

Wild and Scenic River Planning Comments
70220 E Highway 26
Zigzag Oregon. 97049

8/24/2019

RE: Clackamas River Basin, wild and Scenic River Plan

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to comment on the Wild and Scenic River Plan for the Clackamas watershed that includes the main stem of the Clackamas and related rivers in the basin covered by the national legislation including the South Fork, Collawash, Fish Creek, Roaring River and Oak Grove forks.

I grew up in the Estacada area and except for living in Portland 15 years have resided most of my life in the area. I have spent many years here hiking, camping, fishing, rafting, kayaking and cycling in the Mt Hood National Forest along these wild and scenic streams. I helped to develop the plan for the Cascading Rivers Scenic Bikeway that follows Highway 224 and FS 46 from Estacada to Detroit Oregon and have been the Estacada Proponent for the project since it was authorized in 2014. Currently I organize annual rides along the bikeway under Forest Service permits. I have also hiked most of the river trails along the effected streams.

Currently I chair the Economic Vitality Committee of the City of Estacada that works to expand business and tourism in the area. I also serve on the Estacada Chamber Board and work in a local business that benefits from area visitors. I chaired a committee working with the local Destination Marketing Organization (Mt Hood Territory) to develop projects that expanded tourism for several years including river recreation.

I have read the Forest Service plan for the wild and scenic planning review and the various options being considered. Overall the plan for the Clackamas and tributaries covered by the wild and scenic designation appears to be a thoughtful and thorough explanation of the challenges and opportunities in meeting multiple objectives and serving multiple interests. We, in Estacada, rely to a large extent on the natural amenities of the river that runs through our city to attract visitors who stay in our lodging, dine in our bars and restaurants, purchase food, gas and supplies before and after exploring the wild lands to our east. We would like to expand the economic benefits from recreation in our area. Also we are one of the fastest growing cities in Oregon and my perception is that there is an expanded number of visitors to the Mt Hood National forest for river recreation. For that reason I expect we will see far more pressure to develop additional resources for visitors who recreate on and along our rivers.

In your alternate plans (A through E) you indicate a plan to create a multi-user trails system where possible. I would like to see a trail system along the entire Clackamas linking what trails are now in use with other noted attractions from near Big Bottom where the state's largest Western Red Cedar is located to Big Cliff, if feasible. I believe that some of the attractions along the river that are not now accessible such as the "Killer Fang" rapid and the waterfalls on the Memaloose and Clackamas South Fork including the South Fork waterworks should be included. This would include the popular existing Clackamas River Trail, the Riverside Trail south of Ripplebrook and other segments that are currently along the stream.



In several of the options you discuss dispersed camping areas and issues in the way they are being currently used. Although these sites might be in an attractive area they have often been misused and the areas around them abused. I would suggest bringing sites up to the general standards of campgrounds (but maybe smaller) and offer them for a fee like the other campgrounds or close off the sites. Currently they are often bringing down the standards in the forest and become places that are littered and vandalized. Also they do not contribute resources to keep up the sites. In general I think natural resource agencies should plan for more camping in the forest and plan new sites in appropriate places. I would not support closing campgrounds along the Collawash as this is one of the more attractive streams of the basin.

I agree with the plans to emphasize hatchery fish in the lower river and wild fish in the Collawash and south of Ripplebrook.

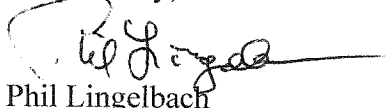
Not mentioned in the plans is target shooting. Visitors to our area frequently complain about the target shooting at the 36 Pit. It does not seem to fit the goals of a wild and scenic river. It is very close to both the road and the river and is not well regulated.

Your plans to widen Highway 224 and straighten it above Foreman Hill to FS Road 63, Collawash Junction would improve bicycle and vehicle safety. Generally, your plans to improve highway 224 and FS 46 for cycling are much appreciated. The improvements that would make road cycling safer are maintenance improvements. For example, the road from Promontory to Ripplebrook has a number of rock fall areas. As these rocks fall, they shatter on the roadway causing litter that ends up on the bike shoulders and is likely to puncture tires. Fixing flats along this area is one of our major complaints of cyclists who come to ride the scenic bikeway. If a sweeper was run from Promontory to Ripplebrook just once a month the problem would mostly be solved. Another complaint I have received is from repaving that does not extend the full width of the bike lane. Currently from Promontory to the South Fork junction with the Clackamas River the road was recently paved but the bike lane was only paved for about 6". This leaves the cyclist to either ride in the vehicle lane or in the 12 inches next to the guard rail. Generally, cyclists find the road from Estacada to Detroit in good repair. Traffic volume is a concern on weekends on the lower section of Highway 224.

For cyclists the day use areas and campgrounds serve the function of rest stops since they generally have water and bathrooms for those riding the entire scenic bikeway route. A possibility of adding additional facilities, where we have rest stops during our annual rides, would allow families to traverse the entire bikeway with rest stops about every 15 miles. The stops would be at the SE junction of FS 42 and FS 46 and at the powerline crossing 18 miles from Detroit. The FS 42 and FS 46 junction is currently a dispersed sight that might be able to be converted to a small campground.

Over-all I think you have made a good effort to provide a plan that protects the natural attractions of the area and the pristine qualities of the streams that make them so appealing. Hopefully we can work together to preserve these outstanding natural resources so that future generations have the same opportunity to enjoy them and they continue to benefit the local communities that are their stewards.

Respectfully,


Phil Lingelbach

