

## Clackamas County Water Tourism Study

### Purpose:

In spring of 2017 Clackamas County Tourism initiated a comprehensive study to determine if its water recreation assets are being used to their greatest economic potential.

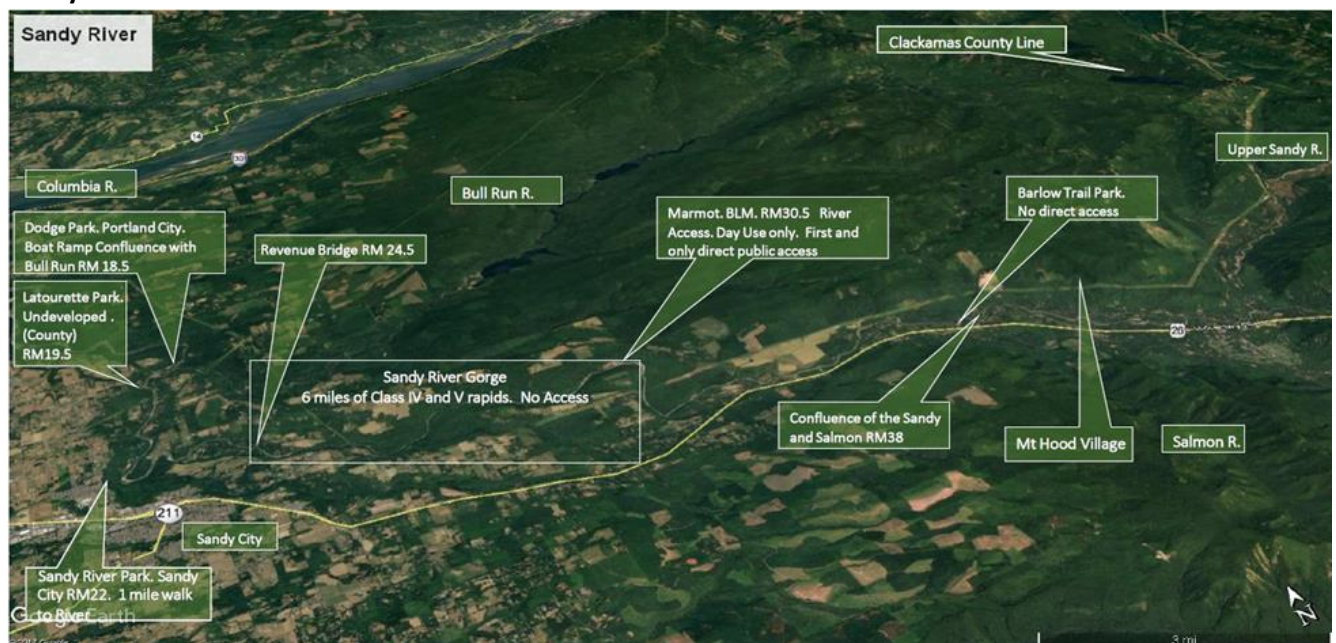
### Method:

The study included over 3 months of site visits to the County's water bodies and surveyed 1700 statewide respondents. The results represent the interests of 1.6 million water recreation enthusiasts and a detailed inventory of the County's recreational assets.

### Overall Key Findings:

- Oregon's recreational waters are visited 80 million times annually by people looking to recreate.
- Clackamas County's recreational waters attract 1.5 million visitors annually, which result in 240,000 overnight stays.
- Clackamas County's water bodies are equally good or better than the State average for recreational value.
- The public's concern for water quality, habitat quality, public access, information, safety, user conflicts, and crowds are not significantly different in the County than the rest of the state.
- Water-based recreation generated about 12 million dollars in lodging reservations in Oregon in 2016, but Clackamas County captured only about 2% of this amount. Despite above average water assets, the County is attracting below average visitation to these waters due to a combination of physical access, water-recreation management, lack of awareness, and niche product development.

### Sandy River Corridor



Location:

Sandy River - The Sandy River welcomes most of its visitors between the Salmon River confluence in Mt Hood Village and Dodge Park. The river has 20 miles of superb fishing, exciting whitewater, inviting flatwater, and remote riparian wilderness all within an hour's drive from the Portland metropolitan area. The river receives visitation in all four seasons for a range of purposes. Therefore it presents great opportunities for year-round tourism.

Recommendations:

1. Create easier access to the Sandy River
  - a. Provide Access at RM38 (Salmon River) - The Sandy River Trail map recommends that visitors park at the Sandy Ridge Trailhead and walk about ½ mile through a wooded trail to access the river. This is difficult for boaters seeking to float the 8 miles of fun intermediate level rapids to Marmot. Public access at this location is critical.
  - b. Improvements, Parking and Access at Sandy River Park - The city's only access to the river involves parking on residential streets and walking one mile down steep terrain. Providing river access would most likely increase tourism visitation.
2. Improvements in Infrastructure
  - a. Improve Day Use Area & Access at Marmot - Encourage the BLM to continue to make modest annual improvements at this site as currently proposed including road maintenance, trail maintenance, picnic areas, parking, etc. Over the longer term, leave-no-trace tent camping should be considered.
  - b. Upgrade Camping Facilities at Dodge Park - Currently Dodge Park has only 5 RV sites and limited facilities. Camping services and facilities at Dodge Park need upgrades to meet current demand.
  - c. Access Upgrades and Camping at Ed Latourette Park - Add basic infrastructure and camping to help meet consumer demand.
3. Coordination of Community
  - a. Foster and promote the connection between the city of Sandy and the Sandy River through infrastructure, policy, programs, and events.
4. Improve the Experience
  - a. Expand Tour Products - Offer packages including a variety of price points and abilities increasing the accessibility of water-based recreation. Examples include fishing gear rental, family friendly tours, and increased soft adventure offerings.
  - b. Promote the Experience - promote time spent bonding and creating memories while engaging in water recreation.



Next Steps:

View the full 156-page report from Crane and Associates

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/122hp73833fpsog/Clackamas%20County%20Water%20Tourism%20Report%20F.pdf?dl=0>

To discuss the Water Tourism Strategic Plan, Development Grants, or relevant projects contact Samara Phelps 503-742-5910 or email [samara@mthoodterritory.com](mailto:samara@mthoodterritory.com).