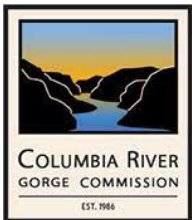




Vital Sign Indicators Progress Report Draft Recreation Indicators

December 13, 2022



VSI Work Session Overview

Objective: Share progress on Draft Recreation Vital Sign Indicators and gather feedback

- Rationale for recreation Vital Sign topics
- Draft recreation indicators
- Commission questions and discussion

For Commission Consideration



Does the Commission support moving forward with draft recreation indicators as summarized in this presentation?

Vital Sign Indicators Program



Purpose: Monitoring the **health of the National Scenic Area** to assess how well we are protecting NSA resources



Photo credit: USDA Forest Service Air Quality Program



Photo credit: S. Richards for East Cascades Oak Partnership



Photo credit: OR Department of Transportation

Vital Sign Indicators

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area



Climate Change



Natural Resources



Cultural Resources



Recreation

- Visitor Experience
- Recreation Equity
- Recreation Impacts on Other Resources

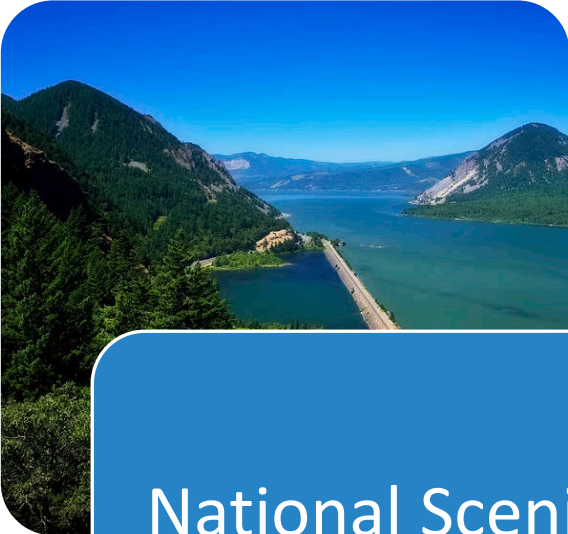
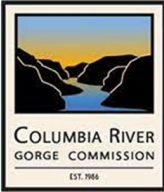


Scenic Resources



Economic Vitality

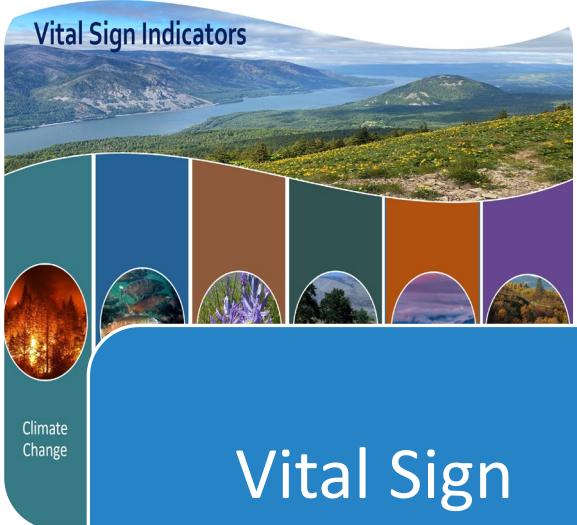
Recreation in the Management Plan



National Scenic Area Act



Management Plan



Vital Sign Indicators

Vital Sign: Visitor Experience

Draft Indicators: Visitation
Visitor Satisfaction



These indicators tell us:

- **Visitation:** How the amount of visitor use is changing over time
- **Visitor satisfaction:** How well we are providing high quality recreation experiences in the NSA

Vital Sign: Recreation Equity

Draft Indicators: Percentage of Recreation Sites and Trailheads [Accessible via Public Transportation](#)
Percentage of Recreation Sites and Trailheads [Requiring Access Fees](#)



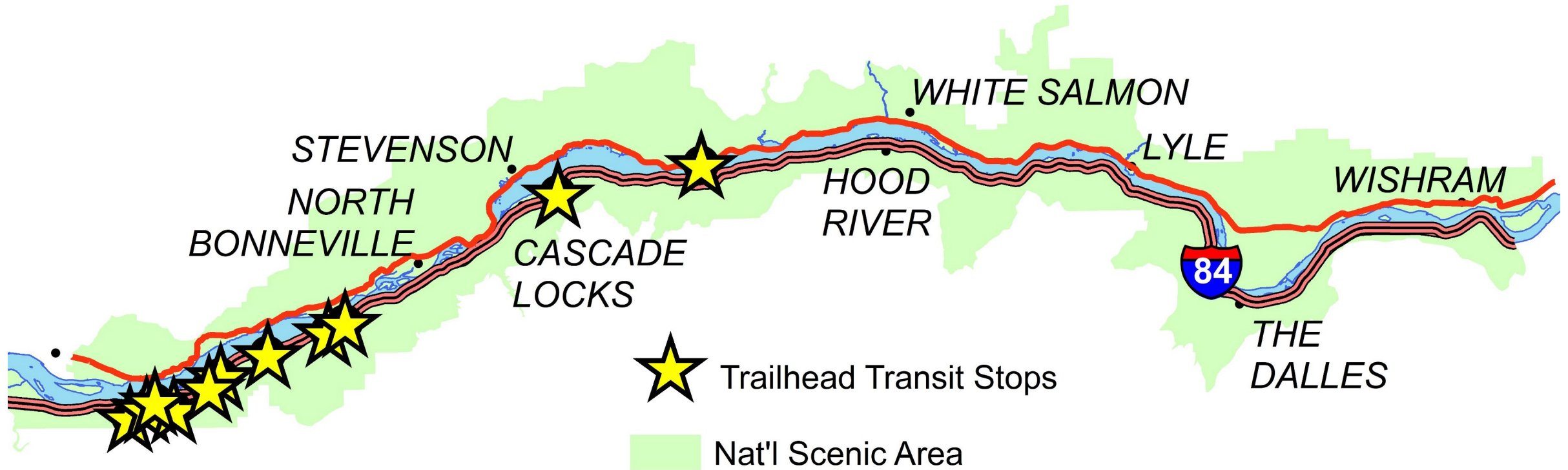
Gorge Express Bus at Multnomah Falls

Photo credit: OR Department of Transportation

These indicators tell us:

How well we are providing recreation opportunities in the NSA with low barriers to access

Recreation Sites and Trailheads Accessible via Public Transportation



Vital Sign: Recreation Impacts on Other Protected Resources

Draft Indicators: Extent and Distribution of Unofficial Trails

Extent and Distribution of Official System Trails



These indicators tell us:

Where unofficial trails occur across the landscape in relation to protected cultural, natural, and scenic resources, and in relation to official trails

Next Steps: Indicator Development and Implementation



- Finalize recreation monitoring methodologies and implement in mid-2023.
- Share progress update on cultural indicators in April 2023.
- Present final comprehensive VSI list in summer 2023.

For Commission Consideration



Does the Commission support moving forward with draft recreation indicators as summarized in this presentation?

Criteria for Selecting Vital Sign Indicators



1. Measurable through repeatable methods



2. Relevant to Management Plan



3. Clear to public, partners, and policymakers



4. Consistently available over time



5. Obtainable through existing monitoring programs whenever possible



6. Cost-effective

2009 Recreation Vital Sign Indicators								2022 Recreation Vital Signs
Objective	Vital Sign Number	Title	Measure	Proxy Measure	Year Reported	Connects to Management Plan Provision? YES/NO/UNCLEAR	Management Plan Reference and Notes	
5.1 Address the Demand for Resource-Based Recreation Opportunities in an Environmentally Sustainable Manner	5.1 a	Recreation Demand	Percent of recreation sites at or above capacity more than X percent of the time on high season days--total and by recreation activity type	Percent of surveyed recreation sites above capacity more than 30% of the time on high season days	2009	YES--Vital Sign topic connects with MP resource protection goals; Review of measure needed	Collaborate with partner agencies and stakeholders to develop management strategies and actions to protect and enhance natural, scenic, and cultural resources from overuse at popular recreation sites and trails.	Recreation Impacts on Other Protected Resources
	5.1 b	Environmentally Sustainable Recreation	Percent of recreation sites that are environmentally degraded--total and by recreation activity type and specified as improving or not improving	(1) Percent of each surveyed recreation site that is more than 10% environmentally degraded as a result of human activity and (2) percent that are (a) improving, (b) not changing, and (c) worsening.	2009	YES--Vital Sign topic connects with MP resource protection goals; Review of measure needed	Protect scenic, natural, cultural, and recreation resources when providing new recreation opportunities.	
	5.1 c	Recreation Availability	Percent of visitors and residents rating the access to recreation activities as good or better--total and by recreation activity type		TBD in 2011	YES--Vital Sign topic connects with MP accessibility goal; Review of measure needed	Provide equitable and accessible (regardless of income level, ethnicity, gender, ability, or age) recreation opportunities.	Recreation Equity
	5.1 d	ADA Accessibility	Percent of recreation sites that meet ADA standards--total and by recreation activity type	Percent of surveyed recreation sites that meet one or more ADA accessibility standards	2009	YES--Vital Sign topic connects with MP accessibility goal; Review of measure needed		
5.2 Protect and Enhance the Quality of Recreation Experiences	5.2 a	Recreation Quality	Percent of visitors and residents rating the overall recreation qualities of the Gorge as good or better		TBD in 2011	YES--Vital Sign topic connects with MP recreation opportunities and experience goal; Review of measure needed	Provide a diversity of resource-based recreation opportunities that are accessible to all segments of the public that emphasize the quality of the recreation experience meeting present and future needs by protecting and enhance the natural, scenic, and cultural resources and support economies of local communities.	Visitor Experience
	5.2 b	Recreation Site Quality	Percent of site users rating their overall experience as good or better--total and by recreation site		2009	YES--Vital Sign topic connects with MP recreation opportunities and experience goal; Review of measure needed		
	5.2 c	Recreation-Related Conflicts	Number of reported incidents related to recreational uses by type of incident		TBD in 2011	NO	Site level management topic.	

Vital Sign Indicators



Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area



Climate Change

Wildfire



Natural Resources

Oak Woodlands
Coniferous Woodlands
Grasslands
Cold Water Refuge Habitat
Wetlands
Talus
Air Quality



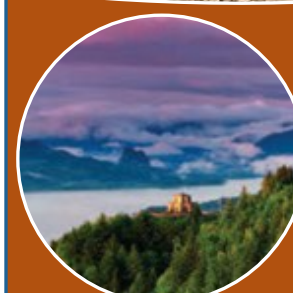
Cultural Resources

First Foods
Archeological and Historic Resources
(TBD in consultation with Tribes)



Recreation

Visitor Experience
Recreation Equity
Recreation Impacts on Other Protected Resources



Scenic Resources

Landscapes Seen from Key Viewing Areas
Landscape Settings
Visibility (Haze & Light Pollution)



Economic Vitality

Oregon and Washington Investment Board Loans
Agriculture