

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY - SRD Proposals for Confluence Project, Parking, Trails, etc.

Comments as of July 11, 2007 - Comment period ended July 11

Confluence Project (Maya Lin Structure)
 Trials, Including Leash Restrictions and Trail Routes
 Extent of Wetland Closure to Dogs and Horses
 Parking Area
 Garbage/Dog Waste
 Parking Fee
 Security
 ATVs
 Reforestation

Invasive Plants
 Cultural Resources
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 Planning Process
 General Support for Proposal
 General Opposition to Proposal
 Topics Outside the Scope of the Proposal

Topic: Confluence Project (Maya Lin Structure)	
Comment	Response
Water resource buffer zones, which can range in width from 50-feet to 200-feet, shall be left undisturbed unless an alternatives analysis is performed and mitigation measures are proposed. It is unclear from the plans whether the bird blind will be located within a water resource buffer zone.	The Confluence Project is located in a water resource buffer zone. It has been determined to be a water dependant structure, and a No Practicable Alternative Test and a natural resources mitigation plan have been developed per CRGNSA requirements.
FOCG commented on the CRGNSA Management Plan requirements for the Confluence Proposal.	The Findings of Fact address CRGNSA Management Plan requirements for the Confluence Proposal.
The design of the bird blind and elevated walkway are OK. The view corridors should have a natural shape to blend into the setting, not linear as currently designed. The planted trees should be located as to result in a natural shape and pattern of trees. The proposed pattern will result in trees in a regular, cornfield like pattern inconsistent with the natural forest setting to be created. This is a National Forest setting, not urban park. The spacing of trees is too close, unless significant thinning will happen later.	The riparian forest restoration in the immediate vicinity of the Confluence Project utilizes successful restoration techniques used elsewhere at Sandy River Delta. The Forest Service has found planting trees in rows significant reduces the costs of weeding while the trees become established. Over time, the area will appear more natural, and the Forest Service could selectively thin the trees if needed in the future. In the view corridors, some of the planted rows may encroach upon the corridor more than others, and a few single trees may be planted here and there to give a less sharp (straight) or severe edge.
Page 2 of Project Review Application CD-07-05-S references the use of vertical steel posts and horizontal braided steel cables for the Bird Blind ramp. Staff's experience has been that some steel surfaces can be quite reflective.	The surfaces will be required to be non-reflective.
I am against this project entirely and believe that if Maya Lin knew the true outcome of the project, she would re-consider its location. And the unbelievable thought that anyone would push or operate a wheelchair on that gravel road leading to the bird blind is absurd. Try it. Perhaps the Forest Service used this idea to try to tug at our hearts, when in fact it is unrealistic.	The Forest Service has used compacted gravel successfully for accessible trails elsewhere in the Columbia River Gorge, for example St Cloud and Sams-Walker Day Use sites.
Without some serious enforcement of the transient problem and some on-site 24/7 presence, I expect this nice little jewel will last about 6 months without some expensive vandalism. There are some people who still insist on using this site (the 1000 acres) as their own shooting area and this will only end up being another target. I do like the concept, now ensure that it will last rather than being another vandalized public project.	The Confluence Project has applied for a special use permit from the Forest Service to maintain the structure. This will include any damage from vandalism.

<p>The proposed bird blind is in an inappropriate place at the SRD. It will initially draw a crowd or two, but interest will soon die down, leaving this structure to the discretion of the transient population and those individuals that partake in drinking and drug use at the SRD. It is a perfect cover for the transients to sleep during cold nights and is perfectly situated in an area where no monitoring can or will occur. As for the individuals that will drink and or use drugs in this structure, they will do so and leave their paraphernalia in the bird blind for the early morning visitor to stumble upon. I will gladly be there to take snapshots of this and the transient remains for your photo album. The distance from the proposed parking lot to the bird blind is much too far for the "normal population". Only those of us that frequent the SRD will see this structure daily and it is of no use to us. It is a ridiculous reminder that those that are in philanthropy don't know how to use money wisely. There are far better uses for such a structure and money from the Confluence Project.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I remain vehemently opposed to the Confluence Project, though I realize any protest is moot. The Lin piece is unlikely to draw anywhere near the number of visitors that the Delta already draws yet a disproportionate amount of land, road and planning is being devoted to this alleged audience. A duck blind hundreds of yards away from actual shooting is truly preposterous and puts stress on an area where walkers and hunters are already at odds. I regret that the Confluence Project and the Forest Service have entered into this collaboration, however fortuitous it might have originally seemed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>A Maya Linn showpiece is a wonderful thing but a true wonder would be the land returned to a pre-1900 state.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>Confluence Project: This is a significant and important component that will enhance the Sandy Delta experience.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>And the Confluence Project is a beautiful idea what with a "Bird Blind" observation platform designed by Maya Lin. Again, no problem in complying with the universal on-leash trail rules.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I'm general supportive of the proposal for the Maya Lin Sculpture. I think it will provide a nice focus on the Delta and a reminder of the historical significance of the place.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

Topic: Trails, including Leash Restrictions, Trail Routes

Leash Restrictions

Comment	Response
<p>I believe your plans to allow dog to run loose in a "no-leash area" are totally irresponsible. Multnomah County does not permit dogs to run loose on public land within the county. The United States Government should not be responsible for the behavior of dogs--- and you will be when they bite, seriously wound or kill some person. You seem to be depending on the Multnomah County Sheriff's Department for policing the Delta-- unless you plan to do it with USFS personnel. The newspapers should make it clear that the Multnomah County Sheriff is already overworked---he cannot even keep the newer (now getting old) jail open. And you are expecting Multnomah County Fire District #14 (ALL CORBETT AREA VOLUNTEERS) to provide the fire protection and emergency response on this Delta when trouble develops. Your own Delta Plan, developed by Virginia Kelly, did not anticipate un-leashed dogs running around much of the Delta. How will you really protect wildlife?</p>	<p>The Sandy River Delta Plan specified dog walking as an allowed use. The present proposal provides more specificity on areas where dogs would be allowed off leash, on leash or not at all.</p>

<p>The Sandy River Delta was purchased by the Federal Government at the suggestion of Ms. Nancy Russell and others with the Friends of the Columbia River Gorge---I'm quite certain they did not intend for the USFS to put a free running dog park that required other agencies to police and protect. Please note that dogs are required to be on a leash in both Multnomah County Parks (ie Blue Lake Park) and State Parks such as Rooster Rock Park. Have you considered the insurance problems you will face when one of these dogs kills someone? I no longer visit the Delta. I think it is a mess! Much better with cattle grazing.</p>	<p>The Forest Service concurs that this is a problem and is working with user groups to improve the situation.</p>
<p>Both on- and off-leash dog areas may adversely impact recreation opportunities. Dogs may pose an actual or perceived threat to visitors to the Sandy River Delta. The Forest Service should ensure that the project is designed to mitigate such adverse impacts.</p>	<p>See response above</p>
<p>There should be some 'no dog' trails to provide a diversity of recreation experiences. Some people don't like stepping in dog poop and others are afraid of dog confrontations. Having been confronted with vicious dogs on trails, dog control is a very real issue. It seems that under the current proposed plan the Sandy River Delta is too oriented to folks with dogs. The reason you only hear from folks with dogs is that folks who'd rather not hike around dogs just won't go there now. That's too bad and shuts these folks out. The proposal with 3 out of 4 trails with off leash dogs seems biased to off leash dog use. I'd propose reversing this ratio. Furthermore I propose fencing the off leash dog trails to keep dogs from harassing wildlife by running through the woods at their impulse to chase whatever wildlife is their. Who will be on site to regulate the dog rules? This needs to be a part of this plan or the plan won't work.</p>	<p>See response above</p>
<p>I use the SRD almost daily, mostly for walking the dogs off leash and birding (a combo most birders abhor), for weekly trash removal, and for some occasional duck hunting in the fall (another anti-birder activity). Everything looks very good and well planned; however, I think you should consider providing at least twice as much off-leash trail availability for us off-leash dog walkers, who comprise the vast majority of SRD users. But why aren't you proposing more off-leash trails, especially along the existing North-South road (along the Powerlines) to the Columbia and back? Will that road be available all year? By and large it's sure to be a significant improvement, but please consider us off-leash dog walkers proportionally in your plan.</p>	<p>The Forest Service is not currently planning any recreation changes north of the original Sandy River. Habitat restoration, weed removal and tree planting will continue. The road out to the Columbia is proposed to continue as off-leash. The FS is looking at taking out a small dam across the original Sandy River channel. The existing road is on top of that dam. The FS is looking into whether to take the dam out, and if so, whether to build a bridge to get to the north side. Consequently, there could be effects to access to the north side.</p>
<p>I am very concerned about the Forest Service statement: "Noting which trails are off leash was an attempt to communicate clearly that only one trail is proposed to be leashed. I thought it was important to spell it out in the hopes of reducing questions about where leashes are and are not required. I can see, however, that it created some questions in your mind anyway." Either your office is slowly and carefully pushing the dog folks out, or your office spends a fraction of the time it should thinking things through. If you release a map where five trails (for example) are posted as being off-leash, people will rightfully assume off-leash dogs are only allowed on those five trails; especially hostile people like Julie the crazy horse lady. If the intent is that dogs are allowed off-leash except where posted, then that's what should have been put on the map.</p>	<p>The Forest Service has created a map that specifically addresses the wetland closure and on-leash areas. See attachment B of the decision document.</p>
<p>Do the No-leash trails delineate a No-leash area? Are dogs allowed off the No-leash trail? Is there a buffer zone? What rules apply at the confluence near the on-leash and off-leash trail?</p>	<p>See response above.</p>

<p>I would like to have all trails be considered off-leash unless otherwise marked. I'm willing to bet that the most frequent users of the enhanced SRD will be the current users – dog walkers and horse folks. I don't want to have to discuss whether my dogs need to be on-leash with the infrequent user who is misinformed about the trails.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>I would like to see only "leash required" trails labeled on maps, while all other trails have no labels. Users such as dog walkers and horse riders, know the lay of the land and do not want to have to explain themselves to someone who is not a frequent user that one trail over another is supposed to be off leash. Minimizing conflict from the start is recommended. My fear is again, that this could be the FS' attempt to start to minimize the use of off leash dog walkers and horse riders, a blatant turn around from original discussions. The FS must recognize that the majority of users (numbers prove this) are off leash dog walkers, yet there is a disregard for all of our concerns and comments. Another sore spot is the discussions we had about trail improvement/building over the coming months/years, yet on the information you distributed it specifically states "The FS does not currently plan to extensively improve these trails, but brushing or repair work would be likely." As frequent users, we can live with the current trail system and are happy to help maintain certain trails, but when you invite more people to this limited infrastructure, it could cause problems.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>If the no-leash trails are severely limited, the use on these trails will be astronomical and the subsequent environmental wear and tear inevitably deleterious. I believe it is indeed short-sighted to limit trails without at least making provisions to create more. Which dovetails with the wetland closure to dogs because by taking more and more space away from no-leash users, the Delta's well-being suffers in a way it does not, now.</p>	<p>The current proposal includes one 1.2 mile leashed trail, about 200 acres of wetlands closed to recreation use, and some leashed area in the parking area and Confluence site. No other leash restrictions are proposed at the 1,400 acre Sandy River Delta.</p>
<p>Maybe there should be more than one trail for dogs. Personally, I don't believe people will keep their dogs on leash after having used this area for so long as an "informal" off leash area. (Addendum after clarification from the Forest Service: Sorry, I was under the impression there would be only on leash trails and not all trails open to dogs.)</p>	<p>The Forest Service clarified with this commenter that only one trail is proposed as on-leash.</p>
<p>I have been regularly using this recreation area for many years to walk my small dogs. This area is a unique resources in the Portland metro area for dog owners and should maintain its attributes as a large open space for dogs, dog walkers and others to enjoy. I don't know how often you have visited this area, but the vast majority of users are dog owners that want to get out and enjoy the delta and let their dogs play off leash. In all the years that I have been walking my dogs in the area, I have never encountered any problems with other dogs or dog walkers, even though my dogs are usually the smallest ones out there. Of course there are other occasional users: horses, fishermen, birders and hunters. My experience has been that all of these users have all gotten along just fine with one another. I am interested in seeing the proposed plan, but I have to wonder why the forest service feels it needs to intervene with a resource that is being utilized without conflict.</p>	<p>Numerous conflicts have been reported to the Forest Service and to the Multnomah County Sheriff.</p>
<p>I go to the Sandy River Delta about 3 times a week with my dogs and it is the only place I know of where my dogs truly get tired. They absolutely love running down the trails off leash and jumping into the river, and I love seeing them so happy. I am so glad you have included so many off leash trails in this proposal. My dogs and I would be devastated if they were restricted to being on a leash. I am very happy with the proposal</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

<p>No-Leash Trails: This is a necessary concession to those with horses and dogs. While some may quibble with the boundaries, there is no ideal solution that will avoid all conflicts with foot traffic.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I use the SRD to walk my dogs regularly and I think the plans look great. I appreciate that the plans keep the off leash trails - that is really important b/c that is pretty much the only time my dogs get to truly run and fully exercise. I think having one separate on leash trail is very reasonable for the public as a whole and a good way to protect the wetlands.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>I am writing with regards to the proposed development plans for the Sandy River Delta. For the most part, I am pleased with the plans that have been proposed and am delighted that you plan to keep a number of off leash trails for dogs. This is the ONLY place in the Portland area where we can go freely with our dogs. We love it as do they.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>Excellent idea to keep the network of existing informal trails to be used by off-leash dog walkers, horses and bicycles.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>As a frequent (3-4 times a week) user of SRD, I definitely have an interest in the development plans. The proposed developments seem very reasonable to me. I am pleased to see off-leash trails are built into your development plan. As a user of the dog trails, I am in favor of preserving and allowing as much space as possible for this specific use and expanding on the amount currently allocated. I love hiking with my dogs and this is very difficult to do in the Portland area. My dogs need to run daily and it's very difficult to allow them to do that adequately even in fenced dog parks. The hiking areas are all on-leash only and so those trails are not suitable for two high energy dogs. SRD allows them to get the exercise they really need and an enjoyable one-hour hike for me. There are so many family-friendly sites & trails already around the Portland area & Columbia Gorge that are off-limits to dogs. SRD is the only area for miles and miles where dogs and their owners can enjoy the forest and river without having to leash their dogs. Please consider keeping as much of SRD open to off-leash dogs and the people wh</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>As a frequent and long-time visitor to SRD, I definitely need to comment on the current development plans. Of course I'm disappointed that this relatively undiscovered treasure of rare free space will now be subjected to "improvements" designed to promote greater use, but as Portland grows and develops, I do recognize that such changes are inevitable. That said, the proposed developments seem quite reasonable to me. I'm particularly pleased to see that off-leash trails are a substantial part of your development plans. My wife and I and our two high-energy dogs are frequent users of the dog trails here, and I favor preserving and allowing as much space as possible for this specific use--even expanding on the amount currently allocated. As you know, there are already many family-friendly sites and trails already around the Portland area and Columbia Gorge that are off-limits to dogs. SRD is the only area for miles and miles where dogs and their owners can enjoy the forest and river without having the dogs on leash. Please consider keeping as much as possible of the SRD open to off-leash dogs and the people who love to walk with them.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

Trail Routes	
Comment	Response
<p>The proposed "no-horse, no-dog" area includes two existing roads within the proposed boundary. The existing roads run from the "universal access trail" beneath the powerlines and to the eastern edge of the property. These existing roads provide year round access to the eastern portion of the property and are not part of the current wetlands designation. Personally, I find it disturbing that these two roads are not marked or designated in this proposal. It certainly gives me the impression that important information is being withheld from public discussion. The proposal would remove or restrict a current public usage of the property in two ways. First, it would prevent the existing access to areas east of the powerlines since there are no designated roads to trails to these areas in the proposal Second it would remove the exiting public access to the areas between these roads.</p>	<p>The Sandy River Delta Plan proposed that the area in question be untrailed in the long run. The Plan set aside some areas as untrailed to balance the needs of wildlife and recreation.</p>
<p>Equitable Parallel Solution: True parallel options from the proposed parking lot would serve two purposes, provide options equivalent to the current experience enjoyed by existing users, and reduce the potential for future conflicts along the Confluence Trail. The Forest Service proposal provides nothing comparable to the current loop options. It effectively cuts users out of the eastern meadows entirely, reduces the loop available by nearly 50%, and eliminates access to the open vistas currently enjoyed. (These vistas are unique to low elevation, and are a significant reason the Delta is visited as it is.)</p>	<p>The Sandy River Delta Plan proposed that the area east of the trail to the Confluence Project be untrailed in the long run. The Plan set aside some areas as untrailed to balance the needs of wildlife and recreation. For this reason, the Forest Service proposed off leash trails west of the trail to the Confluence site.</p>
<p>I don't see any river access for pedestrians on this map. Is there any and if so, is it on or off leash for dogs and to the Sandy or the Columbia River?</p>	<p>Several trails go to the Columbia/Sandy Rivers. One off-leash trail is shown almost to the Sandy River. The trail isn't shown all the way to the water because the spot where the trail ends gets sandy and often floods. People can continue to the river from where the trail ends. A trail labeled "Universal Access On-Leash Trail Under Construction" goes out to the Columbia River. It is on-leash out to the proposed Confluence Project area. An existing road goes north all the way to the Columbia River, and is currently planned for off leash.</p>
<p>Area should be conducive to dogs and horses. Trails should be constructed to be conducive with dogs and horse use.</p>	<p>Based on input from horse users, most of the trials are conducive to horse use. Dogs are allowed as shown.</p>
<p>The trail to the Bird Blind appears to be designated as foot-traffic only in the proposal. While this may be desirable from the point of preventing user conflicts, this was not my original understanding of the trail's allowed users. I propose that the Bird Blind trail remain open to all users until a suitable horse trail can be constructed. I've seen too many situations where equestrians agreed to a "separate but equal" trail plan only to have the money for the equestrian trail never materialize.</p>	<p>The trail out to the Confluence Project Bird Blind is open to horses and bikes, with the ultimate proposal to have an adjacent soft path for horses. At the Confluence Project, a hitching post is provided. Only the small spur trail down the Columbia River at the Confluence Project area is proposed as foot only. This is consistent with the SRD Plan for the river access spur trail to be foot only.</p>
<p>Confluence Project foot-only trail: Locate a separate horse path starting at the parking lot and running approximately 50 to 100 feet east of the foot-only trail.</p>	<p>The revised site plan notes that the trail will include a mown equestrian trail.</p>
<p>Can we put the separate horse path on the plan map? Can we mow the future horse path and put in the signage right along with the other signage when the parking lots are built? Then horses can start using it from the get-go and we can add material if or as needed.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>

Topic: Extent of Wetland Closure To Dogs and Horses

Comment	Response
<p>The proposed "No Dog/Horses" area is way too small and should extend to the Columbia River shore to the north and east. This area of important riparian habitat corridor to the River should be closed to dogs and horses to protect important wildlife and riparian/shoreline vegetation. The proposed fence needs to be designed to keep dogs out of the protected areas. Unfortunately dog owners can't be depended upon to always keep their dogs under control, even on the leash trails</p>	<p>The eastern boundary of the wetland closure ends at the powerlines, because waterfowl hunting is allowed east of the powerlines, and waterfowl hunters often use bird dogs.</p>
<p>My concerns is the off leash to dogs/horses wetlands. I have no problems with the above with obvious concerns to the environment/nesting birds but I feel the off wetlands boundaries too where the birds nest is too severe. We walk our dogs up the gravel path in the field that is just north between the highway/wetlands. I feel that even though the dogs may run 50 yards south of the trail this does not go into the wetlands. My proposal is too keep the now new graveled trail out to the new "art/bird sanctuary off leash since this does not disrupt the wetlands and off leash dog use is the highest most prominent traffic through this area. Maybe posting signs as the boundaries to the wetlands would allow people/dogs/horses to stay out vs. such a large buffer zone.</p>	<p>The decision changes the boundaries outlined in the proposed action to eliminate the non-wetland area east of on-leash trail from the wetland closure and deleted the rail fence. See attachments A and B of the decision document. The Sandy River Delta Plan calls for leaving the area east of the new Universal Access trail as untrailed, to balance wildlife and recreation needs.</p>
<p>More Precise Definition of Wetlands: We have been repeatedly told the northern boundary of the wetlands was chosen for reasons of convenience and or the existing delineating features such as the roads. However, the choice of the northern road as a boundary includes a significant area that is clearly not wetland. There is considerable room for tailoring in such a way that will still provide an adequate buffer to the wetlands. By choosing appropriate boundaries, the wetlands can be protected just as effectively, and additional area can be utilized and enjoyed by the current user base. This can be done with minimal signage, no fencing, and utilization of natural features.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>As for the proposed closure of the Bird Nesting / Wetland area. I believe that this should be reduced in size to the pertinent areas with a buffer, demarcated with signs at the least and closed to all users - hiker, horse, and dog.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>The No-leash trail designations and wetland proposals need clarification before they can garnish meaningful feedback. Is the claim that the 200 acres already fall under federal wetland guidelines and restrictions and you wish to augment them with additional restrictions? Is there any data to suggest that the additional restrictions will have the desired affect or is it just wishful thinking?</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>I've been using the delta for several years with my dogs. It is, without doubt, the best place for off-leash dogs in the Metro area. I drive from Clackamas every Saturday and Sunday, rain or shine to exercise my dogs. It is the only place I know where my dogs can get in the water. I want to make sure that the space available for off-leash dogs doesn't shrink to "dog park" size. What makes this area perfect is the space it allows my dogs to run. As a native Oregonian, I value the environment highly and I support wetlands. But I also know that wetlands are "mitigated" out of existence every day. Protect what you need to, but please don't lock out too much. I think that the more realistic your goals are, the more likely that dog owners will comply. The fields are what my dogs love best. And as far as bird watchers and the confluence project goes, dog people are there everyday, if you do the numbers, birdwatchers don't come close. And of course, bird watchers can go anywhere, while off-leash dogs have this one place.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>

<p>The only concern I raise is that the area that you are proposing the keep as wetlands is an area that many of us dog owners enjoy going. There is a seasonal pond in that area that is a place where older dogs that can't make it to the river can go and get a drink of water and a soak. My desire is that you would include this pond and the main path and area just south of the pond as part of the off leash trails network. This would still leave a large area to the wetlands project but also accommodate the dogs who so love this park.</p>	<p>Forest Service personnel have seen dogs chasing wildlife in the wetland areas. Most of the Delta will remain off-leash, and the critically sensitive wetland areas need to be protected.</p>
<p>I disagree with the intent to make 200 acres inaccessible to dogs and horses. People seemed to have behaved honorably during nesting season and that should be adequate. If there is evidence of serious disruption and loss of natural life, then suggest an amount of acreage that is more reasonable than simply ideal. I sense the lobbying efforts of Audubon Society people here, yet in my year-round forays through the Delta, I can't remember seeing any of them out there. At the risk of repeating myself, I feel there's a lot of glad-handing going on with special interest groups that are only taking a special interest <i>now</i>. If it's good will and good p.r. the FS wants, it's still in a unique position to score major points by acknowledging that the greater Portland area's animal lovers are a valuable, serious and powerful contingency ready to support the FS</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>Alternative Proposal: The following link shows a proposal using existing trails, and natural features to delineate the wetlands. With the addition of approximately 150 yards of trail, a path can be defined that would separate the current user base from Confluence visitors (except for a single intersection (or two)). The existing trails have physical barriers to the wetlands along the entire path, except for one location, which can be easily posted. http://img.villagephotos.com/p/2003-9/395995/WetlandsSRDProposal.jpg I will draft a more formal presentation, with images along the entire proposed route. I will deliver this before the 7/11 comment deadline. However, I think you'll find the provided map quite understandable.</p>	<p>The Forest Service used some of these concepts for the revised wetland closure map--see attachment A of the decision document.</p>
<p>My first question is what about people? Are people not going to disturb this area as well? Are people restricted from this area? I'd like to see the area that Jeff Schuh proposed, be added to the off leash and horse riding permitted area (see attached map). Otherwise, this area has always been a beautiful place for birds to migrate to in safety. I've never seen a dead bird at the SRD, nor seen a dog or horse ever catch a bird.</p>	<p>See response above</p>
<p>Great! Include more closed area, especially at the eastern end where turtles occasionally roam cross-country. However, this proposal will only work with proper fencing and diligent enforcement. Putting in a "rail fence" next to an off-leash dog area seems half-hearted. Can't an on-site caretaker or camp host be included to at least have the appearance of enforcement? With so much area, why can't closed areas and off-leash areas be more separated?</p>	<p>See above response regarding the wetland closure. A caretaker is possible, if one would choose to live there without power or domestic water. It is not clear how to separate closed and off leash areas; there must necessarily be a boundary between the areas.</p>
<p>This is a tough one. There is a beautiful stretch of open space that is not wet just to the east of the foot-only trail. However, the idea of a protected place for waterfowl and wildlife is also appealing. That leaves us somewhere in the middle. The ponds and pond buffers need to be off-limits to all. If you stick with the 200 acre wetland closure than it is extremely important that Sundial Island is kept open to users.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>I think having one separate on leash trail is very reasonable for the public as a whole and a good way to protect the wetlands. I also appreciate the ecological aspect of the protected wetlands.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>Overall I am very pleased with the compromise of having off-leash areas and a no dog area which is reserved for the wetlands. I believe this area will become one of the most popular parks in the Portland metro area with dog owners and bird lovers alike.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

Closure of Wetlands to Dogs and Horses. This is essential, and is likely the piece that will generate the most negative spin on this proposal. Please, please, please hold to a no horse and dog area; it is essential for the wildlife that is present and for any future reintroductions.	Thank you for your comments.
I fully support what you're proposing with regard to the wetland and wildlife restoration and protection area; I can easily live with keeping the dogs away from there, but would be frustrated without having more off-leash access.	Thank you for your comments.
The Forest Service should also minimize potential impacts to wildlife and recreational uses caused by both on- and off-leash dog areas. On- and off-leash dog areas may adversely affect wildlife. The Forest Service should ensure that appropriately designed fence excludes dogs from sensitive wildlife areas.	Thank you for your comments.

Topic: Parking Area	
Comment	Response
New Parking Lot Design: Long overdue. Combined with ODOT's plan to improve the off-ramp, the plan will work. Without coordinating with ODOT's work, however, USFS's new parking lot could be creating an extremely hazardous condition for motorists attempting to leave the area and for those using the off-ramp.	The Forest Service worked very closely with ODOT to develop a comprehensive design for the off-ramp, new access road and parking area. Multnomah County is concurrently processing ODOT's application for the off-ramp improvements.
Your pictures do not look like the space accommodates horses. There should be a particular day use parking for horse trailers and combination trails for horses, dogs and hikers	Nine large vehicle spaced are provided, for horse trailers and other large vehicles.
With respect to the parking lot design, there is no justification for allocations presented for the plan. What is the rationale for 9 large vehicle spaces? Did you just pull 9% out of some template for park building or do you have data to suggest it is needed? If you build it, they will come. I find this problematic for a few reasons. There are many, many parks in Oregon where I can take my RV, there are relatively very few where I can take my dog off-leash. This supports my assertion that the plans exhibit little concern for the current user group. Furthermore, without justification for 9 large vehicle spaces, I have difficulty seeing this as anything but an attack on the current user group. Is the agenda is to change the demographics of the user group by diluting it with RVers, and then ultimately to close the park to off-leash dogs completely	The large vehicle spaces are primarily included for horse trailers for equestrians, although other large vehicles such as RVs may use them. The SRD Plan developed in the 1990's decided that 10% of the parking, or ten spaces, would be for large vehicles such as horse trailers. In order to minimize cutting down large trees, only nine large vehicles spaces were proposed.
Will nine spaces for RV's and horse trailers be enough? Excellent idea to have several places to access off-leash trails from the parking areas. Designs for fence, restrooms, gates very nice. It will be quite a change from the current situation.	Nine large vehicle spaced are provided, for horse trailers and other large vehicles. The location and number were established largely by the site configuration and the desire to keep the parking area within the previously cleared "meadow".

<p>This has to be one of the worst parking layouts I have seen in 35+ years as a Architect. If you want to create accidents, making opposing traffic cross upon entering (especially with trailers) is one of the best ways to do it. Even better, have some back-out parking at the same crossing point! I realize the on-line plan may not be entirely to scale and is only a concept, but it is evident that the person who designed this has never pulled a trailer before when I look at the turning radius at some corners and the convoluted circulation path. This layout is poor, poor, poor. Start again, with someone who does not have a vendetta against motorized vehicles and has a knowledge of the required turning radius for the anticipated vehicles. Suggestion: Make the circulation counter-clockwise instead of clockwise. Traffic will never cross. Minor revisions will be needed in the islands of the trailer parking area. The turning radius of the largest vehicle allowed or anticipated should be considered, especially at the northeast corner where the present plan shows a very tight turn. ...semi-trucks should not be allowed, if there is no signage to say so, you are making a very attractive truck stop.</p>	<p>The parking area plans have been revised to change the circulation pattern to solve this problem.</p>
<p>Where is the parking area for the first trail at the southwest corner (trail/road already existing)? This layout only encourages people to continue to block the off-ramp from I-84. Hasn't anybody actually VISITED the present site on a busy weekend? Parking should positively NOT be allowed on the I-84 off-ramp or on either side of Jordan Road. If ODOT lengthens and straightens out this off-ramp, the speed of exiting vehicles is going to be greater (because the S curve will be eliminated) and parking here will only create additional problems. There are many large semi-trucks that apparently mistakenly take this exit instead of the next exit for Burns Bros. and again without a big sign that says "Trucks: This is not your exit!" it will only get worse.</p>	<p>A few parking spaces for access to the subject trail have been added to the site plan.</p>
<p>The location of the parking lot is ridiculous. It will invite more vehicle break-ins, maybe even theft and now we will have to worry about attacks upon people due to the lack of visibility from the street. I will be more fearful when arriving and leaving the parking structure. As well, the Forest Service and the Confluence Project will be invading the home of many creatures, to list a few: birds of all sorts, rabbits, snakes, coyote, deer, and insects of all varieties. Barring the invasion of their homes, then we have to look at the pollution that will be brought into their homes. It's bad enough there is a highway so close to their home, but the trees and brush have protected them for so long. Now we will be brining exhaust, garbage, and noise directly into their homes. I know this because I have seen it – you most likely have not. The money that will be necessary to improve the road into and out of the parking lot will be immense. This constitutes a misuse of funds that could otherwise be used for more important philanthropic deeds. I am against the new parking lot location. I believe the current parking lot should be</p>	<p>The current parking area is located in an interstate off-ramp. ODOT will not permit improvements at this location. The proposed parking lot location in Sandy River Delta is the closest location to the current parking area, requires the least amount of new road, while meeting National Scenic Area requirements for scenic screening.</p>
<p>The type of roofing materials proposed for the proposed restroom can not be determined from the photograph. Multnomah County does not typically support the use of metal roofing due to reflectively concerns. Textures of building materials should be borrowed from the landscape and should generally be rough, irregular and complex with the use of dark earth-tones found in the surrounding landscape.</p>	<p>Materials will be required which meet the scenic resource standard.</p>
<p>Exterior lighting should be shielded or hooded in the National Scenic Area. The "proposed restroom design" photo appears to contain an unshielded light near the top of the two entrance doors. Staff is under the assumption exterior lighting is not proposed within the parking area because the application does not discuss lighting in this area.</p>	<p>Since there is no electricity at the site, there will not be exterior lights.</p>

<p>It is not clear from the application materials whether the proposed development would accommodate wheelchair travel. ADA travel should be considered for the pervious road and parking area surfaces, travel to the bathroom structures, to the bulletin boards and travel onto the existing and proposed trail system and up into the bird blind.</p>	<p>ADA requirements are proposed, and will be part of the design package.</p>
<p>The proposed landscape plan in the vicinity of the new parking area appears to rely heavily on deciduous vegetation. The use of coniferous screening should be considered if the surrounding vegetation would not adequately screen the parking area during winter after deciduous trees have dropped their leaves. The application materials also do not provide detail on the proposed rehabilitation measures for the existing parking area.</p>	<p>Because of the flat terrain, the distance from the KVA, and the amount of existing deciduous vegetation, the CRGNSA landscape architect considers the existing vegetation adequate to screen the new parking lot. Conifers were not considered because they are native vegetation at the Delta. The current parking area is located on State Land, and the rehabilitation measures will be part of the application to Multnomah County.</p>
<p>I believe strongly that there are too many parking spaces for the so-called leashed dog area and not enough spaces for the unleashed area. Anyone who's walked the Delta will know that people who opt to leash their dogs are a small minority indeed. Again, it seems the plan is catering to the mythical Lin visitors and not to the actual current and committed users.</p>	<p>The revised parking lot plan (see Attachment B of the decision documents) adds more parking to the unleashed part of the parking lot. In addition, dog walkers would be able to park in the parking area where leashes are required and then unleash as soon as they reached the no-leash trails. To a great extent, the parking areas and number of spaces were designed to fit into the land and minimize cutting existing trees. The design creates a parking area with spaces tucked in here and there and stays away from a shopping mall feeling with large uninterrupted expanses of parking. The Forest Service did not start with any specific number in mind for each type of parking area (except a certain number of large vehicle spaces). The land best accommodates the large spaces in the opening in the northeastern end of the lot. The area with the large spaces should be the leashed lot because it would be used by horse trailers and possibly by other large vehicles such as RVs or buses</p>
<p>The design is very good, I like the way the area is broken up to fit in with the wooded setting. The width of the road at 20' is good. The road should be developed of truly pervious surfacing. Note that gravel compacts and in a very short time becomes very impervious. Rather use pervious asphalt or concrete, it's out there and was used for Drano Lake parking lot. Restroom and Gate: Very nice design proposed.</p>	<p>Thank you for the surfacing suggestion. The actual surface material will be specified in the construction drawings.</p>
<p>It looks good with better parking and rest rooms.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment</p>
<p>Naturally, the parking and a bathroom will be much appreciated.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment</p>

Topic: Garbage/Dog Waste	
Comment	Response
<p>Will there be dog waste bag stands to encourage people to pick up after their dogs? Two, will there be garbage cans at the start of the off-leash trails to encourage people to throw away their dogs' waste?</p>	<p>The decision includes a dog waste dump station at the restroom area toilet vault.</p>
<p>I know that dog owners need to take better care of the area. I participated in the litter clean-up this past weekend. I hate the dog waste left on the path and would even pick up after other people's dogs, if there was a place to put it. Could you arrange for a barrel or two inside the area?</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>Also, forgive me if I missed it, but I understood that you would be providing receptacles for dog waste along some of the trails. Are you still planning to have them?</p>	<p>See response above.</p>

No leash trails suggestion. Install several secured barrels for dropping off 'doggie do-do bags including a slot for 'spare change ' donations (I think anyone using this service would be happy to drop in change) and hire someone to come pick this stuff up for the donations collected He(she) would have a key for the locked donation site	See response above.
With respect to the restroom design, are you intentionally omitting garbage cans? Are there plans for garbage service? Yet another sad demonstration of the lack of understanding of the needs of the current user group.	The revised parking lot plan includes an area for a dumpster at the parking lot should the "pack it out" option prove inadequate in the future. See attachment B of the decision document.
Who picks up the dog manure and how often is this going to happen? The present trails off the parking area are unpleasant for about the first 200' because of the huge amount of dog poop. Requiring dog walkers to pick up after their pets does not work, without enforcement.	The decision includes a dog waste dump station at the restroom area toilet vault. The Forest Service is working with user groups to ensure that this is enforced.
This design looks very nice and will improve the existing area for dog users. While this is all "nice", there is one thing that is essential: cans to put dog waste in. With out these, the area will continue to be fouled by dog waste.	See response above.
Let's talk about garbage. Currently, there is a garbage problem caused by all users. The Forest Service and the Confluence Project <u>must consider</u> garbage management if you intend to invite even more visitors. The new visitors are people that need and expect garbage service, similarly to what they currently have at the many other "tourist" destinations in the Gorge. I will not pick up anymore garbage once the bird blind is installed, and again I will be delighted to capture the garbage moments for your photo album.	The revised parking lot plan includes an area for a dumpster at the parking lot should the "pack it out" option prove inadequate in the future. See attachment B of the decision document.

Topic: Parking Fee	
Comment	Response
Will there be fees for parking and/or using the site?	A fee is not proposed at present, although it could be considered in the future. If a fee is proposed, the Forest Service would request public comments before it made a decision on this subject.

Topic: Security	
Comment	Response
As evidenced by the present gate and barriers, they need to be built super strong and without some way to be vandalized or moved. If at all possible, lighting the gate area would be a plus to discourage vandalism	We agree strong gates are needed. There is no electricity at the site, so the gate area will not be lighted.
The restrooms will only encourage more transient camping. Include an on-site 24/7 host or guard. Simply putting up a gate at the entry road is not the answer. I understand there will be no power serving this restroom, but why can't you have some solar panels so a host (using an RV) would have some way to charge the RV batteries? Water and a pump-out septic will be there for the restrooms, so many retired folks might enjoy this area in exchange for hosting/security service.	A camp host is possible, if one can be found to live in an area with such limited services.

Topic: ATVs	
Comment	Response
Nothing in this proposal addresses or prevents the ATV's from continuing to enter from the Sandy River/Lewis & Clark Park area. Why not? Are ATV's going to be allowed?	ATVS will not be allowed in the SRD.

Topic: Reforestation	
Comment	Response
As usual this is very vague. The thing I oppose is ripping out, destroying ALL of the berry bushes. Although I realize that they are not an indigenous species, the fruit those bushes bare have become an important summer food source for many creatures and the bushes are protection for them as well. Again, this is something I have personally witnessed. I also oppose such large vehicles entering the SRD so often. The noise alone is enough to scare many of the creatures that live at the SRD. I also oppose the garbage and other things that the men/women working at the SRD are leaving. I find cigarette butts and garbage of all sorts that are obviously left by the work crews. I do agree with the new growth being planted and I'm happy to see that happening. I hope it grows into beautiful cover and food for the many creatures that inhabit the area.	The Forest Service is committed to control and eradication of invasive species, such as Himalayan blackberry, to the maximum extent possible. The blackberries are very difficulty to control, and any that are not removed quickly spread. The Forest Service will plant native shrubs which will provide food for animals and birds (rose, elderberry, thimbleberry). While the restoration techniques may be disruptive in the short term, in the long term, the result will be much better habitat for wildlife.
Yes. Needed and desirable from an ecological standpoint.	Thank you for your comment.
Previous plans have shown less forested areas than already exist so adding (or recognizing) more forest area is fine. There is plenty of area for open space and for wooded area. It does seem like some of the "forest restoration" crowds the potential views at the Confluence project	Thank you for your comment.
The forest restoration area delineated is very good.	Thank you for your comment.

Topic: Invasive Plants	
Comment	Response
I have walked, slogged and crawled most of the delta area and am more concerned that efforts be made toward mitigation of invasive plant species than I am that parking be improved. Except for the reforested area, most of the land would be canary grass and blackberry vines. Is it possible to address the invasives at all? A Maya Linn showpiece is a wonderful thing but a true wonder would be the land returned to a pre-1900 state.	The FS has been doing battle with the weeds for some time, with initial efforts north of the original Sandy River channel and the wetland area near the freeway. Areas heavily infested with blackberry, reed canary grass and thistle have been cleared and planted with native trees and shrubs. Wetland areas have been scraped of reed canary grass. When restoration is completed in the northern area, restoration will start south of the original Sandy River channel with a mix of forest, shrub/scrub, oak savanna, open meadow, and wetland.

Topic: Cultural Resources

Comment	Response
<p>The Yakama Nation is in receipt of your invite to comment on habitat restoration and some ground disturbance for the a "Bird Blind" and "New Parking Lot". The proposed project is within a high potential area for archaeological resources. There may have been an archaeological survey for this project area and there is likely a high possibility of uncovering archaeological resources or human remains in the proposed area, mainly the parking lot development. The parking lot development needs to be closely monitored.</p>	<p>The Confluence Project area was first surveyed in the early 1990s. No cultural resources were identified (Reese et al. 1995). A more site specific survey was conducted in 2006 by a professional archaeologist. McDaniel excavated with 10 deep subsurface probes and discovered no cultural resources (McDaniel 2007). The NSA Archarologist finds that further subsurface testing and/or monitoring is unnecessary. The parking area was surveyed in 1992 (Fagan and Reese 1992). 15-m wide transects covered 150-acres and 85 deep subsurface auger probes were excavated. One buried site of cultural material was found outside of the area of potential effect for the parking area. The proposed parking area is located in a relic river channel. Some subsurface tests will be located immediately south of the proposed parking area north of I-84 related to the I-84 Bridge replacement. The NSA will coordinate with the contract archaeologist and, as always, should any cultural resources be identified during construction the emergency provisions of the NSA plan will apply.</p>

Topic: Scenic Resources

Comment	Response
<p>FOCG stated the Forest Service should require that the proposed parking facilities meet the scenic standard of "not visually evident".</p>	<p>The applicable scenic standard per the NSA Plan is visual subordination.</p>

Topic: BPA Lines

Comment	Response
<p>It does not appear that any of the current projects impact the Bonneville Power Administration Power Line rights-of-way. For your reference, use of the rights-of-way must be approved by BPA. Plant only species that will have a mature height of 10 feet or less. Contact me at 503-230-5563 early in your projects to prevent conflicts.</p>	<p>The NSA lands staff has a different perspective on use of National Forest System land subject to a BPA easement. When the USDA Forest Service is the underlying land owner, we review easement language to specifically check rights, easement limits, etc, but feel we have a right to use the land in any manner that does not interfere with BPA's rights under the associated easement. I have not found preapproval to be a term/condition in any of the BPA easements to date. We will notify BPA of our projects and request that you inform us of any planned activities or special circumstances, but do not feel our use has to be approved by BPA as long as BPA's rights under the associated easement are not being impacted. As always communication is key in avoiding conflicts</p>

Topic: Planning Process	
Comment	Response
FOCG noted the Sandy River Delta Plan and EIS are over 10 years old and likely outdated and may need to be updated to reflect current environmental conditions.	The Decision Memo and Findings of Fact address compliance with NEPA.
Thank you for providing a feedback mechanism, may providence grant you the wisdom to incorporate the feedback from respondents into your deliberations. I've followed the planning for over two years by attending public meetings and reviewing web postings. The plans consistently demonstrate a shocking ignorance or flagrant disregard for the park's primary user group. I fear it must be the latter, because I know the majority of people that attend the public planning discussions are 'dog people'. Furthermore, I recognize that these comments are incapable of reshaping your intentions, and although this is a Quixotic endeavor the resource is to important to silently watch it slips away.	Please note the changes made to the decision due to public comment. See decision document including attachments A and B. We hope that your confidence will improve over time.
First, I will comment on the process. I am pleased that meetings between the Forest Service, and SRD_MUD are continuing, but I am feeling a growing sense of discomfort. We are a very small number of representative users, and the users as a whole are not well organized, but I am concerned that there has been too little listening or accommodation evident in the process so far. I see evidence of this in the dwindling participation of the Forest Service (lately only Greg Cox), and little real dialog on plans under consideration. I had hoped for a session discussing trail planning at length, but have only had off-the-cuff comments from Greg and Virginia, and no real dialog. Now we have a proposal to comment on without any realistic opportunity to muster public consensus from the active users. I currently don't have confidence that the FS is adequately considering the current, (and likely continuing) majority users of the delta, and this is guaranteed to only generate animosity where inclusiveness and cooperation could easily be fostered.	We envision that respresentatives from our Recreation department will continue to work with SRD_MUD. We hope that your confidence will improve over time.
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the various proposals at the Sandy River Delta. Although I do feel as though my comments are not taken into consideration, it is a duty I must partake in as a tax paying, law abiding, voting citizen. The FS and the Confluence Project have obviously made special arrangements behind the scenes to make things happen as each organization sees fit. I believe money drives most of the Forest Services' agenda and not the well being of the environment or the creatures that inhabit that environment at the SRD. I believe most of your plans at the SRD are a conflict of interest. I also believe that the FS has given lip service to the SRD_MUD group. The reason I say this is because more times than not, one thing is discussed and then that information changes or was just plain incorrect. The latest example is when Stan Hinatsu stated that a the Forest Service could not put up nor manage a fence to define boundaries, however a fence is now part of these proposals in front of us today. Too many times, I have received inaccurate information from the FS. This is disheartening.	See above two responses. The fence has been removed from the revised plan. Communication is an on-going process and is never as perfect as we would all like.

Topic: General Support for Proposal

Comment	Response
I have reviewed the material and maps attached, and find the proposal well balanced in its goal of serving a wide variety of outdoor lovers needs/wants. If Troutdale can be of any assistance with the project review please let us know.	Thank you for your comment.

Topic: General Opposition to Proposal

Comment	Response
Go away leave this area the way it is. Nobody want you people here. No one wants the changes.	Thank you for your comment.
As a regular visitor to the Sandy Delta, I have noticed that almost everyone there is with dog. I have also seen people on mountain bikes and horses. Besides that are a smattering of fisherpersons. Everyone is happy as a clam there. I think your plans are a solution to a problem that doesn't exist and will screw up one of the best places around. The people who use the place like it the way it is...natural. Who would benefit from your proposal besides some contractors? Please let it be!	Thank you for your comment.
I have decided not to reiterate my objections relating to the atrocities being committed by your office. You and your staff are completely aware of what you are doing and the future ramifications; be it broken beer bottles left by vagrants in the bird blind to scattered picnic trash left by tourists (who will expect trash service). I firmly believe your decisions have been made and actionable items have begun. This "public comment" is both pacifying and insulting. As for the Forest Services' share of the millions of dollars – I hope you choke on it.	Thank you for your comment.
To summarize, I object to the proposed changes as presented by the Forest Service and hope our voices will be heard. The majority of users have strong objections to what is happening at the SRD and yet the plans still seem to move forward, with or without public consideration. I think this public comment process is not used as it should be and I'm sickened by the way the federal government is able to destroy OUR LAND with blatant disregard to nature and the very people that pay your salary. I intend to continue my work as a communicator bringing messages from the Forest Service and the Confluence Project to the users and vice versus.	Thank you for your comment.

Topics Outside the Scope of the Project

Comment	Response
<p>Please publicize the proposed removal of the small boulder and earthen dam when it is up for consideration. I personally oppose its removal, and would like an opportunity to fully explain my reasoning. A public hearing in Troutdale would be desirable; there are many venues in which this could be accommodated.</p>	<p>The Forest Service is now writing the environmental assessment document, and will publicize when it is available for public review and comment. A 30 day public comment period is required; the FS reviews the comments before making a final decision. It will be late summer/fall before the document is published. It is doubtful there will be a public meeting on the dam removal proposal. The S can talk or meet with individuals.</p>
<p>I would strongly recommend and suggest that you retain reasonable access to the north of the channel for a variety of reasons, not the least of which could be for emergency services.</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>It is still disappointing that the dam built by pioneer farmers is proposed to be removed. These rocks were all hand placed with as much work and care as some of the stonework on the Scenic Highway. Why can't drive-thru's (concrete or stone lined depressions) be incorporated rather than removing this stonework? Has anyone considered that breaching this dam may only lower the water table for the wetlands you are trying to establish or are existing?</p>	<p>See response above.</p>
<p>It is not clear from the application materials how ingress and egress from I-84 to the parking area is proposed. Any proposed alterations to the I-84 ramps should also be considered as part of this overall project. Road reconstruction projects in the Gorge Special Pubic Recreation zone require National Scenic Area review.</p>	<p>The Forest Service worked closely with ODOT to design the parking area, access road and I-84 ramp changes as a comprehensive design. Since the I-84 changes are on State land, ODOT will submit a land use review application to Multnomah County.</p>