

**CROOKED
RIVER BASIN**

**MASTER PLAN
FOR ANGLER ACCESS AND
ASSOCIATED RECREATIONAL
USES**



**Oregon State Game Commission
Lands Division**



CROOKED RIVER BASIN
Master Plan for Angler Access
and
Associated Recreational Uses

By

Oregon State Game Commission

Lands Section

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CROOKED RIVER BASIN
Master Plan for Angler Access
and
Associated Recreational Uses

This report details a plan that we hope can be followed to solve the access problems of the Crooked River Basin. Too, we hope that all agencies that are interested in retaining existing water access as well as providing additional facilities, whether they be municipal, county, or state, will all join in a cooperative effort to carry out this plan in an orderly manner. It is probable that Land and Water Conservation Funds will be available on a 50-50 matching basis. In order to acquire these funds, it will be necessary to apply through the Oregon State Highway Department.

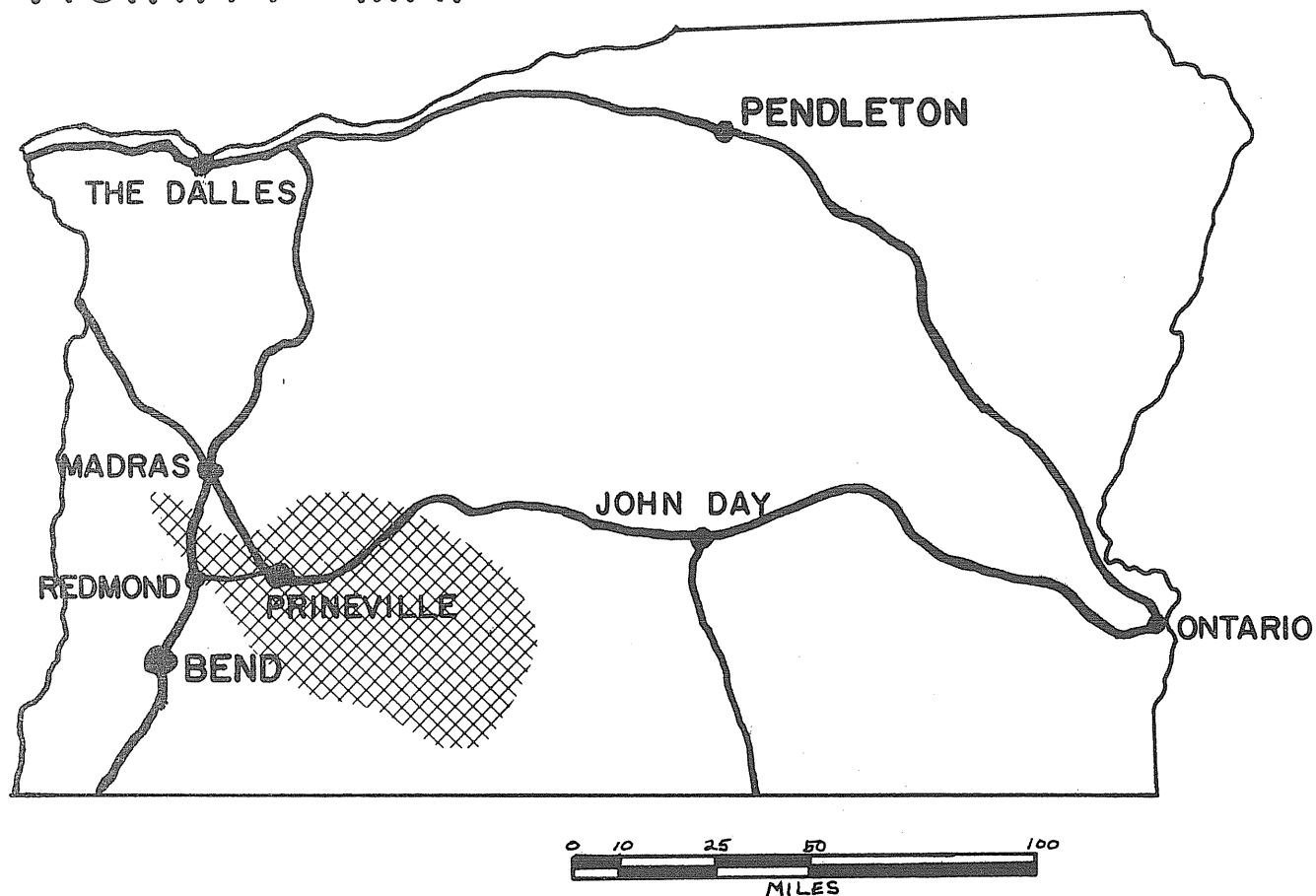
The Crooked River Basin is located in the central part of the state and covers an area of approximately 4,100 square miles. Included within the basin is nearly all of Crook County and portions of Deschutes and Jefferson Counties. The Crooked River heads in the Ochoco and Maury Mountains, flows through a wide valley near Prineville, and enters a deep canyon in the lower basin. It then joins the Deschutes and Metolius Rivers to form Round Butte Reservoir.

Agriculture and timber production are the major land uses within this semiarid basin. The Ochoco and Maury Mountains produce most of the timber, and the higher plateaus in the basin are used for either grazing or dry-land farming. Most of the lower lands adjacent to the rivers are used for cropland. In this area of low rainfall, additional water is needed during the summer to meet the agricultural needs. As a result nearly all the water in some areas is diverted for irrigation, leaving only a minimal amount for fish life.

The fishery within the basin is primarily for rainbow trout. Planted legal size rainbows are available in the upper river tributaries and large resident rainbows up to eleven pounds contribute to the fishery in the river below Prineville Reservoir. During the early part of the trout season this area receives extremely heavy pressure by anglers from the entire state. During the summer and fall, the angling is mainly by local anglers.

Land ownership along the Crooked River is almost entirely private except for an eight-mile section below the Prineville Reservoir. At a number of places along the river, anglers are now gaining access by permission or implied consent. In order to assure access to fishermen throughout the angling waters of the basin, nine sites have been recommended for development. Two sites, at the present, provide access but need additional development; and seven are recommended for acquisition and development.

VICINITY MAP



Crooked River, located in central Oregon, heads in the Ochoco National Forest and flows westerly to join the Deschutes and Metolius Rivers in forming the Round Butte Reservoir.

The major access routes to the basin are U. S. Route 26, U. S. Route 97, U. S. Route 126 and State Route 27.

CROOKED RIVER GORGE AREA

This area extends from the head of Round Butte Reservoir to river mile 30 at the head of the gorge. The river passes through a deep gorge of basaltic rock bluffs with a few small level benches along the river's edge. Due to the terrain and private lands, the access in this section of the river is limited to only a few locations.

The fishery in the gorge area of the Crooked River is for rainbow trout. Angling pressure is the greatest in the spring. In late May or early June when irrigation starts, most of the available water above the gorge is withdrawn leaving only a minimal amount to flow through the gorge area. With the reduced flow, higher water temperatures and high population of rough fish, the angling success is reduced considerably resulting in a decline of the trout fishery throughout the summer and fall.

Access in this section by necessity will be trails to the river bank from parking areas on the rim above the canyon walls. Four sites have been evaluated and are included in this section.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 1
Crooked River Gorge Area Priority A
Name Opal Springs

Location 20 miles northwest of Redmond, East Bank
T 12 S, R 12 E, Sec. 33 River Mile 7 County Crook
Ownership: Public USA 2700
Private X Tax Lot No. 2800
Number of owners 2

DESCRIPTION

Land type Steep canyon
Cover type Juniper and sagebrush
Road access Public road, Condition Gravel
Flows Affected by irrigation Water quality Good
Present stage of development Municipal water pumping station

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 1 Acres, 1 mile of frontage
Type of conveyance Purchase and trail easement

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets X Trails X Roads _____
Parking area X; For 15 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This site would have a parking area above the rim with trail access to the
river.

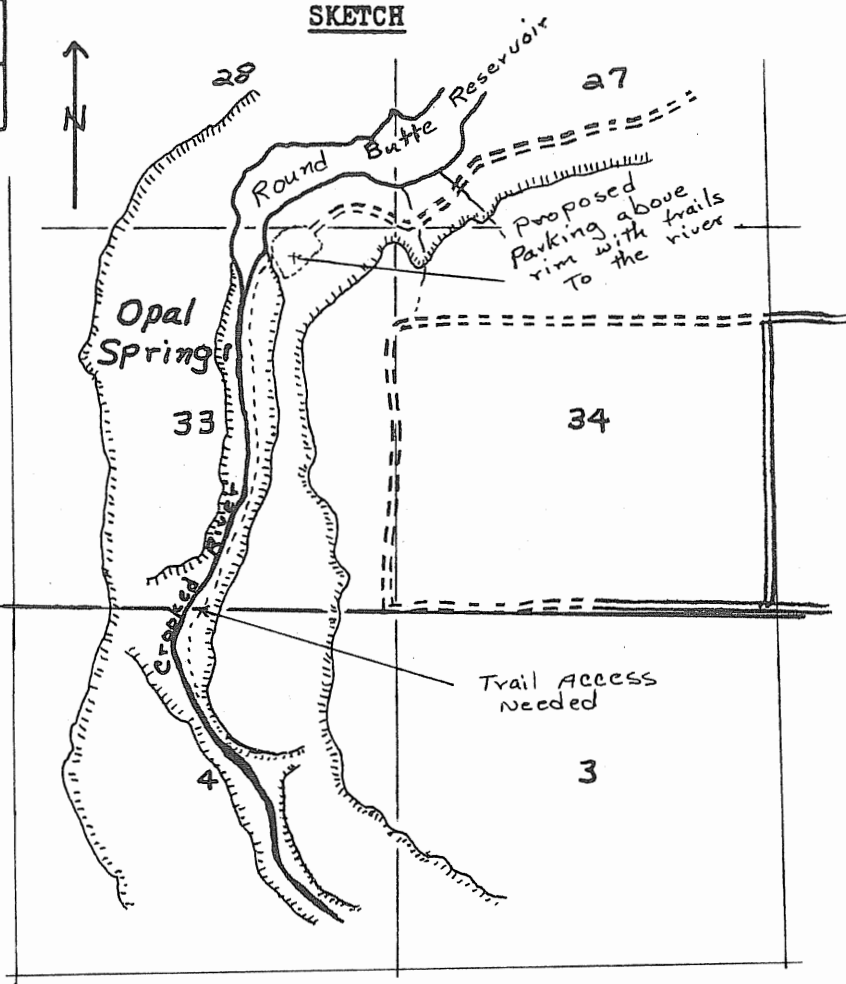
FISHERY: Rainbow trout

Spring Summer Fall Winter

Heavy				
Medium	Tr	Tr		
Light			Tr	

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

SKETCH



Seasons (Check)

RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
	x	x	x	

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities:

REMARKS

A few anglers are gaining access now by boating up to the end of the reservoir and walking up the river. Parking and trail access could be established wherever feasible along this section of the river.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 2
Crooked River Gorge Area Priority A
Name Crooked River Ranch Access

Location Crooked River Ranch north of Redmond, West Bank
T 13S, R 12E, Sec. Many River Mile 8 to 14 County Crook
Ownership: Public Oregon State Game Commission
Private X Tax Lot No. 100,300, 301, 380, 1700
Number of owners 3

DESCRIPTION

Land type Steep gorge
Cover type Juniper, sagebrush and rabbit brush
Road access County & private, Condition Dirt
Flows Affected by irrigation Water quality Good
Present stage of development Proposed state hatchery site

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 6 Acres, 4 miles of frontage
Type of conveyance Purchase and/or easement

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets X Trails X Roads X
Parking area X; For 30-50 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This site would provide trail access to the river at various points through-
out this section of the inaccessible gorge area. Parking would
be above the rim with trails to the river at indicated points.

FISHERY: Rainbow trout

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Heavy				
Medium	Tr	Tr		
Light			Tr	

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

SKETCH

Seasons (Check)

(See Page 11)

RECREATION
(Check)

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Boating, motor				
Boating, non-motor				
Camping, tent	X	X	X	
Camping, trailer				
Fishing, boat				
Fishing, shore	X	X	X	
Hiking	X	X	X	
Horseback riding				
Hunting, big game				
Hunting, upland game				
Hunting, waterfowl				
Nature study				
Picnicking	X	X	X	
* Sightseeing	X	X	X	X
Skin and scuba diving				
Swimming				
Water skiing				

* Fish hatchery if developed

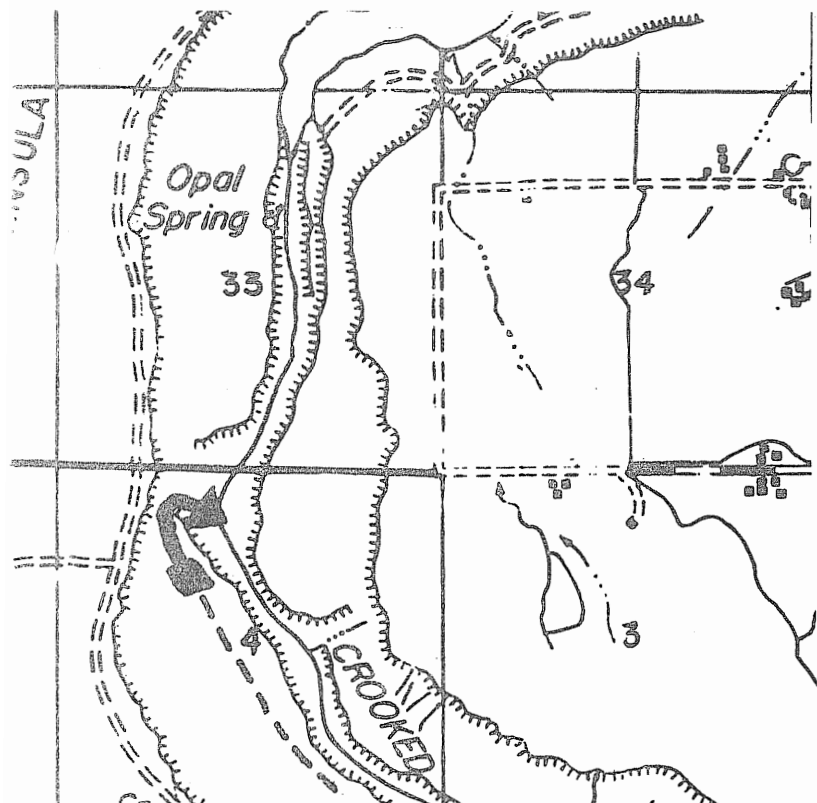
OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities:

REMARKS

The Oregon State Game Commission has proposed a hatchery to be constructed on the site marked on the sketch map.



CROOKED RIVER RANCH

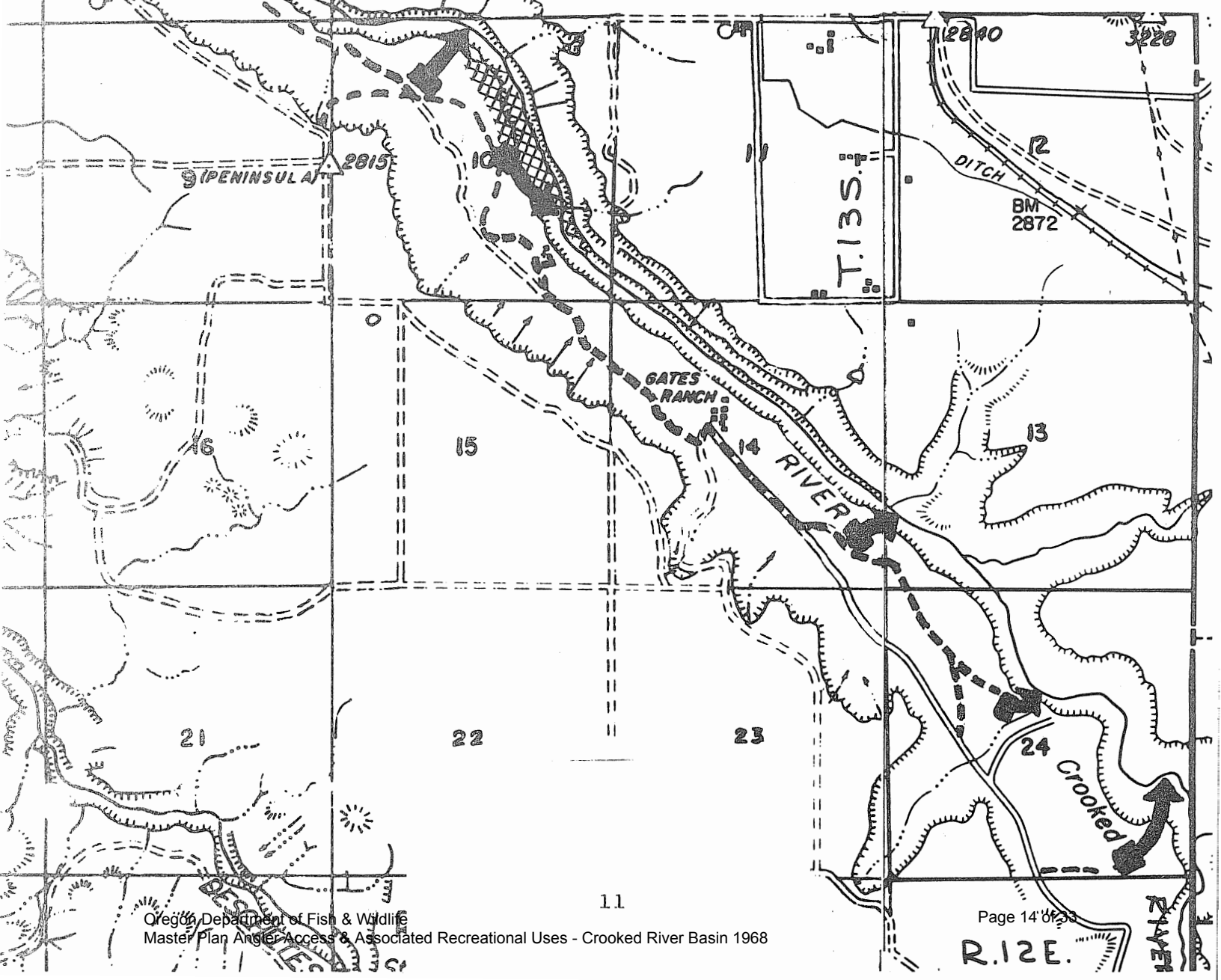
Access

Proposed Hatchery site 

Parking and trails 

Road 

Scale 2" = 1 mile



WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 3
Crooked River Gorge Area Priority C
Name Crooked River Gorge Access

Location 11 miles north of Redmond, East Bank
12 E Sec. 25 & 36
T 13 S, R 13 E, Sec. 30 & 31 River Mile 15.5 County Crook

Ownership: Public U. S. A.
Private X Tax Lot No. Many
Number of owners 3

DESCRIPTION

Land type Steep gorge
Cover type Juniper, sagebrush and rabbit brush
Road access Private, Condition Dirt
Affected by irrigation
Flows diversion Water quality * Fair
Present stage of development Indistinct trail used by anglers.

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 1 Acres, 2 miles of frontage and road easement.
Type of conveyance Purchase and road easement

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets X Trails X Roads X
Parking area X; For 15 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This site would provide parking and a trail into the gorge area.

* High water temperatures in the summer.

AREA Crooked River Gorge

SITE # 3

FISHERY: Rainbow trout

Spring Summer Fall Winter

Heavy				
Medium	Tr	Tr		
Light			Tr	

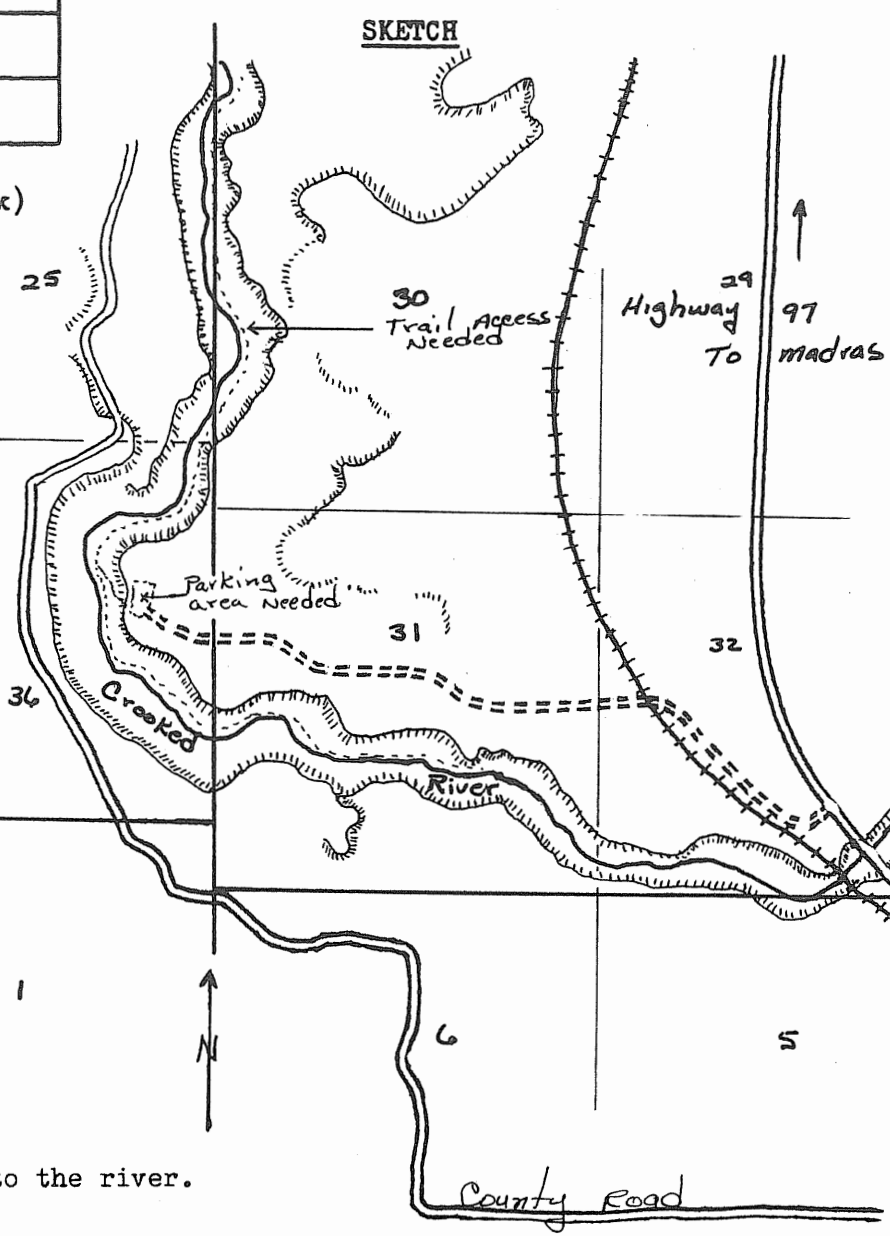
(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

Seasons (Check)

RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	



OTHER

Safety Problems: Steep trail to the river.

Group Facilities:

REMARKS Most of the road is on public land. The parking area is on private land.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 4
Crooked River Gorge Area Priority B
Name Smith Rock State Park

Location 9 miles north of Redmond, South Bank
T 14 S, R 13 E, Sec. 11 River Mile 25.5 County Crook
Ownership: Public State Highway Department
Private _____ Tax Lot No. _____
Number of owners 1

DESCRIPTION

Land type High flat steep canyon to river
Cover type Juniper and sagebrush
Road access State Highway, Condition Paved
Affected by irrigation _____
Flows diversion Water quality * Poor
Present stage of development Completed day use park

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: _____ Acres, _____ of frontage
Type of conveyance _____

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets _____ Trails _____ Roads _____
Parking area _____; For _____ cars or _____ car-trailer units

This park is complete, but the trail to the river could be improved and
marked.

* High water temperatures in the summer limits the trout fishery.

LOWER CROOKED RIVER AREA

Included in this area is the Crooked River from river mile 30 at the head of the gorge to the Prineville Reservoir dam at river mile 72.5. The only major tributary in this section is Ochoco Creek which joins the river two miles below the city of Prineville. The stream gradient from the reservoir to Prineville is moderate with numerous pools and riffles. Below Prineville the stream slows and meanders through the valley with a minimum of fast water.

The fishery in this area is for rainbow trout. Construction of Prineville Reservoir and chemical treatment to reduce the rough fish population have contributed to an excellent fishery on large trout up to eleven pounds. Most of the angling pressure occurs on the 15-mile section of stream between the Prineville Reservoir and the Stearns diversion dam. Water conditions in this area are ideal for fish life as the water coming from the bottom of the reservoir remains at a constant temperature and even flow.

From Stearns diversion dam down to the Montgomery diversion dam, three miles below the town of Prineville, angling success is reduced because the lower flows and higher water temperatures are not as favorable for trout production. From Montgomery Dam downstream to the gorge, the river is marginal for trout production due to low flows, high water temperatures, and a high population of rough fish.

River frontage in this section is predominantly in private ownership except for 8.5 miles of BLM lands below Prineville Reservoir. Below this point access is gained either by permission or trespassing over posted lands.

To assure access in this section of the Crooked River five sites have been chosen. In addition to providing bank access, two of these sites will provide parking; one will provide parking and limited camping. The remaining two will be fully developed campgrounds with camping and picnicking facilities, as well as bank access. These sites are described in detail on the following evaluation forms.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 1
Lower Crooked River Area Priority B
Name Lone Pine Bridge

Location 10 miles northeast of Redmond, Both Banks

T 15 S, R 14 E, Sec. 17 & 20 River Mile 30 County Crook

Ownership: Public _____

Private X Tax Lot No. 1 and 2

Number of owners 2

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat low bench

Cover type Juniper and willow

Road access State highway, Condition Paved

Affected by irrigation _____

Flows diversion Water quality * Poor

Present stage of development None

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 2 Acres, 4 miles of frontage

Type of conveyance Purchase and trail easement

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____

Toilets X Trails X Roads _____

Parking area X; For 25 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This is the last site available for camping before entering the gorge area.

* In the spring, the water temperature is suitable for trout, but in the summer when flows are reduced and the temperature rises, the trout leave the area and are replaced by rough fish.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 2
Lower Crooked River Area Priority C
Name Elliot Bridge

Location 5 miles northwest of Prineville, Both Banks

T 14 S, R 15 E, Sec. 21 & 22 River Mile 44 County Crook

Ownership: Public

Private Tax Lot No. Sec. 21, Lot #1

Number of owners 3 Sec. 22, Lot #3 and 4

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat farmland

Cover type Farm crops

Road access County, Condition Gravel

Affected by irrigation

Flows diversion Water quality Fair (High water temperature)

Present stage of development None

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 1 Acres, 2 miles of frontage

Type of conveyance Purchase and trail easement

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____

Toilets Trails Roads _____

Parking area _____; For 15 cars or _____ car-trailer units

The fishery in this section of the stream is affected by the irrigation

diversion. The flow in the summer is reduced considerably resulting in

high temperatures. The trout are moving out of this section and have been
replaced by rough fish.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 3
Lower Crooked River Area Priority A
Name Stearns Ranch Access

Location 7 miles south of Prineville, East Bank
15 S 15 E
T 16 S, R 16 E, Sec. 36, 31, 1, 6 River Mile 57 - 60 County Crook

Ownership: Public
Private X Tax Lot No. 1, 14
Number of owners 1

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat farmland
Cover type Farm crops
Road access State Highway 27, Condition Paved
Flows Seasonal fluctuation Water quality Good
Present stage of development Stiles for crossing fence at three locations

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 3 Acres for parking and 3 miles of river frontage for
trail access to be purchased.

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets _____ Trails X Roads _____
Parking area X; For 30 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This site would assure access along the portion of stream which is now
open to fishing by the landowner.

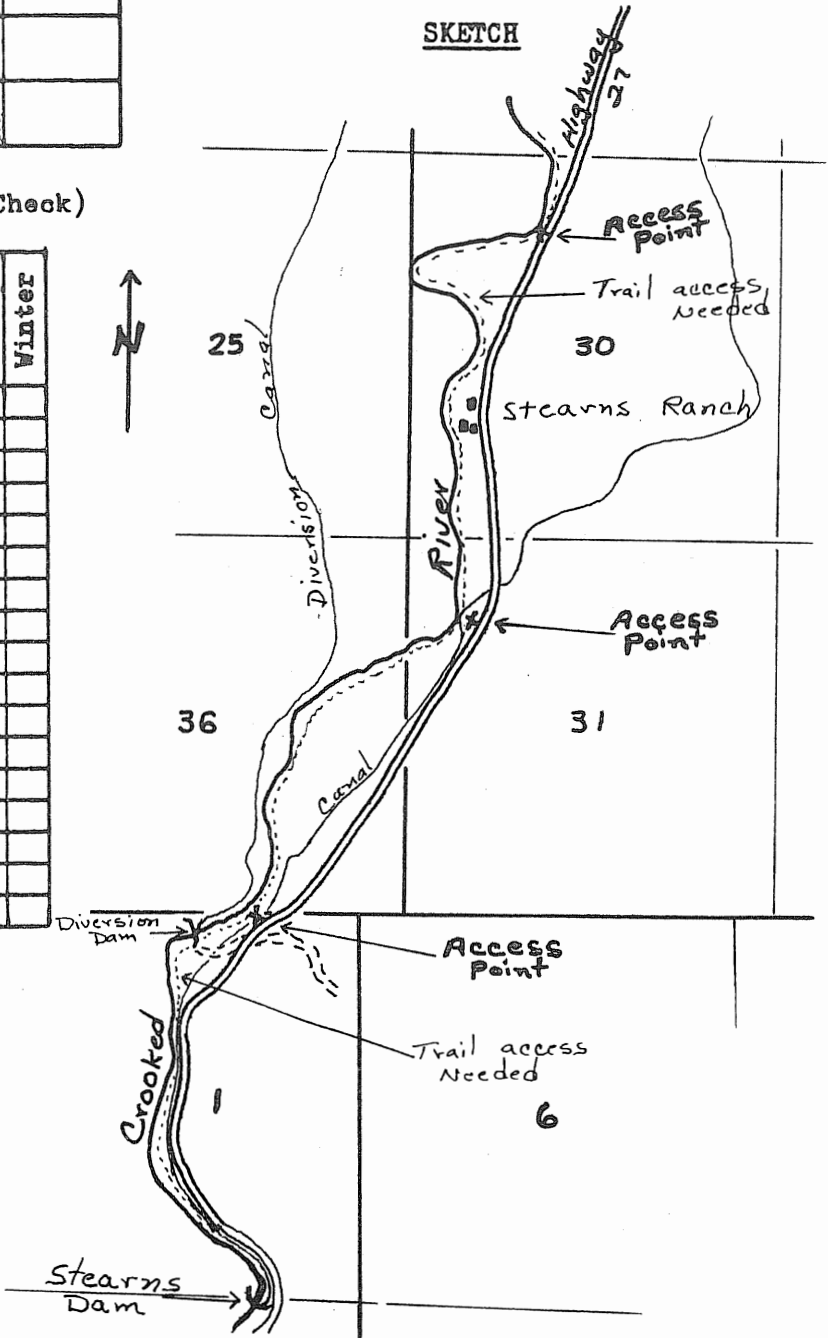
FISHERY: Rainbow trout

Spring Summer Fall Winter

Heavy	Tr	Tr		
Medium			Tr	
Light				

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

SKETCH



Seasons (Check)

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
	X	X	X	

RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities:

REMARKS

Parking would be off the highway at the 3 access points with trails to the river as indicated in the sketch.
This section of the river receives heavy angling pressure throughout the summer.

WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked _____ System Site No. 4
Lower Crooked River Area Priority A
Name Swartz Canyon

Location 10 miles south of Prineville, _____ East _____ Bank
T 16 S, R 15 E, Sec. 13 River Mile 61 County Crook
Ownership: Public _____
Private X Tax Lot No. 15 & 16
Number of owners 2

DESCRIPTION

Land type Flat bench
Cover type Juniper and sagebrush
Road access State Highway, Condition Paved
Flows Seasonal fluctuation Water quality Good
Present stage of development None

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: 5 Acres, 2 miles of frontage
Type of conveyance Purchase

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets X Trails X Roads X
Parking area X; For 30 cars or _____ car-trailer units
This site could be developed into a small park and camping area as well as
providing access to the stream.

FISHERY: Rainbow trout

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Heavy	Tr	Tr		
Medium			Tr	
Light				

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

Seasons (Check)

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	

* RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

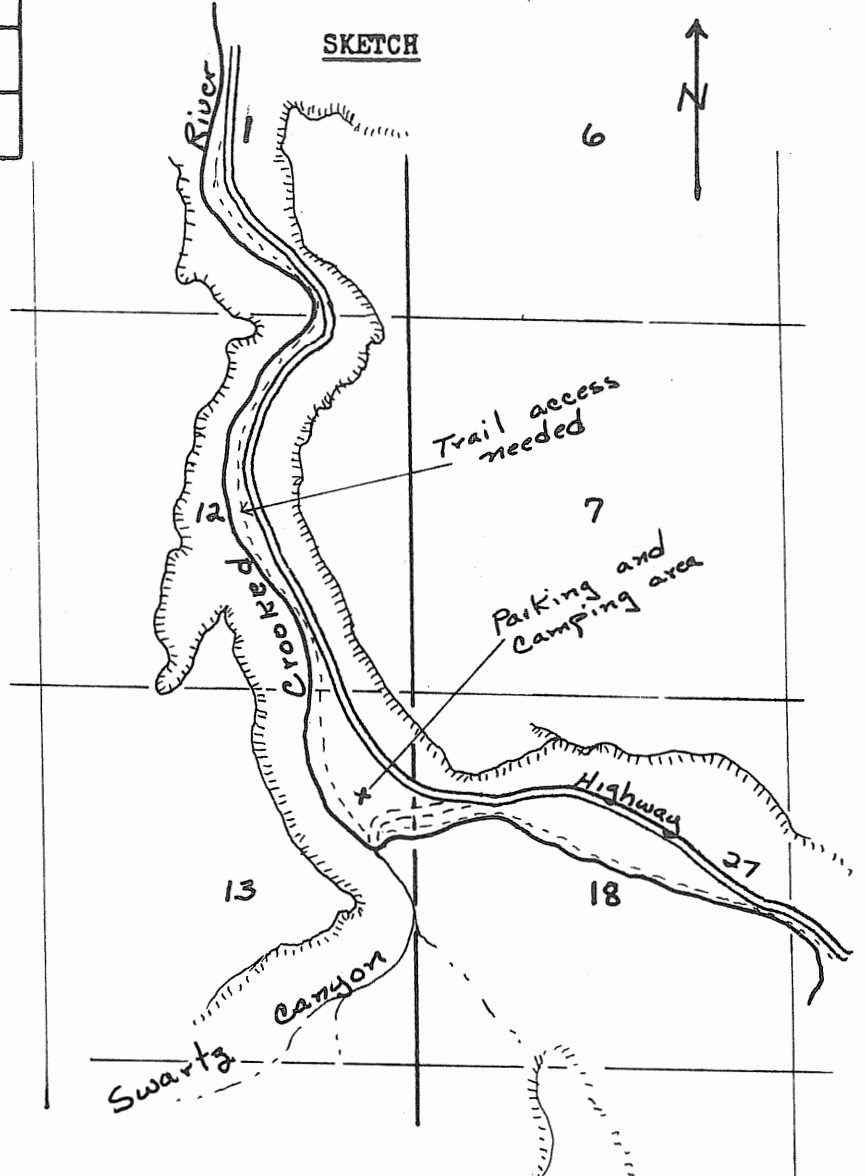
* Potential if developed.

OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities: Bus parking, camping and picnic facilities when parking and camping area is developed.

REMARKS This section of the river receives heavy angling pressure throughout the fishing season.



WATER ACCESS SITE EVALUATION

Crooked River System Site No. 5
Lower Crooked River Area Priority B
Name Chimney Point

Location 15 miles south of Prineville, Both Banks
T 17 S, R 16 E, Sec. 4 River Mile 68 County Crook
Ownership: Public USA (Bureau of Land Management)
Private _____ Tax Lot No. 21
Number of owners 1

DESCRIPTION

Land type Low flat bench with steep canyon walls
Cover type Juniper and sagebrush
Road access State Highway 27, Condition Gravel
Flows Seasonal fluctuation Water quality Good
Present stage of development Partially completed park

ANGLER NEEDS

Acquisition: _____ Acres, _____ of frontage
Type of conveyance _____

Development:

Boat ramp: Type _____ Number of lanes _____
Toilets X Trails X Roads _____
Parking area X; For 30 cars or _____ car-trailer units

This site provides bank access on BLM lands from river mile 64 to the reservoir dam at mile 72.5. In addition to parking areas in the park there are numerous pull outs along the highway along this section of the river.

AREA Lower Crooked River

SITE # 5

FISHERY: Rainbow trout

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Heavy	Tr	Tr		
Medium			Tr	
Light				

(Sa - Salmon, St - Steelhead, Tr - Trout, Sg - Sturgeon, Ww - Warm Water Fishes)

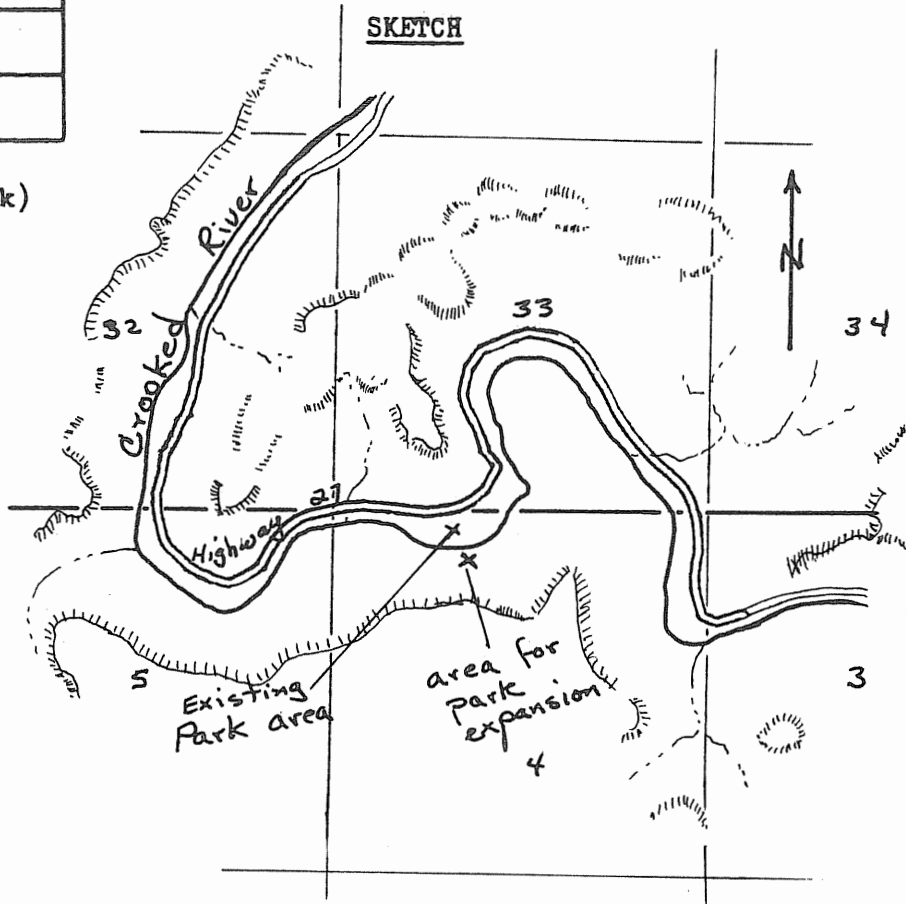
Seasons (Check)

RECREATION
(Check)

- Boating, motor
- Boating, non-motor
- Camping, tent
- Camping, trailer
- Fishing, boat
- Fishing, shore
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Hunting, big game
- Hunting, upland game
- Hunting, waterfowl
- Nature study
- Picnicking
- Sightseeing
- Skin and scuba diving
- Swimming
- Water skiing

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	

SKETCH



OTHER

Safety Problems:

Group Facilities: Bus parking and picnic facilities when development is completed.

REMARKS Proposed development plans include a bridge across the river and development of additional campgrounds on the south side of the river.

UPPER CROOKED RIVER AREA

Included in this area is the Crooked River drainage above Prineville Reservoir and Ochoco Creek above Ochoco Reservoir.

Under present conditions, angler access is adequate as the North Fork Crooked River is the only drainage that has a substantial fishery. Most of the adjacent lands are public so access is not a problem except in areas where the roads are a considerable distance from the river. The Bureau of Land Management's future plans are to construct roads along the ridges and develop trail access to the river in these areas.

South Fork Crooked River and Ochoco Creek, as well as the main stem of Crooked River above Prineville Reservoir, are of little value as a fishery. During the summer when these streams are diverted for irrigation, the reduced flows and high water temperatures make these waters unsuitable for a trout fishery.

Unless a fishery can be established in these waters through a water storage and release program, future access is not needed.

