

# Chapter 15

## Corvallis Community Resource Unit

### Section One: Baseline Social and Economic Information

#### A. Community Description

##### Geographic Features

The Corvallis Community Resource Unit stretches from north of the Polk County line south of Monmouth and Independence, west to a line between Philomath and Corvallis, south to a line passing through William Finley Wildlife Refuge, and east to a line just west of Bowers Rock State Park west of Albany. Figure 43 contains a map showing this area.

##### Settlement Patterns

Joseph C. Avery platted Marysville at the junction of the Mary's River and Willamette River in 1849. Marysville became Corvallis, which is Latin for "heart of the valley." From its beginning, Corvallis was dominated by education. Corvallis College was established in 1852 and became a state school in 1885. Oregon Agricultural College became Oregon State College in 1932 and today is Oregon State University. Corvallis was a transportation hub with its presence on the Willamette River and the presence of the railroad. Until 1915, steamships ran between Portland and Corvallis. When Interstate 5 was built in the 1960s, Corvallis was bypassed by about 10 miles and missed some of the urbanization and shopping malls that have affected communities closer to the freeway.

Corvallis had a population of 45,589 in 1990 and 49,322 in 2000, an increase of 8% (Census Data, Table Five).

"I moved here 45 years ago. I had been at Camp Adair and my buddies and I liked it and came back after the War. I like the character of



Figure 43  
Map Showing the Corvallis Community Resource Unit

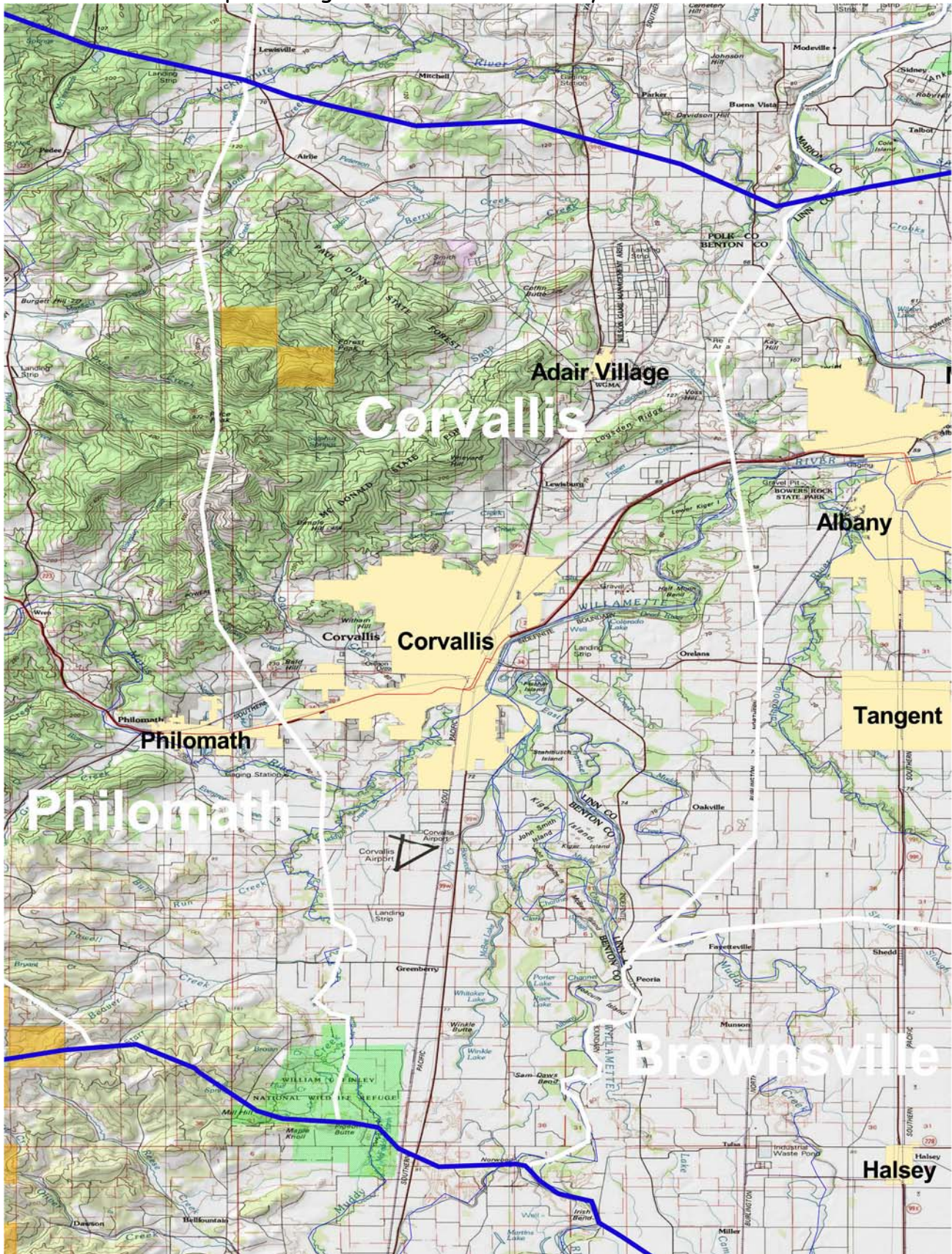




Figure 44  
Map of Corvallis Neighborhood Resource Units

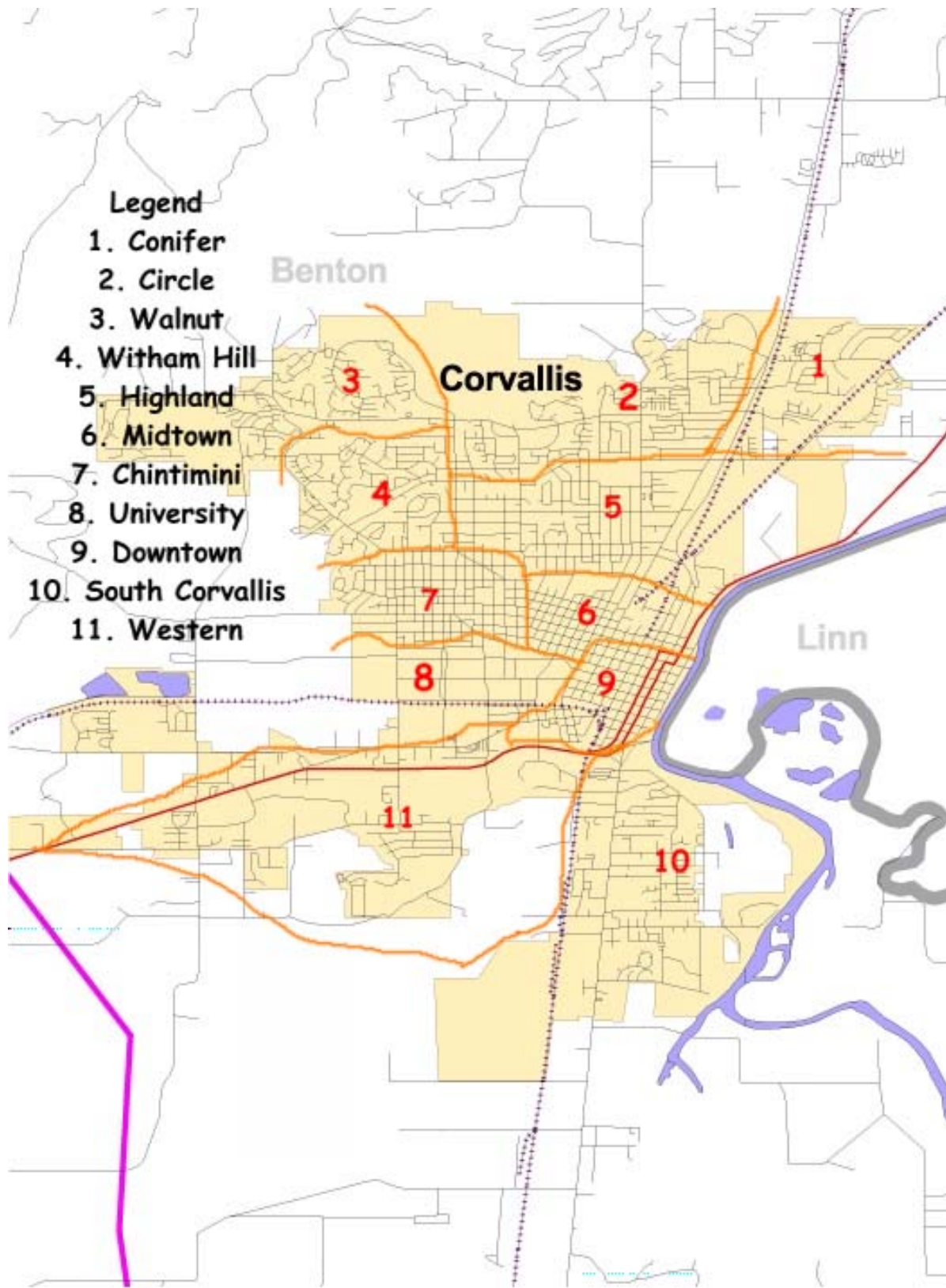
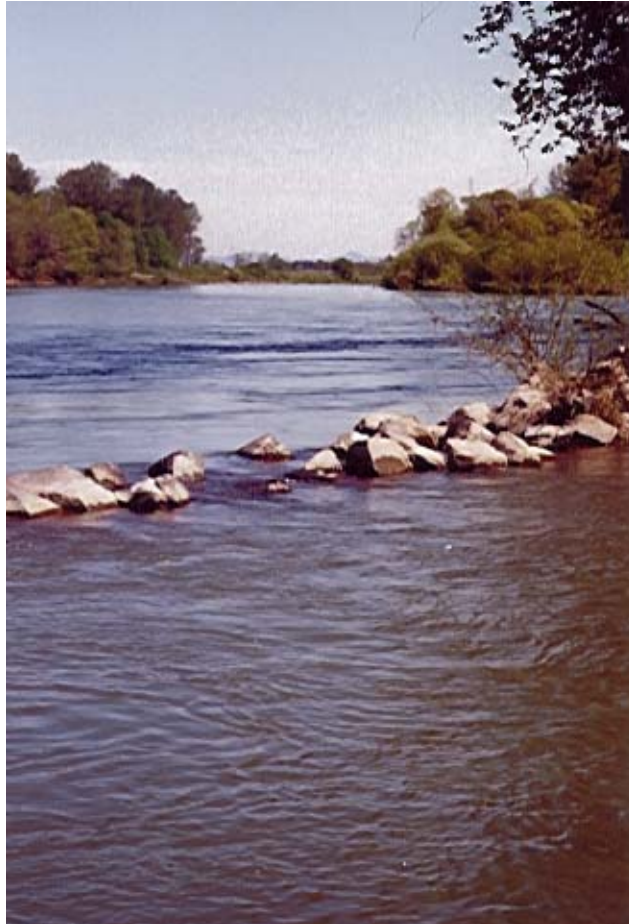


Figure 45  
The Willamette River in South Corvallis



the city. People are rational and civic minded. It's still clean and safe. Also, I'm a Beavers fan."

"When I first moved to town in 1972, Corvallis was 40,000; it's 50,000 now. This is steady growth. OSU is an attraction—the athletics, lectureships. The performing arts are very good for a land grant school. Retirement is increasing."

Corvallis greatly expanded in the 1980s and 1990s. Currently, growth is occurring to the north, south, and west, but mostly to the south, where the largest amount of vacant land is.

A recent City survey revealed that, in 1995, 47% of the people thought the city was growing too fast, while only 29% feel that way today (City Survey 2001, <http://www.ci.corvallis.or.us/cmo/casre01.html>).

Some residents said that Corvallis developed the way it did because of the presence of Oregon State University (OSU). According to some, OSU had such political control over the city and county that it dictated the kind of development that occurred. In particular, there were to be no “dinner bucket” industries. Industrial uses were not favored and residential, while quality of life considerations, and university-related businesses were preferred.

Today, retirement is driving settlement. Housing prices are so high that people with moderate incomes are not able to afford to buy homes in the community. The high quality of life is attracting retired people, reportedly Californians, who stimulate higher prices but can also afford them too.

### Neighborhood Areas

Corvallis is a tidy town of well-kept homes and yards. Sometimes neighbors pressure others to maintain their yards. For instance, one woman in northwest Corvallis did not cut her grass for a few weeks last spring. Several neighbors commented among themselves and finally someone told the woman that if she did not mow her lawn the neighbors would lodge a formal complaint with the landlord. The woman has kept her lawn mowed since that time.

The downtown neighborhood of Corvallis (Area 9, Figure 44) is faring better than many other downtowns. What is impressive about downtown Corvallis is that it still works. It is active, with busy pedestrian, bicycle and auto traffic. It is easily accessible for bikes and cars and parking is free. Lower downtown has evidence of struggling businesses—a few vacated buildings, some rundown areas, and so on. Some businesses have been there for years—a furniture store and three large auto service centers are still quite active. A few artist galleries, sporting goods, book stores, eateries and other businesses appear healthy. Through obligation bonds, the City is creating a bike path and access to the river from lower downtown. The

project had strong opposition before being approved, but already nearby businesses are improving their appearances and new stores are coming in. The residential areas of downtown are the least maintained, with more ethnic diversity, and are characterized by ranch style homes.

The Highland neighborhood (Area 5, Figure 44) has many two-story upscale homes. Most of the homes have elaborate landscaping and fences or shrubs to mark property lines. Very few campers or motor homes were observed. The neighborhood is set apart from others by busy streets and dead end roads. The eastern part of this neighborhood is dominated by apartments and duplexes and showed greater ethnic diversity. Students and working families live here.

The mid-town area (Area 6) was described as half students and half retired people. These ranch-style homes appear to have been built in the 1950s. Few fences or shrubs separate homes and there is much less landscaping. The Circle Neighborhood (Area 2) is similar to Highland but with fewer students and more retired people.

The area known as South Corvallis (Area 10) is south of Highways 20 and 24 along Highway 99W and includes the areas of Crystal Lake Drive, Alexander Avenue and Park Avenue. The Willamette River on its east side and Highway 99 circumscribe it effectively and help create a neighborhood feel. Although it has a seedy reputation, it is a beautiful area of older, modest homes with well-established vegetation. Some industrial sites dot the area, primarily along the river—tire shop, mechanic shop, and the large operation of Evanite Fiber Corporation. Willamette Park and the Corvallis Water Treatment Plant are within the neighborhood and new larger, two-story homes are being built along its south border.

Adair Village, in the north area of the CRU, has about 600 people. At one time, the area was a well-known World War II military camp, being the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest city in Oregon in its time. Its presence was a primary settlement attraction after the war, when servicemen chose to return to Oregon because they liked it or because they had married an Oregonian. Residential development is occurring at a steady rate, with fairly high-end homes, because land and housing prices are cheaper compared to Corvallis. It has no commercial services to date and is considered a suburb of Corvallis.

## Publics

The publics that are prevalent in Corvallis include university-related professionals, students, and support staff whose presence is widespread throughout the community. A thriving commercial and retail segment is important, as is a high tech economic sector. Surrounding agricultural and timber workers still use Corvallis as a service center. A large segment of the population is employed in the trade and service sector and in blue-collar jobs. Corvallis also has a large, active, outdoor and environmentally-oriented community that makes its presence known through events and political activities.

## Networks

See Section Two.

## Work Routines

From its inception, Corvallis was focused on education and OSU employment still is the number one source of jobs. High technology ranks number two because of the presence of Hewlett-Packard. The third largest segment of the economy is health services. The Good Samaritan Hospital serves a regional population and one official said that half of their employees live in town.

The City Administration reported its largest employers, as of June, 2000 as the following:

Oregon State University, education	8473
Hewlett-Packard, computer peripherals	5800
Good Samaritan Hospital, health and medical	980
Corvallis Clinic, health services	548
CH2MHill, engineering and consulting	350

Source: Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, Community Profile, 2002.

Agriculture is having a difficult time. Grass seed production is not what it used to be and observers doubt its long-term recovery. If forestry is

included in agriculture, this sector ranks fourth in the local economy. Corvallis was never a "timber town." However, the towns around it were, and Corvallis was their service center. Stores featured clothing, shoes, tools, and equipment that were oriented to the needs of loggers and mill workers. That retail and commercial element has mostly faded now.

"Mills will always be around, but not like before."

The common perception of Corvallis is one of well-educated, middle and upper middle class people, but many residents cautioned that the story goes deeper. A large class of poor and undereducated people are part of the City and "can't even own their own computers." Unemployment rates are typically low in Corvallis, as they are presently.

### Support Services

Corvallis, more than surrounding communities, is a town of fitness centers, including those catering to women, yoga centers, and martial arts studios.

Benton County Parks and Recreation Department has a reputation for being close to its citizens. It uses citizen advisory committees that are effective in hearing local concerns and translating them into budget priorities.

Health services are said to be very good in the Corvallis area. Known colloquially as "Pill Hill", Good Samaritan is recognized regionally for specializing in heart and cancer treatment. This facility grew with the community. In the 1970s, it was a very modest facility on Harrison Boulevard. Assisted care facilities are increasing in number, with a couple of new ones under construction.

The river front project in downtown Corvallis is currently under construction. The decision to proceed with the project was controversial for the city, with conflict over the amount of paving and parking versus green areas, whether trees were to be cut, and the rip-rap along the river. With many modifications, it was approved and ultimately residents expressed enthusiasm for the likely benefits.



The Benton County Historical Museum has an agreement with Benton County to house the Horner Museum OSU collection, once a suitable location can be found. Vacated downtown buildings are being explored for this purpose.

A couple of long-term residents pointed to what they said was a real strength of Corvallis—the ability to re-cycle civic buildings for new purposes. City hall was a USO building during World War II. The old clinic became Community Public Health. The old fire station became the senior center. Washington School became the Benton center of the Linn-Benton Community College. For these citizens, these changes were a sign of community health and resilience, and continuity over time that is important for any community.

Bikes are an accepted and encouraged mode of transportation in the community, with extensive bike paths and bike lanes throughout the town. Corvallis drivers are even said to be courteous.

“People have found courtesy. At the four-way stops, people take turns. Even getting out of sporting events, people take turns.”

A bond was passed recently to acquire open space.

Schools are “as good as they get” in Corvallis. They are highly valued by residents.

“When Crescent Valley High School was started, Corvallis lost something. It created a big change. It split up circles of friends that had known each other their whole life. Now ‘CHS’ [Corvallis High School] was not the only game in town. They weren’t all going through the same things anymore.”

Numerous people stated that Corvallis wants only clean industry.

“Heritage Mall in Albany was slated for here and rejected. Some people are sorry—it would have been convenient. On the other hand, downtown is still viable because of it.”

Homes are maintained, with residents talking about “pride of ownership.”

"People want to live here, it's friendly, and the standards of the community are good."

Residents also said that they have had outstanding leadership at city and county government over the years, people capable of long-range thinking. The city's work on urban growth boundaries and standards of development have been a means of managing steady growth over the last two decades.

A number of neighborhood associations are active in the city, although until recently, ties with city government have not been strong. The Planning Department is in preliminary stages of having associations map out neighborhood units and of using associations to communicate and position the department in proactive ways with citizens.

### Recreational Activities

See Section Three.

## B. Trends, Themes and Citizen Issues Related to Community Life

### Trends

The number of retirees has increased and represents a significant portion of the population and of the economy. The 2000 census reported a 14% increase in people over 65 years of age and that retired people now make up a total of 10% of the population.

Population growth has continued at a steady rate, which apparently remains a constant political and community issue as the community struggles to balance growth with livability.

### Themes

1. "There's lots of cooperation here between groups."

"The CERT state process has a "Needs and Priorities" process. You score higher if you are cooperative. I call it 'rational politeness.' There is a reason to be nice—it pays off." [City official]

2. "Environmental values are strong here. People want economic development that does not pollute."

### *Citizen Issues Related to Community Life*

#### Growth and Development

"Watch the farmlands so they don't disappear."

"The urban growth boundary keeps getting pushed out."

"Corvallis is growing too much."

"There's a big fight now about whether College Hill should be an historic district."

#### Affordable Housing

Corvallis housing prices were described as some of the highest in the state. First time home buying programs have been instituted but more needs to be done, according to residents.

"Affordable housing is a big issue."

Both the City and the School District, like much of the state, are currently undergoing severe budget contractions related to the regional recession. Program cuts are underway.

## Section Two: Communication Strategies

### A. Informal Networks and Communication

Allan Brothers Coffee, lower downtown, is active in the morning.

Peak Sports is known as a communication node for recreation interests in Corvallis.

Starker Forests offers a free forest tour of Starker Forest Inc. every Wednesday through September through the Corvallis Convention and Visitor Bureau. The purpose is to show modern forestry practices and to dispel negative public images of the timber industry.

Family Adventure Day, Tree Day 2002 is an event that features a loggers' breakfast, oldtime tree falling demonstration, horse logging demonstration, hands on forestry skills for children, and a helicopter fire demonstration. Benton and Linn county extension services sponsor the event. The contact is Fay Sallee at (541) 451-5322.

The Second Street Beanery  
Golf City Pub  
Interzone  
Nearly Normals  
Sunnyside-Up  
Sam's Station



## B. Formal Groups and Communication

Figure 45  
Organizations With Interest in Public Lands in the Corvallis Area

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>Mission</b>
Wood and Wildlife Tour, sponsored by OSU Extension, Starker Forest Products and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Rick Flecher OSU Extension (541) 766-3554	Provide foresters and wildlife professionals a forum to view and discuss research and results regarding management choices on wood and wildlife values of the forests.
Peak Sports	(541) 754-6444	Communication about outdoor recreation activities
Wheelmen Bicycle Club	P.O. Box 1373 Corvallis, OR 97339	
Benton County Parks and Recreation Department	George McAdams (541) 766-6891	
Mary's River Watershed Council	Sandra Coveny P.O. Box 1041 Corvallis, OR 97339 (541) 758-7597 <a href="mailto:sandrac@peak.org">sandrac@peak.org</a>	Watershed restoration
Soap Creek Watershed Council	Mike Dubrasich 29094 Tampico Road Corvallis, OR 97330 (541) 745-7404 <a href="mailto:soapcrwc@peak.org">soapcrwc@peak.org</a>	Watershed restoration
Greenbelt Land Trust	730 S.W. 4 <sup>th</sup> St. Corvallis, OR 97333 (541) 752-9609	Participates with City on Bald Hill Project; open space and trails. 450
Economic Development Diversification Task Force	Doug Sweetland Corvallis-Benton County Economic Development Partnership (541) 757-1507	
Park and Recreation Senior Center	Sharon Brogdanovic Senior Center Program Coordinator 2601 NW Tyler Avenue	Keen interest in Forest Service/BLM coordination

	Corvallis, OR 97330 (541) 754-1709 sharon.bogdanovic@ci.corvallis.or.us	
Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department	Sally Robertson Recreation Coordinator 1310 SW Avery Park Drive Corvallis, OR 97333 (541) 757-6918 sally.robertson@ci.corvallis.or.us	Has not yet coordinated with Forest Service lands; always looking for new places to take kids
Girls Scouts Council	Sally Robertson (541) 757-6918	Monthly leadership meeting would be a great Forest Service forum
4-H Youth Program 4-H Wildlife Stewards	Oregon State Extension (541) 725-2027	Training to sustain wildlife habitat on school grounds, "bringing science and nature together one school at a time."
Coastal Range Association	425 SW Madison Corvallis, OR 97333 (541) 758-0255	Environmental organization
Green Belt Association	(541) 752-0609	
Corvallis Environmental Center	214 SW Monroe Corvallis, OR 97330 (541) 753-9211	Focus on education, youth gardening, resource conservation program
Outreach Education Office	Michael Cloughesy, Director Nathalia Glitt, Conference Coordinator College of Forestry Oregon State University (541) 737-2349	Many events related to outdoor education
Oregon Riverwatch	Sean Carroll	Willamette River Clean-ups
Corvallis Outdoor School	1555 SW 3th Street Corvallis, OR 97333 (541) 757-4323 <a href="mailto:outdoor_school@corvallis.k12.or.us">outdoor_school@corvallis.k12.or.us</a>	Residential environmental education for 509J 6 <sup>th</sup> graders; USFS partner

## Section Three: The Public Lands Perspective

### A. Uses of and Orientation to Public Lands

One highly valued feature of local life is proximity to nearby outdoor and recreation opportunities. One and one-half hours' drive from Corvallis gets people to the coast, the Cascade Range, and to Portland. This feature was mentioned several times during Corvallis research.

Mary's Peak, a scant few miles west of Corvallis, is the highest elevation peak in the coastal range. During this research, people from throughout the region stated that they visited Mary's Peak at one time or another. Key features are its high-altitude meadow and natural rock gardens. The Mary's Peak North Ridge Trail on the Siuslaw National Forest is also very much used.

A clerk in a sporting goods store described the recreation interests of Corvallis residents as "so granola." By this he meant that residents like easy access to public lands and non-intrusive activities such as hiking and mountain bike riding. This segment of the recreational public is complaining recently about motored outdoor sports—ATVs, jet skis, dune buggies, and motor bikes—and their noisy impacts on the quieter activities.

A city official stated that Corvallis was progressive related to natural resource management. Evidence of this is the new waste water system, a large-scale effort to inventory natural features for future preservation, and the City's efforts to address the requirements of the Endangered Species Act.

Benton County has more than 60 miles of bike and running paths and over 50 parks and preserves. It has public and private recreational facilities for golf, swimming, fitness, tennis, racquetball, volleyball, basketball, baseball, football, karate, and horseback riding. The trails, as well as nearby public lands, provide opportunities for backpacking, mountaineering, canoeing, camping, ski touring and bike touring. The Corvallis Arts Center, as well as a number of art galleries display local and regional art. There are major

festivals, and the scenic routes of the County feature covered bridges, wildlife refuges, historic buildings, and wineries (Community Profile, Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, 2002).

As the population grows and urbanizes, Parks and Recreation programs, as well as after-school and other youth programs, could be expected to increase. City and county parks and recreation programs typically have not been well funded and are among the first departments to experience cuts in times of tight budget constraints. In order to survive, they are likely to become more fee-based as time goes.

The City program includes urban forestry. Using a grant from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, they have a project now on Bald Hill to preserve white oak with Nature Conservancy Greenbelt Land Trust, a group that has also secured hundreds of acres of open space and trails. Pacificorps and ODF have provided Benton County with a three-year grant for urban forestry.

The Corvallis Environmental Center, located in Avery Park, has done outdoor education courses for many years using City Parks and Recreation funds. Recent budget cuts will eliminate this funding and the program may be in jeopardy.

"People want to do outings closer to home. They want variety and they are interested in education. They want restoration that is reasonable and effective." [County Parks official]

"Americorps recently did a 'Progression of Species Parade' that was so amazing. Over 200 kids with the Youth Park Corps and the Youth Volunteer Corps."

The City Parks and Recreation Department began Rock Creek camp three years ago. It's a day camp for kids 8-12 years old on Mary's Peak. It was described as a "learning experience" for the 35 kids that participate each year.

Youth programs in the City are hurting. The school district dropped its summer program, "Summer Connections." After-school sports were dropped



by the school district, but picked up by City Parks and Recreation. Many of the City's programs are being dropped because of budget cuts. 504

"Kids are searching for something to do after age 12." [The issue was the lack of programs for youth over this age.]

Benton County Parks does partnership programs, including 4-H Wildlife Stewardship. It also coordinates frequently with the Waldport District Ranger for mutual projects on Mary's Peak. The Parks Department is exploring the possible use of Title 3 money of the Secured Schools Bill, which, at the discretion of the Board of Commission, can be used for easements, fire safety, training, and restoration. However, Title 3 does not cover all costs, so with a small department in times of tight budget, its resources may be directed elsewhere. Sometimes community service groups of youth and adults can be used to fulfill Title 3 requirements but an official stated that it is not always worth the effort.

The use of Title 2 monies of the Secured Schools Bill are very prescriptive. After going through a multi-county process of the Resource Advisory Committee, funds can be used by local entities that contribute to natural resource management. For example, Benton County Public Works paved the south section of the Alsea road using this program.

The City recently began a Natural Features Scoping Project to identify natural resources in the city deserving of protection and to develop regulations to protect them. The effort will include an inventory of water resources, wetlands and riparian habitat. It has also prepared a response plan for Endangered Species.

Corvallis has an active and successful Senior Citizen Center run by the Parks and Recreation Department. The center is crucial for absorbing new seniors into the community, for creating a support center for the very elderly, and for facilitating numerous activities and events throughout the region. Many activities are outdoors—hikes, boat rides, and excursions to historical areas.

Guided nature walks are most popular among seniors. Their range of ability varies tremendously and they like knowing trail information and trail conditions ahead of time. Last year, the Sweet Home Ranger District

coordinated a historical walk along the Santiam Wagon Road that was led by a Forest Service employee. The program director described this as one of the most successful events ever held, as seniors enjoyed learning about history and its connection with the Forest. The Corvallis Senior Center relates exclusively to the Sweet Home District, not to the Siuslaw National Forest.

"I'm surprised they didn't charge money for that event. It was such a contribution to so many."

Scouts are very active in Benton County. The Girl Scouts alone have 57 troops. Parents have been very involved in leadership roles and are active users of public lands. Personal safety in the woods came up as an issue at the last leadership meeting.

The Supervisor's Office of the Siuslaw National Forest in Corvallis does not have strong links to the local community. Partnerships with formal entities or inter-governmental partnerships do not appear numerous. Contracts recipients are drawn from around the region. They are determined by the Hub Zone law, which stipulates hiring contractors from certain low income areas, so contract relationships in the local area are not very strong. Ties with OSU Forestry appear limited to speaking engagements. The Forest's "small purchasing program" is done through employee credit card and spending can be local or national. "Agreements," an area of contracting ranging from Memorandas of Understanding (MOU) to collection agreements, are growing but these are formal in nature and often done electronically. Permits are issued to many individuals for firewood, Christmas trees, and other special forest. Forest Services trail passes are sold at the office and at a sporting goods store.

"The Forest Service has respect here, but people aren't dependent on it."

"My husband is a hunter and gets his maps at the SO."

Local citizens have limited contact or identity with the Supervisor's Office. Some people knew where the office was, but many did not. The owner of a fisherman's store in Philomath was aware the Alsea office had closed but

said he didn't know if Corvallis had an office or not. Most people just shrugged when the Supervisor's Office was mentioned.

To say that people do not have a strong identity with the Supervisor's Office is not to say that people do not have a strong identity with the Siuslaw and with the Forest Service in general. Not only does Mary's Peak have a special "backyard" orientation for Corvallis residents, our research shows that the area is a mecca for many recreationists in the region. It seems like everyone does a trip to Mary's Peak at one time or another. In addition, Dale Edward's Outdoor School was mentioned several times as an asset to the community, with people openly wondering what would happen to the program when Dale retires.

"That program touches a lot of rural schools."

Rural Community Assistance funds were mentioned several times by various officials and agency staff as valuable. Special projects on Mary's Peak were mentioned as well as projects in Alsea and other small communities, and with Corvallis city departments.

"The funding has been a good thing, in Kings Valley, Bellfountain, Kim, Monroe, Philomath. Critics say its just planning, but it keeps volunteers mobilized, it builds direction, and it gives you status in the money queue."

On Mary's Peak, the Forest Service has a partnership with BLM, where they collect fees, do the maintenance and interact with the public, while the Forest Service does the brochures and public relations.

Corvallis exhibits a strong value for environmentalism, although residents are quick to point out that it is not the "extreme" environmentalism of Eugene. The underlying value is conservation and they want to see how change and development contribute to conservation.

"We are more the Missouri of environmentalism. Once you show us, we're fine. It's a practice conservation ethic."

"The city always votes a resounding 'No' on hate measures. We have a mosque and a Jewish center. The city slogan is 'diversity counts.'"

## C. Themes and Citizen Issues Related to Natural Resource Management

### Themes

1. "The Forest Service is not visible [with notable exceptions]."

### Citizen Issues

Interests in outdoor education

"We need more outdoor education!" [frequent]

"Kids would love to get into the forest. The Alsea District used to provide information to kids."

Orientation to Retired People

Retirement professionals described senior citizens as growing in number and active in their interest in outdoor activities. Older adults are more susceptible to changes in trail conditions, elevation and weather. They appreciate a guide that can teach them about an area. Also, the conditions of bathrooms are very important to this community for safety reasons.

"There is a scarcity of hikes for older adults. We need better information about trail conditions." [Senior Center Program Coordinator]

"Often, bathrooms on Forest Service land are not acceptable."

"The Forest Service matrix for trails doesn't list characteristics of interest to seniors. They need to know length of trail, elevation climb, difficulty level, and road conditions."



## Environmental Management

"Budget cuts may force the loss of our urban forestry program. It will be difficult to deal proactively on Dutch Elm disease." [City Parks and Recreation Department]

"We need an effective noxious weed program. ODF is a regular supporter. We are getting some support through Mary's River Watershed Council and NRCS."

## Recreation

"The Forest Service should have programs in our recreation program book." [City Parks and Recreation]

"It's hard for City employees to purchase Forest Passes. Since the Forest Service isn't set up to bill a business or send an invoice, I have to buy the pass with personal money and then get reimbursed by the City. The process should be streamlined. Why can't I get a yearly invoice so I know I have it ahead of time?"

"The process for buying permits and passes could be improved. There's got to be a better way. Maybe when people renew their driver's licenses or something."

"I used to buy passes at Anderson's sporting goods store, but since it closed a few years ago, I'm not sure where else to go for passes and maps."

"People don't like the Forest Passes because they are not sure the funds are reinvested in a wise manner."

"Don't the Forest Passes attract even more tourists?"

## Visibility

"The Forest Service is invisible here. Does the Forest Service have a Partnership Coordinator?"

"The Forest Service is not visible in Corvallis. I never go by the building. They don't publicize very much."

"If the Forest Service does pull out, can it locate its remaining staff with similar agencies, like NRCS, especially those that have strong community interface?"

## C. Management Opportunities

### Communication Opportunities

The Forest Service should insure that local residents have easy access to Forest Passes and that vendor locations are well known. This will be especially important if the Supervisor's Office closes.

Develop interpretive trails for educational purposes. Both ecological and historical aspects are of interest to residents.

Consider guided hikes and educational activities for a fee as an extra revenue source. Organized groups could pay such fees.

Develop an effective orientation to the retirement community.

Explore options for becoming more visible even in light of increased budget cuts.

There may be natural opportunities for the Forest Service to partner with the City's Natural Features Scoping Project.

## Action Opportunities

A proposal that has been in the news and has been discussed inside the agency is to merge the offices and management of the Willamette and Siuslaw National Forests. Several positions are already shared between the two offices, and budget limitations will force further staff reductions in the near future. Two central questions related to the merging are where the new Supervisor's office would be located and how important services will be maintained at the District level.

Many people had the correct understanding that most management activities of the Forest Service are already handled out of the District offices. Support and coordination for Watershed Councils is handled primarily at the District level, although a hydrologist from the Supervisor's Office has been very active.

The concern was raised several times that location of the Supervisor's Office of a National Forest should be close to the land base it is responsible for.

"Forest managers should be close to the lands they manage."  
[frequent]

"The big danger is collapse at the bottom, where there is too much management and the workers, those doing the real work on the ground, disappear. Once decline starts, you're in a complaining mode and the agency gets inward looking. It's a downward cycle."

"We have found that unsupervised lands bring in undesirables. It's a small percentage but they can do a lot of damage. With parks, if there is vandalism we have to deal with it right away. If we do, it goes away. If we don't, it gets worse. They've got to keep people on the ground here." [County parks staff]

The community leaders with whom we spoke voiced concern about the economic impact of losing employees, but reflected that the Corvallis economy was diverse enough to absorb the loss.

"Yeah, we can get over the economic loss, but what about the leadership? A lot of Forest Service people are involved in civic organizations. They should really reach out and communicate with people about this move." [City official]

People were aware of the budget constraints of the Siuslaw and reluctantly voiced understanding that further re-organization was necessary. However, a number of thoughtful observers pointed to the difference that the future location would communicate. In particular, one leader said that location in Eugene would signal a loss of the Siuslaw, rather than a sharing of identities, which is what she advocated. In fact, a number of arguments were made against a location in Eugene. Among them:

1. Rather than a sharing of management, the Eugene location signals the loss of the Siuslaw within Willamette management;
2. Eugene is too far south to relate well to such a large land base, especially the coastal Siuslaw lands;
3. The rivalries between the Ducks and the Beavers, while often portrayed in good natured terms, has a serious underside. "Now don't laugh when I say this," one person said, and she related how she was asked to change her clothes at an OSU office when she inadvertently wore the colors of the opposing team. "There's already a rivalry between Eugene and Corvallis," another person chuckled. The power of a cultural symbol like this should not be underestimated.
4. Land prices are seen as higher and quality of life as lower in the Eugene area. Shopping and the ability to "get around" are not seen as good. People thought that areas of cheap land and interstate accessibility, such as Albany and Lebanon would be good sites.

Enough citizen issues were raised that a process of citizen contact seems prudent to consider. A list of key community leaders, communicators and caretakers could be identified who should talk through the options with the upcoming management decisions. Let those people participate in problem-solving with forest management in order to minimize surprise, to get the best ideas, and to resolve citizen issues. In particular, it is important that people understand the level and nature of management on the ground that could be expected with the options being considered. Without such an effort, the Forest Service will be vulnerable to rumors and political agendas.

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