

Middle Fork Snoqualmie River Access Draft Concept Plan February 2005



Project Partners (add City of North Bend, UW, U.S. Dept. of Trans.)



MidFORC
Middle Fork Outdoor
Recreation Coalition



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Doug Sutherland - Commissioner of Public Lands

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The University of Washington's studio class developed design alternatives for two of the river access sites and an interpretation and education plan.
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National Park Service – RTCA assistance

Technical assistance in planning for the trail system and production of this document was provided, upon request from American

Whitewater, by the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service – Seattle Office.

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Map

The map was designed and developed by Audrey Stout.

Graphics

The majority of the photos were provided by Tom O'Keefe.
Some additional photos were provided by RTCA.
Mine Creek Design– UW studio class –
Tanner Landing Designs – Audrey Stout

Executive Summary

Purpose

This document presents river access issues, needs, and recommendations for improvements to ensure the public has dedicated access to the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River in Washington for whitewater boating (canoes, kayaks, and rafts).

While access for the whitewater recreation is the primary focus of this plan, all other user groups desiring access to the water including fishermen, swimmers, and families were also considered through the planning process. Another goal of the plan was to develop low-impact improvements and address resource degradation issues and opportunities for conservation at the same time. This plan also outlines interpretation and education opportunities, operation and management issues, and potential funding sources for implementation. This document will help to guide land management agencies and the local community to maintain and develop river access that meets the user's needs and minimizes impact to the natural environment.

River Access Needs & Resource

The Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River is a popular whitewater recreational destination and provides the closest intermediate



Kayaker enjoying the house rock rapid.

whitewater to the greater Seattle area of over 3 million people. The river and its tributaries include 40 miles that are suitable for paddlers over a wide range of skill levels including sections appropriate for beginners and other sections that challenge the nation's top expert paddlers. There are three distinct runs on the Middle Fork – the

upper-middle, middle-middle, and lower-middle. While the resource is significant only a few informal access points exist along public land adjacent to the river. Whitewater boating has greatly increased in popularity over the last decade and at the same time more shoreline property has been developed in the Midfork. Further the access for rafting, which due to the heavier craft requires wider trails and shorter walking distances from the vehicle to the river, has diminished.

Planning Processes & Partners

Planning efforts to develop this concept plan for river access builds on previous planning work on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie including the River Corridor Use Concept Plan which was an interagency effort published in 1997 that

addressed recreation and conservation needs in the valley. The current concept plan focuses on whitewater boating access sites and develops a more focused vision for implementation and stewardship of these sites.

American Whitewater has spear-headed this new planning effort. In the summer of 2003, American Whitewater applied for and received

a grant of technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service. RTCA's primary role has been to facilitate and coordinate an open planning process actively involving key stakeholders in the effort. A planning team of key groups and agencies were formed including representatives from American Whitewater, University Kayak Club, Washington Kayak club, Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Mountaineers, Middle Fork Outdoor recreation coalition, Washington recreational River Runners, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, the Department of Natural Resources, King county, the United States Forest Service, the City of North Bend, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. This group acted as the primary planning body that developed this concept plan.

The planning team also benefited from a partnership with the University of Washington's Landscape Architecture Department. Design assistance from the University of Washington landscape architect studio class led by Nancy Rottle was provided during the winter of 2004. The studio class developed detailed design alternatives for two of the river access sites – Tanner Landing and Mine Creek. In addition, the class developed an interpretation and education framework plan.

Recommendations

River Access Sites

Twelve river access sites along the Midfork were identified by the planning group as priority sites that should be formalized for boating access. The planning team recommends that all of these sites be formalized, maintained, and remain open year-round. Below is a brief summary of the site-specific recommendations that were made.

12 – Taylor River Bridge.

- No development improvements are recommended for this site.

11- Bridgeview

- Depending on parking needs in the future, consider developing a drop off/turn around area at this site with additional parking being available at the Middle Fork Trailhead. If a drop off area is developed, develop a trail from the Bridgeview site to the Middle Fork Trailhead.

10 - Riverbend

- Construct a kiosk and sign this site as a boating access point and day-use site.
- Also consider adding a toilet based on future use and funding availability.

9 – Russian Butte View

- Construct a sign that identifies this site as a river access point and posts any rules and regulations.

8 – Granite Creek

- Monitor use levels to determine the need for additional parking. If additional parking is needed, determine the feasibility of acquiring land from willing sellers for parking. A new parking area could also be used by hikers.
- Depending on use levels, add a seasonal toilet to this site
- Add a kiosk that posts the rules and regulations, interpretation elements, and the river access map.

7 – Mine Creek

- Preserve existing parking and in the future develop additional parking for up to twenty-five sites.
- Replace user-built bridge with a more permanent bridge at the downstream access point. Formalize a trail along the old road from the parking entrance to the new loop trail.
- Construct a kiosk that posts the rules and regulations, interpretation elements, and the river access map.
- Add a couple of picnic tables.

6 – Tanner Road End

- No development improvements are recommended for this site.

5 – Tanner Landing

This site is currently undeveloped. Several design alternatives were developed for this site through working with the University of Washington's class. These alternatives were further refined by the planning team. Since development of this site will likely take several years to complete, the implementation was broken into phases. Below is a brief summary of the developed elements of the preferred alternative. In addition, all alternatives include restoring the site by removing scotch-broom and planting native vegetation.

Phase I – Minimal Whitewater Boating Access Development

- Acquire an easement from private property
- Develop an access road to the southeast corner of the property via this private property.
- Develop a river access point on the southeast side of the property including a trail to the river, twenty spots for parking, compost toilet, covered area, and kiosk (including interpretation elements, river access map, and rules/regulations).

Phase II – Enhanced Whitewater Boating Access Development

- All elements of Phase I
- Develop an access road alongside the Snoqualmie River trail to the northwest area of the property
- Develop a northwest river access point including twenty spots for parking (about half with trailer capacity), compost toilet, covered area, and kiosk (including interpretation elements, river access map, and rules/regulations).

4 – Blue Hole

- Formalize a trail directly to the river from the parking area.

3 - Old School Site

- Formalize a trail directly to the river from the parking area

2 – Old Norman Bridge Site

- Formalize a trail leading from the approach road to the old bridge site.

1 – Meadowbrook Bridge

- Investigate the possibility of purchasing this site from Weyerhaeuser to ensure that it remains open for public use.

Interpretation and Education

As part of the planning process, a river access map was also prepared and will be distributed via: (1) printed brochures, (2) downloadable via American Whitewater's website, and (3) signs posted at key sites. The map and interpretative elements will be posted at kiosks at the Granite Creek, Mine Creek, and Tanner Landing river access sites. In addition, it is recommended that the map be posted at the Middle Fork Trailhead.

Next Steps and Implementation

The planning committee intends to share this plan with paddling groups, environmental groups, other user groups, and agency managers to get their input on the recommendations and next steps. As the planning effort moves more into a design phase and as more input is received, it is anticipated that the final plans will also change. Depending on what the changes in the future are, this concept plan may be updated in the future.

Implementation of the recommendations found in this report will be completed through seeking grants for funds and through volunteer labor. Funding is already available from King County to implement the Phase I recommendations for the Tanner Landing site. It is anticipated that this will be completed by 2006. Maintenance of these sites will be carried out by the land managing agency with assistance from stewardship groups like American Whitewater and Mountains to Sound Greenway.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Who uses the river access sites?*

Currently, the access sites are used by boaters including canoers, kayakers, and rafters. Other recreationists also use these sites for family orientated day-use activities including picnicking, swimming, and fishing.

2. *Who will to pay for river access improvements?*

This concept plan presents recommendations for river access improvements for a number of sites. Implementation of these recommendations will come after funding is secured through grants and donations. A list of potential funding sources is located in Appendix III. The work will also be accomplished through the use of volunteers.

3. *Who manages the area?*

There are twelve river access sites discussed in this concept plan and three different agencies that manage the various sites. These agencies are the United States Forest Service (USFS), Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and King County. In addition to these public agencies, non-profit agencies including American Whitewater and its affiliates (Mountaineers, Paddle Trails Canoe Club, University Kayak Club, and Washington Kayak Club); and Mountains to Sound Greenway also help manage some of these sites. A list of key contacts for each site is located in Appendix II.

4. *Will there be any fees to use these sites?*

Currently there are no special fees to use these sites. A Northwest Forest Pass is required for the Middle Fork Trailhead although boat launching is currently discouraged at this site and not recommended as part of this document. Land-use agencies are however facing continued cuts to operations and maintenance budgets that will need to be addressed. One possibility proposed by American Whitewater is the development of co-management agreements where donations and volunteer labor can be utilized to address operations and maintenance needs.

5. *Where can I go to learn more about white water recreation and safety?*

The interpretation and education chapter of this report contains some information on whitewater recreation and safety. In addition, American Whitewater's webpage is an excellent resource on this subject – www.americanwhitewater.org.

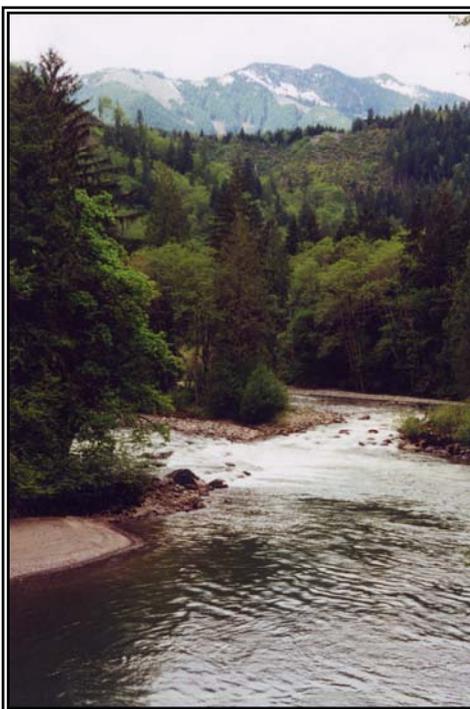
6. *How can I get involved in helping to improve river access for the Midfork?*

Volunteers are a valuable resource in helping to take care and improve the Midfork river valley. If you are interested in lending a hand in maintenance of the river access sites or for other volunteer opportunities in the Middle Fork, contact the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust: www.mtsgreenway.org and American Whitewater www.americanwhitewater.org.

Introduction & Background

Purpose & Overview

Initiated by American Whitewater,¹ local paddling organizations, government agencies, and other interested groups met to develop a conceptual plan to ensure the public would have dedicated access to the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River in Washington for the whitewater recreational community (canoers, rafters and kayakers). While access for whitewater recreation was the specific goal of this plan, our objective was to consider all user groups desiring contact access to the water including fishermen, swimmers, and families, and at the same time address resource degradation issues and conservation opportunities that were resulting from dispersed access to the river. Technical assistance was provided by the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Program. This document will help to guide land management agencies and the local community to maintain and develop river access that meets the user's needs and minimizes impact to the natural environment.



Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River

Chapter 1 provides a background of the river valley and describes the planning process. The river access site descriptions are detailed in Chapter 2 including recommendations for future action. Chapter 3 describes Interpretation and Education opportunities and includes guidelines for paddlers on river etiquette and safety. The challenges of operation and management are described in chapter 4 as well as the funding opportunities that are essential to ensure the plan is implemented and managed on an on-going basis.

The Midfork of the Snoqualmie River

The Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River drains the Cascades Mountains before dropping onto a forested alluvial river valley near the confluence of Burnboot Creek. From this point, the river flows west winding through a remote river valley that extends for 30 miles continuing through the town of North Bend, Washington and past the base of Mt. Si, until it's confluence with the North and South Forks to become the Main Snoqualmie River. This valley is one of the most significant outdoor recreation areas close to the metropolitan Seattle area. The Valley is less than an hour drive from downtown Seattle, and so is accessible to a population of over three

million people. With excellent whitewater opportunities, wilderness areas and open space, it attracts visitors from across the country. The river and its watershed are largely in public ownership and approximately 20 miles of river has been proposed for federal designation as a *Wild*

¹ American Whitewater is a national organization whose mission is to conserve and restore whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. www.americanwhitewater.org.

and Scenic River by the U.S. Forest Service. Many recreational opportunities are pursued within the boundaries of the watershed.

The Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River is a popular whitewater recreational destination and provides the closest intermediate whitewater to the greater Seattle area. The river and its tributaries include 40 miles that are suitable for paddlers over a wide range of skill levels including sections appropriate for beginners and other sections that challenge the nation's top expert paddlers.

River Access

The quality of this river as a recreational resource is significant. However, only a few informal access points exist along public land that adjoins the river. Formal public access to meet the needs of paddlers was not provided in the past. This planning process began because of the recognition that there is a need to formalize access for boating use at all sites currently being used, to ensure that they are made available in the winter and spring when the majority of the boating use occurs, and to develop sites where necessary to handle future use.

The sports of kayaking, canoeing, and rafting have greatly increased in popularity over the last decade. At the same time more shoreline private property has been developed. With higher use at the few sites provided, the potential for conflict is real. Furthermore, the access for rafting, which due to the larger and heavier craft requires wider trails and shorter walking distances from the vehicle to the river, has also diminished in the area.

Two sites were recently purchased (December 1996 and January 2003) for public boating access by King County (KC). At about the same time, KC initiated a partnership program, the Association Development and Operation Partnerships (ADOP), which allows non-profits to work with them to create or enhance facilities on KC

owned land. American Whitewater (AW) is working with KC under this program to help improve and maintain the two recent purchases that includes serving the dual conservation and recreation needs.

The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration is currently developing a plan for paving the Middle Fork Road, the primary access road to the majority of the river access sites. It is expected that the paving project will increase recreational use in the corridor. Currently parking for many of the river access sites is on the shoulder of the road. The road project could affect available parking and access to these sites. There is also an opportunity for access improvements through mitigation requirements for the paving project.

In addition, the US Forest Service has been working on the development of an Access Travel Management (ATM) Plan for federally-managed lands in the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie Valley. There could be opportunities for coordinating river access with decisions emerging from the ATM process; these include management of day-use areas and conversion of selected spur roads to trails.

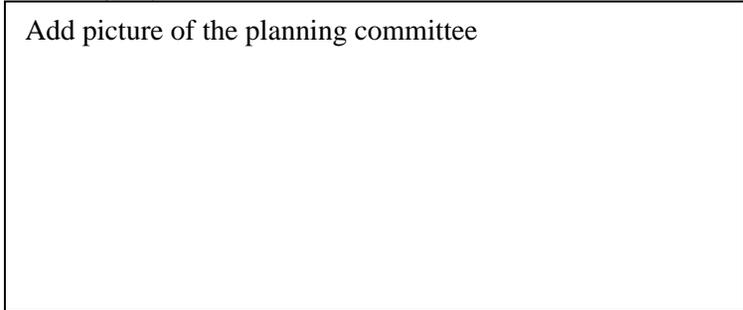
The issues surrounding current river access, the purchase of the two new river access sites, the partnership between AW and KC, and the planning process for paving the Middle Fork road, created an opportunity to take a comprehensive look at the needs and opportunities for boating access in the Middle Fork corridor.

Conceptual Planning Process

Planning efforts on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie are not new and the current discussion of river access builds on previous work that has focused on recreation and conservation needs in this river valley. The River Corridor Public Use Concept was an interagency

effort published in 1997 and funded by the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC). This concept plan consists of a series of day use sites and one overnight site, the Taylor River complex. The sites are carefully concentrated along the river and the Middle Fork River Road within the Lower and Middle sections of the Valley. All are located on previously disturbed sites or within environmentally appropriate areas based on resource suitability, site capacity, existing visitor use patterns and visitor use forecasts. During development of this plan the Mountaineers represented river users and identified preferred access sites. While river access was but one aspect of this plan, the current document seeks to focus on these areas and develop a more focused vision for implementation and stewardship.

In taking the elements of the Middle Fork Concept Plan and developing this vision for implementation of the river access sites, AW recognized the value of working with other local non-profit organizations and government agencies in addition to the local paddling clubs, to secure and develop access along the river. In the summer of 2003, AW applied for and received technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service. RTCA's primary role has been to facilitate and coordinate an open planning process actively involving key stakeholders in the effort.



A planning team of key groups and interested parties was formed that consisted of representatives from AW, University Kayak Club, Washington Kayak Club, Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Mountaineers, Middle Fork Outdoor Recreation Coalition (MidFORC), Washington Recreational River Runners (WRRR), Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), KC, the United States Forest Service (USFS), the City of North Bend, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. This group acted as the primary planning body that worked to develop this concept plan. The planning team met regularly for over a year to help create a plan for river access. Twelve sites were identified, described and recommended actions/improvements were made. These sites include: Taylor River Bridge, Bridgeview, Riverbend, Russian Butte View, Granite Creek, Mine Creek, Tanner Road End, Tanner Landing, Blue Hole, Old School Site, Old Norman Bridge, and Meadowbrook Bridge.

First, the planning team acted on the opportunity to work with the University of Washington's (UW) Landscape Architect studio class via a partnership between RTCA and UW. Over the winter quarter of 2004, the UW landscape studio class investigated design alternatives for two of the sites chosen by the planning team – the Mine Creek site and the Tanner Landing site. These sites were chosen because the complexity of the sites provided opportunities to easily develop many alternatives. The result was an array of graphic design alternatives and visual renderings of the sites. The UW class also developed a conceptual interpretation and education plan for the valley. A series of site visits and workshops were held with the stakeholders and UW class throughout the quarter.

During the spring of 2004, the planning team worked together to develop a list of additional sites to focus on next and to develop recommendations for each of these sites. In the summer an intern with RTCA, a former student with the UW studio class, developed a

river access map for the project. The map will be used as a downloadable map for AW's website, on information signs to be posted at certain sites, and as a printed brochure for wide distribution. The group also worked with the intern to further refine the alternative designs that the UW class developed. In the fall and winter, the planning group further refined the site recommendations and drafted this concept plan.



UW's landscape architecture class and the planning team discuss site design ideas.

Early On-the-Ground Improvements

Recently, a number of on-the-ground efforts have been undertaken to improve river access. These improvements were taken on sites where the opportunities existed to take early action and helped to

energize the river access planning process. In some cases, this river access plan recommends additional improvements at the same sites where this initial work was completed.

Granite Creek Site Development

In the spring of 2004, King County partnered with American Whitewater, Washington Recreational River Runners, and EarthCorps to develop a new site at Granite Creek (aka "Concrete Bridge"). This effort involved using volunteers from the paddling groups to remove an obstructive barrier and convert an old road to a 12'-wide trail to the river. This access site which was closed for a number of years, prior to purchase of the site by King County, was reopened for use immediately following these improvements. The development at Granite Creek is compatible with allowing both rafters and kayakers easy access to the river and is one of the only sites on the Midfork that allow for easy access for rafts. Funding for this project was provided by King County.

USFS & DNR Site Improvements

In the summer of 2004, another initiative was embarked on to both conserve valuable natural resources and improve river access at the same time. This project involved closing unofficial spur roads caused by illegal 4-wheel vehicle activity that led to sensitive natural resources, while at the same time developing and formalizing appropriate river access sites for boaters. Five access sites (Taylor River, Bridgeview, Riverbend, Russian Butte View, and Mine Creek) were improved by defining small informal parking areas, formalizing trails to the river, and restoring unneeded areas to natural conditions. At the Mine Creek site, a hiking loop trail was also developed by improving an abandoned campground road. This endeavor was made possible through a partnership between AW, (including local affiliate clubs), Mountains to Sound Greenway, DNR, and the USFS. Funding was provided by Tom's of Maine

through a partnership with NPS and the National Park Foundation, donations from local paddling groups (UKC, WKC, and Paddle Trails), an Osberg Family grant to Mountains to Sound Greenway, and a King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Rural Community Partnership grant.



Volunteers haul rock to improve a trail at the Mine Creek site.

Outreach

The planning committee intends to share this plan with paddling groups, environmental groups, other user groups, and agency managers. Members of the planning committee will attend paddling groups meetings to share the results of the plan with them and get their input on how to move forward with the recommendations. In addition, the land managing agencies will share this plan and its recommendations with their managers and have a dialogue on how to move forward. Presentations on the planning effort will also be made at forums, such as the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River Valley Council, that include recreation user groups, agency staff, and environmental groups to ensure a wider distribution of the plan and to solicit feedback on the recommendations and next steps.

This document is intended to be a conceptual plan based on the best information available at the time. As the planning effort moves more into a design phase and as more input is received, it is anticipated that the final plans will also change. Depending on what the changes in the future are, this concept plan may need to be updated.

River Opportunities and Access Site Descriptions

Upper Middle

The upper middle run is a class II-III run. It starts from the confluence of the Taylor River and the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie and ends at Granite Creek access, approximately 8.5 miles long. It is a scenic beginner's run that flows through floodplain forest and offers impressive views of Mount Garfield. This section of the river is popular with canoeists, but also enjoyed by kayakers and occasionally rafters. The most challenging rapids are located from Taylor River Bridge to the Pratt River confluence. Most use occurs when flows are above 1000 cfs (typically late October to mid June depending on snowpack).



View of the Upper Middle stretch from the Middle Fork Trailhead

12 - Taylor River Bridge

Overview & Use.

This site is the most upstream site on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie and it is located near the confluence of the Taylor River and the Middle Fork. It is used as a take-out for the Taylor River run, a hike-in class IV run done by area paddlers. The use is relatively low but does exist. This site may also be used as a put-in for the Upper Middle run of the Middle Fork.

Amenities.

Existing

In the summer of 2004, limited maintenance work was completed at this site to address resource degradation issues in riparian areas. Actions were taken to not preclude future management of this site for river access.

Parking. Multiple spots are open on the north side of the bridge.

Trail. There is an existing narrow walking path to the river.

Recommended Actions/ Improvements

No improvements are recommended. The existing parking and the trail should be open year-round and maintained for continued use.

Site Management & Stewardship.

The site is owned and managed by the USFS. Potential partners for stewardship are Paddle Trails, AW, and MTSG.

11 - Bridgeview

Overview & Use.

This site is used as the primary put-in site for the Upper Middle run on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie. In addition to kayaking/canoeing use, this small site is also open for day-uses such as fishing, swimming, and picnicking. This site is a short distance (~200 yards) downstream of the Middle Fork trailhead bridge. For many years the riverbank under this bridge has been used as a river access for club trips by Paddle Trails and other river user groups. But the Bridgeview site was selected as a preferred site for river access due to potential riparian resource issues associated with providing river access at the trailhead, and the inability to accommodate rafts. This downstream site can accommodate all water craft, provides convenient roadside access, and a good eddy provides much safer river access.

Amenities

Existing

In the summer of 2004, limited maintenance work was completed at this site to address resource degradation issues in riparian areas. Actions were taken to not preclude future management of sites for river access. This work was completed through a partnership between Mountains to Sound Greenway and the USFS. Funding was provided by Tom's of Maine through a partnership with NPS and the National Park Foundation and an Osberg Family grant to Mountains to Sound Greenway.

Parking. Road-side parking for 10-12 spots is available along the wide shoulder on the opposite side of the river.

Trail. There is an existing path to the river.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Parking. In conjunction with FHWA road project, develop a parking plan for this site that preserves the existing number of sites available (10-12 spots). If the number of vehicles accommodated must be

significantly reduced then explore the option of overflow parking at the west end of the existing Middle Fork trailhead with appropriate foot trail connection between the trailhead parking area and this site. In addition a drop off/turn-around area could be developed at the Bridgeview site to allow boaters to drop off their gear before parking at the overflow parking area. This would require additional discussion in partnership with the USFS.

Trail. Maintain existing path to the river.

Note: Any improvements would need to be coordinated and approved by the USFS through their planning processes. The above represents recommendations by the Planning Team, and does not necessarily mean it is approved by the USFS.

Site Management & Stewardship.

The site is owned and managed by the USFS. Potential partners for stewardship are Paddle Trails, AW, and MTSG.



Bridgeview river access site

10 – Riverbend

Overview & Use.

This site is a secondary river access point that currently does not receive a lot of use due to the existing dispersed camping use. It can be used as take-out point for those wishing to have a short run on the Upper Middle from the Taylor confluence to this point which may in the future be of interest to those staying at the campground who desire a short river experience. It can also be used as a put-in site for boaters who would like to avoid the most challenging drop on the Upper Middle which is in between Bridgeview and this site. In addition, to providing access to the river for boating, this site also is open for fishing and other day-use activities.

Amenities

Existing

In the summer of 2004, limited maintenance work was completed at this site to address resource degradation issues in riparian areas through a partnership between the USFS and Mountains to Sound Greenway. Actions were taken to not preclude future management of sites for river access. Funding was provided through an Osberg Family grant to Mountains to Sound Greenway, and a King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Rural Community Partnership grant.

Parking. There is currently parking available on the shoulder of the road for about 6 cars.

Trail. A path to the river exists.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Parking. Coordinate with FHWA, to preserve existing parking of about 6 spots once the road is paved.

Trail. Maintain the trail to the river.

Signs. Construct a kiosk and sign the site as a boating access point and a day-use site.

Other improvements. Consider adding a toilet based on future use and funding availability.

Note: Any improvements would need to be coordinated and approved by the USFS through their planning processes. The above represents recommendations by the Planning Team, and does not necessarily mean it is approved by the USFS.

Site Management & Stewardship

The site is owned and managed by the USFS. Potential partners for stewardship are Paddle Trails, AW, and MTSG.



View of the river from the Riverbend access site

9 - Russian Butte View Site

Overview & Use.

This site is an important take-out access site for the Upper Middle run.

The most challenging rapids are located in the first few miles of the run and many boaters like to take-out at this intermediate point, rather than continuing

down to Granite

Creek. Alternatively, some users prefer to

use this site as a put-in

to run the easiest section of the Upper Middle from here down to Granite Creek. The site is primarily used for boating access, but it is also open for other day-uses such as picnicking and fishing.



View of Russian Butte mountain from the access site.

Amenities.

Existing.

This site was improved in the summer/fall of 2004 through a partnership effort with AW (including local affiliate clubs), Mountains to Sound Greenway, and DNR. Paddle Trails canoe club provided volunteer resources for site restoration work. Funding was provided by Tom's of Maine through a partnership with NPS and the National Park Foundation, donations from local paddling groups (UKC, WKC, and PaddleTrails), an Osberg Family grant to Mountains to Sound Greenway, and a King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Rural Community Partnership grant. Improvements included restoration of the site by blocking the riparian area to vehicle access, vegetation restoration, formalization

of a pull-out area for parking, and improvement of the trail to the river to address safety and resource degradation issues.

Parking. Road-side parking is available for about six cars.

Trail. There is a short 3'-wide trail from the parking area to the river.

Recommended Additions/Improvements.

Parking. Maintain and formalize parking through designation of a pull-out in conjunction with the Federal Highways Project.

Trail. Continue maintenance of the existing river trail.

Sign. Add a sign to this site that identifies it as a river access point and post rules and regulations.

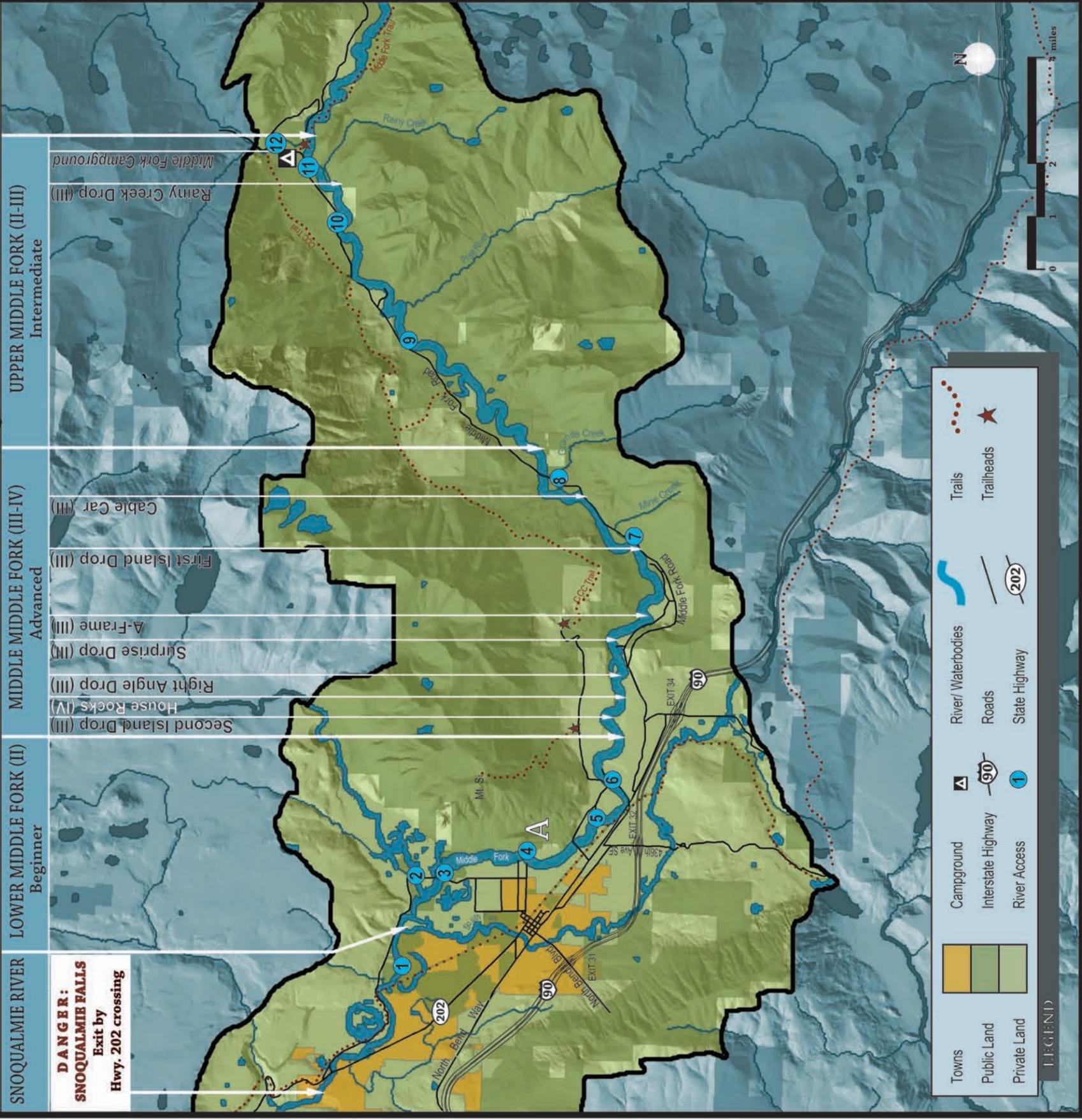
Site Manager & Stewardship Partners. This site is owned and managed by the DNR. Potential partners for stewardship are Paddle Trails, AW, and MTSG.

Middle- Middle

The middle section of the Snoqualmie River, known by the paddling community as the "Middle-Middle", is a class III-IV (moderate in difficulty) section and is the most popular run on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie. The run generally starts at the Granite Creek site and ends at the Tanner Road End site, approximately 7.1 miles long.

Once the new Tanner Landing site is developed, this site will also be used as a take-out for this run. For local paddlers, the Middle-Middle run is very popular because it can be paddled on weekday evenings during late spring, because of its easy access from the Seattle metropolitan area, as well as on weekends. The river is used whenever snowmelt from the Western Cascades provides sufficient flows and throughout the rainy season when winter storms provide ample flows for whitewater boating. In addition to the western Washington paddlers who consider this river their local run, the Middle-Middle attracts paddlers from across the country.

MIDDLE FORK OF THE SNOQUALMIE RIVER



LOWER MIDDLE FORK (II)
Beginner

MIDDLE MIDDLE FORK (III-IV)
Advanced

UPPER MIDDLE FORK (II-III)
Intermediate

Second Island Drop (III)
House Rocks (IV)
Right Angle Drop (III)
Surprise Drop (III)
A-Frame (III)
First Island Drop (III)
Cable Car (III)

Rainy Creek Drop (III)
Middle Fork Campground

WHITEWATER RECREATION GUIDE

MIDDLE FORK OF THE SNOQUALMIE RIVER

LOCATION	Middle Fork Rd. Mile-Markers	RIVER USE	GENERAL	Land Manager
LOWER MIDDLE FORK	1 Meadowbrook Bridge	Raft	Boating Skill Level	1 KC / KC
	2 Old School Bridge	Kayak/ Canoe	Beginner	2 KC / KC
	3 Old Norman Bridge			3 KC / KC
MIDDLE MIDDLE FORK	4 Blue Hole			4 KC / KC
	5 Tanner Landing Park			5 KC / DNR
	6 Tanner Road End			6 KC / DNR
	7 Millie Creek			7 KC / DNR
	8 Granite Creek			8 KC / DNR
UPPER MIDDLE FORK	9 Russian Creek			9 KC / DNR
	10 Riverbend			10 USFS/USFS
	11 Bridgeview			11 USFS/USFS
	12 Taylor River Bridge			12 USFS/USFS

KEY

- Available
- Future Availability
- Not Available

DNR: Dept. of Natural Resources
KC: King County
USFS: U.S. Forest Service

WHITEWATER ACCESS MAP

WHITEWATER ACCESS INFORMATION

8 – Granite Creek

Overview & Use.

Granite Flats is a popular put-in point located at Lake Dorothy Bridge. This is the major put-in for rafters boating the section known as the Middle-Middle and is currently the only convenient access to the river designed for rafts along the entire Middle Fork corridor. This site is also used as an alternative put-in for kayakers desiring a longer run, particularly during higher water, who would otherwise use the Mine Creek access. The site is also the easiest take-out for beginner paddlers who put in on Forest Service land upstream to run the Upper Middle. In addition, the area is a known access point for hiking to the East and Southeast side of the site. Fishing, picnicking, and other day-use activities are known to occur here too.

It is anticipated that use of this area will increase with the existence of a safer, more accessible trail, especially among whitewater rafters.

Amenities

Previously existing access was recently restored, as described in King County’s planning document for the Middle Fork Natural Area, after several years of “closure”. In the spring of 2004 a former road leading down to the river was converted to a



The Granite Creek access trail, pictured above is large enough to accommodate rafts.

12’ wide, gravel, river access trail. The site includes shoulder parking for approximately 12 cars. Construction was completed through a partnership between King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, EarthCorps, and with volunteers from Washington Recreational River Runners. Funding for the project was provided by King County.

Existing

Parking. Shoulder parking is available for about 12 cars.

Trail. A 12’-wide gravel trail connects the shoulder parking to the river.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Parking. Monitor use levels in 2004 and 2005, to determine the need for additional parking. If additional parking is needed, determine feasibility of acquiring additional land from willing sellers for parking. The site could first be used as a staging area during the construction phase of the road project and then turned into a parking lot when the road construction is complete. The parking could be used by river users and as a trailhead for hikers dependent on the development of new trail routes that have been discussed for the south side of the river and along the river between this site and Mine Creek.

Trail. Continue maintenance of the existing trail.

Restrooms. A seasonal toilet may be needed at this site depending on use.

Sign. Add a kiosk that post the rules and regulations, interpretation elements, and the river access map.

Site Management & Stewardship

King County Parks and Recreation Division owns and manages the site with stewardship assistance from Washington Recreational River Runners and American Whitewater.

7 – Mine Creek

Overview & Use.

This site is the primary put-in for kayakers on the popular after work run known to paddlers as the “Middle-Middle”. The Granite Creek Access upstream at the Dorothy Bridge also serves as an alternative put-in for this section, but the Mine Creek access is popular because its starts just above the best rapids on the run which is of interest to those trying to get in a quick evening run. The walk-in access makes this a useful site for those with kayaks or canoes, but those with larger rafts use the access upstream at Granite Creek. This site actually has two river access points. While more experienced paddlers put-in at the pool at the base of Island Drop (out of convenience), less experienced paddlers arriving from runs starting further upstream prefer to take-out above Island Drop rapid (class III) in the old campground. The site therefore provides both important put-in and take-out access and on most days that the river is at an ideal flow for boating (1000-4000 cfs) is the busiest river access along the Middle Fork road.



Kayakers stop to play at the popular island creek wave

In addition to boating use, this site is a popular day-use site for (limited) hiking, fishing, swimming, picnicking, and family-oriented day use.

Amenities

Existing

In the summer/fall of 2004, work was done to improve this site. Recent work includes defining and improving the trails at both access points and the short hiking loop at the old campground. This work was completed through a partnership effort involving work crews and volunteers from AW (and local affiliate clubs), Mountains to Sound Greenway, and DNR. Funding was provided by Tom’s of Maine through a partnership with NPS and the National Park Foundation, donations from local paddling groups (UKC, WKC, and PaddleTrails), an Osberg Family grant to Mountains to Sound Greenway, and a King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Rural Community Partnership grant. Improvements included restoration of the site by vegetation restoration and improvement of the trail to the river to address safety and resource degradation issues.

Parking. Informal pullouts along the north side of the road here typically accommodate 6-8 cars. Parking for up to approximately 4 cars is available at the gate for the old Mine Creek Campground.

Trails. There are existing paths to the river from both of the access points. In addition, there is a short hiking loop in the interior part of the site near the old campground.

Restrooms. There are two existing restrooms that are in a degraded condition.



Paddlers making their way to the river.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Parking. Coordinate with FHWA, to preserve parking once the Midfork road is paved. In the future, additional parking up to 25 sites may also be provided somewhere within the old campground site or along side the road.

Trails. Maintain existing trails to the river. Replace user-built bridge with a more permanent bridge at the downstream access point. Formalize a trail along the old road from the parking entrance to the new loop trail.

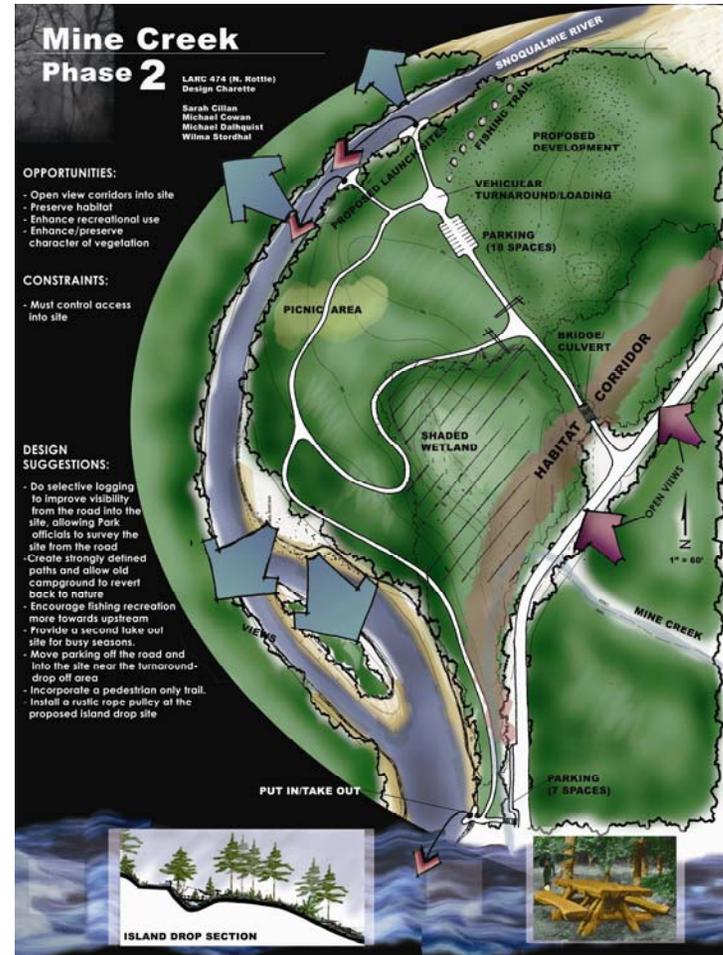
Restrooms. Upgrade the restrooms

Signs. Add a kiosk that posts the rules and regulations, interpretation elements, and the river access map.

Picnic Tables. Add a couple of picnic tables to enhance the day-use experience.

Site Management & Stewardship

The site is owned and managed by the DNR. Potential partners for stewardship are Washington Kayak Club, AW, and MTSG.



The above design concept was produced by the UW studio class. It generally represents the planning groups recommendations for the Mine Creek site. One change that has been made since these designs were developed is the parking area would be located near the road, not in the interior portion of the site.

6- Tanner Road End

Overview & Use.

This site continues to be an important access point on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River. It is currently the take-out for the Middle-Middle run that begins at Granite Creek or Mine Creek and ends at this site. This is also the put-in access for a popular beginner training run known as the Lower-Middle or Club Stretch. The access is used by all whitewater craft including kayaks, canoes, and rafts. This site is on an old King County Road right-of-way, approximately 60' wide.

Development of the new site, Tanner Landing, located about 0.8 miles downstream will relieve pressure from this Tanner Road site by providing an additional site and one with improved access and facilities. Maintenance of this existing point is important to paddlers who enjoy the Club Stretch—some of the best rapids and sections heavily utilized for beginner instruction are between this access and Tanner Landing.

Amenities

Existing

Parking. Tanner Road is within a 60' right-of-way with the pavement extending 24' wide. Gravel shoulders are 12-15' wide on the east and 9-10' wide on the west providing safe non muddy parking off the roadway for more than 20 cars over a 1/10 mile stretch of road. The area right by the trail is used as a load/unload zone.

Trails. 150' long and 27' wide trail/old road bed exists from the road to the river. The trail is now grassed over. A locked steel gate prevents cars from traveling on this old road bed/trail.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

This site should continue to remain open and be maintained in the future.

Site Management & Stewardship

This site is owned and managed by King County Roads. A letter from Linda Dougherty, Director of King County Roads (5/28/04) states that the county has no plans to close access via this right-of-way, and that pursuant to RCW 36.87.130, the right-of-way can not be vacated. American Whitewater and affiliate clubs that include Washington Kayak Club, Paddle Trails Canoe Club, University Kayak Club, and Washington Recreational River Users can work with King County to maintain the site. King County could assist by providing an effective means of communication between the paddling community and local property owners so that any potential problems can be quickly and efficiently addressed. A local steward could also be identified to help address these issues.



Parking along side the road at the Tanner Road End site on a busy day.

5- Tanner Landing

Overview & Use.

Tanner Landing was purchased by King County in spring 2003 for its conservation potential and for river access. This site will serve as a take-out for the Middle-Middle and also as a put-in for a beginner-training run known as the “Club Stretch” or Lower Middle. This site is 40.8 acres, and is currently undeveloped; it was most recently used for cattle grazing. In the short term, King County intends to develop this site with a focus on access for kayaking, canoeing, and rafting. Once developed, it is expected that much of the use of the Tanner Road End site as a take-out for the Middle-Middle will shift to this site. The site will also be open for family-oriented day-use and fishing purposes.

This site provides nearly a mile of low bank access along the south side of the river and adjacent to the Snoqualmie Valley Trail. It retains some large second-growth trees along the river but the field is dominated by invasive species and has significant restoration and conservation potential. Future improvements to serve both recreation and restoration needs could really enhance the experience of other recreation users and the general public, particularly the community of North Bend. It is adjacent to the Snoqualmie Valley Trail, which is a popular hiking and bicycling trail. Given all of the potential opportunities and funding constraints, the development of this site will be implemented in phases. King County is committed to completing the first ‘phase’ of the project by 2006. Future phases will depend on partnerships, funding, and land acquisition negotiation processes.

Amenities

Existing

None. This site is currently undeveloped and is occasionally used as a walk-in access site to the river.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Phase I- Minimal Whitewater Boating Access Development

Alternative A

- SE access road via the easement across private property
- SE access point
 - Trail to the river
 - 20 spots for parking
 - Compost toilet
 - Covered area
 - Signs

Alternative B

- Access road along the Snoqualmie Valley trail that would parallel the trail for most of the property. A 5’ separation would be available between the trail and the road.
- SE Access Point
 - Trail to the river
 - 20 spots for parking
 - Compost toilet
 - Covered area
 - Signs

Phase II – Enhanced Whitewater Boating Access Development

Alternative A

- Everything in Phase I – Alternative A
- NW access road along side the trail
 - 20 spots for parking, about half with trailer capacity
 - Compost toilet
 - Covered Area
 - Signs

Alternative B

- Everything in Phase I – Alternative B
- NW access road along side the trail
 - 20 spots for parking, about half with trailer capacity

- Compost toilet
- Covered Area
- Signs

Alternative A is the preferred alternative in both phases. However, this option would require obtaining an easement. If an easement can not be obtained, then the group would look at alternative B. It is important that raft use in particular be carefully considered for this site. While the access at Granite Creek provides an important put-in, the rafting community has not had an adequate take-out since changes in ownership and management of property along Tanner Road. Due to the size and weight of their craft, rafters have needs that are unique from those of kayakers.



View of the river from the Tanner Landing site.

Conservation Efforts

In addition, to providing river access at this site, there is a need and opportunity for restoring the site. Currently much of the site is

covered with scotch-broom. The seed bank of scotch-broom remains viable for up to 80 years. An effective way to get rid of the seed bank is to deprive it of the light it needs to survive. To accomplish this, the scotch-broom will be removed and the seed bank underneath will be relocated into berms. The berms will then be covered with topsoil and planted with native vegetation.

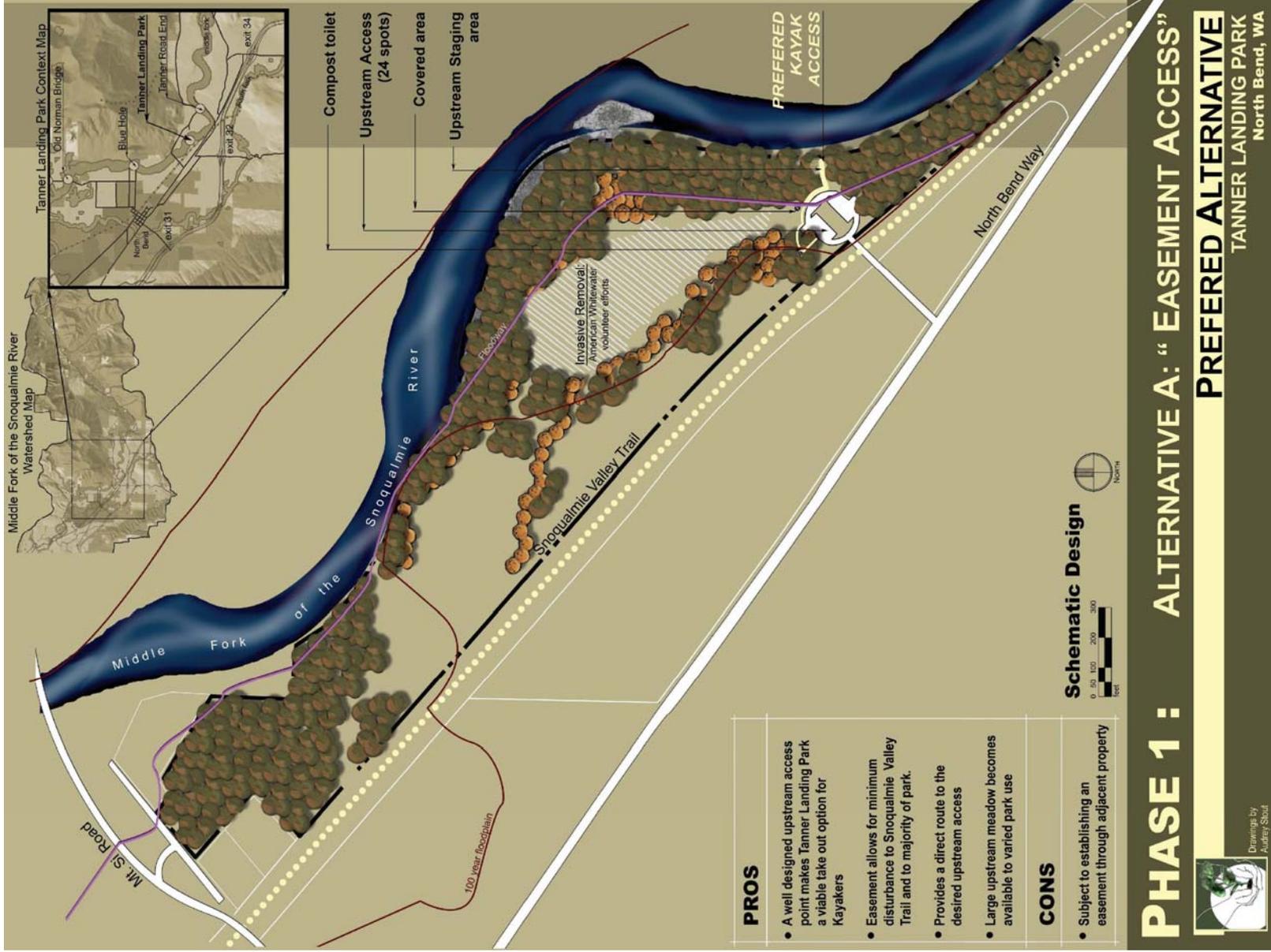
King County Roads Division is planning on selecting the Tanner Landing site as their mitigation site for the Mt. Si bridge project. This would benefit all groups involved including the King County Roads Division, King County Parks, and other partners. The mitigation effort will involve removing the scotch-broom, creating berms for the seed banks, and replanting native trees and vegetation. Volunteer groups including American Whitewater are also interested in helping to restore this site.

Site Management & Stewardship

King County Parks owns and manages this site. King County has entered into a partnership agreement with American Whitewater under their new Association Development and Operation Partnerships (ADOP) Program. American Whitewater will help with stewardship and maintenance of this site.

Lower Middle

The Lower Middle is a class II run that starts at the Tanner Road End and ends at the Meadowbrook Bridge site. This run can be further broken into two runs: the first run is the Club Stretch which is a class II run that starts at Tanner Road End and ends at the Old Norman Bridge site and the second which is a scenic class I run through the Three Forks Natural Area that starts at Old Norman Bridge site and ends at the Meadowbrook Bridge. Paddlers must be aware of log hazards in this section. Both runs are popular with canoeists, as well as kayakers and rafters.

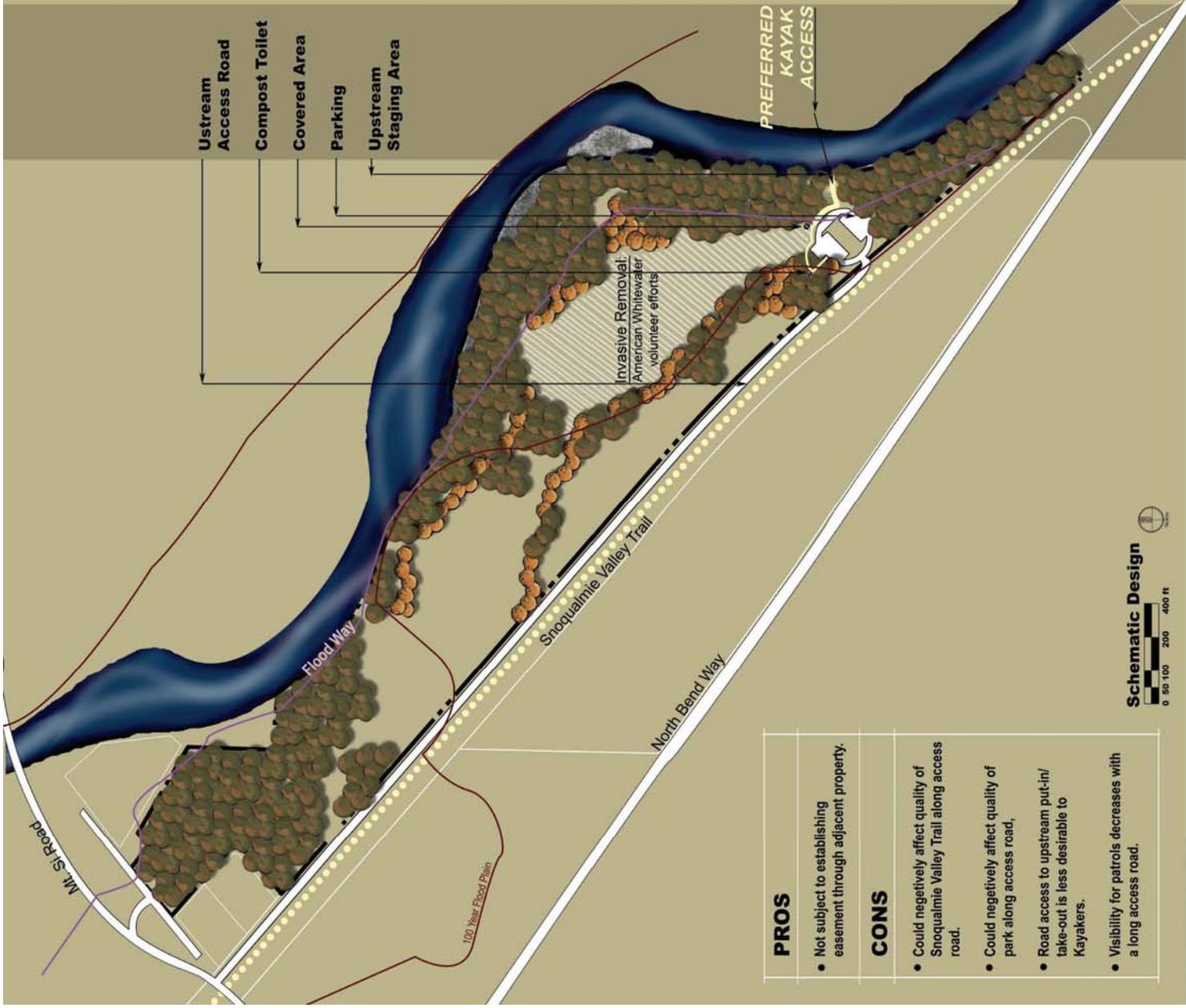


PROS

- A well designed upstream access point makes Tanner Landing Park a viable take out option for Kayakers
- Easement allows for minimum disturbance to Snoqualmie Valley Trail and to majority of park.
- Provides a direct route to the desired upstream access
- Large upstream meadow becomes available to varied park use

CONS

- Subject to establishing an easement through adjacent property



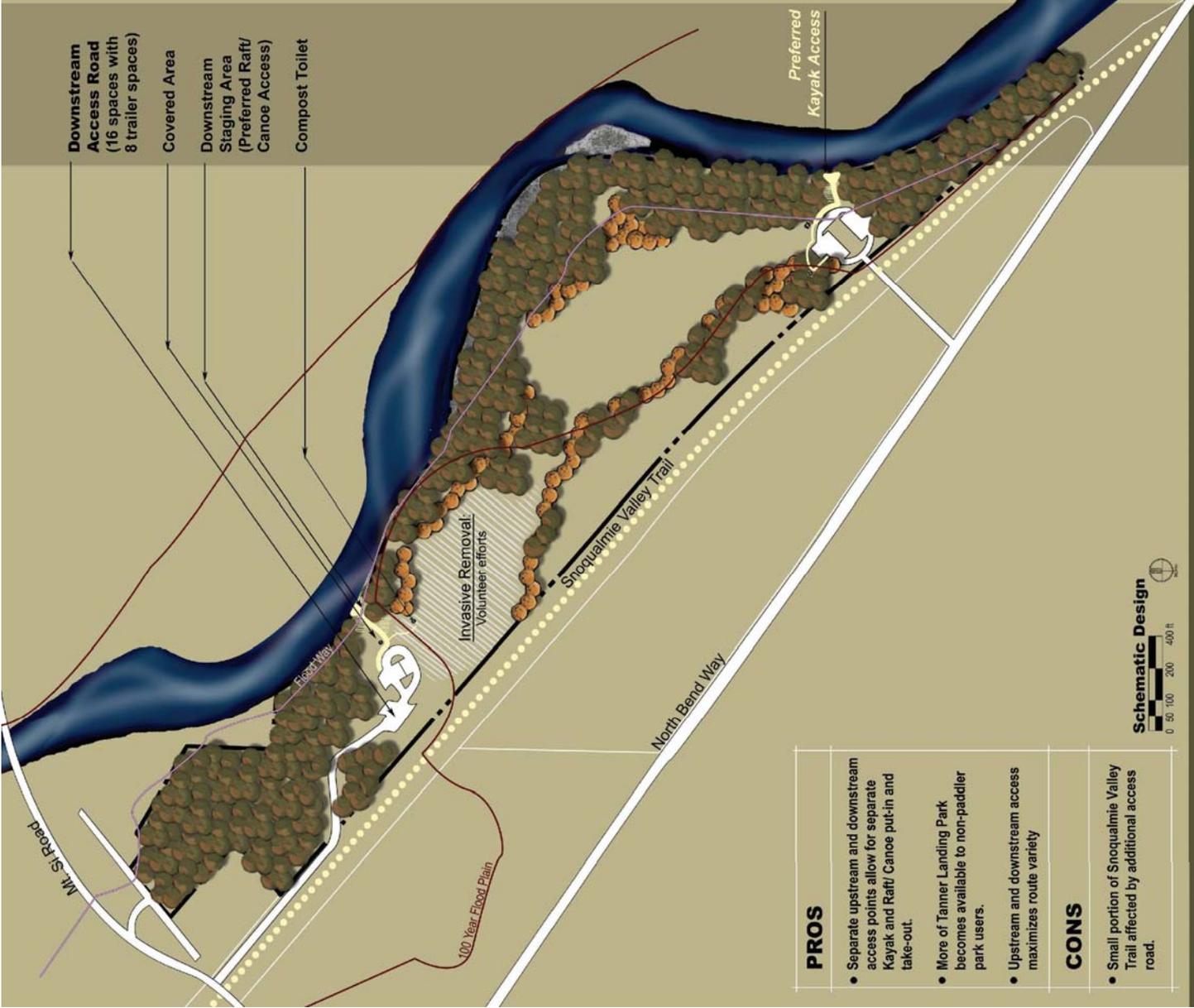
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not subject to establishing easement through adjacent property.
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could negatively affect quality of Snoqualmie Valley Trail along access road. • Could negatively affect quality of park along access road, • Road access to upstream put-in/take-out is less desirable to Kayakers. • Visibility for patrols decreases with a long access road.

PHASE I: ALTERNATIVE B: TRAIL-SIDE ACCESS



Drawings by
Audrey Stout

TANNER LANDING PARK
North Bend, WA



- PROS**
- Separate upstream and downstream access points allow for separate Kayak and Raft/ Canoe put-in and take-out.
 - More of Tanner Landing Park becomes available to non-paddler park users.
 - Upstream and downstream access maximizes route variety
- CONS**
- Small portion of Snoqualmie Valley Trail affected by additional access road.

PHASE II:

BASED ON ALTERNATIVE A: "EASEMENT ACCESS"

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

TANNER LANDING PARK
North Bend, WA

Drawn by
Audrey Skell



4 – Blue Hole

Overview & Use.

This site is used by paddlers (canoes and kayaks) who put-in at Tanner Road to paddle the Lower Middle or “Club Stretch”. The site represents a natural break in the character of the whitewater as the headwall rapid at this site is the last significant class II rapid before Snoqualmie Falls. It is, therefore, also used as a put-in for those desiring a more leisurely trip downstream through the Three Forks Natural Area. This site is also open for other day-use activities such as swimming and fishing.

Amenities

Existing

Parking. Parking at the end of road for approximately 5 cars.

Trails. Those who wish to access the river must scramble around a gate following a poorly designed user-built trail to the dike maintained by King County. A trail follows the dike for about 100 yards along the river to a site providing convenient access to the water.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Establish the site as an official river access point for paddlers and continue maintenance of the site.

Parking. Parking area should remain open year around to serve winter users.

Trail. Formalize a trail directly to the river from the parking area that is designed for walk-in access to the site.

Site Management & Stewardship

King County owns and manages this site.

3- Old School Site

Overview & Use.

The Old School Site is one of the central public access points proposed in the 2000 Adopted Three Forks Master Plan. There are designs for a 20 stall gravel parking lot, a bike station, a mile loop trail to the gravel beach at the confluence with the Middle Fork, interpretive elements, and a seasonal restroom. Direct river access from the parking area to the NF Snoqualmie for boaters was not included in the original draft of the plan for this site. The parking area is currently overgrown by blackberries. This site is used by advanced kayakers. It is the take-out for the “Ernie’s Canyon” run of the NF of the Snoqualmie, one of the premier steep creeks in the United States after heavy rain events. This site, and in particular the beach downstream at the confluence, is also used by fishermen, swimmers, and family outings.

Amenities

Existing

Parking. Parking is available through an informal gravel pull-out with room for 7 cars on the corner of 428th Ave SE and SE Reinig Road.

Trails. There are no existing trails. Paddlers currently walk along the road about 100 yards and access the river on the downstream side of the bridge.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Establish the site as one of three official river access points for paddlers in the Three Forks area.

Parking. Parking area should remain open year around to serve winter users.

Trails. Formalize a trail directly to the river from the parking area.

Site Management & Stewardship

This site is owned and managed by King County Parks.

2- Old Norman Bridge

Overview & Use.

This site is used by kayakers, rafters, and canoeists as the take-out for the Lower Middle (“Club Stretch”), a popular beginner and training run. Members of the United States Wildwater Team frequently use this take-out for training runs and it’s the take-out for the annual MF Snoqualmie downriver race that is part of the Northwest Cup whitewater racing Series. This site is also used as a put-in for a class I easy stretch as this spot marks the difference between the class II character upstream and the flatwater downstream of the bridge. This site is open for day-use activities including fishing and day use; the site provides a great view of Mt. Si. In the future there are plans to link this site to the Little Si trail.

This is the historic site of an old wood truss bridge, Old Norman Bridge. The bridge was removed because of its deteriorated condition in the fall of 2004. The site offers stunning views of Mt. Si and several parcels of the King County Three Forks area property. One of the parcels consists of an open space meadow recently re-vegetated by King County.

Amenities

Existing

Parking. Parking is available via the old approach road to the old bridge site which is paved and includes room for approximately 8 cars.

Trails. Following removal of the bridge the site was graded to create an ideal access point for recreational boaters, but the trail remains undefined.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Establish the site as one of three official river access points for paddlers in the Three Forks area as described in the Three Forks Master Plan. With the removal of the bridge, river access should be

formalized, improved, and serve as an interpretive center for the historic bridge and views of Mt. Si.

Trail. A trail leading from the approach road to the old bridge site and to the water should be formalized and restoration activities for the river bank should be designed to incorporate river access.

Site Management & Stewardship

King County Roads owns and manages this site.



View of Mt. Si from the Old Norman Bridge View site.

1 - Meadowbrook Bridge Site

Overview & Use. This site has an attractive sandy beach and is close to the Reing Road. The property is owned by Weyerhaeuser and is adjacent to King County's Three Forks Natural Area. This site is included in the 20 acre area of the Three Forks Natural Area that will be transferred to the City of Snoqualmie in the near future.

The site is used by paddlers who like an easy scenic flatwater stretch. In addition, the site is used for other day-use activities including fishing, swimming, and picnicking.

Amenities

Existing

Parking. There is a gravel pull-off area for parking with room for about 8 cars.

Trails. An old road from the parking area to the sandy beach and river eddy, approximately 50 feet long, is used as both a trail and emergency access to the river.

Recommended Actions/Improvements

Establish the site as one of the three official sites for paddlers in the Three Forks Area.

Parking. Parking area should remain open year-round for winter use.

Other. Consider purchasing this site from Weyerhaeuser to ensure that it remains open for public use.

Site Management & Stewardship

Weyerhaeuser owns this site. King County helps manage and maintain the site.



Meadowbrook Bridge site

**Midfork River Access Sites
Summary Table**

Site Name	Location & Ownership	Primary /Secondary Access Point	Suitable Activities						Recommendations
			Boat	Hike	Bike	Picnic	Fish	Swim	
Taylor River Bridge	USFS site RM 65	Secondary	Upper Reach Taylor Creek run: take-out canoes, kayaks						No improvements are recommended. The existing parking and the trail should be open year-round and maintained for continued use.
Bridgeview	USFS site RM 64.8	Primary	Upper Reach canoes, kayaks, some rafting			Yes	Yes	Yes	Maintain the trail for pedestrian access. Maintain existing parking – approximately 10-12 spots. Develop a drop off area.
Riverbend	USFS site RM 63.0	Secondary	Upper Reach canoes, kayaks			Yes	Yes		Maintain trail for pedestrian access to the river. Maintain existing parking area – about 6 spots. Develop a kiosk with regulation and/or interpretation information. Consider adding a seasonal toilet.
Russian Butte View	DNR site RM 60.5	Primary	Upper Reach canoes, kayaks, rafting			Yes	Yes		Improve and maintain the existing 3' wide trail for day-use to the river. Maintain and formalize parking – approximately 6 spots. Provide regulation signage.
Granite Creek	King County RM 56.5	Primary	Upper Reach: take-out Middle Reach: put-in canoes, kayaks, rafting	Yes (in area east of this site)		Yes	Yes		Maintain existing new 12'-wide trail. Maintain existing parking - 12 spots. Additional parking may be needed in the future for this site depending on use. If additional parking is needed, determine the feasibility of acquiring land from willing sellers. The parking area could first be used as a staging area for the FHWA road project. A seasonal toilet may also be needed. Add a kiosk that posts the rules and regulations, interpretation elements, and the river access map.
Mine Creek	DNR RM 54.5	Primary	Middle Reach canoes, kayaks	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes-popular spot	This site has two access points. Improvements include maintaining trails to the river at both sites and the loop trail at the first site. It also includes defining a trail from the parking area at the upstream site to the existing loop trail. The downstream site includes improving/formalizing a bridge over the creek. Repair the restrooms at the first site. Maintain and develop parking at both sites – up to 25 parking sites at the first site and 6- 8 at the second site. Develop a drop-off and turnaround area at the downstream site to allow users to drop off gear at this site and then park upstream at the other parking area. Construct a kiosk that posts the rules and regulations, interpretation elements, and the river access map.

Site Name	Location & Ownership	Primary /Secondary Access Point	Suitable Activities						Recommendations
			Boat	Hike	Bike	Picnic	Fish	Swim	
Tanner Road End	King County RM 49.4	Secondary	Middle Reach: take-out Lower Reach: put-in canoes, kayaks, rafts				Yes		Maintain this site as a formal river access site. Maintain parking for approximately 20 cars. No improvements are recommended at this time.
Tanner Landing	King County RM 48.4	Primary	Middle Reach: take-out Lower Reach: put-in canoes, kayaks, rafts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Open this site and develop an access road, parking area, and trail to the river. A kiosk with interpretive elements, the river access map, and rules and regulations is also recommended. An easement is needed to construct the access road. In the future, other developments could include creating an access point on the northwest end of the property, a compost toilet, and covered staging area. In addition the property adjacent to the site could be purchased which would allow better road access and other opportunities for development. Conservation efforts to control the invasive species are also recommended. Several alternatives are currently being considered for this site.
Blue Hole	King County RM 46.9	Secondary	Lower Reach canoes, kayaks,				Yes	Yes – popular spot	Establish this site as a formal river access site. Leave parking area open year-round. Formalize and improve a trail directly to the river from the parking area.
Three Forks – Old School Site	King County RM 48.6	Secondary	Take out for Ernie’s Canyon run of the North Fork kayaks	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes – popular spot	Establish this site as a formal river access site. Leave parking area open year-round. Formalize and improve a trail directly to the river from the parking area.
Three Forks- Old Norman Bridge	King County RM 45.3	Primary	Lower Reach canoes, kayaks, rafts	Future use expected			Yes	Yes	Establish this site as a formal river access site. Formalize and improve river access.
Three Forks- Meadowbrook Bridge	Weyerhaeuser RM 42.7	Secondary	Lower Reach			Yes	Yes	Yes – popular spot	Formalize this site as one of the river access sites. The parking area should remain open year-round. Consider purchasing this site from Weyerhaeuser to ensure that it remains open to the public from river access.

Interpretation Opportunities

Proposed Interpretation Components

A river access map was developed as part of this planning process. The map was developed as a way to promote the river and its boating resources, directional/navigation purposes, and to encourage personal safety and stewardship of the river. The map will be distributed via a number of methods: (1) signs at selected river access sites, (2) printed brochures, and (3) the American Whitewater website.

Signs are recommended for placement at key access sites including: Granite Creek, Mine Creek, and Tanner Landing. A sign will also be placed at the Middle Fork Trailhead. This site is not a river access site, but is an important and well-used trailhead along the Midfork River.

The key components of the river access map include:

- Map of the Midfork river
- Access Site Table including site name, manager, and type of use (i.e. raft, kayak, etc.)
- List of class III/IV rapids, and
- Interpretation and education information on river etiquette, safety, and regulations.

The river etiquette, safety, and regulation information used in the map are summarized below.

Boating Etiquette:

- Be respectful and helpful towards others.
- Be mindful of the time you are spending putting in, taking out, and playing, especially when others are waiting.

- Allow enough space upstream and downstream between you and other paddlers in order to avoid collisions
- The upstream craft always has the right of way.
- When exiting the river, avoid occupied eddies. Use caution when entering those eddies that are occupied.
- Always provide assistance to others who are in trouble

Boating Safety:

- Know your skills: You should be able to stop or reach shore before encountering danger. Do not enter a rapid unless you are sure you can run it safely.
- Be a competent swimmer.
- Wear a life jacket.
- Wear a helmet that is solid and fits correctly.
- Boat with a friend! Minimum parties include 3 people or 2 craft.
- Know the universal river signals shown below to communicate with other paddlers

Know These Signs:

- High Water: Be cautious judging water level at time of put-in as conditions may be different downstream or could change rapidly.
- Cold: Dress appropriately for the cold water. Wear a wet or dry suit if the water is less than 50 degrees. Cold water submersion can take away strength and mental agility needed for making sound decisions while on the water
- River Obstacles: Know how to read the river and its obstacles including: strainers, dams, weirs, edges, holes,

and hydraulics in order to avoid entrapment, pinning, and difficult rescues.

(for more information, visit the “Safety code of American Whitewater” at americanwhitewater.org)

Universal River Signs:

- **STOP! Potential Hazard Ahead!**
When you see this signal, pass it back to others. Wait for the “All clear” sign or scout ahead before proceeding.



- **HELP!**
Give three long blasts on a police whistle while waving a paddle, helmet, or life jacket. Assist ASAP whenever you see this signal.



- **I'M OK!**
Elbow out to side, repeatedly pat top of head. Signal is same from a boat as standing.



- **ALL CLEAR!**
Wave flat side of paddle or fist with index finger pointing up to side WITHOUT obstacle. Never point towards obstacle.



The map was designed by Audrey Stout, intern – NPS RTCA. The map was funded, in part, by a grant received by Tom's of Maine.

Other Resources for Interpretation/Education.

The University of Washington's Winter 2004 Design Studio Class led by Nancy Rottle completed an interpretation/education framework plan that is intended to serve as a basis for creating materials, facilities, and programs for interpretation of stories about the Middle Fork valley. The plan answers the following questions: (1) who will it serve?, (2) what are the themes and stories important to convey?, (3) why -for which goals- should it be created?, and (4) where should the stories be told?. The major themes explored in this plan include stewardship, natural and cultural history, and recreational and educational opportunities in the valley. The plan integrated the entire Midfork River valley including both river access sites as well as other important sites in the corridor.

Nuts and Bolts

Operation and Management

As more whitewater access is developed along the Middle Fork, operations and maintenance needs will continue to grow despite insufficient jurisdictional resources available to properly maintain improvements and preserve assets along the corridor. KC, DNR, and the USFS all have seen reductions in their operations and maintenance funding just as the recreation interest and user activity along the Middle Fork is starting to rise. This has created a maintenance gap that could grow worse as planned whitewater access improvements are implemented, with a potential explosion in jurisdictional maintenance resource needs when WA Forest Highway 29 (Lake Dorothy Rd.) is improved.

As the whitewater access plan moves forward, operations and maintenance considerations must be at the forefront of the decision-making process. While the current and future maintenance resource needs could be dramatic, there are solutions on project-specific as well as, corridor-wide basis. These solutions relate to jurisdictional resources, planning and design, partnerships and volunteers, and revenue strategies.

Jurisdictional Resources

Despite all the potential to be realized with creative operations and maintenance solutions, the overall resource shortage still remains at the jurisdictional level. Decision-makers at the state, county, and local level are struggling with these shortages system-wide and are attempting to develop funding packages and policies that will stem the tide of these universal maintenance resource gaps.

- Jurisdictional staff and stakeholders should continue to highlight, celebrate, and market the public value and recreational excitement of the Middle Fork corridor to ensure that it not only becomes a selling point for jurisdictional funding packages, but also receives an adequate share of the resources when those packages are successful.
- In addition, all jurisdictions along the corridor should consider a multi-jurisdictional consolidation of O&M resources dedicated to the Middle Fork area. KC, DNR, USFS, law enforcement, and others should develop a single operation and maintenance strategy that uses their collective resources in the most efficient manner possible. This could also be a platform for a corridor use fee or seasonal permit (see Revenue)

Planning and Design

Whether or not there is ever a return of adequate jurisdictional maintenance resources, stakeholders and jurisdictions still need to carefully plan and design the whitewater access system in a manner that limits operations and maintenance impacts as much as possible. Innovative solutions should be solicited from field staff, user groups, as well as, other whitewater recreation areas throughout the country. There are constant innovations in materials, designs, and application that can create operations and maintenance efficiencies.

The challenge facing this effort is that many of the solutions that work today (pack-it-out philosophies, casual clean-up events, composting toilets, etc.) may not be adequate as the corridor traffic dramatically increases with the growing collection of whitewater access improvements, and ultimately, a new forest highway. While whitewater recreation enthusiasts should be proud of their history of low-impact use of the Middle Fork, the planned corridor improvements will continue to draw a broader user-base that may require more of the traditional, publicly funded operation and maintenance approach.

- Planners, designers, and stakeholders of the various corridor improvements should make every effort to integrate innovative efficiencies. Decision makers should expressly demonstrate that every possible efficiency was implemented or considered.
- Planners should recognize the distinction between the short-term solutions that are adequate for the existing user impact and the long-term solutions that must address the growing maintenance impact that comes with the likely future increases in users, traffic, and activity.

Partnerships and Volunteers

Partnerships with whitewater recreation groups, environmental organizations, and other non-profits and the jurisdictional use of volunteers, in general, should continue to expand. Promoting and embracing formal, long-term relationships between the stakeholders and the Middle Fork assets is the best long-term investment jurisdictions can make. There is broad range of functions that can be performed by both individual volunteers, as well as, small and large stakeholder organizations.

The key to expanding this resource is for jurisdictions to implement a carefully planned and coordinated stakeholder participation in the maintenance of the Middle Fork corridor. Currently, maintenance relationships or events are often a result of site-specific stakeholder-initiated interest, as opposed to a multi-jurisdictional effort throughout the corridor. This whitewater access plan, along with other plans addressing environmental and other recreational needs of the Middle Fork, could provide an excellent framework for a new comprehensive approach whereby both small and large organizations, as well as, individual volunteers are more tightly integrated.

- Middle Fork jurisdictions should proactively seek and develop more stakeholder partnerships and volunteer resources and integrate those resources into a multi-jurisdictional maintenance strategy based on this whitewater access plan and other environmental and recreational plans available for the Middle Fork.

Revenue Strategies

In the wake of universal maintenance funding challenges, most jurisdictions have initiated a new focus on entrepreneurial strategies to increase maintenance resources through revenue. Sponsorships, revenue-generating programming, parking fees, user fees, and other innovations have all been key components of this new approach. While the Middle Fork clearly has a lot of untapped entrepreneurial potential, such strategies need to be carefully considered against the environmental limitations and philosophical boundaries of its users and stakeholders. A detailed entrepreneurial plan for the Middle Fork should be developed so that jurisdictions, users, and stakeholders can identify all of the revenue generating opportunities, as well as, set limitations in order to protect the unique environmental and recreational value of the corridor.

- Stakeholder and jurisdictions should come together to develop a cohesive and detailed entrepreneurial plan for the Middle Fork that leverages untapped revenue while protecting the environmental and recreational value of the corridor. Commercial guide fees, seasonal corridor permits, parking fees, sponsorships, programming, vendor relationships, and all other revenue strategies should be reviewed and considered. Revenue generated in the Middle Fork should be specifically earmarked for the corridor by the respective jurisdictions whenever possible.

The Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie is a unique whitewater recreation gem. Proper planning, coordination, creativity, stakeholder involvement, and jurisdictional diligence will ensure that the corridor's environmental and recreational value are preserved, maintained, and enhanced. This is especially important as users and activity continues to expand every day with exponential growth being ushered in the near future by the new forest highway.

Funding

Funding is critical to the success of this Boating Access Plan. There are a variety of grants available through Federal, State, and local government resources. A number of private organizations and foundations also offer grants. The primary grant sources are listed in Appendix III. In addition to these sources, as is the tradition in the Midfork Valley, volunteers and donations from small groups and individuals will be utilized to implement the recommendations developed in this plan.

Appendix I - Site Location Table

Site Name	General Description	GPS Coordinates	Legal Description	King County Parcel	River Mile	Road Mile	FHWA project	Map Locations
12 - Taylor River Bridge	At the first Taylor River Bridge on USFS land.	UTM 10 610235E 5267640N (NAD27)	T24N, R10E, Section 22	2224109001	65			
11- Bridgeview	~200 yards downstream of Middle Fork trailhead and footbridge on USFS land.	UTM 10 609816E 5266807N (NAD27)	T24N, R10E, Section 21	2124109001	64.8	11.2	Alignment 4 Station 654 ²⁰ ; ~200 yards	
10 – Riverbend	Day use site along the river on USFS land.	UTM 10 608407E 5265969N (NAD27)	T24N, R10E, Section 29	2924109001	63	10.2	Alignment 4, Station 599 ³⁰	
9- Russian Butte	A short distance downstream of the Pratt River confluence on DNR land..	UTM 10 605605E 5264300N (NAD27)	T24N, R9E, Section 36	3624099001	60.5	8.1	Alignment 4, Station 481 ²⁰	
8 – Granite Creek	Also know as the Concrete Bridge where the Lake Dorothy Road crosses the MF Snoqualmie. King County land.	UTM 10 602477E 5260858N (NAD27)	T23N, R9E, Section 10	1023099017	56.5		Alignment 4, Station 321	Kroll Map Page: Z50 Thomas Guide Map: Page 173
7 – Mine Creek	The old DNR Campground at Mine Creek which has been proposed for a family-oriented day-use site.	UTM 10 600998E 5258723N (NAD27) for access below Island Drop, UTM 10 600915E 5259172N (NAD27) for access above Island Drop	T23N, R09E, Section 16	1623099003	54.5		Alignment 4 Station 236 ³⁰ (approximate site of current trail down to put-in below Island Drop most commonly used) 243 ³⁰ (site of entrance to old Mine Creek Campground);	
6 – Tanner Road End	King County right-of-way in a residential neighborhood along Tanner Road.	UTM 10 595130E 5259052N (NAD 27)	T23N R8E Section 14	King County Road right-of-way, 60' wide and located between King County parcel 1423089149 (upstream) and 1423089159 (downstream) that was	49.4	0.45 miles up Tanner Road from North		

				the former eastern end of Mt. Si Road when it crossed the river at this location. Bridge was washed out years ago [date?]		Bend Way		
5- Tanner Landing	Recently acquired by King County Parks and upstream of the Mt. Si. Road bridge.	UTM 10 594292E 5258940N (NAD27) for upper site; alternatives exist		1423089180 (upstream parcel) and 1523089023 (downstream parcel)	48.6			
4 – Blue Hole	East end of NE 6 th St. in North Bend at the King County dike and where the river runs directly along the base of Lt. Mt. Si	UTM 10 593300E 5261076N (NAD27)	T23N R8E, Section 10	1023089222	46.9			
3 – Old School Site	Just above the confluence of the middle and north forks next to where the bridge crosses the North Fork on 428 th Avenue SE just after SE 92 nd in unincorporated King County.	UTM 10 592715E 5263720N (NAD27)	T24N R8E, Section 34	3424089027				
2 – Old Norman Bridge	A turnoff off on 428 th Avenue SE Just above the confluence of the middle and north forks, upstream and parallel to the new bridge that crosses the Middle on 428 th Avenue in unincorporated King County.	UTM 10 592741E 5263115N (NAD27)	T24N R8E, Section 34	3424089116	45.3			
1- Meadowbrooks	Just upstream of the Meadowbrook bridge at a gate along Reinig Road	UTM 10 590008E 5264509N (NAD27)	T24N R8E, Section 29	2924089019	42.7			

Appendix II - Key Contact List

Site Name	Key Contact			
	Name	Agency/Group	E-mail	Phone Number
12 - Taylor River Bridge	Steve Johnson	United States Forest Service	sljohnson@fs.fed.us	(360) 825-6585 Ext. 212
11 - Bridgeview	Steve Johnson	United States Forest Service	sljohnson@fs.fed.us	(360) 825-6585 Ext. 212
10 - Riverbend	Steve Johnson	United States Forest Service	sljohnson@fs.fed.us	(360) 825-6585 Ext. 212
9 - Russian Butte View	Jon Byerly	Department of Natural Resources	jon.byerly@wadnr.gov	(360) 490-1017
8 - Granite Creek	David Kimmett	King County Parks	david.kimmett@metrokc.gov	206-618-5660
	Tom O'Keefe	American Whitewater	okeefe@riversandcreeks.com	206-527-7947
7 - Mine Creek	Jon Byerly	Department of Natural Resources	jon.byerly@wadnr.gov	(360) 490-1017
6 - Tanner Road End	Tom Bean	King County Roads	tom.bean@metrokc.gov	206-296-8377
5 - Tanner Landing	David Kimmett	King County Parks	david.kimmett@metrokc.gov	206-618-5660
	T.J. Davis	King County Parks	tj.davis@metrokc.gov	206-263-6214
	Tom O'Keefe	American Whitewater	okeefe@riversandcreeks.com	206-527-7947
4 - Blue Hole	Tom Bean	King County Roads	tom.bean@metrokc.gov	206-296-8377
	John Koon	King County, Flood Hazard Reduction	john.koon@metrokc.gov	206-296-8062
	David Kimmett	King County Parks	david.kimmett@metrokc.gov	206-618-5660
3 - Old School Site	Tom Bean	King County Roads	tom.bean@metrokc.gov	206-296-8377
	John Koon	King County, Flood Hazard Reduction	john.koon@metrokc.gov	206-296-8062
	David Kimmett	King County Parks	david.kimmett@metrokc.gov	206-618-5660
	Robert Foxworthy	King County Parks	robert.foxworthy@metrokc.gov	206-263-6206
	Butch Lovelace	King County Parks	butch.lovelace@metrokc.gov	206-263-6267
2 - Old Norman Bridge	Tom Bean	King County Roads	tom.bean@metrokc.gov	206-296-8377
	John Koon	King County, Flood Hazard Reduction	john.koon@metrokc.gov	206-296-8062
	David Kimmett	King County Parks	david.kimmett@metrokc.gov	206-618-5660
	Robert Foxworthy	King County Parks	robert.foxworthy@metrokc.gov	206-263-6206
	Butch Lovelace	King County Parks	butch.lovelace@metrokc.gov	206-263-6267
1 - Meadowbrooks	Tom Bean	King County Roads	tom.bean@metrokc.gov	206-296-8377
	John Koon	King County, Flood Hazard Reduction	john.koon@metrokc.gov	206-296-8062
	David Kimmett	King County Parks	david.kimmett@metrokc.gov	206-618-5660
	Robert Foxworthy	King County Parks	robert.foxworthy@metrokc.gov	206-263-6206
	Butch Lovelace	King County Parks	butch.lovelace@metrokc.gov	206-263-6267

Appendix III - Funding Opportunities

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was enacted by Congress in 1964 to establish a funding source for grants to state and local governments for land acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. LWCF is federally funded but administered in each state through a governor-appointed state agency. In Washington, LWCF is administered by the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC). LWCF grants require a 50% match from state or local funds. Areas funded through LWCF assistance are required to be dedicated in perpetuity for public recreation use. Letters of intent are due in February and applications are due in March. (www.iac.wa.gov/)

EPA Environmental Education Grants

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sponsors environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. The program is managed by EPA's Office of Environmental Education and awards grants each year based on funding appropriated by Congress. Annual funding for the program ranges between \$2 and \$3 million. More than 75 percent of the grants awarded by this program receive less than \$15,000. This represents an opportunity to pursue funding for various environmental education projects (e.g., interpretive signs, exhibits, websites, brochures, etc).

State

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)

The WWRP is a grant program authorized by the Washington State legislature to support acquisition and development of outdoor recreation and conservation lands. Eligible projects include state and local parks, water access sites, trails, critical wildlife habitat, and natural areas. Grants require a 50% match. WWRP is managed by the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) (www.iac.wa.gov/). For applicants besides State Parks, letters of intent are due in March and applications are due in May.

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)

The ALEA is a grant program authorized by the Washington State legislature to provide grant-in-aid support for the purchase, improvement, or protection of aquatic lands for public purposes, and for providing and improving access to such lands. It is funded by is funded entirely by revenue generated by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from management of state-owned aquatic lands. Eligible projects include acquisition (purchase), restoration, or improvement of aquatic lands for public purposes and for providing and improving public access to aquatic lands and associated waters. Any divisions of local or state government, as well as Native American Tribes are eligible to apply if legally authorized to acquire and develop public open space, habitat, or recreation facilities. The ALEA program is managed by the IAC (www.iac.wa.gov/). Letter of intent and applications are both due in March.

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program (NOVA)

The NOVA Program is funded by the State of Washington and helps develop and manage recreation opportunities for such activities as cross-country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, hunting, fishing, sightseeing, motorcycling, and riding all-terrain and four-wheel drive vehicles. By statute, activities supported by the NOVA Program must be accessed via a "Nonhighway Road" (NHR). These are roads open to the public but not constructed with gasoline tax revenues. NHRs are found in National Forests and National Parks. Eligible projects include planning, capital improvements, maintenance and operation, and off-road vehicle (ORV) education and enforcement. Municipal subdivision, State agencies, Tribal governments, and Federal agencies are all eligible to apply. The program is managed by IAC (www.iac.wa.gov/). Letters of intent are due in September and applications are due in October.

Boating Facilities Program (BFP)

The BFP is a Washington State program used to acquire, develop, and renovate boating facilities, including launching ramps, transient moorage, and support facilities on fresh and saltwater. It is funded by a portion of the motor vehicle tax paid by boaters. Eligible projects include Acquisition, development, planning, and renovation projects including launching ramps, transient moorage, and upland support facilities. Eligible recipients are municipal subdivisions, tribal governments, and State agencies. Local and tribal government must provide at least 25% matching funds in cash or in-kind contributions. The program is managed by IAC (www.iac.wa.gov/). Letters of intent are due in March and applications are due in May.

King County

King County has a number of grant programs. For more information, see <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/grants/>.

Other

Other grant opportunities are available from various private groups, foundations and businesses. These have to be tracked and monitored from year to year for funding levels and availability. There are several web-based programs that assist people in identifying and locating these types of grant opportunities. Some of these are:

- The Red Lodge Clearinghouse (www.redlodgclearinghouse.org)
- The Environmental Grantmakers Association (www.ega.org)
- The Sonoran Institute (www.sonoran.org/)
- The Trails and Greenway Clearinghouse (www.trailsandgreenways.org/)
- American Rivers Restoring Riverfronts: A Guide to Selected Funding Sources (<http://www.americanrivers.org/riverfronttoolkit/>)
- Foundation Center's Guide to Grants (www.fdncenter.org/pnd/)