access in the Upper Canyon; Ellensburg KOA and Ellensburg’s Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park in the Kittitas Valley; and WDFW’s Ringer Loop Road South Access, private Big Horn Campground, BLM’s Umtanum, Lmuma Creek, Big Pines, and Roza Campgrounds in the Lower Canyon.

• **Proposed day-use improvements** – including picnic tables and toilets are to be provided at WDFW’s King Horn Slough-Hundley Road in the upper river reaches, WDFW’s Thorp/Green Bridge in the Kittitas Valley segment, and WDOT’s Mile Post 20/19 in the Lower Canyon.

• **Proposed new site day-use improvements** – including picnic tables, shelters, and toilets are to be included at Suncadia Bullfrog Road Bridge and Old Church Camp Access in the upper river reaches, Swauk Creek Access in the Upper Canyon, and Kittitas County Thrall Road/Wilson Creek before the Lower Canyon.

**Camping**

Camping facilities for tents and recreational vehicles (RV) are currently provided along the river at public and private access sites at Lake Easton, Ellensburg, and the Lower Canyon. The campgrounds are multi-use sites providing wildlife viewing, fishing, wading, swimming, boating, picnicking, hiking, and other activities of interest. The following facilities may not be sufficient to accommodate projections of resident and tourist populations likely to be interested in camping along the river corridor:

• **Existing public campgrounds** – include P&R’s Lake Easton State Park that provides wet and dry tent and RV campsites, and BLM’s Umtanum, Lmuma Creek, Big Pines, and Roza Campgrounds in the Lower Canyon that provide dry tent and RV campsites only. P&R and BLM campgrounds are developed to site capacity.

• **Existing private campgrounds** – include KOA in Ellensburg that provides wet and dry tent, RV, and cabins, and Bighorn Campground in the Lower Canyon that provides dry tent and RV campsites. Both sites should be monitored in the event either or both should come up for sale.

**Hunting**

Kittitas County provides diverse opportunities for hunting a wide range of game including waterfowl, upland birds, rabbits, coyote, deer, elk, bear, and bighorn sheep in the appropriate seasons and with the proper permits. Hunters stage excursions into public and some private lands water and land trails that extend outwards from a number of public access sites including:

• **USFS, Nature Conservancy, and Suncadia lands** – for ducks, deer, and elk in the upper river reaches that are accessible from Stampede Pass Bridge and the U-Fish Road/NF-4823 Road on the Yakima River, and Pedestrian Bridge and Old Winston Bridge Site on the Cle Elum River.

• **Yakima River** – for ducks and other waterfowl on the streams, wetlands, and ponds adjacent to the river from Ellensburg KOA, Kittitas County’s Hanson Pits/Tjossem Ditch, WDFW’s Ringer Loop Road South Access, BLM’s Ringer Loop Road North, WDFW’s Ringer Loop Road South, and Kittitas County’s proposed Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access.

• **WDFW lands** – for upland birds, deer, and elk on the western ridgelines in the Lower Canyon that access trails and Green Dot Roads in the Wenas and LT Murray Wildlife Areas from BLM’s Umtanum, Lmuma Creek, Big Pines, and Roza Campgrounds – particularly by way of the existing suspension bridge at Umtanum Campground and potentially by way of the proposed suspension bridge across the river at Big Pines Campground.

• **Private lands** – for upland birds, deer, and bighorn sheep on the eastern ridgelines on private Eaton Ranch property managed by Red’s Fly Shop.
Lake Easton State Park
Roza Campground
Bighorn Campground
Umtanum Campground
Big Pines Campground
Ellensburg KOA
Lmuma Creek Campground
Camping

Ownership
Private
Federal
State
Other
Yakima Training Center
Cities

Miles
Sightseeing
Tourists drive SR-10 in the Upper Canyon and Canyon Road in the Lower Canyon to observe and photograph the dramatic and varied scenic vistas of the river, canyon cliffs, and wildlife from numerous roadside shoulders, pull-offs, and public access sites. While there are numerous roadside locations tourists frequent to take photographs, many are dangerous traffic hazards. Scenic wayfinding signs should be posted at the following safe and strategic viewpoints from which to effectively observe Upper and Lower Canyon scenic attributes:

- **Upper Canyon on SR-10** - 11 safe and strategic wide shoulders, pull-offs, and public accessible sites effectively provide viewpoints of the most scenic wetlands, cliffs, basalt outcrops, river segments, pastureland, rural farmstead, and wildlife features in the Upper Canyon if properly waysigned for tourist vehicles.
- **Lower Canyon on Canyon Road** - 18 safe and strategic wide shoulders, pull-offs, and public accessible sites effectively provide viewpoints of the most scenic cliffs, basalt outcrops, river segments, and wildlife features in the Lower Canyon if properly waysigned for tourist vehicles.
Upper Canyon Scenic Viewpoints
Lower Canyon Scenic Viewpoints
**Yakima River Mile 2**
Latitude 47.3083
Longitude -121.314264

**Stampede Pass Bridge**

**Owner**
US Forest Service (USFS)

**Access**
Stampede Pass Road/Kachess Lake Road
Exit 62 From I-90 then west 1.0 mile on Stampede Pass Road to bridge and access to Crystal Springs Campground.

**River use**
The first river access site that is located below Keechelus Lake Dam that is suitable for fishing from shore and river wading. Crystal Springs Campground was closed due to I-90 wildlife crossing constructions but has access road/trail, picnic shelters, tables, and pit toilet.

**Existing improvements**
- Paved access road
- On-road parking area
- Parking in front of gate
- Picnic table and shelter
- Pit toilets - closed

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Wildlife trails

**Concerns**
- Human impact on I-90 wildlife crossing
Yakima River Mile 4
Latitude 47.293163
Longitude -121.29659

U-Fish 1

Owner
US Forest Service (USFS)

Access
Take U-Fish Road/Cabin Creek Snowpark Exit 63 from I-90 then 1.0 mile south on U-Fish Road/NF-4826 then west on first forest side road NF-4836-127 to site access.

River use
Upper river site is suitable for fishing from shore and river waders. The parking area is located under BPA power lines.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Parking area

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding sign
- River trail kiosk
- Wildlife trails
Yakima River Mile 6
Latitude 47.272096
Longitude -121.284155

**U-Fish 2**

**Owner**
US Forest Service (USFS)

**Access**
Take U-Fish Road/Cabin Creek Snowpark Exit 63 from I-90 then 2.0 miles south on U-Fish Road/NF-4826 to BPA power lines then west to site.

**River use**
Upper river site is suitable for fishing from shore and river waders. The parking area is located under BPA power lines.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel access road

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Wildlife trails
Yakima River Mile 8
Latitude 47.258418
Longitude -121.259676

**U-Fish 3**

**Owner**
US Forest Service (USFS)

**Access**
Take U-Fish Road/Cabin Creek Snowpark Exit 63 from I-90 then 3.0 miles south on U-Fish Road/NF-4826 to site access.

**River use**
Upper river site is suitable for fishing from shore and river waders. The road is located directly adjacent to the river and subject to washout.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel access road

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Armor road edge
Yakima River Mile 10
Latitude 47.250759
Longitude -121.234248

**U-Fish 4 – End of Road**

**Owner**
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

**Access**
Take U-Fish Road/Cabin Creek Snowpark Exit 63 from I-90 then 4.0 miles south on U-Fish Road/NF-4826 to end of the road and walk-in to site access.

**River use**
Upper river site is suitable for fishing from shore and river waders. BPA powerlines usable for ATV trails, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. The road eventually reduces to trail width with flooding during winter months. An alternate access is possible from BPA service roads.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel access road
- Hiking trails
- Wildlife trails

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
Yakima River Mile 11
Latitude 47.244137
Longitude -121.220159

Cabin Creek Road-Monahan Road

Owner
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission (P&RC)

Access
Cabin Creek Road/Tree Farm Road Exit 71 from I-90 at Easton then west 2.2 miles through Easton on Cabin Creek Road north to Monahan Road then right to and across railroad tracks to PTC Trail.

River use
Palouse to Cascade Trail (PTC Trail) overlooks of Cabin Creek and Yakima River. Trail access from PTC Trail across from Monahan Road on road grades for BPA line maintenance to wetlands and Cabin Creek for shore and river wading fishing. PTC Trail is shared vehicular access to adjacent Monahan residential community.

Existing improvements
- Paved access road
- Dirt parking area adjacent to railroad crossing
- Access across tracks to PTC Trail and wetlands

Possible improvements
- Cabin Creek access
- Wildlife trails
- Wayfinding sign
Yakima River Mile 13
Latitude 47.243975
Longitude -121.185495

Lake Easton State Park

Owner
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission (P&RC)

Access
Lake Easton Road Exit 70 from I-90 then south on Lake Easton Road to main park entrance.

River use
Lake Easton Dam contains Yakima and Kachess Rivers to create a reservoir for upper Kittitas County along with a 516-acre park with 24,000 linear feet of shoreline and access to the Palouse to Cascade Trail (PTC Trail). Open year-round.

Existing improvements
- Paved access roads
- Wildlife viewing
- 6 miles of bike trails
- 6.5 miles of hiking trails
- Snowmobiling, dog sleds
- 5 miles of groomed cross-country skiing
- Shore, wader, and tube float fishing
- Swimming beach
- Boat launch (>10 HP)
- Amphitheater, playground
- 40 picnic tables
- 90 campsites, 45 hookups
- 2 hiker/biker sites
- Dump station
- 4 restrooms (3 ADA)
Yakima River Mile 13
Latitude 47.240714
Longitude -121.181935

**Railroad Street Bridge**

**Owner**
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission (P&RC)

**Access**
Cabin Creek Road→Tree Farm
Exit 71 from I-90 then north on Cabin Creek Road to the bridge over the Yakima River

**River use**
Upper river site is suitable for fishing from shore and river waders with caution due to shallow, rapid water.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel shoulder parking
- Trail access along river and into Lake Easton State Park

**Possible improvements**
- River trail kiosk
- Wayfinding sign

Trailhead

Trail

Trail bridge

Lake Easton State Park

South campground

“Salmon Trail” into Lake Easton State Park

Roadside parking

Shoreline

Shoulder parking

Yakima River Mile 13
Latitude 47.240714
Longitude -121.181935

**Railroad Street Bridge**

**Owner**
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission (P&RC)

**Access**
Cabin Creek Road→Tree Farm
Exit 71 from I-90 then north on Cabin Creek Road to the bridge over the Yakima River

**River use**
Upper river site is suitable for fishing from shore and river waders with caution due to shallow, rapid water.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel shoulder parking
- Trail access along river and into Lake Easton State Park

**Possible improvements**
- River trail kiosk
- Wayfinding sign
**Yakima River Mile 14**
Latitude 47.233187
Longitude -121.167971

**Easton Acclimation Ponds**

**Owner**
Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Bonneville Power Authority (BPA)

**Access**
Cabin Creek Road-Tree Farm Exit 71 from I-90 then south on Tree Farm Road to the Acclimation Ponds

**River use**
Upper river site is suitable for wildlife, picnicking, fishing from shore, river waders, but not tube floats due to swift water, sweepers, and logjams.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel parking lots
- Picnic tables and shelters
- Playground
- Pedestrian bridge over Cowboy Creek
- Trail access along river and around ponds

**Possible improvements**
- River trail kiosk
- Wayfinding signs
- Suspension bridge over river to trail system on BPA land

**Concerns**
- Human impact on BPA conservation lands for elk habitat
River Mile 21
Latitude 47.212944
Longitude -121.09285
King Horn Slough,
Hundley Road

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
East Nelson Siding Exit 74 from I-90 between Cle Elum and Easton to north side of I-90 then 2.2 miles on Hundley Road to site entrance.

River use
First boat launch below Lake Easton Dam suitable for fishing from shore and waders with caution due to fast water.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Dirt boat launch
- Large parking area
- Pit toilets

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Wildlife trails
- Picnic tables

Concerns
- Swift current, sweepers, and logjams downriver limit watercraft use
Three Bridges Access

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
Take Golf Course Road Exit 78 from I-90 then south on Sun Country Road to Pebble Beach Drive underpass of BNSF Railroad and Palouse to Cascade Trail (PTC Trail).

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, fishing rafts, drift boats, and other frame boats with hiking access to PTC TRAIL Bridge.

Existing improvements
- Gravel parking shoulders
- Trail access along river and to PTC Trail bridge

Possible improvements
- River trail kiosk
- Wayfinding signs

Concerns
- Swift current, sweepers, and logjams downriver limit watercraft use
Yakima River Mile 26
Latitude 47.176699
Longitude -121.039214

Bullfrog Road South

Owner
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission (P&RC)

Access
Take Bullfrog Road/Roslyn Exit 80 from I-90 then south across BNSF Railroad tracks then south into P&RC site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame boats, picnicking, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Dirt access road
- Dirt boat launch
- Picnic tables
- Wildlife trails

Possible improvements
- River trail kiosk
- Wayfinding signs
- Toilets

Concerns
- Frame boats required downriver due to swift current and logjams
Cle Elum River Mile 1
Latitude 47.240811
Longitude -121.064459

Pedestrian Bridge

Owner
US Forest Service (USFS)

Access
Bull Frog Road/Roslyn Exit 80 from I-90 then north on SR-903 through Roslyn and Raymond to Lake Cle Elum Dam Road then NF dirt road to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, picnicking, and wildlife trails. Lake Easton Dam release affects river volume and flow.

Existing improvements
- Dirt access road
- Trailhead parking area
- Interpretive signage
- Hiking trail to fish ladder viewpoint
- Pedestrian bridge over Cle Elum River (closed to crossing)

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs

Concerns
- Dam water release can overwhelm river users
- BOR construction projects on and around the dam for next couple of years
Old Winston Bridge Site

Owner
Suncadia

Access
Bull Frog Road/Roslyn Exit 80 from I-90 then north on SR-903 through Roslyn and Raymond to Winston Road then Baker Road past gravel pits to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, and wildlife trails. Lake Easton Dam release affects river volume and flow.

Existing improvements
- Dirt access road
- Trailhead parking area
- Interpretive signage
- Hiking trail to fish habitat restoration revetments into river at side channel with Domerie Creek

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- Dam water release can overwhelm river users
Cle Elum River Mile 7
Latitude 47.18996
Longitude -121.015405

**Bullfrog Road Bridge**

**Owner**
Suncadia, Cle Elum

**Access**
Bullfrog Road/Roslyn Exit 80 from I-90 then north on Bullfrog Road to bridge

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame boats, picnicking, and wildlife trails.

**Existing improvements**
- Old river bridge for emergency launch due to deeper water
- Extensive wetlands habitat with viewpoints

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Gravel access road and parking lot
- Gravel boat launch
- Picnic tables and shelter
- Shoreline trails along shelter
- Interpretive trails into wetlands
- Restrooms

**Concerns**
- Well site restrictions may limit emergency launch
- Dam water releases affect river volume and flow.
Yakima River Mile 32
Latitude 47.190916
Longitude -120.946264

Memorial/Fireman’s Park

Owner
City of Cle Elum

Access
South Cle Elum Exit 85 from I-90 then north on Oakes Avenue to Railroad Avenue west to South Cle Elum Way south across bridge to park

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame boats, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road and parking lot
- Gravel boat launch
- Picnic tables and shelter
- Baseball fields
- Wildlife trails
- Restrooms

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- Swift currents and logjams downriver limit watercraft
Yakima River Mile 34
Latitude 47.186057
Longitude -120.918419

Hanson Ponds/Kiwanis Fishing Pond

Owner
City of Cle Elum

Access
South Cle Elum Exit 85 from I-90 then south on Oakes Avenue to Whispering Pines Drive then east into site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road and parking lots
- Gravel boat launch
- Hiking trails on Whispering Pines Drive (abandoned due to river washouts)

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Rebuild pedestrian bridge to Whispering Pines Drive to access extensive riverfront and ponding areas
- Toilets

Concerns
- Swift currents and logjams downriver limit watercraft
Yakima River Mile 38
Latitude 47.171774
Longitude -120.857546
Teanaway Junction

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
SR-97/10 to Airport Road then south across BNSF Railroad tracks into site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, and wildlife trails. Down river hazards due to log jams

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road and parking lots
- Gravel boat launch
- Hiking trails
- Wildlife
- Toilets

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Picnic tables
- Suspension bridge to WDFW lands across river

Concerns
- Swift currents and logjams downriver limit watercraft
- Boat launch at this site may be closed if Old Church Camp Access is developed
Yakima River Mile 39
Latitude 47.170966
Longitude -120.846976

Old Church Camp

Owner
Private – proposed acquisition

Access
SR-10 south of Airport Road to gravel access road then south across BNSF Railroad tracks and parallel to tracks south into site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, fish tube floats, kayaks, canoes, recreational floaters, rafts, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, swimming, picnicking, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Gravel parking lot
- Boat launch
- Picnic tables
- Restrooms
- Suspension bridges to DNR lands across river to PTC Trail

Shoreline – potential boat launch
Shoreline – wading beach
Teanaway River Mile 10
Latitude 47.175258
Longitude -120.836139

Lambert Road Bridge

Owner
Bonneville Power Authority (BPA)

Access
SR-970 east from Cle Elum to Lambert Road then east to the site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, recreational floaters, fishing rafts, drift boats, and other frame craft.

Existing improvements
- Dirt boat launch through BPA transmission station

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- BPA permission advised to use site
Yakima River Mile 11
Latitude 47.169196
Longitude -120.83386

Teanaway River Bridge

Owner
Private – proposed acquisition

Access
SR-10 south from Cle Elum to the bridge over the Teanaway River

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, and other frame craft if a launch and parking are located off the highway. Otherwise, this site should be abandoned due to hazardous traffic conflicts between on-road parking and river user activities.

Existing improvements
 Access from river levy

Possible improvements
 Wayfinding signs
 River trail kiosk
 Access road and parking
 Raft/boat launch

Concerns
 Extreme traffic hazards on SR-10 bridge and shoulders - this site to be abandoned if Old Church Camp is developed
Yakima River Mile 42
Latitude 47.148352
Longitude -120.807595

**Bristol Flats**

**Owner**
Private

**Access**
SR-10 south from Cle Elum to Bristol Flats pasture land then across BNSF Railroad tracks to gate into the site ($10 access fee)

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, fishing rafts, drift boats, and other frame craft during summer months. Use not advised when irrigation flume located across river from boat launch may release water into the river.

**Existing improvements**
- Dirt boat launch developed by Kittitas River District (KRD) river from flume

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

**Concerns**
- Flume water release in April and early fall can overwhelm watercraft
Yakima River Mile 46
Latitude 47.123633
Longitude -120.736736

Swauk Creek Access

Owner
Private – proposed acquisition

Access
SR-10 south from Cle Elum to Swauk Creek Bridge then south across BNSF Railroad tracks into the site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, recreational floats, rafts, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, picnicking, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Dirt access road and BNSF crossing
- Dirt boat launch

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Picnic tables
- Restroom
- Suspension bridge over river to PTC Trail
Yakima River Mile 48
Latitude 47.105974
Longitude -120.72212

Clark Flat Acclimation Ponds

**Owner**
Bonneville Power Authority (BPA)

**Access**
SR-10 to Thorp Highway to Dudley Road then south on Dudley Road across BNSF Railroad tracks and north to the end of the road to the site

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, and wildlife trails on the river levy. Acclimation ponds are off limits but salmon runs are visible from the river upstream to the ponds.

**Existing improvements**
- Dirt access road and BNSF crossing
- Irrigation intake with river overlook viewpoint
- Acclimation ponds interpretive exhibit

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

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Acclimation pond interpretive
Intake overlook
Levy trail
Salmon acclimation stream
Yakima River Mile 50
Latitude 47.100775
Longitude -120.701435

Thorp/Green Bridge

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
SR-10 to Thorp Highway to Thorp/Green River Bridge to the site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, recreation floaters, rafts, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, picnicking, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Dirt access road
- Dirt boat launch

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Picnic tables
- Wildlife trail
- Restrooms
Yakima River Mile 51
Latitude 47.096229
Longitude -120.689043

Rill Adventures

Owner
Leased by Rill Adventures
River Rafting for river takeout

Access
SR-10 north of Ellensburg
Water Company Diversion Dam

River use
River site is used primarily as take-out site for recreational floaters and guided river rafting by private excursion company.

Existing improvements
• Dirt access road
• Road shoulder parking
• Recreational floating and guided river rafting take-out

Possible improvements
• Wayfinding signs
• River trail kiosk
Yakima River Mile 53
Latitude 47.071721
Longitude -120.658888
SR-10 Takeout

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
SR-10 just above Ellensburg Water Company Diversion Dam to the site

River use
River site is mandatory takeout for all watercraft including kayaks, canoes, recreation floaters, rafts, fishing rafts, drift boats, and other frame craft, before hazardous Division Dam spillway. Site is suitable for fishing from shore.

Existing improvements
- Interpretive signs
- Gravel access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Concrete boat launch
- Sanican toilets

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Shoreline trail
- Picnic tables

Concerns
- Takeout launch ramp needs to be configured for emergency jet boat trailers
Yakima River Mile 54
Latitude 47.06425
Longitude -120.651985

**Diversion Dam Overlook**

**Owner**
Ellensburg Water Company
Diversion Dam

**Access**
SR-10 to north of Grandview
Road to the site

**River use**
Diversion Dam and spillway are hazardous for all river users except shoreline fishing, viewpoint overlook, and wildlife trails.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel access road
- Gravel overlook
- Roadside parking and walk-in trail

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
Yakima River Mile 54
Latitude 47.05912
Longitude -120.649319

City Wells

Owner
City of Ellensburg

Access
SR-10 just below Ellensburg
Water Company Diversion Dam to the site

River use
River site is first access below the Diversion Dam suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, river rafts, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Gravel access top of levy

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Gravel raft/boat launch
- Gravel parking lot
- Wildlife trail
- Toilets

Concerns
- Shifting river channels downriver from this site at Gladmar Road Conservancy need to be marked annually to alert launch users at this site
**Yakima River Mile 55**
Latitude 47.04916
Longitude -120.647475

**Gladmar Road**
Conservancy

**Owner**
Kittitas County with Central Washington University (CWU) conservancy agreement

**Access**
I-90 Thorp Highway North Exit 101 then east on Gladmar Road to the site

**River use**
River site conservancy created by levy breach forming multiple side channels, ponds, and shorelines suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, and wildlife trails. Side channels are hazardous due to fast currents, limited visibility, and overhangs.

**Existing improvements**
- Paved access road
- Levy-top trail
- Access to PTC Trail

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Suspension bridges to interior islands created by side channels

**Concerns**
- Swift currents and logjams limit watercraft uses

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Creek outlet to side channel
Side channel shoreline
Side channel pond
Yakima River Mile 60
Latitude 47.00499
Longitude -120.593586
Ellensburg KOA

Owner
Private boat launch ($5 fee)

Access
I-90 Thorp Highway South Exit 106 to Thorp Highway South Bridge to the site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, canoes, river rafts, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, picnicking, and wildlife trails but not for recreational floaters due to log jams and currents.

Existing improvements
- Dirt access road
- Dirt boat launch
- Picnic tables
- 19 dry tent campsites
- 9 wet tent campsites
- 60 wet RV campsites
- 26 wet/sewer RV campsites
- 4 cabins
- 3 group campsites
- Playgrounds, pools, courts
- Wildlife trail into former landfill site

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
Yakima River Mile 60
Latitude 47.00499
Longitude -120.593586

**Thorp Highway South Bridge**

**Owner**
Kittitas County/City of Ellensburg

**Access**
I-90 Thorp Highway South Exit 106 to Thorp Highway South Bridge to the south shore site

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayaks, and canoes but not for trailered craft due to steep access or recreational floaters due to logjams and currents.

**Existing improvements**
- Dirt access road
- Dirt boat launch

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Steep walk-in access
Dirt launch
Stair access
Yakima River Mile 61
Latitude 46.994683
Longitude -120.57914

Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park

Owner
City of Ellensburg

Access
Canyon Road in Ellensburg
south or I-90 Canyon Road Exit
109 north to Umptanum Road
west to the site

River use
River site is mandatory takeout
for kayaks, canoes, recreational floaters, river and fishing rafts, and all other non-frame craft water activities due to swift current and logjams.
Site is suitable for fishing from shore, picnicking, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Paved/dirt access road
- Hiking trails
- Lake swimming
- Playgrounds
- Picnic tables
- Toilets

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Raft/boat takeout
- Gravel parking area

Concerns
- Extremely hazardous sweepers, downed trees, logjams downriver
Yakima River Mile 62
Latitude 46.978136
Longitude -120.567378

Rinehart/Umptanum Bridge

Owner
City of Ellensburg

Access
Canyon Road in Ellensburg south or I-90 Canyon Road Exit 109 north to Umptanum Road west to the bridge site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, picnicking, and wildlife trails but no other uses due to swift current and logjams. Existing boat launch may be improved for emergency use only.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road, parking
- Picnic tables
- Wildlife trails

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Launch improvements for emergency use only

Concerns
- Extremely hazardous sweepers, logjams, and split channels downriver for all watercraft
Yakima River Mile 63
Latitude 46.9636
Longitude -120.5537

**Riverbottom Road**

**Owner**
Kittitas County River Levy

**Access**
Canyon Road in Ellensburg
west on Umptanum Road to
Riverbottom Road south to the
levy site

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing
from shore, river waders, but
no other uses due to swift
current and logjams.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel access to levy
- Road shoulder parking

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

**Concerns**
- Sweepers, logjams, and
split channels limit
watercraft uses

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Existing improvements:
- Levy access parking
- Levy shoreline

Existing improvements:
- Levy access parking
- Levy shoreline
Yakima River Mile 64
Latitude 46.960301
Longitude -120.533714
Hanson Pits/Tjossem Ditch

Owner
Kittitas County

Access
Canyon Highway in Ellensburg south to Tjossem Road then right across BNSF Railroad tracks into the site

River use
River site created by existing and proposed levy breach that is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, and wildlife walks.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Dirt shoreline, wildlife trails

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Picnic tables
- Toilets

Concerns
- Sweepers, logjams, and split channels limit watercraft uses
Yakima River Mile 67  
Latitude 46.932266  
Longitude -120.518269

**Ringer Loop Road North**

**Owner**  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

**Access**  
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to Ringer Access Road North then west across BNSF Railroad tracks to site

**River use**  
River site is suitable for fishing from shore and wildlife trails. Ringer Loop Road closed due to flooding and high water intrusion.

**Existing improvements**
- Paved access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Interpretive sign
- Wildlife trails

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

**Concerns**
- Sweepers, logjams, and split channels limit watercraft uses
**Yakima River Mile 67**
Latitude 46.926679
Longitude -120.516384

**Ringer Loop Road South**

**Owner**
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

**Access**
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to Ringer Access Road South then west across BNSF Railroad tracks

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, and wildlife trails. Ringer Loop Road closed due to flooding and high water intrusion. Adjoins BLM lands on the west boundary.

**Existing improvements**
- Paved access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Interpretive sign
- Concrete boat launch
- Wildlife trails
- Pit toilets

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

**Concerns**
- Sweepers and logjams downriver limit watercraft uses
- Launch may be closed if Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access developed
Yakima River Mile 68
Latitude 46.923937
Longitude -120.511237

Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access

**Owner**
Kittitas County

**Access**
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to Thrall Road then west across BNSF Railroad tracks into site

**River use**
Site is first safe access to the river below Irene Rinehart. River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, kayak, canoe, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, and wildlife trails.

**Existing improvements**
- None

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- BNSF Railroad crossing
- Gravel access road, parking
- Raft/boat launch
- Wilson Creek float access
- Picnic tables
- Wildlife trails to Ellensburg, WDFW, BLM conservancy lands
- Toilets

**Concerns**
- River closed to motorized craft

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**Proposed access trail**

**Proposed access road, parking, raft/boat launch**

**Proposed trail, recreation float launch on Wilson Creek**

**Proposed shoreline, wildlife trails**

**Potential access to Wilson Creek**
Yakima River Mile 70
Latitude 46.894323
Longitude -120.501

**Bighorn Campground**

**Owner**
Private launch for a fee

**Access**
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to horseshoe bend in the river to site

**River use**
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, kayak, canoe, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, picnicking, and camping. Safety issue on Canyon Road due to recreational float and boat launch shoulder parking.

**Existing improvements**
- Gravel access road and parking
- Gravel raft/boat launch and parking for $10 fee
- Picnic tables
- 39 dry tent/RV campsites
- Toilets

**Possible improvements**
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

**Concerns**
- River closed to motorized craft
Yakima River Mile 72
Latitude 46.884665
Longitude -120.477389
Mile Post 20/19

Owner
Washington State Department of Transportation (WDOT)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to Mile Post 20 to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, picnicking, and wildlife trails. Site has limited capacity due to size and traffic conflicts.

Existing improvements
- Gravel shoulder pull-offs
- Shoreline access

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Picnic tables
- Wildlife trail
Yakima River Mile 76
Latitude 46.854719
Longitude -120.482676

Umtanum Campground

Owner
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to the site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river waders, kayak, canoe, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, other frame craft, picnic, campground, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Gravel raft/boat launch
- Yakima River Tubing concession launch
- Picnic tables and fire rings
- 6 dry tent/RV campsites
- Vault toilets
- Interpretive sign
- Wildlife trails
- Suspension bridge over river

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- River closed to motorized craft
Yakima River Mile 78
Latitude 46.842567
Longitude -120.461598

Canyon River
Ranch/Red’s Fly Shop

Owner
Private launch for fee

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, fishing rafts, drift and jet boats. Resort includes fly fishing shop, restaurant, lodge, and condominium development.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Gravel raft/boat launch
- River raft/drift boat rental/storage

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- River closed to motorized craft

Lodge, fly shop, restaurant
Raft/boat launch and rental
Lodge, fly shop, restaurant
Dirt raft/boat launch
Yakima River Mile 80
Latitude 46.814115
Longitude -120.449863

Lmuma Creek Campground

Owner
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, kayak, canoe, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, picnicking, camping, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Gravel raft/boat launch
- Picnic tables and fire rings
- 7 dry tent/RV campsites
- Vault toilets

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- River closed to motorized craft
Yakima River Mile 83
Latitude 46.79816
Longitude -120.462881
Mile Post 10

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, kayak, canoe, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, and wildlife trails. Adjoins Big Pines Campground

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Gravel raft/boat launch

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- River closed to motorized watercraft
Big Pines Campground

Owner
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, kayak, canoe, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, picnicking, camping, and wildlife trails. Adjoins Mile Post 10.

Existing improvements
- Paved access road
- Paved parking lot
- Concrete raft/boat launch
- Picnic tables and fire pits
- 38 dry tent/RV campsites
- 3 walk-in dry tent campsites
- 1 group campsite for 20
- Shoreline, wildlife trails
- Vault toilets

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk
- Suspension bridge

Concerns
- Bridge subject to WDFW habitat management
- River closed to motorized watercraft
Yakima River Mile 85
Latitude 46.776674
Longitude -120.453338

Mile Post 8

Owner
Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to site

River use
River site is suitable for fishing from shore, river wading, kayak, canoe, recreation floats, river and fishing rafts, drift boats, and wildlife trails.

Existing improvements
- Gravel access road
- Gravel parking lot
- Gravel raft/boat launch
- Shoreline, wildlife trails

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- River closed to motorized watercraft

Dirt raft/boat launch
Shoreline, wildlife trails
Raft/boat launch

River shoreline
Roza Campground

Yakima River Mile 86
Latitude 46.764358
Longitude -120.456213

Owner
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Access
Canyon Highway from Ellensburg south to site

River use
River site is mandatory takeout before Roza Dam for all non-motorized watercraft. Motorized watercraft allowed downriver to Roza Dam only.

Site is suitable for river wading, picnicking, and wildlife trails

Existing improvements
- Paved access road
- Paved parking lot
- Paved raft/boat takeout
- Picnic tables and fire pits
- 5 dry tent and RV campground

Possible improvements
- Wayfinding signs
- River trail kiosk

Concerns
- Downriver closed to all non-motorized watercraft and river uses
The resulting goal statements in Chapter 5 and the river inventory and classification in Chapter 6 determined there were key existing public sites that need to be improved and new public access sites that should be acquired and developed to resolve river safety issues, fill gaps in access, and increase multi-use opportunities.

Illustrative development concepts were created for these 10 key public access sites to determine if and how they could be improved to meet the goals listed above. The concepts were based on workshops with user and interest groups and state and federal agencies, and finally by site verification with the knowledgeable members of the Yakima River Access Citizens Advisory and Public Lands Advisory Committees.

The illustrative development proposals are CONCEPTUAL, in some instances, subject to further study and coordination with public and private participants that may modify eventual project particulars.
Easton Acclimation Ponds

- Add parking on the loop access road
- Restore footbridge over Cowboy Creek
- Construct additional footbridge over Cowboy Creek
- Construct suspension bridge over Yakima River
- Develop wildlife/shoreline trail system on BPA conservancy
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

Note – assumes BPA confirmation for trail access to conservation easement lands
Bullfrog Road Bridge North Emergency Launch

- Use old bridge approach for launch
- Align launch ramp between Suncadia well standpipes

Note - assumes Suncadia and City of Cle Elum confirmation to launch between 8 shallow wells 40-feet deep about 20-40 feet from the river edge for river emergency response access
Bullfrog Road Bridge South Riverfront Access

- Construct access road and parking lot off Bullfrog Road
- Develop non-motorized, hand-carry launch on Cle Elum River
- Develop wildlife/shoreline trails south towards Yakima River
- Install fire pits, picnic tables, shelter, and vault toilet
- Install wayfinding signs and river trail kiosk

Note – assumes Suncadia confirmation for access
Old Church Camp

- Acquire triangular property fronting on Yakima River
- Acquire linear frontage from Old Church Camp property
- Construct car and boat trailer parking lot
- Construct launch ramp into Yakima River
- Develop wildlife trails along river shoreline
- Install fire pits, picnic tables, shelter, and vault toilet
- Construct suspension bridge across river to DNR lands
- Construct suspension bridge across channel to PTC Trail
- Develop shoreline trails on DNR and link to PTC Trail
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

*Note – assumes DNR and P&RC confirmation for trail development and PTC Trail connection*
Swauk Creek Access

- Acquire linear frontage along Yakima River
- Construct car and boat trailer parking lot
- Construct launch ramp into Yakima River
- Develop wildlife trails along river shoreline and Swauk Creek

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Install fire pits, picnic tables, shelter, and vault toilet</td>
<td>Construct suspension bridge across river to PTC Trail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construct suspension bridge across river to PTC Trail</td>
<td>Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk</td>
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Note – assumes P&RC confirmation for suspension bridge connection to PTC Trail
City Wells Access

- Construct access road from SR-10 adjacent to river levy
- Construct launch ramp into Yakima River
- Construct car and boat trailer parking lot
- Construct launch ramp into Yakima River
- Develop wildlife trails along river shoreline and wetlands
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

Note – assumes City of Ellensburg confirmation for access to well site
Gladmar Road Conservancy

- Construct suspension bridge(s) across channel to islands
- Improve PTC Trail connection
- Develop wildlife trails along river shoreline and wetlands
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

*Note – assumes P&RC confirmation for PTC Trail connection*
Upper Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park Slough Takeout

- Extend access from main park road - line road with barriers
- Construct takeout ramp from Yakima River into slough
- Construct car and boat trailer parking lot
- Install mandatory takeout notice on river and shoreline
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

Note – assumes City of Ellensburg confirmation for access to upper park area
Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access

| Develop new entry road across BNSF from Canyon Road | Develop trail system across Wilson Creek |
| Construct launch ramp into Yakima River            | Develop trail system north to WDFW, BLM lands |
| Construct car and boat trailer parking lots         | Install fire pits, picnic tables, shelter, and vault toilet |
| Develop footbridge over Wilson Creek                | Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk |

Note – assumes BNSF confirmation for new railroad crossing by possibly closing Ringer Loop Road South railroad crossing
Mile Post 20/19

- Construct one-way access roads and parking lots
- Develop shoreline trail along riverfront
- Install fire pits, picnic tables, shelter, and vault toilet
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

Note – assumes WDOT confirmation for controlled access road and parking
Big Pine Campground Suspension Bridge

- Construct suspension bridge across river to west ridge
- Install wayfinding signs and river kiosk

**Note – assumes WDFW confirmation for access to wildlife conservancy lands**

According to Lidar maps, the culvert ground level is 9.8 to 16.4 feet above the river surface. If the culvert is at least 3 feet deep and another 5 feet is excavated for a total of 8 feet of clearance the culvert underpass would still be 4.8 to 11.4 feet above the river. This seems doable and is preferable and more feasible than asking BNSF for a surface crossing in such a remote place.
Public access project priorities

Yakima River Access Citizen Advisory Committee members ranked public access projects for existing sites, new sites, and suspension bridges for:

- **Safety opportunities** - replacing high risk public access sites, providing emergency response launches at hazardous river stretches, and reducing or eliminating other safety issues including congestion on access roads
- **On-water opportunities** - reducing gaps in river access, providing access to the PTC Trail, WDFW and DNR conservancy lands across the river, and connecting with the PTC Trail and other multipurpose trail linkages in Cle Elum and Ellensburg,
- **Shoreline opportunities** - increasing multi-use public access site potentials with habitat conservation measures, wildlife trails and interpretations, picnicking and other day-use activities, toilets and other services.

Considered in the above rankings were implementation issues including whether the sites were publicly owned, shovel ready for improvements, with few or no railroad crossing barriers, and potentially involving other partnering agencies and organizations using multiple possible funding sources.

Committee members scored each safety, on-water, and shoreline opportunity on a scale where low was a score 1, medium 2, and high 3. The 9 committee member composite scores were then ranked where low was a composite member score of 0-1.49, medium 1.50-2.29, and high 2.30-3.00.

Following are the resulting composite scores for existing and new sites in order of river sequence from river origins to lower river stretches and not necessarily due to priority score:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing site enhancements</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>On-water</th>
<th>Shoreline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easton Acclimation Pond bridge, trails</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Horn Slough-Hundley Road trails, picnic</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullfrog Road South toilet</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanson Ponds/Whispering Pines footbridge</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambert Road Access trails</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teanaway River Bridge launch, parking, trails</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark Flat Acclimation Ponds trails</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorp/Green Bridge trails, picnic, toilet</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Wells launch and parking area</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladmar Road Conservancy bridge, trails</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellensburg KOA shoreline trails</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorp Highway South Bridge trails</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Rinehart Takeout ramp, parking</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinehart/Umptanum Bridge launch rebuild</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mile Post 20/19 roadside picnic, trail</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Pines Campground suspension bridge</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New site acquisitions</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>On-water</th>
<th>Shoreline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullfrog Road Bridge</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Church Camp</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swauk Creek Access</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown, committee members ranked existing sites of highest priority that most benefitted safety and on-water opportunities including Ellensburg’s City Wells launch and parking area, Upper...
Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park takeout ramp, Rinehart/Umptanum Bridge launch ramp rebuild, Teanaway River Bridge SR-10 off-road launch, parking, and trails, and Hanson Ponds/Whispering Pines Drive/Levy footbridge rebuild.

Committee members gave higher composite scores for safety, on-water, and shoreline opportunities, however, to the acquisition of the Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek Access, and Bullfrog Road Bridge sites – and even higher composite scores to the development of these sites as well as Kittitas County’s Thrall Road/Wilson Creek site.

While high priority scores are significant in determining where to focus public access resources the scores per se should not determine where implementation actions take place. In general, public access resources should be utilized in an opportunistic manner shifting focus, where necessary and appropriate, to implement site enhancements, acquisitions, and developments when partnerships, funding sources, and other conditions emerge and/or allow.

**Project development cost estimates**

Development costs were estimated for proposed enhancements to existing access sites and for the development, but not the acquisition costs, for proposed new acquisition and development sites.

All estimates are in 2018 dollars and do not include geotechnical costs, boulder removal, irrigation, utilities, sales tax, permitting costs, surveys, design fees, hazardous materials removal, or environmental mitigations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Enhancements to existing access sites</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WDFW</td>
<td>King Horn Slough-Hundley Road trails, picnic</td>
<td>$235,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;RC</td>
<td>Bullfrog Road South toilet</td>
<td>$290,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cle Elum</td>
<td>Hanson Ponds/Whispering Pines footbridge</td>
<td>$173,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Teanaway River Bridge access, launch, trails</td>
<td>$571,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPA</td>
<td>Clark Flat Acclimation Ponds trails</td>
<td>$45,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDFW</td>
<td>Thorp/Green Bridge trails, picnic, toilet</td>
<td>$384,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Ellensburg KOA shoreline trails</td>
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<td>County</td>
<td>Thorp Highway South Bridge trails</td>
<td>$42,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellensburg</td>
<td>Rinehart/Umptanum Bridge launch rebuild</td>
<td>$329,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>New access sites without bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPA</td>
<td>Easton Acclimation Ponds*</td>
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<td>Suncadia</td>
<td>Bull Frog Road Bridge North</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suncadia</td>
<td>Bull Frog Road Bridge South*</td>
<td>$630,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Old Church Camp*</td>
<td>$898,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Swauk Creek Access*</td>
<td>$1,327,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellensburg</td>
<td>City Wells</td>
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<td>County</td>
<td>Gladmar Road Conservancy*</td>
<td>$572,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellensburg</td>
<td>Upper Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park</td>
<td>$435,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access*</td>
<td>$1,792,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDOT</td>
<td>Mile Post 20/19*</td>
<td>$163,125</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLM</td>
<td>Big Pines Campground Suspension Bridge*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>Suspension bridges</td>
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<td>BPA</td>
<td>Easton Acclimation Ponds</td>
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<td>Old Church Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>P&amp;RC</td>
<td>Swauk Creek Access</td>
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<td>BLM</td>
<td>Big Pines Campground</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$16,185,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Does not include trails and other site structures or features beyond the main area of site development.

Development costs by sponsor, meaning landowner in most cases, are lowest for Cle Elum at $173,600, consisting primarily of redeveloping the footbridge in Hanson Ponds to Whispering Pines Drive levy, and highest for Kittitas County at $5,239,200 for improvements to Teanaway River Bridge on SR-10, Ellensburg KOA shoreline trails to the landfill site, Thorp Highway South Bridge trails, Gladmar Road Conservancy footbridge access, and the new...
## Implementation public access project participants

**L** - Lead, **P** - Participant

### Existing site enhancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easton Acclimation Ponds suspension bridge and BPA trails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Horn Slough-Hundley Road picnic area and trails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hanson Ponds-Kiwanis Fishing Pond pedestrian bridge</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullfrog Road South pit toilet</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambert Road on Teanaway River wildlife trails</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teanaway River Bridge off-road parking and launch area</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clark Flats Acclimation Ponds wildlife trails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thorp-Green River Bridge wildlife trails, picnic area, toilet, ADA</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>City Wells boat ramp and parking area</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladmar Road Conservancy suspension bridge and trails</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellensburg KOA wildlife trails</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorp Highway South Bridge wildlife trails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Rinehart boat take-out ramp and parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower Rinehart Umptanum Bride emergency boat launch renovation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mile Post 20/19 picnic area, wildlife trails, ADA</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Pines Campground suspension bridge and culvert dig-out to trails</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
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</table>

### New site acquisitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullfrog Road Bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Church Camp</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swauk Creek Access</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### New site development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullfrog Road Bridge north</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullfrog Road Bridge south</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Church Camp</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swauk Creek Access</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrall Road/Wilson Creek</td>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
site developments at Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek Access, and Thrall Road/Wilson Creek Access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Existing sites/new sites/bridges</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cle Elum</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$173,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellensburg</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$1,337,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Existing and new site developments</td>
<td>$5,239,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;RC</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$2,162,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDFW</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$619,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNR</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$1,794,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDOT</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$163,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPA</td>
<td>Existing site enhancements</td>
<td>$1,055,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLM</td>
<td>Suspension bridge</td>
<td>$2,709,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suncadia</td>
<td>New site developments</td>
<td>$930,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All total</td>
<td>Existing sites/new sites/bridges</td>
<td>$16,185,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In actuality, a number of these projects will likely involve numerous agencies and sponsors as well as multiple funding sources and phases when ultimately implemented.

Implementation participants and partnerships

The public access plan's implementation will require the involvement of numerous public, nonprofit, and some private agencies and organizations even where some access sites may be owned or acquired by a single agency or organization. Some agencies may be the project’s lead responsible for obtaining funds, acquiring properties, designing and constructing projects while other agencies may be participants responsible for identifying and/or mitigating environmental concerns, permitting access and construction, and/or maintaining or managing site access. Depending on specific public access projects, lead and participant partners could include:

- **Kittitas County** – lead agent for overall plan implementation coordination as well as lead agent for specific site acquisitions and developments.
- **City of Cle Elum** – lead agent for design and construction of improvements to Hanson Ponds/Whispering Pines Drive/Levy footbridge reconstruction as well as the linkage between this site and the Coal Miners Trail and PTC Trail with the city’s Skyline Trail network.
- **City of Ellensburg** – lead agent for design and construction of improvements to the City Wells launch ramp and parking, Upper Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park takeout, and possible reconstruction of the Rinehart/Umptanum Bridge launch.
- **P&RC (Washington Parks & Recreation Commission)** – lead agent for Bullfrog Road South toilet installation and participant for suspension bridge trail connections to the PTC Trail at Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek Access, and Gladmar Road Conservancy, and relationship between Thrall Road/Wilson Creek and Helen McCabe State Park.
- **WDFW (Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife)** – lead agent for King Horn Slough picnic and trails, Thorp/Green Bridge picnic, toilet, and trails and participant for the Big Pines Campground suspension bridge.
- **WDOT (Washington Department of Transportation)** – lead agent for Mile Post 20/19’s pull-offs, picnic, and trails and participant to any on-road traffic restrictions and enforcements to the Teanaway River Bridge on SR-10.
- **DNR (Washington Department of Natural Resources)** – participant to Old Church Camp suspension bridge to DNR land and the eventual connection with the PTC Trail.
- **USFS (US Forest Service)** – participant to wayfinding signage and river kiosks at Stampede Pass Bridge, U-Fish Road on the Yakima River and Suspension Bridge on the Cle Elum River.
- **BPA (Bonneville Power Administration)** – lead agent for Easton Acclimation Pond suspension bridge and trails, Teanaway River Lambert Road launch access and trails, and Clark Flats Acclimation Ponds wildlife trails.
- **BLM (Bureau of Land Management)** – lead agent for Big Pines Campground suspension bridge.
- **Yakama Nation** – participant for all public access site launch enhancements and constructions on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers including the proposed new launch sites at Bullfrog Road Bridge, Old Church Camp, Swauk Creek Access, and Thrall Road/Wilson Creek.
- **Suncadia** - lead agent for development of emergency and multi-use access to the Cle Elum River at Bullfrog Road Bridge and wayfinding and river kiosks at Old Winston Bridge.
- **Private owners** - participant in the sale of properties necessary for the development of new multi-use public access sites at Old Church Camp and Swauk Creek Access.
- **NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations)** - including Forterra, Trust for Public Lands, Nature Conservancy, Mountains to Sound Greenway, and others as lead and/or participant in the securing of funds necessary to acquire properties necessary for the development of new multi-use public access sites at Old Church Camp and Swauk Creek Access.

### Public access project funding sources

A number of sources can be packaged to implement public access programs, including educational material and wayfinding signage, and projects by type of enhancement or improvement.

**State and federal funds**

Washington State’s Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO) administers a variety of state and federal funds for which public access projects qualify provided the applicant has adopted a comprehensive parks, recreation, and open space (PROS) plan and, in this instance, a public access plan for the Yakima River area that project applications will be submitted, and that the site will be for public use:

- **NCLI (No Child Left Indoors)** - provides funds for under-served students with quality opportunities to experience the natural world including outdoor environmental, ecological, agricultural, or other natural resource-based education and recreation programs serving youth including orienteering, fishing, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing, camping, and hunting.

- **BFP (Boating Facilities Program)** - provides funds to buy, design, build, and renovate motorized boating facilities for craft less than 26 feet in length including launching ramps and hoists, moorage floats, docks, and buoys for guest boaters, and supporting facilities for boating amenities including picnicking, parking, and restrooms for transient boaters provided the project is on navigable portions of the Yakima River.

- **RTP (Recreational Trails Program)** - provides funds to rehabilitate and maintain recreational trails and facilities that support a backcountry experience such as trailheads and trail connections to the PTC Trail, Cle Elum Skyline Trail, and Ellensburg River to Canyon Trail with an emphasis on annual, routine maintenance including clearing downed trees, repairing flood and fire damage, and replacing bridges and drainage structures.

- **ALEA (Aquatic Lands Enhancement Act)** - provides funds to buy, protect, and restore aquatic lands habitat and to provide public access to the waterfront including wildlife viewpoints, platforms, and blinds, fishing piers and platforms, launching ramps and guest moorage for small boats, non-motorized paths, trails, ramps, and stairs, open-water swim areas, interpretive signs and kiosks, and supporting facilities for benches, tables, parking, and restrooms provided the project is on navigable portions of the Yakima River.

- **NOVA (Non-Highway & Off-Road Vehicle Account)** - provides funds to buy, develop, or maintain backcountry recreational areas including projects for non-motorized trail recreation that is accessed by a non-highway road such as trailheads and trail connections or rerouting trails to the PTC Trail, Cle Elum Skyline Trail, and Ellensburg River to Canyon Trail as well as wildlife viewing areas, non-motorized boating access facilities, picnicking, camping, parking, sanitary facilities, and utilities. Grants may also be used to fund education and enforcement officers patrolling areas eligible for such grants.

- **LWCF (Land & Water Conservation Funds)** - provides funds to buy or develop public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants support both acquisition and development of active and passive recreation areas and conservation lands including waterfront areas, water access, beach restoration, shoreline trails, and waterfront boardwalks.
Public access project funding sources

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**WWRP (Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program)** – provides funds to acquire, develop, or renovate outdoor recreation facilities at neighborhood, community, and regional parks including physical access to shorelines for non-motorized, water-related activities such as fishing, boating, picnicking, camping, swimming beaches, trails including interpretive, scenic vistas and viewpoints, and supporting facilities including parking, restrooms, and utilities.
- Critical Habitat Category provides funds to protect or restore habitat for wildlife including for endangered, threatened, or sensitive species.
- Natural Areas Category provides funds to protect high quality, representative native ecosystems or unique plant or animal communities, endangered, threatened, or sensitive species, rare geological features, or similar features of scientific or education value.
- Riparian Protection Category provides funds to protect riparian areas including acquisition.
- Trails Category provides funds to acquire, develop, or renovate pedestrian, equestrian, or bicycle trails that provide connections to communities like Easton, Cle Elum, or Ellensburg or regional trails like the PTC Trail.

**SRG (Salmon Recovery Grants)** – provide funds to buy pristine salmon and bull trout habitat, restore streams and waterways, replace fish barriers, remove dikes and levies, create fish habitat by planting native trees along a river, reconnect rivers to floodplains, add large, woody materials to rivers to create more habitat, install viewing shelters, trails and bridges, fishing piers and platforms, launch ramps, benches and tables, campgrounds, wayfinding signs, interpretive kiosks, paths, roads, parking, and restrooms as well as stewardship plans and programs.

**LCP (Local Capital Projects)** – provides state appropriations for capital construction projects that benefit local governments and nonprofit organizations. Each appropriate, sponsored by the Governor or the Legislature, is tailored to the needs of the recipient organization.

**Implications** – RCO administered state and federal grant funds can fund a number of Yakima River river access programs and projects, and in fact, most of the programs can fund some of the same program and project proposals depending on how the proposals are structured to fit the grant purposes. Being eligible for a program, however, is not necessarily to be competitive. There are funding limits for each of these programs, and depending on available funds in each cycle, applicant proposals can be extremely competitive resulting in available funds for only a limited and select few of the total submitted.

RCO administered state and federal grant funds have limits on the maximum amount the grants can provide, from $35,000 to $1,000,000, and require matching monies from 20% to 50% in most programs from some other source, preferably local. RCO grants, therefore, cannot be relied upon to fully fund proposed Yakima River public access site acquisition or development projects.

**Kittitas County funds**

Kittitas County has some programs in place with which to match or even fully fund some Yakima River public access programs and projects and/or can adopt a number of other specialized programs or adaptations to existing funding programs with which to implement public river access proposals.

**HMTax (Hotel/Motel or Lodging Tax)** – Cle Elum, Ellensburg, Roslyn, and Kittitas County impose lodging taxes assessed on the sale or charge made for furnishings of lodging including campgrounds, motels, and hotels in accordance with RCW 67.28.180-181. The inter-local agreement between Kittitas County and Cle Elum, Ellensburg, and Roslyn, awards funds with different application processes for each authorized use including a) tourism marketing, b) special events and festivals, and c) tourism-related facilities (or infrastructure) owned or operated by a municipality or nonprofit.

A Kittitas County Consolidated Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) includes members from Kittitas County, Roslyn, Cle Elum, and Ellensburg that advise and recommend to the Board of County Commissioners on how excise taxes on lodging should be allocated supporting tourism activities that generate revenue within Kittitas.
The LTAC issues an annual call for competitive applications for the disbursement of funds for each year's lodging tax revenue. The LTAC scores project applications based on established tourism-benefit scoring criteria, then ranks all submittals and submits funding recommendations with supporting information to the Kittitas County Board of Commissioners (BOCC). The BOCC may request additional information and presentations from the applicants before making a final decision on fund allocations for which the BOCC has final approval authority.

- **REET (Real Estate Excise Tax)** - RCW 82.46 authorizes local governments to enact up to 0.25% of the annual sales for real estate for capital facilities. The Growth Management Act (GMA) authorizes another 0.25% for capital facilities. Revenues must be used solely for financing new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations at existing facilities, as specified in the capital facilities element of the adopted comprehensive plan or supplemental PROS Plan or this Yakima River Public Access Plan.

  The first and second REET may be used for:
  - The planning, construction, repair, rehabilitation, or improvement of parks and recreational facilities.

In addition, the second REET may be used for:
- The acquisition of parks and recreational facilities, or
- The planning, acquisition, construction, repair, replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of trails and river and/or floodway/flood control projects subject to certain limitations.

- **CF (Conservation Futures)** - under provisions provided in recent state legislation, counties can elect to levy up to $0.065 per $1,000 of assessed valuation of all county properties to acquire shoreline and other open space lands. The monies can be used to acquire, but not develop or maintain open space conservation lands that are acquired using Conservation Futures funds.

Conservation Futures revenues can be a major source of project monies for the acquisition of wildlife habitat, resource conservancies, portions of resource activity lands, and possibly portions of linear trail corridors.

- **LLL (Levy Lid Lift)** - Proposition 747, the statutory provision limiting the growth of regular property taxes to 1.0% per year, can be waived by referendum approval of a simple (50%) majority of the county’s registered voters. Voters can approve a resetting of the property tax levy rate or of approving a special purpose limited duration (typically 6-9 years) dedicated property tax levy that adjusts the amount of revenue the county can generate.

The new total revenue that can be generated by a resetting of the rate or of approving a special dedicated and limited duration levy will be subject to the 1.0% limitation, however, and the total amount of revenue and the resulting property tax rate will start to decline again in accordance with the Proposition.

However, the adjusted rate and revenue can finance specific capital improvement projects – or programs that involve construction, maintenance, and operations aspects that a majority of the voters are willing to pay for under the adjusted rate or a specially approved levy.

The resetting of the rate can be permanent, subject to the provisions of Proposition 747, or temporary, where the rate is adjusted until a specific amount of revenue has been generated to finance a project or program – whereupon the rate reverts to the original or a specified amount defined in the referendum.

- **LOSTax (Local Option Sales Tax)** - may be levied up to 1% of all retail sales and uses to be used for new capital facilities, or maintenance and operations at existing facilities. Local governments that levy the second 0.5% may participate in the state’s sales tax equalization fund. The option sales tax assessment requires voter approval.

- **LOVLFee (Local Option Vehicle License Fee)** - the Transportation Improvement Act (ESSB 6358 – RCW 82.80) authorizes countywide (no county levy) local option fees up to $15.00 maximum per vehicle registered in the county. Revenues are
distributed back to the county and cities within the county levying the tax on a prorated per capita basis (1.0 for population in incorporated areas). Revenues must be spent for "general transportation purposes" including the construction, maintenance, and operation of county streets, country roads and state highways, policing of local roads, public transportation, high capacity transportation, transportation planning and design and other transportation related activities such as land and water trails. The local option fee does not require voter approval.

- **PRSA (Parks & Recreation Service Area)** - RCW 36.68.400 authorizes voters to approve formation of park and recreation service areas as junior taxing districts for the purpose of financing the acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, or operation of any park or recreational facility. PRSAs may assess up to $0.15 per $1,000 assessed valuation subject to voter approval. A PRSA can generate revenue from either the regular or excess property tax levies and through general obligation bonds, subject to voter approval.

- **MPD (Metropolitan Park District)** - In 2002, the state legislature authorized the establishment of metropolitan park districts (MPD) as special units of government that may be wholly independent of any involvement with a city, county, or any other local public agency or jurisdiction or that may utilize an existing elected body like the Kittitas Park & Recreation District Commissioners or Kittitas County Commissioners.

Metropolitan park districts may provide recreational facilities that are specific to the district’s boundaries in return for the district residents’ agreement to pay the special development, operation, and maintenance costs utilizing special financing devices.

Metropolitan park districts may be initiated by local government resolution or citizen petition following hearings on feasibility and costs studies of the proposed district’s facility development or operation costs on the viability of other junior taxing districts within the jurisdiction.

The proposal must ultimately be submitted for voter approval (50%) including all provisions relating to any special financing agreements. The voters must initially approve the formation of the district, and may designate existing elected officials, or a body appointed by existing elected officials or elect district commissioners or officers solely responsible for park and recreation policy.

Voters must also approve the establishment of a **continuous levy as a junior taxing district** - compared with 3 year levies under a **recreation service district** to provide maintenance, repair, operating costs, and facility acquisition and development projects. Metropolitan park districts can be flexible and used to provide local or countywide recreational facilities in the same variety of custom service choices with the exception that the financing levy may be as a junior taxing district with a continuous levy.

The Tacoma Metropolitan Park District was established in 1909 and is the largest and oldest recreation park district in the State of Washington. The Seattle Metropolitan Park District was adopted by city voters in 2014 with the Seattle City Council designated as the governing body.

**Implications** - Kittitas County must adopt one or more of these program options in order to generate matching funds for RCO administered state and federal grants and/or with which to directly fund most or all portions of the public access site enhancements, acquisitions, and development proposals in this public river access plan. The Board of Commissioners (BOCC), after consulting with county resident voters, will ultimately decide which of these programs to utilize for which project proposals.

**Implementation management**

Numerous parties will be involved and necessary to successfully implement this public access plan including Cle Elum, Ellensburg, P&RC, WDFW, DNR, WDOT, USFS, BPA, BLM, Yakama Nation, Suncadia, private operators, and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) including the Trust for Public Land, Nature
Conservancy, Forterra, Mountains to Sound Greenway, among others.

A successor organization should be established to the Yakima River Citizen Advisory Committee as a subcommittee to the Kittitas County Public Lands Committee or as a standalone entity responsible for:

- **Publishing consistent and current educational and promotional materials** - in public pamphlets, maps, brochures, and other printed materials to be available from all agencies and linking all agency websites to the same on-line information.
- **Coordinating river safety regulations and programs** - for first time river users particularly recreational floaters including county ordinances concerning lifejackets and other procedures.
- **Facilitating emergency responses** - by the Kittitas County Sheriff and all other fire and police security agencies along the river.
- **Developing public access sites** - by designing, permitting, submitting grant applications, generating or matching funds, and facilitating enhancements to existing sites and the acquisition and development of new access sites identified in this public access plan.
- **Facilitating and promoting annual events** - on the rivers including Epic Float, Bird Watch, and others.
- **Organizing maintenance** - including litter and garbage removal up and down the river corridors on a continuous basis and particularly following special events like the Epic Float.

**Momentum building actions**

There are a couple of immediate actions that can be taken by the implementation management entity that will generate visibility and momentum necessary to successfully implement this public access plan.

- **Wayfinding signs** - design, manufacture, and install a comprehensive system of wayfinding signage that direct users and tourists to every public access site and scenic viewpoint within the Yakima and Cle Elum River corridors. The signs should highlight a
consistent logo promoting the “water trail” created by the 46 composite public access sites and providing directional information leading users and tourists to the individual sites and viewpoints from and on SR-10, Canyon Road, and other major county roadways.

Wayfinding signs are directional and are not meant to displace the individual public access site ownership signs erected at public access sites by Cle Elum, Ellensburg, P&RC, WDFW, BLM, and other agencies but rather to direct users and tourists on the approaching roadways to individual ownership sites.

- **River kiosks** - design, manufacture, and install a comprehensive system of river kiosks at each public access site and scenic viewpoint that provide information on the complete public access plan and water trail along with safety guidelines as well as information on significant geological, ecological, environmental, and historical attributes visible at the site.

The front panels should identify all public access sites and scenic viewpoints on the Yakima and Cle Elum Rivers and SR-10, Canyon Road, and other county highways along with appropriate information designating which stretches of the river are safe for different river uses, skill levels, and watercraft. The front panel can also identify the multiple agencies involved in coordinating the public access plan.

The back panels can incorporate information currently included on P&RC, WDFW, USFS, BLM, and other signage as well as information on unique geological, ecological, environmental, and historical site attributes and attractions.

**National Water Trails System**
The National Water Trails System designates exemplary water trails of local and regional significance that originate on National Forest Service lands. The Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture may designate if the water trail is managed by a local management entity, such as a city or county, nonprofit organization, or interagency organization – as proposed here.

The National Park Service (NPS) Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) administers the National Water Trails System in partnership with a collaborative federal interagency group. RTCA staff serve as a clearinghouse for information sharing and national water trail networking efforts including the National Water Trails System website ([NWTS@nps.gov](mailto:NWTS@nps.gov)) providing access to technical assistance and funding for the implementation of water trail projects.

Designation of the Yakima River Water Trail by the National Water Trails System could:

- Increase tourism awareness and thus economic benefits to the county through the National Water Trails System website promotion.
- Obtain assistance with stewardship and sustainability projects
- Provide access to networking and training opportunities for implementation committee members and volunteers
- Increase funding opportunities from federal programs as well as interested water trail nonprofit and for-profit organizations

Designation by the National Water Trails System of the Yakima River Water Trail does not involve or require any form of land regulation nor would it conflict with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Heritage Area or Yakima River Canyon Scenic Byway designations.