Fisher Preserve
Facilities and Access Summary Report

September 1, 2021

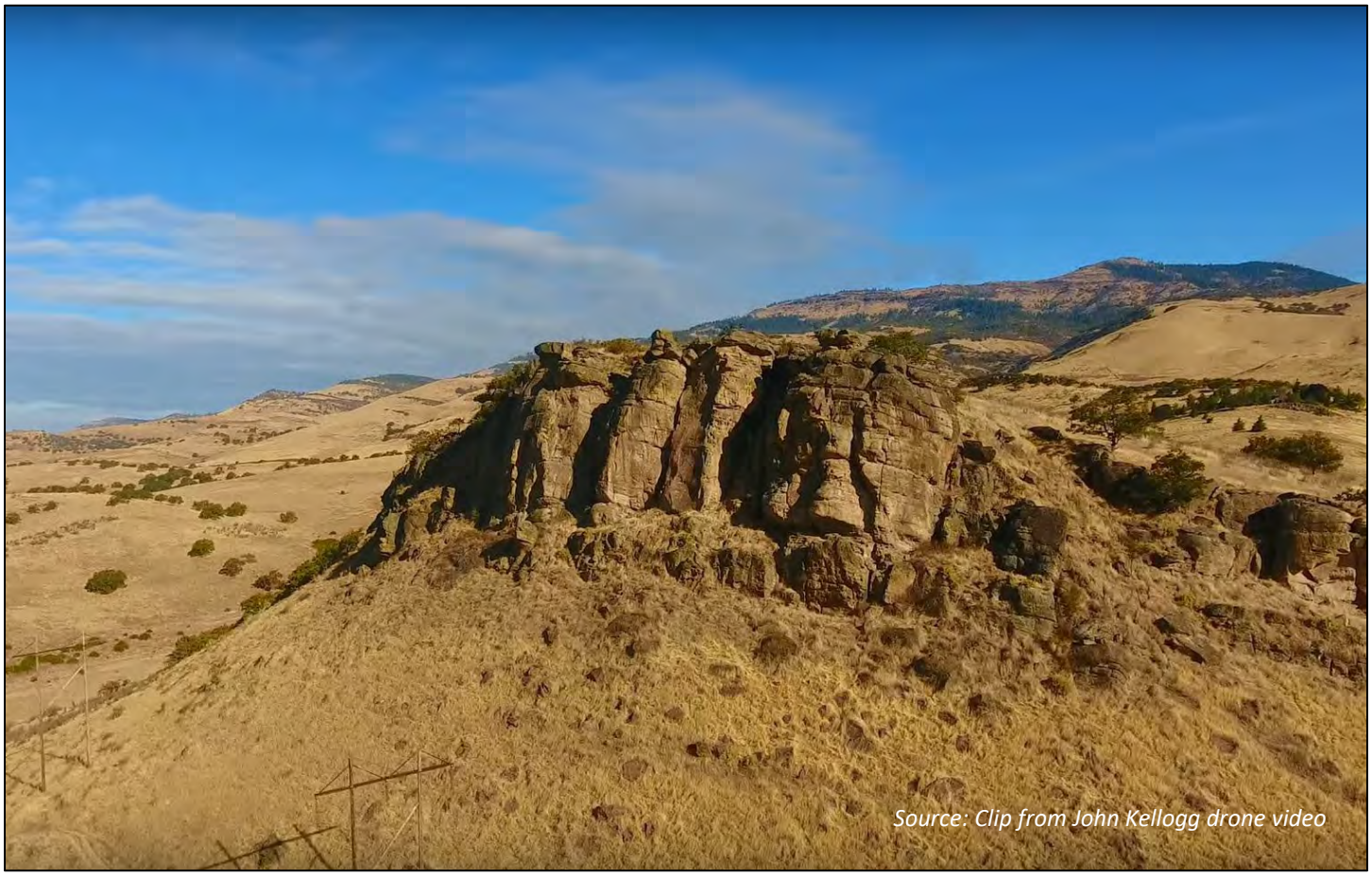
Acknowledgements

Southern Oregon Land Conservancy

- Kevin Talbert, Board of Directors
- Tara Laidlaw, Education Project Manager
- Steve Wise, Executive Director
- Kristi Mergenthaler, Stewardship Director

Recreational Trails Planning Contractor

- Jeff Krueger, Landscape Architect, JK Environments



Pompadour Bluff viewed from the southwest with Grizzly Peak in the distance.

Special Thanks

This effort would not be possible without the generous funding from an Oregon Advancing Conservation Excellence (ACE) grant.

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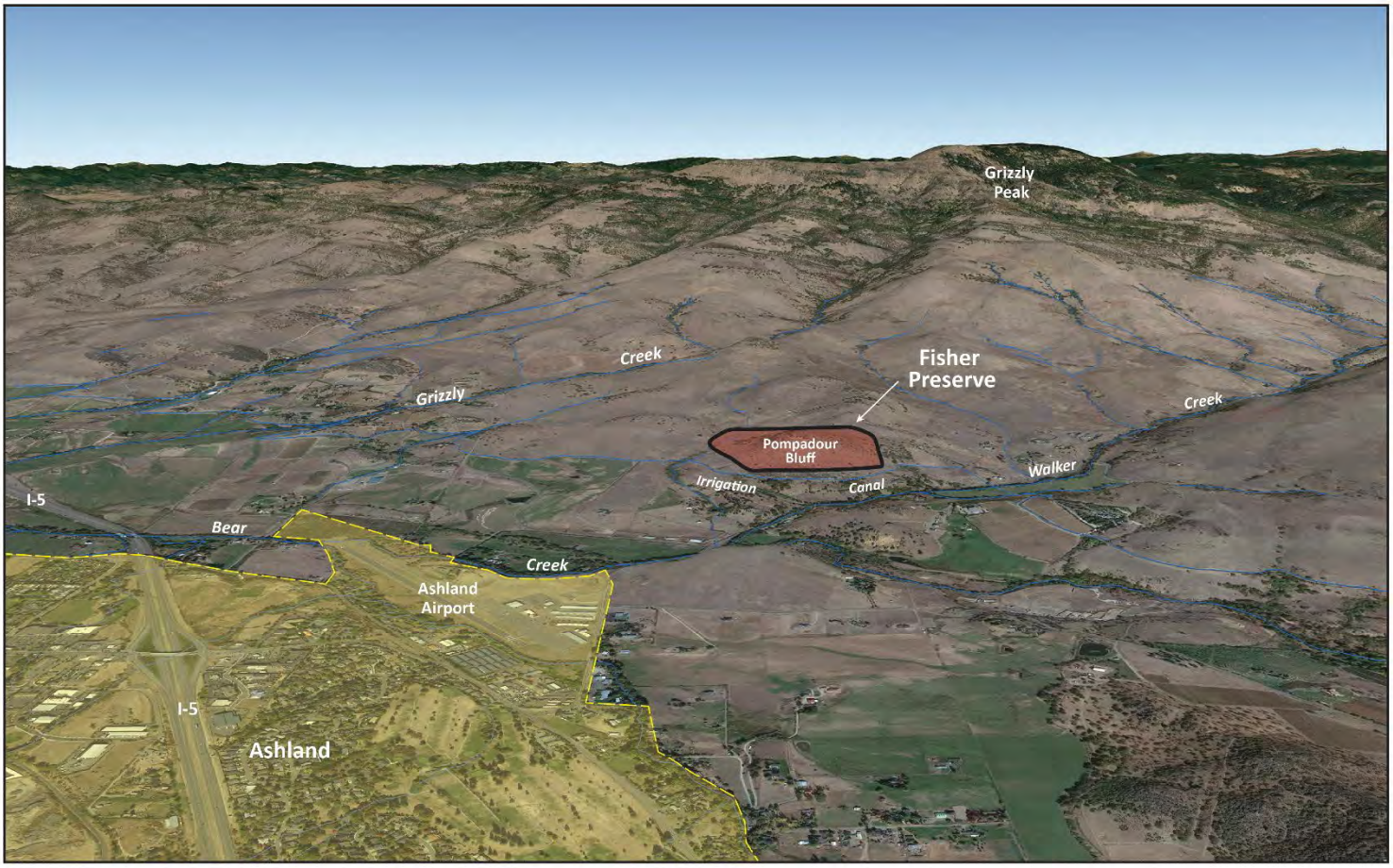
Background and Purpose

Site Overview

The 55-acre Fisher Preserve is located approximately two miles to the east of Ashland, Oregon and was donated to the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy (SOLC) by Harry Fisher upon his death in June 2020. Mr. Fisher's stated goals were to protect the property from sub-division and vandalism and to provide some level of future public access. He requested that the property be named the Marilyn and Harry Fisher Preserve. SOLC is in the process of taking formal ownership of the property, has begun some preliminary site management activities, and is exploring options for future site access. The property includes a residential house with some significant maintenance issues, a barn, several small outbuildings, and a functioning well. Above ground electrical transmission lines cross the southern edge of the site.

The property contains a significant geological feature known as Pompadour Bluff which is highly visible from the surrounding community and Interstate 5. In addition to the extensive cliffs and rocky habitat, the site also includes oak savanna and woodland, upland prairie, and a seasonal stream along the western edge. Much of the prairie and oak habitats are of a particularly high quality and contains a diverse plant assemblage with a relatively high composition of native species. Western rattle snake, elk, deer, and a large variety of bird species are known to inhabit the site. Bird species of particular conservation and interpretive interest include Acorn Woodpecker, Canyon Wren, Great-horned Owl, Savannah Sparrow, Western Bluebird, Western Meadowlark, and White-breasted Nuthatch.

Map 1: Context Perspective



Fisher Preserve - Pompadour Bluff
Context Perspective - Looking North

Legend
- Fisher Preserve
- Ashland Urban Growth Boundary
- Steams or Irrigation Canals

Prepared by Jeff Krueger
June 2021

N W E S

Purpose of the Access and Facilities Planning Process

The Southern Oregon Land Conservancy requested assistance in assessing its newly acquired Fisher Preserve (Pompadour Bluff) for potential future public access and development of a set of recommendations for facilities such as trails, parking, and site access. SOLC has the goal of balancing the need for resource protection with the desire to accommodate some level of public access to this unique and high-value property. Jeff Krueger Environments (JKE) was retained to work with SOLC staff and board to evaluate the property for potential recreational uses, facilitate development of a preferred level of access and facilities, and to prepare a set of recommendations including a conceptual site plan showing proposed trail alignments and related details. The recommendations from this report will be considered by SOLC and implemented over time. It is likely that SOLC will adjust proposed facilities and trail alignments based on further site evaluation, plant surveys, and stakeholder input.

Land Use and Regulatory Considerations

The entire property is zoned for Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) as are most of the surrounding lands. The Jackson County Land Development Ordinance (LDO) regulates allowed site development and uses. Based on a preliminary review of the LDO and consultation with Jackson County planning staff, all recommended facilities proposed within this report would be permitted, but further consultation prior to implementation is recommended.

Parking: A small parking lot would be permitted in the EFU zone but would require a 30-foot setback from adjacent property lines and a 50-foot setback from the Class II stream (western edge of site). A dust abatement plan may be required.

Trails: Soft-surfaced recreational tails would be permitted in an EFU zone without permit but would require a 30-foot setback from adjacent properties and a 50-foot setback from the stream.

Toilets: Portable or pit toilets would be permitted within an EFU zone. Toilets utilizing a septic system would be regulated by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), but this option is not recommended.

Accessory Structures: Per Oregon Residential Specialty Code, building permits are not required for non-habitable one-story detached accessory structures, provided that the floor area does not exceed 400 square feet (on parcels over two acres) with a wall height of less than 10 feet measured from the finished floor level to the top of the top plate. The “educational eddies” proposed should easily be able to meet these requirements.

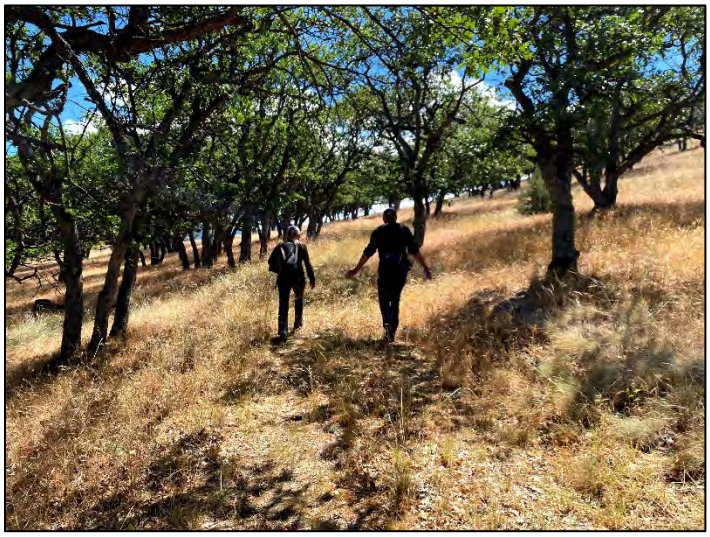
Selected Site Photos

Driveway access and irrigation canal bridge with Pompadour Bluff in the background

Prairie with a road trace just to the east of the house

Pompadour Bluff summit area

View from the rimrock on the east side of the property



Oak habitat on the north side of the property

Scattered oaks and rimrock on east end of property

Prairie and savanna on the northeast side of the property

Oak savanna to the west of the summit

Existing House: Possible future SOLC field office, event staging, accessible parking/drop off area (use to be determined)

Well

Barn

House

Creek

Electric Transmission Lines

Well Access

Driveway

Future Trailhead Parking (Assumed)

Vista Point

Pompadour Bluff

Summit and Panoramic View

Cliffs

Passable Break in Cliff Face

Intermittent

Talent

Driveway

Irrigation

Ditch

Access from Dead Indian Memorial Rd.

Map 2

Fisher Preserve
Existing Conditions Map

- Site Boundary
- Existing Fences
- Stream or Canal
- Property Lines
- Transmission Lines
- 10-Foot Contours
- Control Points (key trail connection points)
- Steep Cliffs
- Areas with Significant Summer Shade

0 100 200 400 Feet

Map Prepared by JKE - July 28, 2021

House

Driveway

Talent

Pompadour
Bluff

Irrigation

Ditch

Map 3

Percent Slope

- 0 - 4.722537471
- 4.722537472 - 9.782399047
- 9.782399048 - 14.84226062
- 14.84226063 - 19.9021222
- 19.90212221 - 24.96198377
- 24.96198378 - 30.02184535
- 30.02184536 - 35.41903103
- 35.41903104 - 43.17748545
- 43.17748546 - 86.01764679

Harry & Marilyn Fisher Preserve Slope Map

Legend:

- Site Boundary
- Stream or Canal
- 20-foot Contours

Source: Percent slope and contours derived from 2016 LiDAR data

0 100 200 400 Feet

Map Prepared by JKE - DRAFT: June 17, 2021

N W E S

Trail Siting and Design Objectives and Access Options

A Range of Access Options for Fisher Preserve

The following table presents a range of possible short- and long-term options for accommodating future public access at the Fisher Preserve.

Options	Description
A. *No public access*	This is a potential short-term option that would allow SOLC to stabilize the property and focus on high-priority habitat management tasks while seeking funding for construction of proposed access facilities. Based on the terms of the Trust, this is not a viable long-term option and public access would need to be integrated in the future.
Access options B-E would require some level of visitor facilities such as parking, restrooms, and trails	
B. *Guided access only*	SOLC staff or volunteer docents would lead guided tours for donors, partners events (i.e., SOU field herpetology), and interested community members on a registration basis. This could be a feasible short-term option until more extensive facilities are developed.
C. *Guided access and special events*	SOLC would lead guided tours plus utilize the property to host special events such as limited duration gatherings, conservation related fund-raisers, natural resource management training, and work parties (e.g., OSU Extension Land Steward Program)
D. *Guided access, special events, and general public access on designated days*	SOLC would lead guided tours, host special events, and would permit general public access on designated days (i.e., first Saturday of the month). This would require some additional staff or volunteer docent time to monitor activities and open/close gates on public access days and facilities such as trails, parking, and a restroom.
E. *Guided access, special events, and general public access at all times*	In addition to tours and special events, SOLC would permit general public access on a regular basis during daylight hours. This would require more significant staff or volunteer time to monitor activities and additional facilities such as expanded rest rooms, way-finding signage, and informational kiosk(s) for posting maps and rules.
Access options F-I would allow for full public access and could potentially reduce SOLC staffing and facility construction cost. All options below except I would allow SOLC to continue to use the property for tours and events.	
F. *Partnership with Non-Profit to Oversee Public Use*	SOLC could partner with, or help form, a non-profit organization responsible for managing public access on the Fisher Preserve.
G. *Contract for Services*	SOLC could contract with a concessionaire to oversee public use at the Fisher Preserve. The concessionaire would provide access and facilities at a level defined by SOLC.
H. *Partner with Public Agency to Oversee Public Use*	SOLC could establish an agreement with a public agency such as the City of Ashland, Jackson County, or Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to provide staffing and potentially construct facilities for public access to the Fisher Preserve.
I. *Transfer of Ownership*	SOLC could establish a conservation easement on the property and then transfer ownership to an agency or organization with adequate funding and expertise to accommodate formal public access, construct facilities, and provide staffing.

Trail Siting and Design Objectives

The following siting and design objectives were developed in collaboration with SOLC staff and are intended to provide a framework for planning desired future access, trails, and facilities. The objectives, along with the bulleted actions listed below each, assume that the site will be used to accommodate SOLC sponsored tours and special events along with some level of general public use in the future. The proposed trail map and facility details included in this report are based on direction provided by the siting and design objectives.

- **Objective 1. Limiting Impact While Providing Impact.** Site and design the trails to minimize negative impacts to site's natural features, hydrology, and neighboring properties:
    - Clearly define areas where public access is permitted and restricted through development of a clearly defined trail network, wayfinding and informational signage, and temporary fencing (e.g., easily deployable rope or cable fencing to define areas that are off limits).
    - Site trails to avoid impacting high-quality native vegetation, known bird nesting areas, and to avoid need for significant tree removal.
    - Avoid siting trail immediately adjacent to neighboring residential properties where possible.
    - Consider seasonal closures of sensitive areas (e.g., limiting springtime access to areas where raptor nesting is occurring).

- **Objective 2. Vehicle Access and Parking.** Provide safe and convenient access to Fisher Preserve and the proposed trail network for tours, events, and possible future general public use:
    - Provide adequate on-site parking for defined uses (approximately 20 vehicles spaces initially)
    - Accommodate bus parking (two buses) and an adequate pull-through turnaround for educational field trips and event shuttles.
    - Replace the existing wooden irrigation canal bridge to a standard that will accommodate bus and emergency vehicle access.
    - Coordinate with Jackson County Transportation on potential safety improvements for vehicles turning onto the Preserve driveway from Dead Indian Memorial Road – design interventions could include advance notice signage, entry signage at driveway, and warning strips (rumble strips).

- **Objective 3: User Experience and Amenities.** Provide adequate facilities and an outstanding user experience:
    - Provide trail access to key vistas/viewpoints and points of interest (positive control points).
    - Provide loop options of varying lengths.
    - Align the primary trails to take advantage of summer shade where feasible.
    - Provide access to a range of habitat types (oak savanna, oak woodland, and prairie) and interesting geological features (cliffs and exposed rock).
    - Provide user amenities including wayfinding signage, benches, trailhead information kiosk, restroom, and interpretive signage at key points along the trail system.
    - Create designated stopping points ("educational eddies") along the trail system to allow groups to gather for educational discussion and resting. These areas could include seating (rocks or wooden benches) and possibly small, covered areas (under 400 square feet) to provide shelter from the weather.
    - Design built facilities to be aesthetically pleasing and to blend into the natural setting of the site to the greatest extent possible.

- **Objective 4. On-Site Access and Trails**. Develop a trail network with a variety of trail types ranging from highly-accessible to more challenging and implement using a phased approach (see design details and trail examples):
    - Universal Access Trail: A highly-accessible trail designed to be usable by all visitors to the greatest extent practicable connecting parking, restroom, and a lower loop trail (maximum of 5% running grade; minimum tread width of 42" with 60" passing zones every 250 feet; highly compacted gravel surfacing).

- General Use Trail: The primary trail type on the site will provide access to key site features such as viewpoints (24"- 30" tread; 10% average running grade with maximum 15-18% for short distances where necessary; natural or graveled surfacing depending on soils and drainage).
- Explorer Trail: A more technically challenging trail with steeper grades and more demanding terrain (24" tread; natural surfacing; rock steps and handrails/cables where needed on steep rocky areas near the cliffs).

- **Objective 5. Sustainable Trail Design and Maintenance.** Utilize sustainable trail principles to produce a safe, high-quality, all-season, low maintenance, and long-lasting trail facility:
  - Create a primary trail system that is well surfaced and drained and usable in all seasons.
  - Incorporate adequate drainage features (rely on drainage dips, not pipes or bars).
  - On steeper slopes, avoid the fall line-trail alignments (perpendicular to grade) and use frequent grade reversals to enhance drainage.
  - Seasonally brush (or mow) the edges of the trail corridors (a minimum of 24") to keep the trail clear of encroaching understory and tall grass and poison oak.
  - Clearly define and control access on the summit area to limit trampling of sensitive vegetation and to create a safe viewing area through use of temporary rope fencing in the near-term and potential installation of an aesthetically pleasing viewing area (platform or terrace) in the long-term with rails to direct movement and prevent falls.
  - Blow or rake organic material (leaves and grass) from the universal access trail surface once annually to avoid organic matter buildup.

Proposed Trails

System Overview

The proposed trail system has been designed to provide access to points of interest and an assortment of habitats, and includes a series of easy and more challenging loop options and could be implemented over time using a phased approach as funding becomes available or if partnership opportunities arise (see partnership options on page 6). Priorities listed below are suggestions based on the desire to construct a functional trail system in the near-term that allows users to access key site features. The top priority would be to create a standard access trail from the area near the house to the summit, followed by a universal access trail from the parking area once constructed. The lower priority trail listed is the explorer trail. In total, 6,890 linear feet of trail is proposed (1.3 miles). These linear foot calculations are based on current proposed alignments which are subject to refinement. In total, 2,148 linear feet (0.4 miles) of universal access trail, 2,050 linear feet (0.4 miles) of standard access trail, and 2,690 linear feet (0.5 miles) of explorer trail are proposed. It is important to note that the Standard Access and Explorer trail types could be constructed using volunteer labor with qualified supervision if desired. See Map 4: Proposed Trails and Facilities for details on proposed alignments and segment numbers.

Proposed Trail Segments and Priority

ID#	Linear Feet	Description and Extent	Suggested Priority
T1	1,299 lf	Universal access trail from the parking area to the house	II
T2	849 lf	Universal access trail from the house to the northern edge of the site with a loop	I
T3	2,050 lf	Primary access trail to the proposed overlook and the summit	I
T4	2,692 lf	Explorer trail with sections of steeper grade and natural surfacing (soil and rock)	III
Total:	**6,890 lf**	**(1.3 miles)**	

Trail Standard and Design Details

Recommended Trail Standards

Trail Type	Surfacing	Standard With	Side Slope	Maximum Running Grade	Drainage Features	Clearance
Universal Access	Highly compacted gravel (remove organic material and topsoil)	42” with 60” wide passing zones spaced a minimum of every 200’	2-3%	5% sustained (up to 8% on short segments as needed)	Grade reversals and drainage dips	V: 84” (7 feet) H: 24” (2 feet)
Standard Access	Natural Surface and compacted gravel as needed based on soils	30” with 48” passing zones spaced a min. of every 400’	2-3%	10% sustained (up to 18% on short segments if needed)	Grade reversals and drainage dips	V: 84” (7 feet) H: 24” (2 feet)
Explorer	Natural surface and rock	24-30”	0-4%	No Standard	None	V: 84” (7 feet) H: 12” (1 foot)

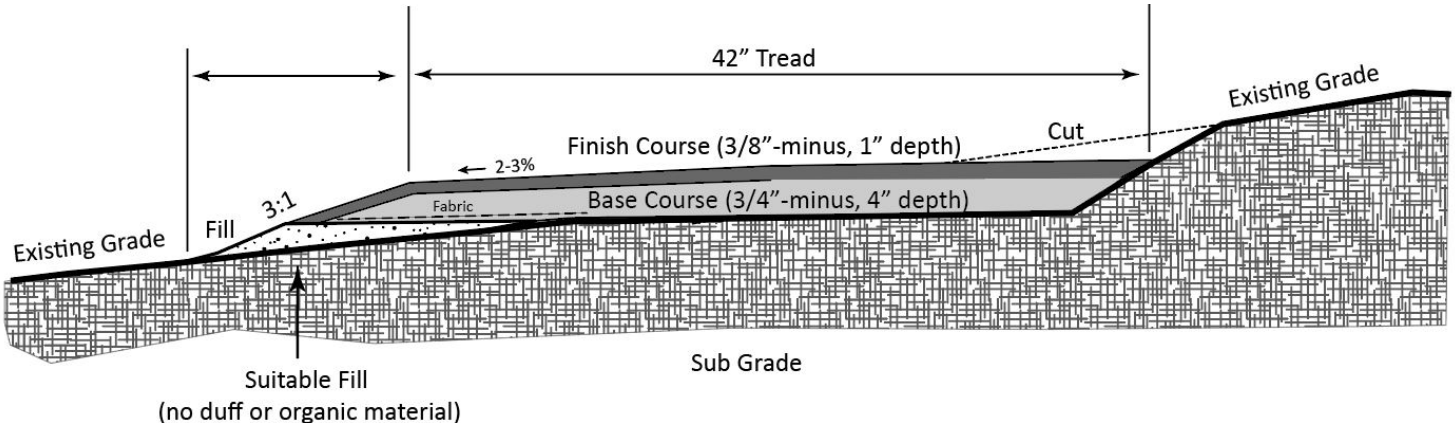
Design Details

Universal Access Trails

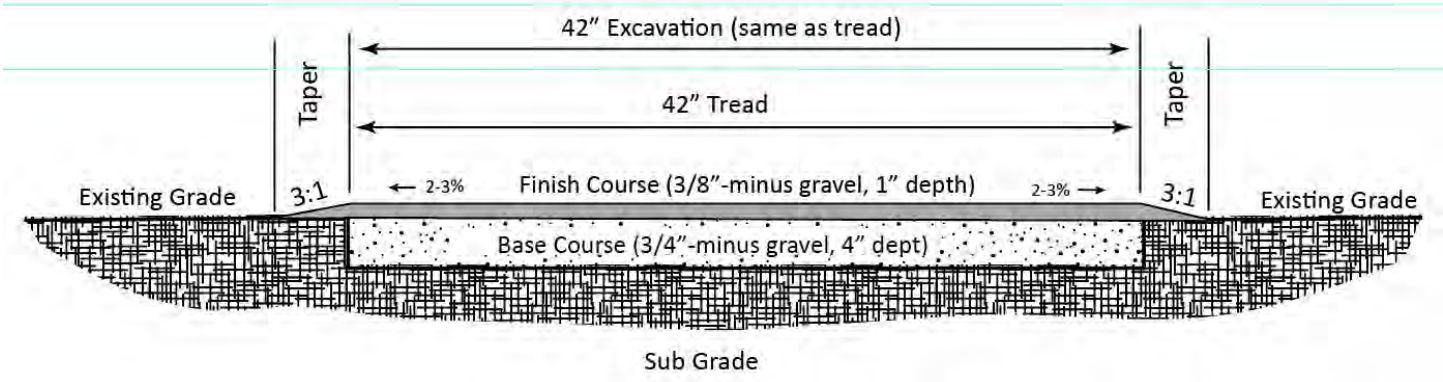
Universal Access trails, also referred to as barrier-free trails, are designed to be usable by all people to the greatest extent practicable without separate or segregated access for people with disabilities. These trails are surfaced with highly compacted gravels to create a solid surface that is capable of accommodating wheeled mobility devices and are free from tripping hazards. Maximum grades are 8% or less with a target running grade of 5% or less.

Universal access-style trail segment at Delta Ponds in Eugene (right)

Universal Access Trail Construction Detail for Areas with Side Slope



Universal Access Trail Construction Detail for Flatter Areas



Standard Access Trail

Standard access trails are designed to accommodate standard foot traffic and would rely on natural surfacing with the option of adding compacted gravel in wetter areas and areas with heavy clay soil if needed. These can be constructed using U.S. National Forest Service trail construction standards and are typical of the trails found in nearby National Forests. A target sustained grade of 10% or less is recommended to limit potential for erosion with short segments of up to 18% where necessary to avoid obstacles and make climbing turns. The proposed alignment would include one switchback which may require a minimal amount of retaining wall.

Standard access trails would be similar to this example of the Pacific Crest Trail near Ashland

Explorer Trails

An explorer trail is designed to be more challenging and maintained and surfaced at a much lower level than a standard trail. At the Fisher Preserve, the proposed explorer trail will include steeper grades as it descends from the primary summit trail and pass through a gap in the cliff face before following the contour below the cliffs on Pompadour Bluff. A rope or cable handhold and construction of informal stone steps could make this short passage through the cliffs easier for a wider range of users. For the most part, the explorer trail will rely on natural surfacing (dirt and rock) with some minor improvements for trail drainage.

An "Explorer Trail" on Spencer Butte in Eugene provides a more challenging route to the summit

Rough Estimation of Costs

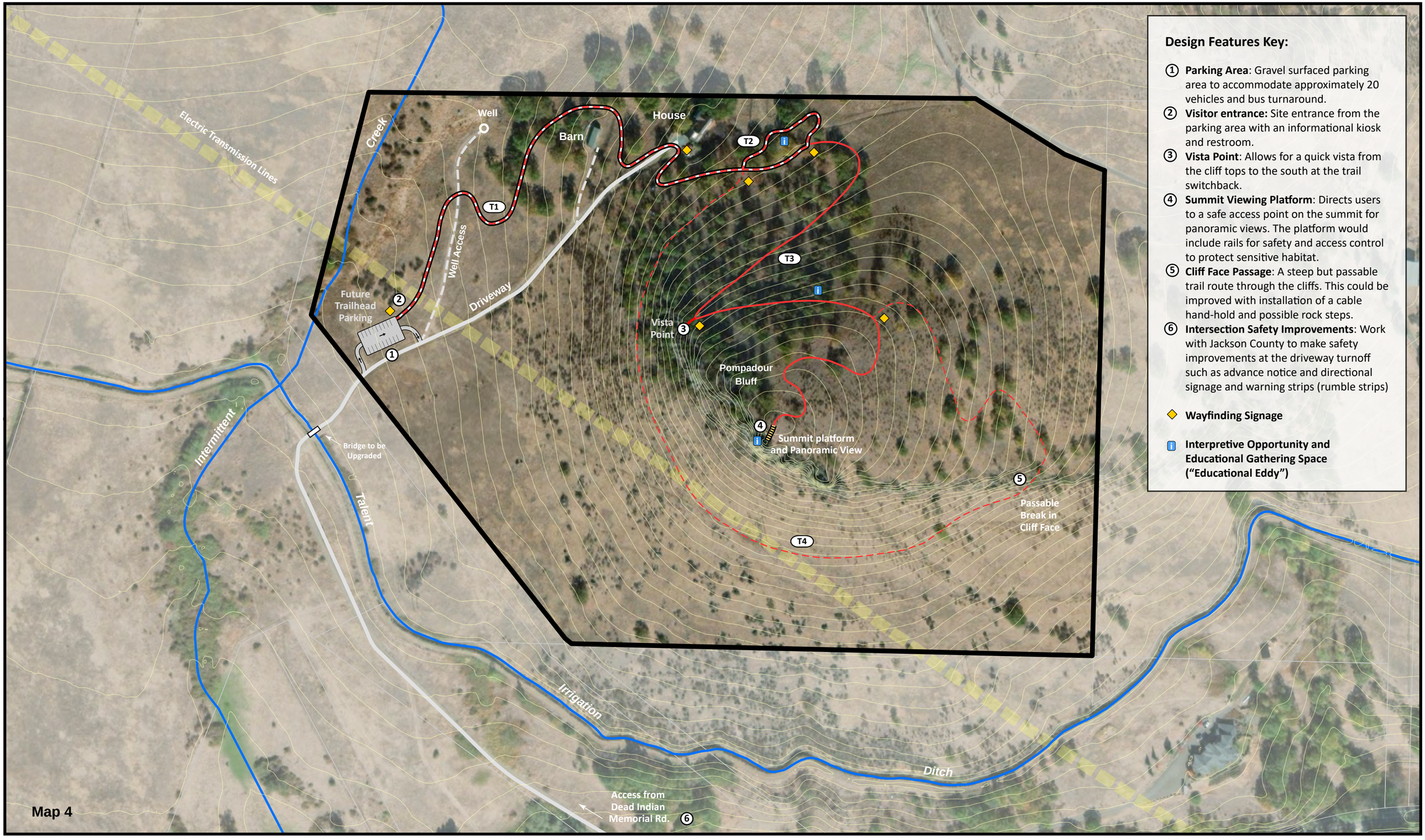
Cost estimates are based on a rough calculation of unit costs derived from Oregon Parks and Recreation Department cost assumptions (2019), comparison of costs from similar projects, and known site constraints and will be refined in the future. Please note that these are intended to be rough estimates and actual cost will vary significantly based on final design, contractor recommendations, use of volunteer labor or donated services, and material costs. The total cost to construct all of the facilities shown using contracted services would be in the range of S250,000. Again, these are rough estimates and do not include donated materials or services.

Trails

ID#	Type	Linear Feet	Per Linear Foot Cost*	Segment Cost (rough estimate)*	Comments
Proposed Near-Term Trails (first priority)					
T1	UA	1,299 lf	$30	$38,970	Could be constructed initially at a lower standard
T2	UA	849 lf	$30	$25,470	Could be constructed initially at a lower standard
T3	SA	2,050 lf	$20	$41,000	Could include the portion of T2 above house
T4	E	2,692 lf	$10	$26,920	High potential for volunteer trail construction
Sub-Total:		**6,890 lf**	-	**$132,360**	

Other Trail Facilities

Type*	#	Per Unit Cost*	Total Cost	Comments
Wayfinding Signs	5	$725	$3,750	Directional with embedded map
Interpretive Signs	3	$1,000	$3,000	Cost highly variable based on style
Kiosks	1	$7,500	$7,500	Cost highly variable based on style
Vault Toilet (2 stall)	1	$64,000	$64,000	Forest Service style concrete
Gravel Parking Lot	20 spaces	$1,300	$16,000	Short access road not included in estimate
Summit Platform	1	$18,000	$18,000	Cost highly variable based on design/materials
Educational Shelters	2	$7,500	$15,000	Cost highly variable based on design/materials
		Total:	**$127,250**	



Design Features Key:

1. **Parking Area**: Gravel surfaced parking area to accommodate approximately 20 vehicles and bus turnaround.
2. **Visitor entrance:** Site entrance from the parking area with an informational kiosk and restroom.
3. **Vista Point**: Allows for a quick vista from the cliff tops to the south at the trail switchback.
4. **Summit Viewing Platform**: Directs users to a safe access point on the summit for panoramic views. The platform would include rails for safety and access control to protect sensitive habitat.
5. **Cliff Face Passage**: A steep but passable trail route through the cliffs. This could be improved with installation of a cable hand-hold and possible rock steps.
6. **Intersection Safety Improvements**: Work with Jackson County to make safety improvements at the driveway turnoff such as advance notice and directional signage and warning strips (rumble strips)

Wayfinding Signage

Interpretive Opportunity and Educational Gathering Space ("Educational Eddy")

Fisher Preserve
Proposed Trails and Facilities

- Site Boundary
- 10-Foot Contours
- Stream or Canal
- Proposed Universal Access Tail
- Proposed Standard Access Trail
- Proposed Explorer Trail (most challenging)
- ① Design Feature Code
- (T1) Trail Segment Code

0 100 200 400 Feet

Map Prepared by JKE - September 1, 2021

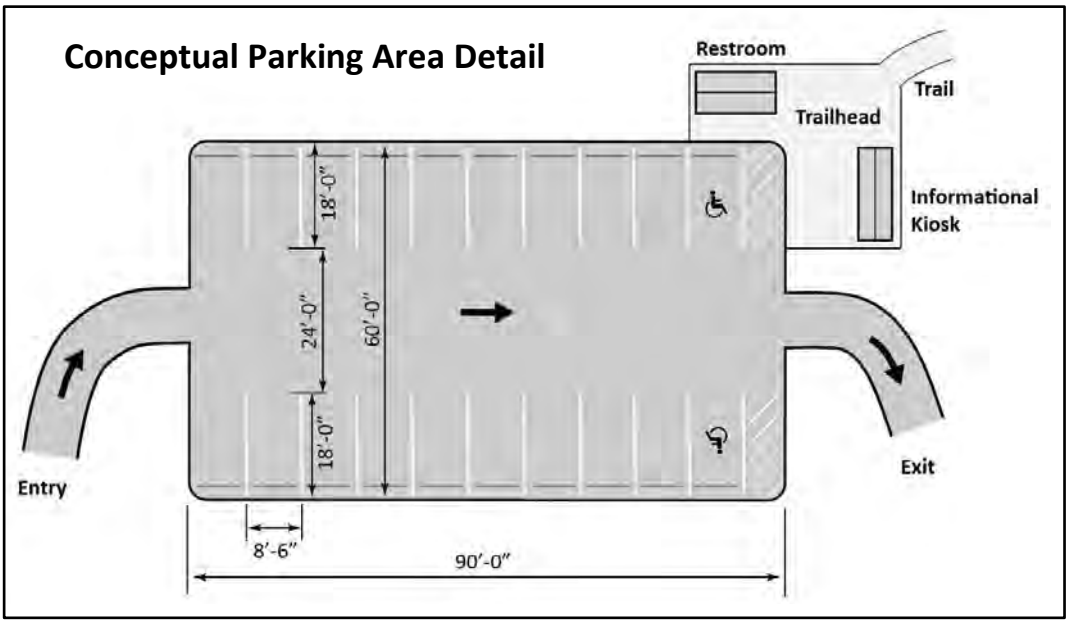
Design Element Recommendations and Examples

Recommendations and examples of similar facilities are shown in the section below. Each element would require design refinement and would be installed over time as funding becomes available and use increases.

Gravel Parking Area (#1 on map)

A small parking area for approximately 20 vehicles is recommended just off of the driveway at the flat area on the southwest corner of the property. This could be designed to allow buses and other large vehicles to pass through and turnaround without having to back up. Gravel would be suitable for this rural location and cable fencing or large boulders could be placed along the edge to prevent vehicles from inadvertently leaving the parking pad and impacting the adjacent habitat. Since striping is not feasible on gravel, wheel stops are recommended as a visual queue for parking lot organization. Consider allowing a drop off area by near the existing house to accommodate visitors with limited mobility.

A 20 space parking area with two dedicated handicapped spaces would require a gravel pad with a dimension of approximately sixty by ninety feet (5,400 square feet).



An example of cable fencing and wheel stops at the Meadowlark Prairie parking area near Eugene (example shown includes permeable concrete pavement – gravel is recommended for the Fisher Preserve)

Entry Kiosk and Restroom (#2 on map)

An informational kiosk with a trail map, Preserve rules, and interpretive information along with a portable or vault toilet are recommended immediately adjacent to the proposed parking area.

A map and site information at the Riley Ranch parking area in Bend

An informational kiosk at the Jackson-Frazier Wetland in Corvallis at the boardwalk trailhead

A "Forest Service style" concrete pre-fabricated vault toilet at the McKenzie River Trust's Finn Rock Reach boat ramp Reach

Mid-Trail Overlook (#3 on map)

Creating a vista point or overlook at the halfway point of the proposed summit trail would help build anticipation of the views ahead and also provide a destination point for those unable to make it all the way to the summit. Permanent fencing (e.g., split rail) or a deployable rope that could be raised during certain field trips may be considered in this location to help define the safe edge.

A vista point on the main Spencer Butte Trail in Eugene, approximately a quarter mile from the summit

The view from the proposed overlook on the Pompadour Bluff rimrock at the halfway point of the summit trail

Summit Platform (#4 on map)

A summit platform could be constructed to help control access to both protect the sensitive habitat found at the summit and to create a safe space for viewing along the steep cliff edge. It is recommended that this be constructed of natural materials such as rough-cut juniper and/or native stone and that it be sited so it is not highly visible from below.

A viewing platform at the end of the trail on the steep cliffs overlooking the Deschutes River at Riley Ranch in Bend (constructed with rough-cut juniper framing and decking)

Cliff Face Passage (#5 on map)

The proposed explorer trail will pass through an existing gap in the steep cliffs. The gap is passable, but fairly steep and loose rock is present. It is recommended that the rock be stabilized to prevent rockfall and that a short segment of cable or rope be installed as a handhold in this area. It may also be desired to construct a series of rough steps in this area using nearby stone to improve the passage.

The narrow passage in the cliff face on Pompadour Bluff

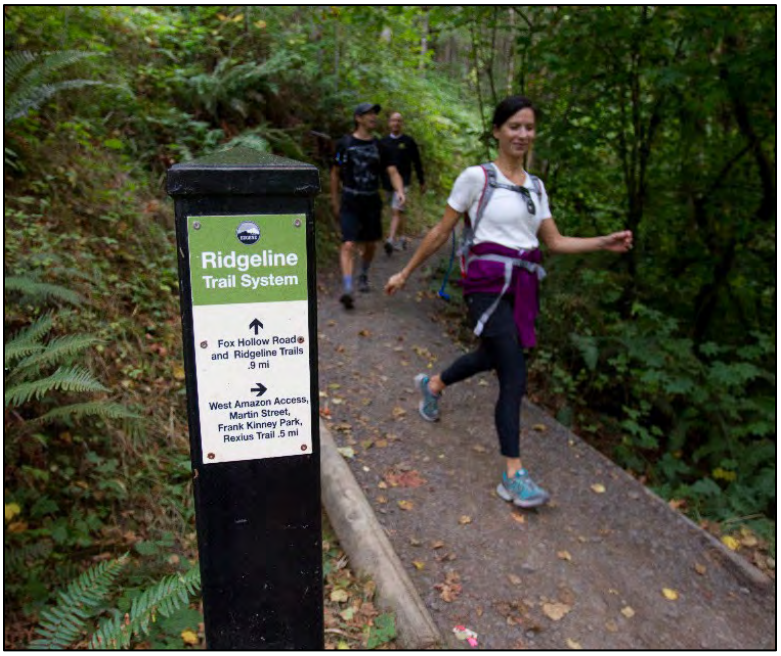
Constructed stone steps on a steep section of trail on Spencer Butte in Eugene

Hardware for connecting a rope handhold on a steep incline at Grand Canyon National Park.

Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding, or directional, signage is recommended at all trail junctions to clarify routes and could include distances. Simple trail maps may be integrated into the wayfinding signage if desired.

Wayfinding signage with integrated trail map at Riley Ranch Park in Bend



Wayfinding signage on the Ridgeline Trail in Eugene

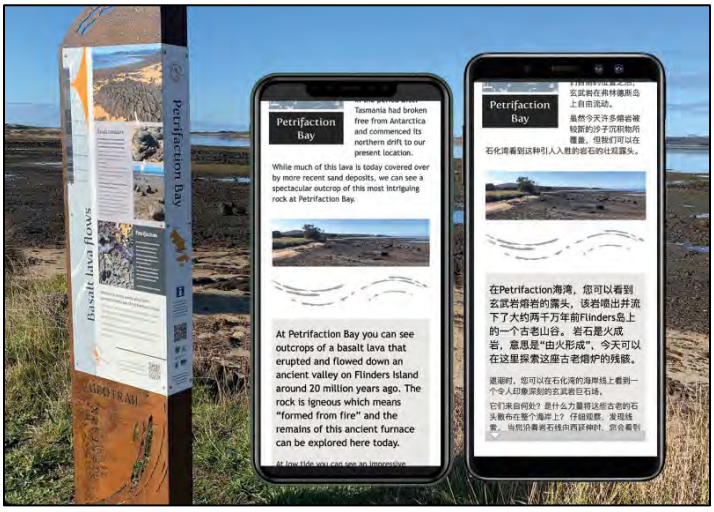
An existing fence post at the Fisher Preserve (shown above) with Acorn Woodpecker workings could serve as inspiration for unique wayfinding posts that could be fabricated using rot-resistant rough-cut juniper, drilled to resemble a granary tree.

Wayfinding signage at Buford Recreation Area in Lane County

Interpretive Signage

Interpretive signage could be placed at key points along the trail system to provide information about the Fisher Preserve's plants, wildlife, and geology. There are a wide range of styles interpretive panel styles. One option that is becoming popular is to provide QR codes in place of or in addition to standard panels that allow users with smart phones to access more in-depth information in multiple languages. The summit overlook with its sweeping views is particularly well suited for the incorporation of a map or panel to highlight locations of visible conserved lands and key geological features in all directions.

Interpretive signage at the overlook at Riley Ranch in Bend



Multilingual QR code on interpretive sign in Australia

Traditional interpretive signage at Delta Ponds in Eugene

Interpretive exhibit at Dee Wright observatory at McKenzie Pass indicating nearby peaks