

# Crow Butte Park Master Plan 2020 Update



## Crow Butte Park

Adopted by the Port of Benton Commission  
February 12, 2020

Resolution #20-14

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## PHOTO CREDITS

PORT OF BENTON

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

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# introduction

## ABOUT THIS PLAN

This is an updated Master Plan for Crow Butte Park, which is operated by the Port of Benton. The Port manages the park as a service to residents in the Port's district, and as a tourism destination, in support of the Port's Economic Development mission. **This Plan provides guidance to the Port, for the operation of Crow Butte Park, for the next six years and beyond.**

This updated Plan includes a summary of completed improvements and accomplishments since the Port of Benton adopted the last Park Plan in 2014. It includes an inventory of existing facilities and assessment of the current and future needs and demands of park users. It also establishes goals and policy direction, and a phased implementation strategy. This compilation of information is a useful tool for the management of park resources.

The Port relies on grant funding in order to accomplish many of the capital improvements to the Park. Most funding sources require periodic updates to parks and recreation plans in order to remain eligible for their funding programs. For example, most funding sources require that funded projects be identified within a park plan, and that the goals and policies contained within support the proposed project. It is critical that the Port continue to successfully compete for outside funding to

ensure the development and maintenance of a high quality park now and into the future.

The first Master Plan for Crow Butte Park was completed in 2008 after the finalization of a long-term lease agreement with the Corps of Engineers in 2007. The Plan included the existing conditions of the Park's facilities, the Park's future needs, and concepts for numerous options for facility improvements and upgrades. The Master Plan, representing a twenty five-year planning period, provided guidance to the Port concerning the Park's future projects and services.

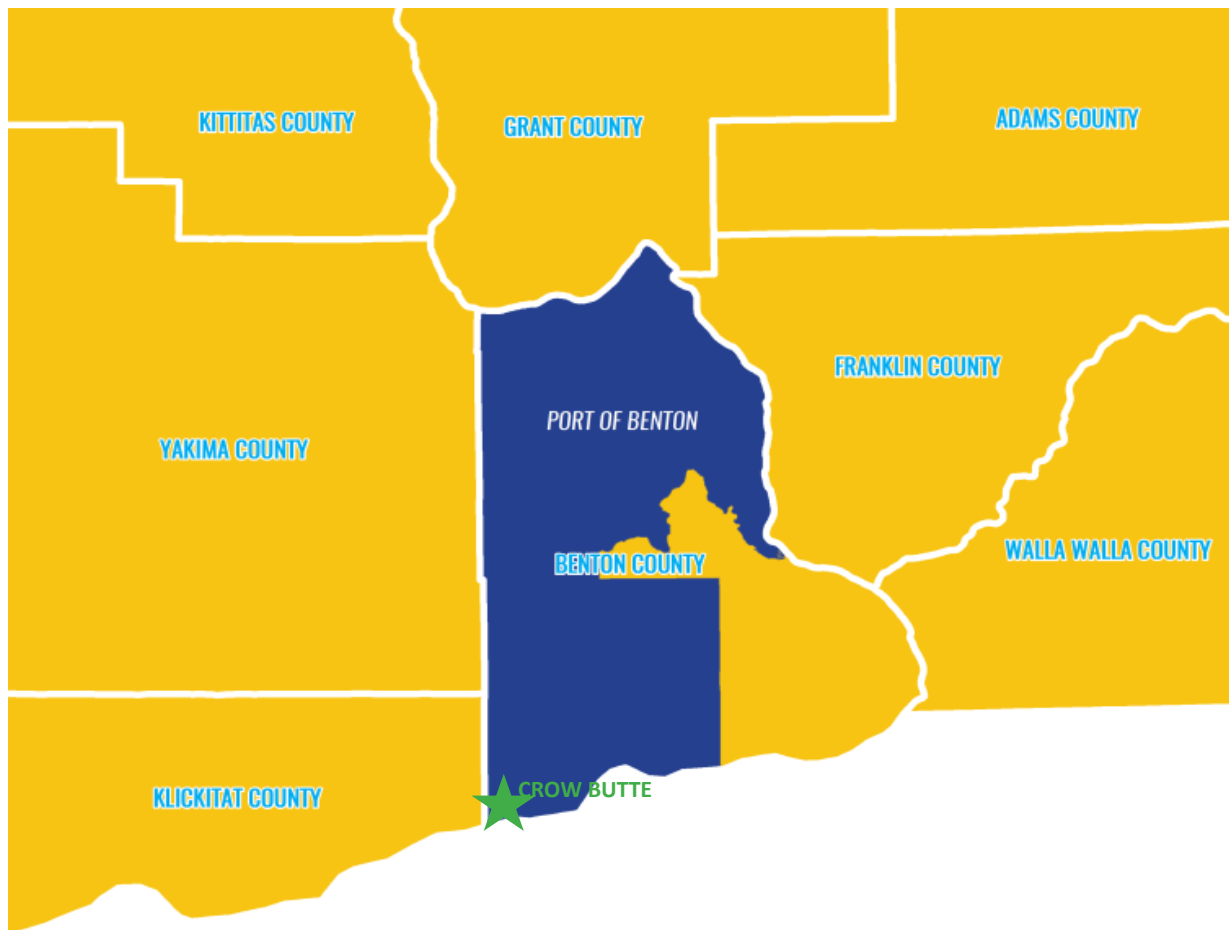
The Master Planning process is intended to be an on-going effort with continual updates to reflect the current status of proposed projects. There is a constant need to reflect accomplishments, revisions and financial commitments. This 2020 Master Plan updates the most recent plan's analysis of existing conditions and revisits the demand and projected future needs to ensure the Plan remains aligned with the community's vision for the Park. The next Plan update is expected in 2026.

This Plan aligns with the Port's 2019 Comprehensive Plan, and the Heritage Management Plan (December 2013).

The objectives of this Plan are:



**Figure I** shows location of Crow Butte relative to surrounding Washington Counties, and also its location within the district of the Port of Benton. Crow Butte is located on the Columbia River, near Oregon.



**Figure I:** The Port of Benton district is located in Benton County, and Crow Butte is situated at the SW corner of Benton County

**Figure II** shows the general layout of the island, with the Crow Butte Park boundary identified. The eastern portion of the island comprises a portion of the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge.



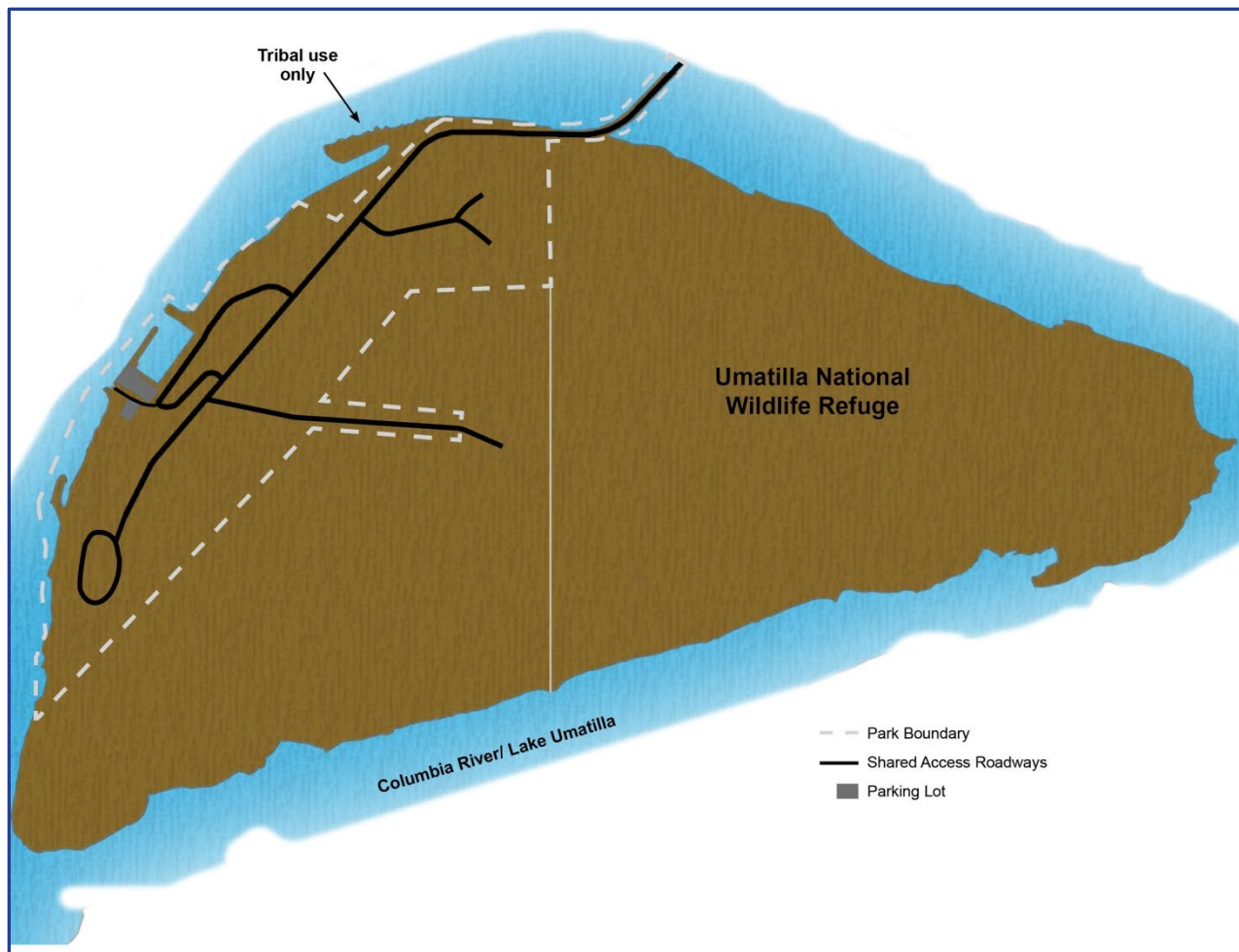


Figure II: Crow Butte island

### ***These Places Have Been Named***

*The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Tribes' traditional area spans the drainages and ranges of the Blue and Wallowa Mountains of eastern Oregon and Washington. This montane region includes waterways that flow in all directions, uniting first with the Snake River and ultimately with the Columbia River. The region is known as the Columbia River Plateau. Nēi Wána, the native name for the Columbia, meaning 'Big River', is at the heart of the tribal homeland. Mid-Columbia River peoples made this area around and including Crow Butte one of their permanent winter villages.*

*From here, the people traveled annually to the mountains on their seasonal round migration routes to gather traditional subsistence of First Floods that sustained them throughout the year. They returned in the late fall to winter in these lower river valley homes. These places had names in the native Sahaptian languages. These names describe the natural and cultural resources of the place including stories of the myth time.*

*(Source: Interpretive signage at Crow Butte)*

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

**Public involvement and engagement is an important element of devising any park plan.**

The Plan should be responsive to community needs and desires, and the processes of creating a plan should always provide ample opportunity for the public to provide comments and feedback about the park facilities.

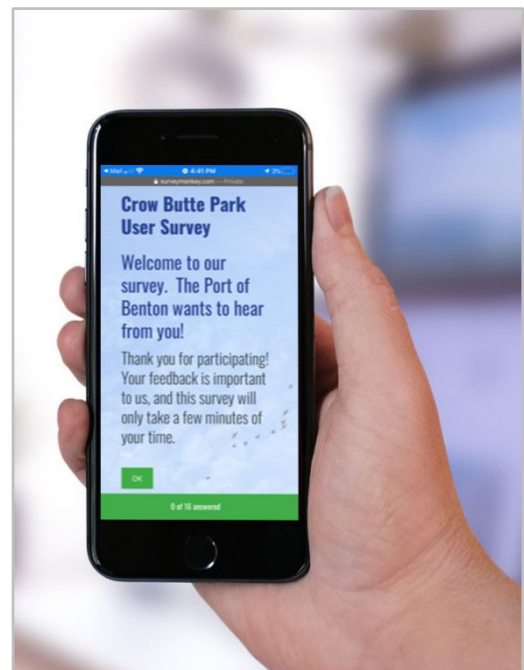
For the original Port of Benton Crow Butte Park Master Plan (2008), the Port hosted a public meeting, held at the Paterson Elementary School Library, in 2007 which had seventeen participants in attendance.

Since that time, the Port has been very proactive in building long-term relationships with Park users through Crow Butte's year-round on-site Caretaker. The Caretaker has been instrumental in providing day-to-day management of the Park, addressing visitors' needs, and assuring facilities are safe and well maintained. The Caretaker has also served as a personal connection between the Port's employees and officials with the public. The Port initiated an on-line survey system in 2008, the first summer the Port was responsible for management of the Park. Park users'

relationships and surveys are valued and utilized to help determine annual and long range needs, improvements and upgrades.

For the Master Plan Update in 2014, a public meeting was held in the evening on March 13, 2014 at the Paterson Elementary School Gymnasium. The Master Plan Update document incorporated and recorded the suggestions and issues voiced by those in attendance at the meeting.

For this update, the Port hosted an on-line survey from January to February 2020 to gather input from the public about the Park. The Port posted information and updates about the survey on their Facebook pages. There were 110 total responses to the survey. Comments about the Park were also posted on the Park's Facebook page. On-line outreach proved to be an effective way to reach out to a wide-range of park users, rather than focusing only on park users in or near Paterson. The results of the survey are included in [Appendix B](#).



## ABOUT THE PARK

Crow Butte Park (Figure III) is a 275-acre park situated on an island of 1,500 acres on the Columbia River. The Park is in southwestern Benton County, south of SR-14, and bordering southeast Klickitat County in an area known as the Horse Heaven Hills, near Paterson, Washington. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers created the island in the late 1970s, as a part of the McNary Dam project. The property is managed by the Port of Benton, and the address is 165215 W. Crow Butte Rd., Paterson.

The Park has served as a destination site for camping, boating, fishing, and hiking since construction was completed in the 1970s. Today, the park has 50 full-service campsites, a playground, three boat launches and a boat basin accessible via motor or river traffic. **The Park is primarily a watersports park with boat launches and a sheltered bay for temporary moorage.**

The Park is open for camping each year from March 15 to October 15, and the boat ramp remains open year-round.

The Park is adjacent to a portion of the McNary National Wildlife Refuge, which is operated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The refuge is over 23,000 acres in total, and borders the Oregon and Washington shores of the Columbia River, for a 20-mile stretch. The Refuge is a popular spot for migratory waterfowl, songbirds and shorebirds to congregate and provides habitat for populations of raptors, mammal species and reptiles.

The Park is also situated on the Northwest Discover Water Trail, traveled by explorers Lewis and Clark. It is additionally a Recreational Bike Trail waypoint on the National Park Service's Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Map.

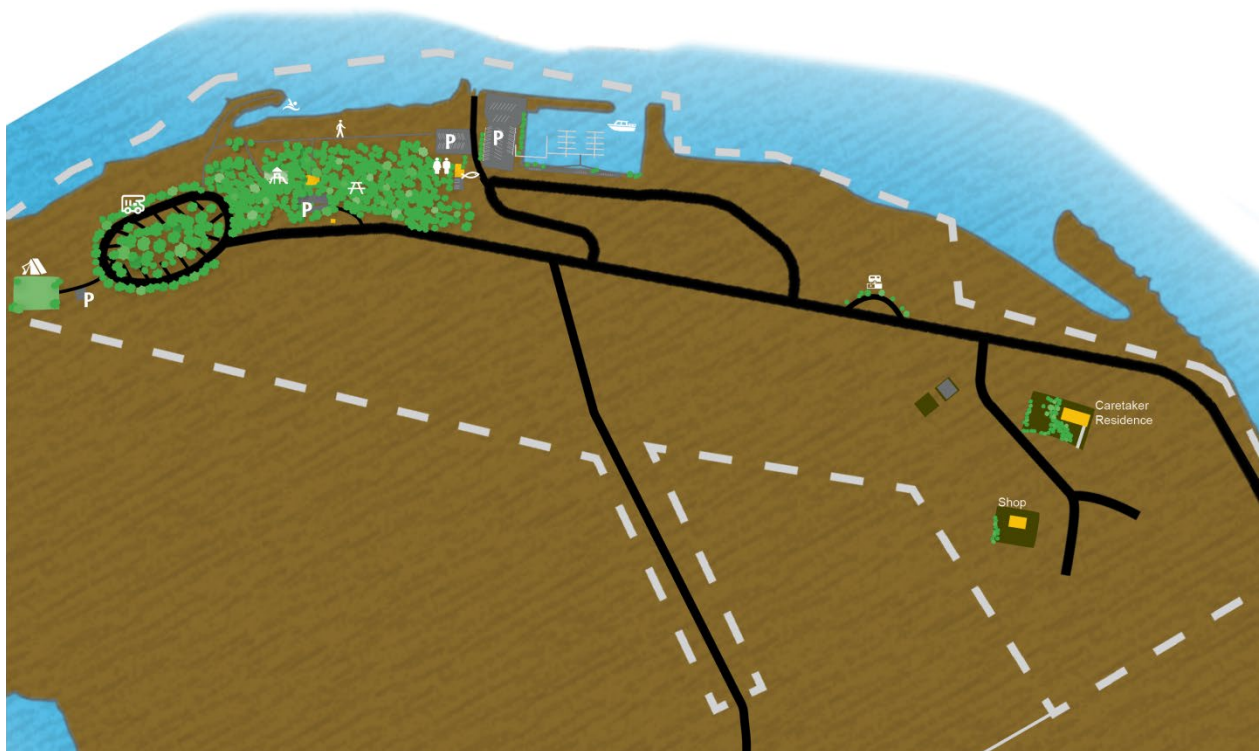


Figure III: Crow Butte Park



Recreational activities at the Park include:



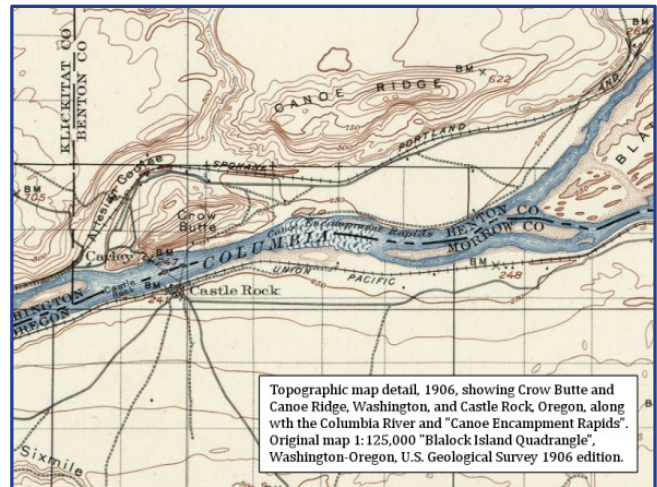
## History

The site of Crow Butte Park is Crow Butte Island – yet the island formation is anthropogenic. Prior to being an island, the site was a hill that connected to land, but when the John Day Dam was built, the Columbia River waters wrapped around the hill and the island formed.

Crow Butte Park was originally opened in the 1970s and was established as a recreational amenity to mitigate the impacts of constructing McNary Dam (which is located several miles upstream). The Park is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers. From April 1977 through October 2002, the facility was operated as a Washington State Park. The State Park was closed, to the great disappointment of the surrounding community, due to budget constraints.

The significance of the Park's importance to the local community was validated in 2003 when a non-profit organization, identified as the Crow Butte Park Association, was created by a group of local businesses and residents to keep the Park open. The group reached a lease agreement with the Corps of Engineers to operate and maintain the Park. Due to the financial difficulties of operating and maintaining a thirty-year-old park facility that had not had ongoing system upgrades, the Crow Butte Park Association contacted the Port of Benton to assume park operations and maintenance responsibilities.

The Port of Benton recognized the value of the Park for recreation and tourism, and also



recognized the support to the Port from surrounding farms and residences in the form of taxes, despite their relative distance from other Port functions and facilities. The Port of Benton reached a twenty-five year lease agreement with the Corps of Engineers in 2007 to operate and maintain this “centerpiece” of the local community.

Crow Butte Island is culturally significant to the local Tribes. The Port's decision to invest in the Park followed meetings with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. On August 28, 2007, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla conducted a ceremony to formally bless the park.

Since 2008, over three million dollars in capital investments have been made in the Park. Almost 30 percent of that funding is from the Port.

***When homesteading began in the area in 1850, the Crow family was one of the first to come west. The site of their homestead is now under the waters of the nearby John Day Reservoir. During a 1941 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers survey, the name "Crow Butte" was assigned to the area.***

*- Washington State Parks and Recreation Website*

## ***Working Relationships***

### **Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla**

The Port maintains an excellent working relationship with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. For any and all ground disturbing activities, the Port consults with the Tribe and the Army Corps of Engineers and the Tribes perform all ground monitoring activity. An Interlocal Agreement exists between the Port and the Tribe, describing this arrangement.

### **State Recreation and Conservation Office**

The Port works closely with the State Recreation and Conservation (RCO) office and staff, as RCO provides generous and needed funding to support the Port's capital improvement projects.

### **Army Corps of Engineers**

As a part of the lease agreement, the Port provides annual management plan reports to the Corps. The reports summarize the operations and maintenance activities performed, discuss improvements made to the site, document costs and income, and provide detailed information on electrical system inspections and application of pesticides. The Corps also performs an annual in person inspection.

### **Neighboring Owners and Land Managers**

The Port maintains positive relationships with the neighboring land owner and land managers, which includes the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and Fish and Wildlife.

### **Fishing Treaty Site**

The Crow Butte Treaty Fishing Access Site is located on the island; the Port has the responsibility to permit unrestricted, uncompensated ingress and egress on the designated routes to members, employees, agents and authorized users of the site.

### **Counties**

Benton and Klickitat Counties have provided financial support in the past to support the Port's efforts to restore, upgrade, and generally improve the Park's facilities. Additional support in the future, if provided, could be immensely helpful in sustaining and expanding the Park's role in providing recreational opportunities to area residents, and in leveraging grant funding.





# goals and objectives

**Goals and objectives guide the future of Crow Butte Park.** The Port should reference the goals and objectives stated within this chapter before making decisions related to the Park.

The goals are established through on-going interactions with Park users and the Park Coordinator and the Port's Administrative and Maintenance staff, as well as the Park's online user survey (see Appendix B). Where goals are formulated as desired outcomes, objectives are created as measurable, specific steps that support the related goal.

Objectives are created through ongoing interactions between users and staff and through the online survey. The objectives are then refined and prioritized as they support the Port's long-range planning by Port Administrative and Maintenance staff and as approved on an annual basis by the Port Commissioners.

## ***Goal 1: Maintain and rehabilitate park facilities.***

**Objective 1.1:** Maintain all facilities in a manner that keeps them in safe and attractive conditions, supports a diverse ecosystem, and minimizes ongoing maintenance costs.

**Objective 1.2:** Update facilities to provide ADA access.

**Objective 1.3:** Replace the contact station at the park entrance.

**Objective 1.4:** Improve and maintain the Park to maximize safety, usability, appeal and identity.

**Objective 1.5:** Develop a maintenance scheduling plan to address ongoing maintenance tasks and help to prioritize staffing.

**Objective 1.6:** Integrate maintenance considerations in the planning and design of facilities.

**Objective 1.7:** Expand the number of campsites where possible to increase park capacity.

**Objective 1.8:** Minimize impervious surfaces and integrate natural drainage systems.

**Objective 1.9:** Obtain the services of qualified professionals in the disciplines of natural resource management (e.g. habitat and wildlife biologist, arborist, horticulturist, etc.) where knowledge gaps exist among the Port staff.

## ***Goal 2: Provide a high quality of service to Park partners and users.***

**Objective 2.1:** Provide current and easily accessible information about the Park on the Port's and Park's website.

**Objective 2.2:** Continue interacting with Park users to learn about their experiences at the Park and thoughts about the Park services and facilities.

**Objective 2.3:** Provide annual management plans to the Army Corps of Engineers.

**Objective 2.4:** Maintain relationships with Klickitat County, Benton County and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla for future partnership opportunities.

**Objective 2.5:** Provide funding and staff time for routine park maintenance.

**Objective 2.6:** Improve the communication system at the Park, providing Wi-Fi service and landline telephones for safety and convenience purposes.

## ***Goal 3: Seek grant opportunities for further development.***

**Objective 3.1:** Update the Crow Butte Master Plan to stay in compliance with RCO guidelines and to continue eligibility for RCO funding.

**Objective 3.2:** Apply for RCO funding for upgrades to the contact station, which currently does not have water, restrooms or any air conditioning.

**Objective 3.3:** Apply for RCO funding to fund upgrades and expansion to the water and sewer system (which includes a lagoon system) at the park, replacing broken lines and updating the system.

**Objective 3.4:** Re-engage former financial partners to participate in future capital projects.

## ***Goal 4: Maintain a unique, welcoming, and safe atmosphere.***

**Objective 4.1:** Balance maintaining habitat and aesthetic value with maintaining visibility within the Park.

**Objective 4.2:** Maintain safety and security while providing privacy at individual RV sites.

**Objective 4.3:** Consider adding additional cameras within the Park to enhance the perception of safety and minimize crime.



## ***Goal 5: Operate the Park in a fiscally responsible manner.***

**Objective 5.1:** Budget adequate funding for maintenance and operation based on public use of facilities, and at a level necessary to avoid future need for costly complete renovations or replacement of the Park and facilities.

## ***Goal 6: Maintain public awareness of the Park.***

**Objective 6.1:** Ensure that consistent and effective outreach is conducted, to inform Port District residents and other potential users of the Park, its amenities and facilities. Focus outreach efforts on communication with special user groups, i.e. disabled persons and youth.

**Objective 6.2:** Continue public relations and publicity efforts to inform park users of the wide-range of available recreational opportunities.

**Objective 6.3:** Maintain interpretive signage and historical / cultural information available at the Park, and seek opportunities to add additional information when capital facilities improvements are made.

**Objective 6.4:** Monitor park and recreation needs and trends periodically through questionnaires, surveys, meetings, and research.

**Objective 6.5:** Encourage cultural and special events to take place in the park.

## ***Goal 7: Maintain excellent environmental stewardship.***

**Objective 7.1:** Begin the processes to obtain permits as early as possible, especially along shoreline and ecologically sensitive areas, and where multiple agencies are involved.

**Objective 7.2:** Support habitat improvements and site restoration efforts that will provide benefits to watersheds, wetlands, and salmon habitat.

**Objective 7.3:** Preserve, protect and enhance areas found in the Park that have significant historic or cultural value to the community and to Tribes.

**Objective 7.4:** Maintain public access (physical and visual) to the shoreline.

**Objective 7.5:** Control invasive species and use native species, where possible, when replacing or enhancing vegetation.

**Objective 7.6:** Avoid or minimize the application of fertilizers and pesticides through the use of Integrated Pest Management practices, especially near water bodies.

**Objective 7.7:** Where it is safe and practicable, retain dead standing trees, fallen trees, logs, and vegetative litter, such as fallen branches, twigs, and leaves to preserve water and habitat in the shoreline areas.

**Objective 7.8:** Maximize the use of native and naturalized plants that are biologically appropriate for the region to avoid or minimize use of irrigation, fertilizers, and pesticides.





The Port of Benton has been diligent in maintaining, improving and upgrading Park facilities since finalizing the Park's long-term lease with the Corps of Engineers.

Since the last Master Plan update the Port has completed numerous projects and upgrades to the Park's facilities. This facility inventory identifies the park and recreational assets within the Crow Butte Park. It is broken into four main categories: camping, day use area, marina and boat basin, and general facilities. The following aerial map illustrates the major facilities and sites at Crow Butte Park.



## ***General Facilities***

The Park includes many other facilities not directly associated with camping, day use, or boating. These include:

- ▶ Dump station
- ▶ Paved (asphalt) roads
- ▶ 20 acres of grass (irrigated with sprinklers)
- ▶ Hiking trails (graveled and paved)
- ▶ Contact station
- ▶ Caretaker's residence
- ▶ Shop building / office



## ***Water System***

The Port maintains a “Group A” water system, classified as a “transient non-community” type by the Washington State Department of Health, Office of Drinking Water. There are 63 total connections, including one residential connection, with a distribution capacity of 50,000 gallons. The system is subject to annual monitoring. Several pumps (located in pump houses) and an elevated cistern comprise the system's components.

## ***Sewer System***

The Port's sewer system treats materials from the dump station, sewage from the caretaker's residence, and sewage from the RV sites and bathrooms. The system includes a lift station, a mini grinder in the RV restroom, and two lagoons which are used to treat the effluent. The lagoons are showing signs of age, as they have not been replaced since the park was first opened. Also, they are not sufficiently sized to accommodate for future planned expansion of RV sites at the marina.

## ***Irrigation System***

Irrigation water is used to water the landscaped areas of the Park. The irrigation system is in need of some basic upgrades and improvements.

## ***Bathroom Facilities***

There are several bathroom facilities throughout the Park. In all cases, the fixtures including toilets are not of an “industrial” nature and should be replaced with steel/ heavy-duty fixtures.



## ***Camping***

Camping is offered at the Park for both RV and tent campers. Amenities associated with the campsites include:

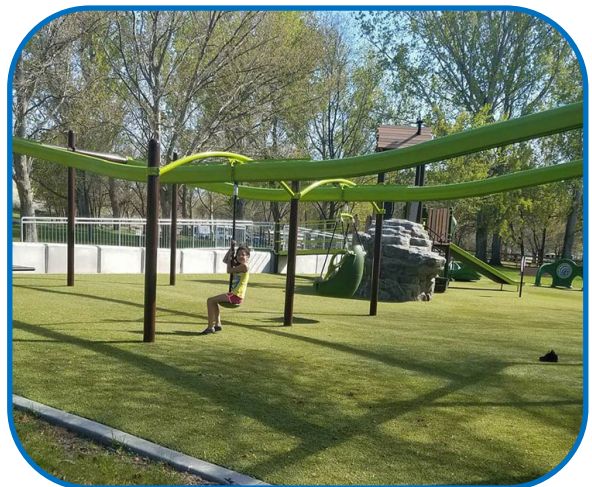
- ▶ 50 tent/ RV sites including 24 pull-through sites. Sizes vary from 65' to 90' each.
- ▶ 20, 30 and 50 amp electrical outlets
- ▶ Primitive campground (used for group camping in tents) with vault toilet
- ▶ Water and sewer hook-ups
- ▶ Mature shade trees
- ▶ Grill and fire pit at each site
- ▶ Restrooms and showers (men's / women's)
- ▶ Privacy fencing at certain locations



## ***Day Use Area***

The day use area is open until dusk and is available without reservations for \$6 per car for up to five people. The day use amenities include:

- ▶ Picnic shelters
  - ▷ East, west, and central gazebo
  - ▷ Group gazebo
- ▶ Running water
- ▶ Grass and mature shade trees
- ▶ Restrooms and showers
- ▶ Swimming area
- ▶ Concession stand
- ▶ Playground
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ Interpretive signage relating to cultural and tribal features





## ***Marina and Boat Basin***

The marina is open year-round for users and has annual or per-day boat launch passes. The boat basin is a sheltered bay that allows for temporary moorage and includes:

- ▶ 17 – 10' x 30' boat slips
- ▶ 4 – 20' x 40' boat slips
- ▶ 2-lane boat launch with gangway (access to Columbia River)
- ▶ Single lane concrete boat launch (access to the boat basin)
- ▶ Floating dock (60 percent open grate, with ADA-accessible gangway)
- ▶ Fish cleaning station
- ▶ Restroom
- ▶ ADA access



### ***A Changing River***

*Crow Butte is considered by tribal people to be a traditional cultural property due to its use as a winter village, fishing area, and a place of other traditional practices from pre-contact to contemporary times. Mostly Umatilla people populated the area although other nearby tribes also lived here. At the time of the signing of the Treaty of 1855, the Umatilla, along with the Walla Walla and the Cayuse, became known as The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.*

*When the Treaty reservation was established in the 1860s, tribal populations were ushered off the Columbia River and the many tributaries that had sustained them for millennia. However, the Tribes retained inherent rights to hunt, fish, graze, and gather within their original lands. Their Treaty rights continue to be exercised today.*

*When the dams were built, traditional use areas were flooded. In a settlement with the Tribes, the U.S. government promised to create access to fishing locations through the use of “in-lieu” sites. Today, Crow Butte hosts one of the 32 “in-lieu” Treaty Fishing Access Sites managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers along the mid-Columbia River. This helps continue the right to tribal subsistence fishing.*

*The Confederated Tribes hope to protect this area for the future and minimize further impacts to the water and the land. Ancient lessons teach responsibility for people, the land, and everything that lives here. Despite changing policies on a changed river, Tribal people persist in applying cultural knowledge and practices. The Tribes’ government works with individual citizens as well as local, state, and federal agencies to protect natural and cultural resources here and elsewhere throughout the vast Tribal homeland.*

*(Source: Interpretive signage at Crow Butte)*



## Park Use

It is important to assess the needs of the community with respect to the Park. One way to accomplish this is to monitor park use over time.

**Table 1** shows the number of Crow Butte Park patrons from 2014 to 2019. These numbers are estimates, based on the revenue collection for each category of campers, day use visitors, and boat launch users. While the boat launches are used year-round, use of the camping and day use facilities are limited to March 15 to October 15 each year, which is 214 days.

**Table 1:** Crow Butte Park Users (Estimate) 2014 -2019

Year	RV and Tent Camping	Day Use	Boat Launch
<b>2014</b>	9,798	2,798	2,249
<b>2015</b>	9,962	2,799	2,233
<b>2016</b>	12,571	3,323	3,566
<b>2017</b>	12,654	3,464	543
<b>2018</b>	9,386	2,898	3,137
<b>2019</b>	17,069	3,422	2,558

From 2014 to 2019, the number of day use visitors varied from 2,798 persons per season to a high of 3,464 persons in 2017. Overall, the figures show an average trend of a 14 percent increase in this category, for that time period.

Likewise, the number of campers (both RVs and tent campers) varied from a low of 9,386 persons per season in 2018, to a high of 17,069 persons in 2019. These figures show that there can be a wide variation of users from one year to another, which can likely be attributed to factors such as weather and how holidays fall on the calendar. In general terms, camping use is on the rise.

The RV Camp areas commonly reach maximum capacity throughout the spring and summer weekends. In response to the popularity and steady growth of RV Camp reservations, the Port is planning for future construction of eighteen RV camp sites adjacent to the Marina.

Finally, boat launch use varied greatly from 2014 to 2019, with a low point in 2017 of only 543 users, to over 3,500 users in 2016. Boat launch use does not appear to show any distinctive trend over time.

## Revenues

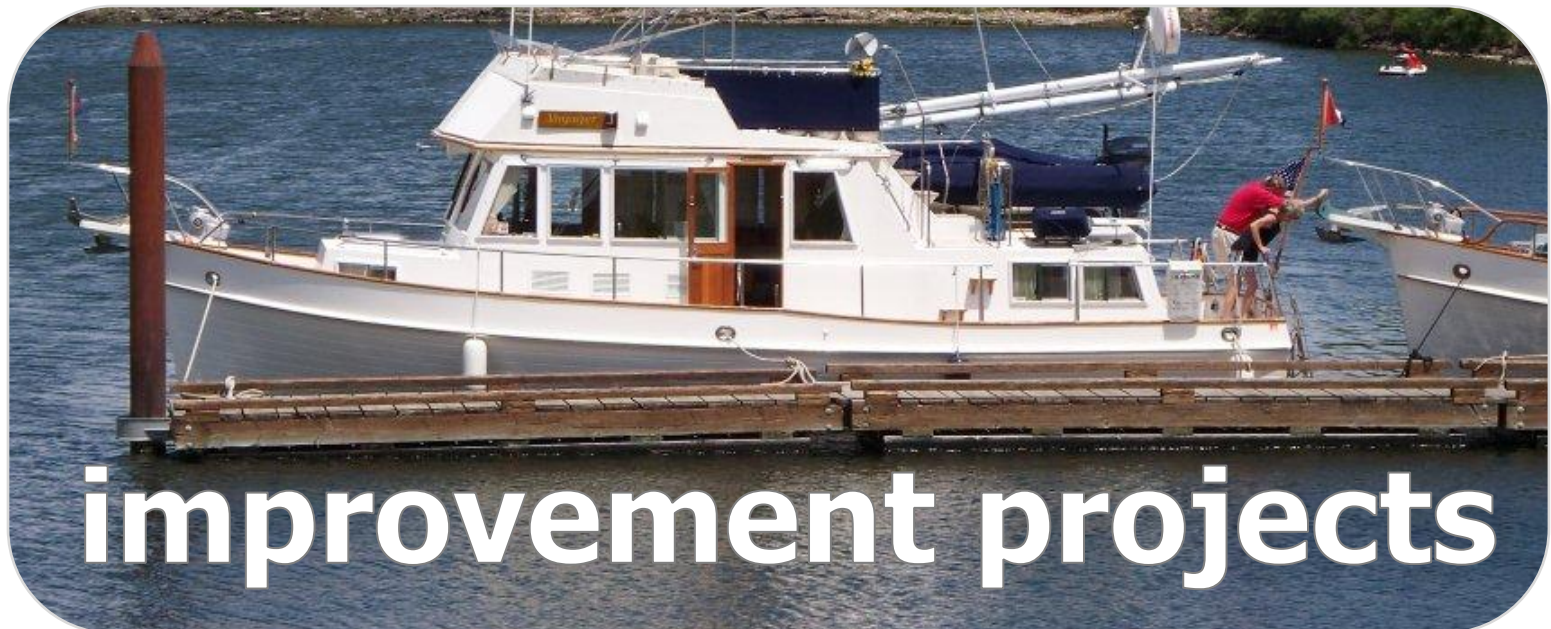
The Park generates revenue from fees collected for the various uses of the Park. Some revenue numbers are included in **Table 2**. This table does not include fees received for showers, or donations. In addition, each year the Park receives a \$500.00 donation from the Horse Heaven Hills Association.

**Table 2:** Crow Butte Park Revenue by Use, 2014 -2019

Year	RV and Tent Camping	Day Use	Boat Launch	Total
2014	\$125,408	\$5,596	\$7,494	\$138,498
2015	\$127,508	\$5,597	\$7,444	\$140,549
2016	\$160,910	\$6,645	\$11,887	\$179,442
2017	\$161,971	\$6,928	\$11,591	\$180,490
2018	\$120,141	\$5,796	\$10,455	\$136,392
2019	\$218,489	\$6,844	\$8,528	\$233,861
Total	\$914,427	\$37,406	\$57,399	\$1,009,232

In conclusion, the Park is frequently used and enjoyed by campers, boaters, and day use patrons alike.





This section identifies park improvement projects. First, recent and ongoing work to upgrade and plan for upgrades to the park is discussed. Next, project permitting and environmental considerations are identified. Finally, a capital facilities plan details the work program and planned improvements to the park.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following projects have been completed since adoption of the 2014 Master Plan Update:

### ***Crow Butte Park Playground Development - COMPLETE***

A grant was obtained from RCO which covered 48 percent of the \$349,247 project to renovate Crow Butte Park. The funds were used to improve the overall recreation experience for visitors and campground users of all ages and disabilities. The project included the purchase and installation of playground equipment, development of access routes, and the designation of three new ADA parking spaces in the day use area. The project was complete in March 2019.



### ***Crow Butte Marina Planning - COMPLETE***

The Port obtained RCO funds for 75 percent of the project with a 25 percent match to complete the planning needed for the future redevelopment of the Crow Butte Park Marina. In 2013, this project resulted in architectural designs, construction drawings, engineering and required permits for the redevelopment of the main boat launch, dock system, floating dock extension, and boat slips. Planning was also completed for the future construction of the fish cleaning station, installation of a prefabricated restroom and improvements for vehicular parking.

### ***Crow Butte Large Boat Slip Addition - COMPLETE***

Eleven new boat slips for transient moorage were added in the Crow Butte Park Marina Boat Basin in 2019. The boat slips include seven 10' x 30' boats slips, four 20' x 40' boats slips and a new gangway to provide ADA access to the southern portion of the site. In addition, 12 power pedestals were added, the existing access route was resurfaced, two new ADA parking spaces were created and running water and solar lights for security were added to the new slips. This project was funded through an RCO grant (87 percent) and a Port match (13 percent) for a total cost of \$760,527.



### ***Crow Butte Marina Improvements - COMPLETE***

This project, completed in 2015, used RCO grant funding to enhance the recreational boating and fishing experience for all visitors of Crow Butte Park. RCO grants provided 75 percent of the funding necessary to aid in replacing the main boat launch, boat basin floating dock and gangway. Additional improvements included ADA compliant access, a new restroom, fish cleaning station, twelve new boat slips and associated electrical, water, and sewer line extensions. This project also improved the environmental features of the site, replacing existing creosote wood pilings with environmentally safe steel pilings and using open steel grating for increased light transmission and to meet environmental criteria.





### ***Crow Butte Boater's Campground Planning – UNDERWAY***

The Crow Butte Boater's Campground will be a 20-space campground adjacent to the Crow Butte Marina. Each slip will contain full frost-free hookups and parking for boat trailers and other water toys. Other site amenities will include a restroom with shower, gazebo, picnic areas, connecting pathways, and interpretative signage. The feasibility of adding yurts and a group camping area near the marina will be included as part of the project planning. This is an ongoing project that began in March 2018 and has a planned completion date of June 2020. The total project funding is \$285,000 with an RCO Grant comprising 74 percent of that amount.





## Summary of Small Projects Completed

In addition to the larger-scale capital improvement projects listed in the previous sections, the Port has also accomplished many small-scale projects, as shown on the following timeline:

2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Sewer lift station upgrade</li><li>•Asphalt repairs made in the campground</li><li>•Milfoil treatment to marina and adjoining beach</li><li>•Installation of a new gazebo, on a concrete slab</li><li>•Privacy fence repairs and tree trimming</li></ul>
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Replaced damaged privacy fences</li><li>•Installed day-use area gazebo</li><li>•Tree and brush pruning</li><li>•Mitigation area established (next to mail boat launch) with 5,000 sq. ft. of invasive vegetation removal and replacement with certified riparian, native trees, shrubs and grasses</li></ul>
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Addition of permanent fire pits to all 50 camp sites</li><li>•Replacement of old privacy fences</li><li>•Purchase of tractor/ mower</li><li>•Trimmed trees and brush</li><li>•Updated flooring in caretaker's residence</li><li>•Installed emergency lights at the domestic water pump house</li><li>•Marina upgrade improvement</li></ul>
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Replaced aging fences</li><li>•Milfoil treatment in boat basin and adjoining areas</li><li>•Updated sewer lift station and existing pipes</li></ul>
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Installation of remote controll irrigation valves in the day use and campground areas</li><li>•Milfoil treatment</li><li>•Installed new park signage</li><li>•Replaced two staff utility vehicles</li><li>•Office improvements</li><li>•Shoulder repairs to the causeway road</li><li>•Replaced/ improved the irrigation system</li></ul>
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Milfoil treatment</li><li>•Installation of remote controll irrigation valves in the day use and campground areas</li><li>•Installed new park signage</li><li>•Cleared shoreline vegetation and debris</li><li>•Installed new fencing between the campground and day use areas</li><li>•Peformed tree trimming</li><li>•Installed a new pump for the water system</li></ul>
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Ongoing maintenance and repairs.</li></ul>

## PROJECT PERMITTING

**Land use activities and development of Crow Butte Park involves numerous regulatory agencies and permits due to its location.**

Benton County is the local regulating jurisdiction. The County Comprehensive Plan designates the Park as “public” and the zoning as “park district”. Development on the site must adhere to Benton County Code’s park district regulations. Typically, an environmental review is also required, depending on the size of the project. The environmental review will be done through the use of a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist, unless an EIS is required.

The Columbia River is considered a Shoreline of Statewide Significance. The shoreline jurisdiction encompasses the river, land within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark of the waterway, their floodways, contiguous 100-year floodplain extending up to 200 feet inland of the floodway, and associated wetlands. All proposed uses and development occurring within the shoreline jurisdiction are regulated by the Benton County Shoreline Master Program (SMP). Through the SMP, it is recognized that the shoreline is a major resource that should be protected and preserved. Goals of these shorelines consistent with RCW 90.58.020 include increased public access and increased recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline. It is important these opportunities are appropriately sited and compatible with the natural environment. A Shoreline Substantial Development Permit is issued by Benton County to ensure these goals, and the regulations of the SMP are being met. The JARPA, described below, can be used as the application form for a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit, Shoreline Conditional Use Permit, Shoreline Variance, and/or Shoreline Exemption with the local government.

To streamline the environmental permitting process associated with shoreline jurisdiction development, multiple regulatory agencies

joined forces to create one application. The Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) can be used to apply for more than one permit at a time from various agencies including the Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and local government.

The Department of Ecology uses the JARPA for 401 water quality certification to ensure a project complies with state or federally approved water quality standards and other aquatic resource protection requirements.

It is necessary to obtain a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) from the Department of Fish and Wildlife if the project involves work that will use, divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow or bed of any waters of the state, which includes the Columbia River. The JARPA is used as the application form for a HPA.

The JARPA is used for two permits from the Army Corps, Section 10 and Section 404. The Section 10 permit is for activities that could obstruct or alter navigable waters – which include the Columbia River. A Section 404 permit regulates the discharge of dredged or fill materials to help protect the nation’s waters. As the Park is owned by the Corps, and operated by the Port, Corps approval is necessary for any development beyond just Section 10 and Section 404 permitting.

Protected or priority species in the area include deer, coyote, waterfowl, eagle (Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle), owls and snakes. Salmon run in the Columbia River.

Critical areas such as wetlands, steep slopes, and shorelines provide valuable natural functions such as water purification and wildlife habitat as well as opportunities for passive recreation such as walking and bird watching.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

The table on the following page provides an estimated schedule of costs and items for capital improvements at the Park. The figures listed are estimates. Given the Park's rather remote and rural location, costs are typically higher as compared to projects which would be done in the Tri-Cities.

### Project funding

The port does not have the ability to obtain funding sources which cities and counties can typically use to fund capital improvements for parks, such as impact fees, sales tax revenues, etc.

One of the primary sources of State grant funding is through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). RCO administers several grant programs for recreation and habitat conservation purposes including:

- ▶ Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)
- ▶ Boating Facilities Program (BFP)
- ▶ Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG)
- ▶ Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP)
- ▶ Firearms and Archery Range Recreation Program (FARR)
- ▶ Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- ▶ Marine Shoreline Protection (MSP)
- ▶ Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
- ▶ Salmon Recovery
- ▶ Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)
- ▶ Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF)





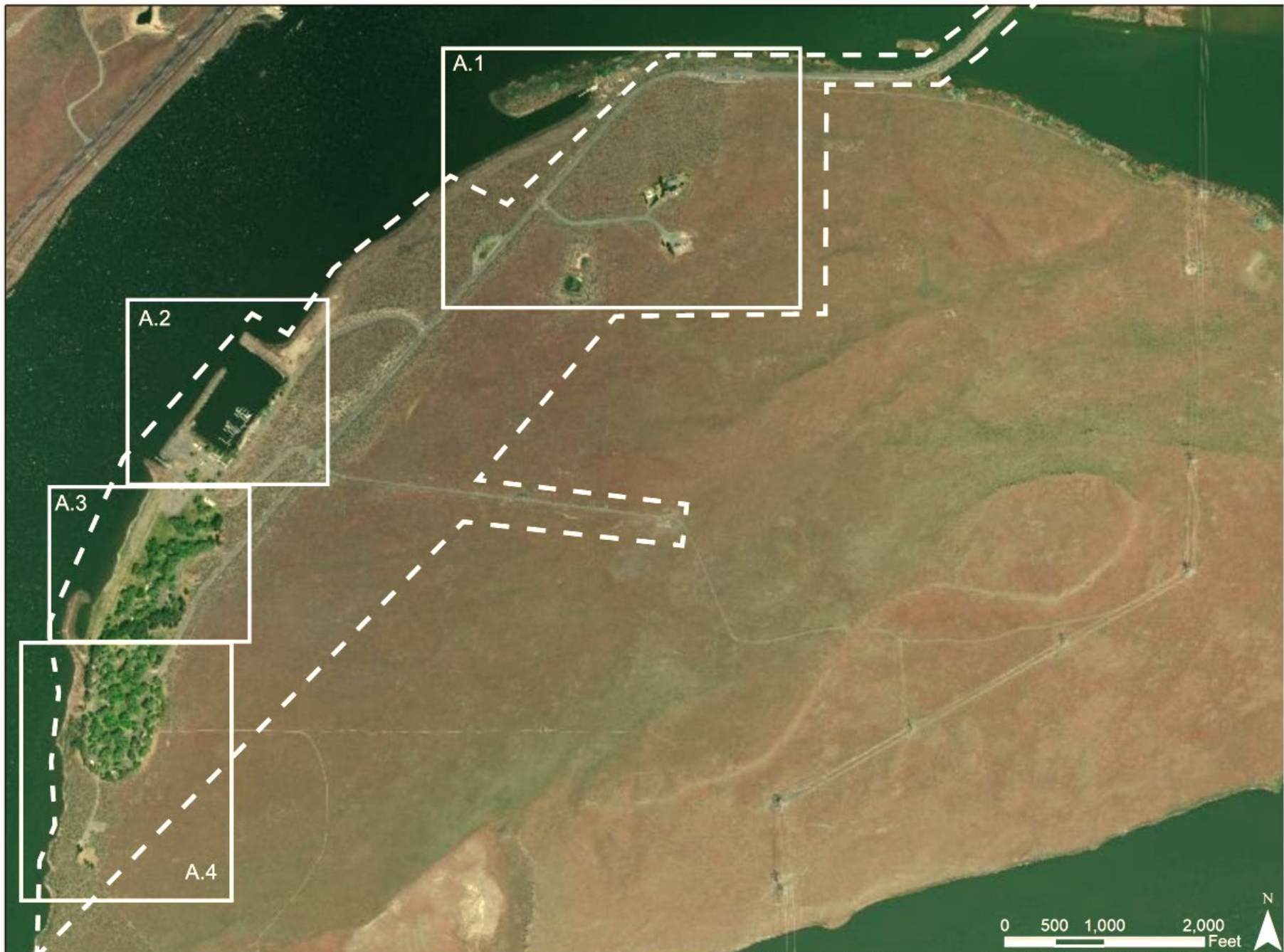
**Table 3: Capital Improvement Plan, 2020-202**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
ANNUAL ACTIVITIES (TYPICALLY PORT FUNDING)								
Pavement repairs, including shoulder work	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Crack sealing & seal coating of park access road & parking lots, pavement markings	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Irrigation Replacement / repair	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
WORK PROGRAM (CONTINGENT ON GRANT FUNDING, WITH PORT MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS)								
Remodel caretaker's residence	\$25,000							
Sewer line cleanout and repair	\$50,000							
Tree trimming	\$40,000							
Prepare O&M manuals for sewer, water systems	\$30,000							
Remove and replace damaged / dangerous trees	\$10,000	\$10,000						
Upgrade communication systems		\$120,000						
Replace the lagoons		\$400,000						
Contact station relocation / add bathroom		\$150,000						
Replacement of park signs and kiosks		\$20,000						
Construct boater's RV Campground		\$3,200,000						
Install second sewer lift station			\$150,000					
Upgrade bathroom facilities to heavy-duty fixtures			\$40,000					
Remodel concession building to expand service area, add first aid room				\$80,000				
Stabilize Park Ranger Residence/shop Access Rd				\$150,000				
Upgrade and expand group camp (potable water, additional turf, irrigation)					\$80,000			
Expand swimming beach area						\$200,000		
Rehab sanitary sewer & potable water system - cistern, pumps, valves, fittings						\$250,000		
Park Plan update							\$32,000	
Replace fire pits at each RV camp site								\$25,000
Construct tour boat dock								\$850,000

# APPENDIX A

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The following are Crow Butte Planning Maps, updated from the 2014 Master Plan.









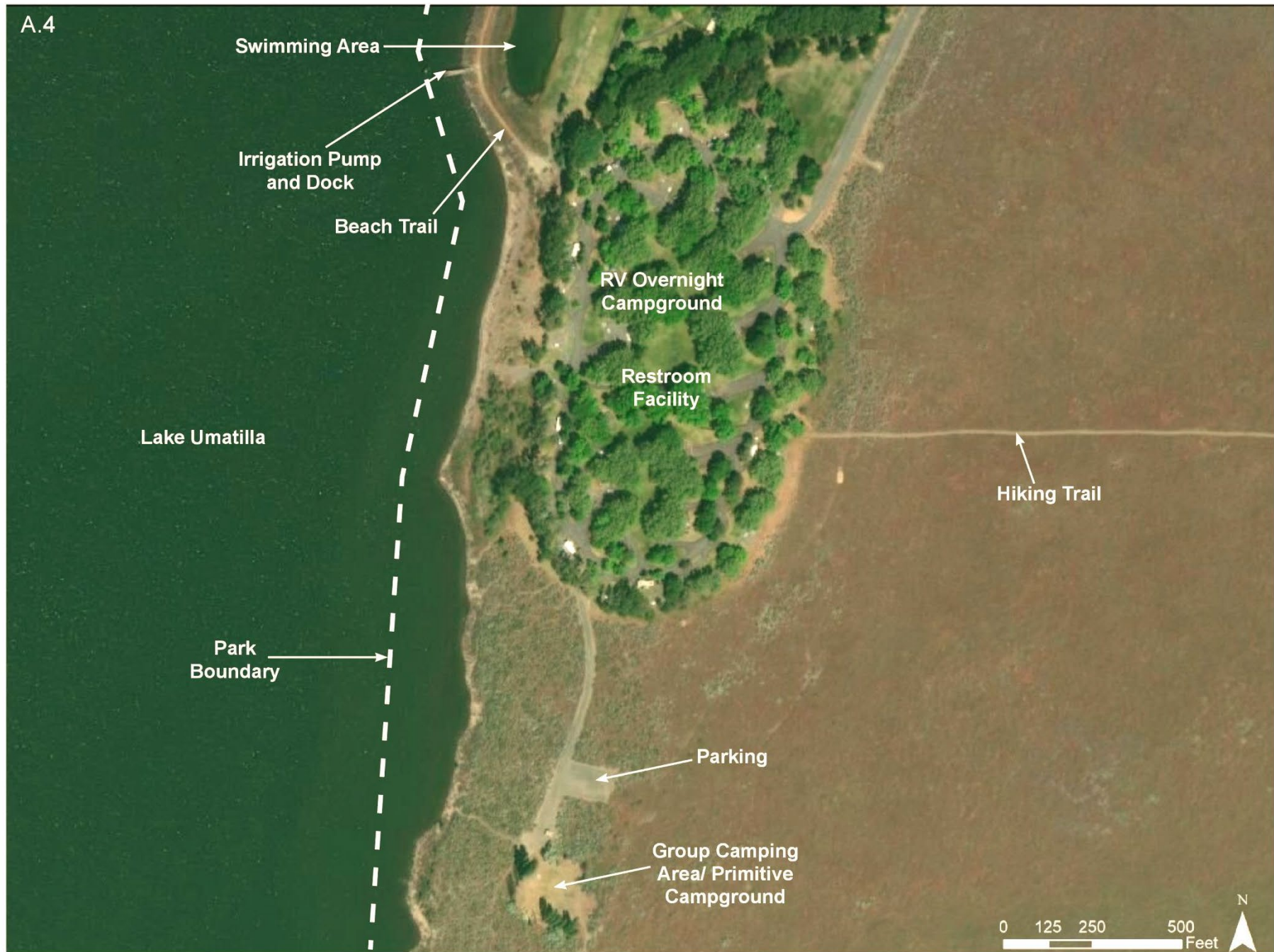
A.2











# APPENDIX B

In January and February 2020 a Park survey was conducted online. The survey was available for access via smart phones as well as typical desktop computers. The Port posted information and updates about the survey on their Facebook pages. We also gathered comments left on the Park's Facebook page.

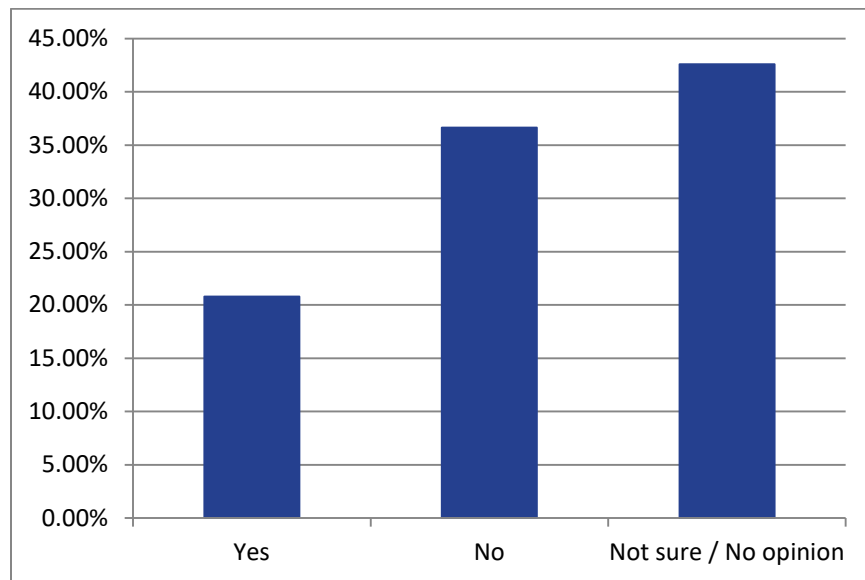
This appendix summarizes the responses. The survey included 16 questions. 109 responses were received and analyzed.

The survey is not intended to be a statistically valid survey. Rather, the survey is an instrument to roughly gauge the position of the public on issues. It is important to note the priorities and issues that were discovered when analyzing the completed surveys.

## Questions and Responses

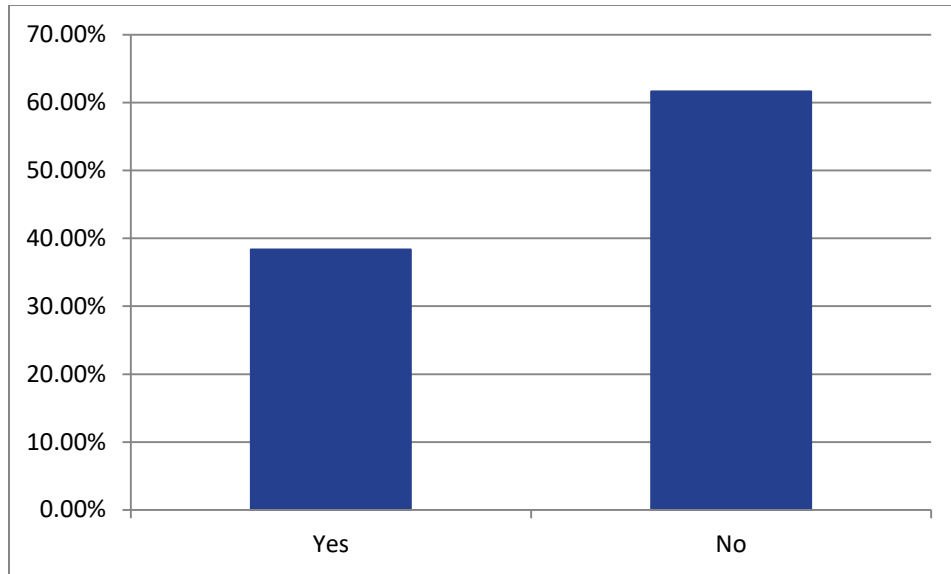
### ***Question 1: Have you used boating facilities at Crow Butte before?***

This question allowed for three answers “yes” “no” and “not sure/ no opinion”. Of the 101 responses, 43 answered “not sure/ no opinion”, 37 answered “no” and 21 answered “yes”. Six participants skipped this question.



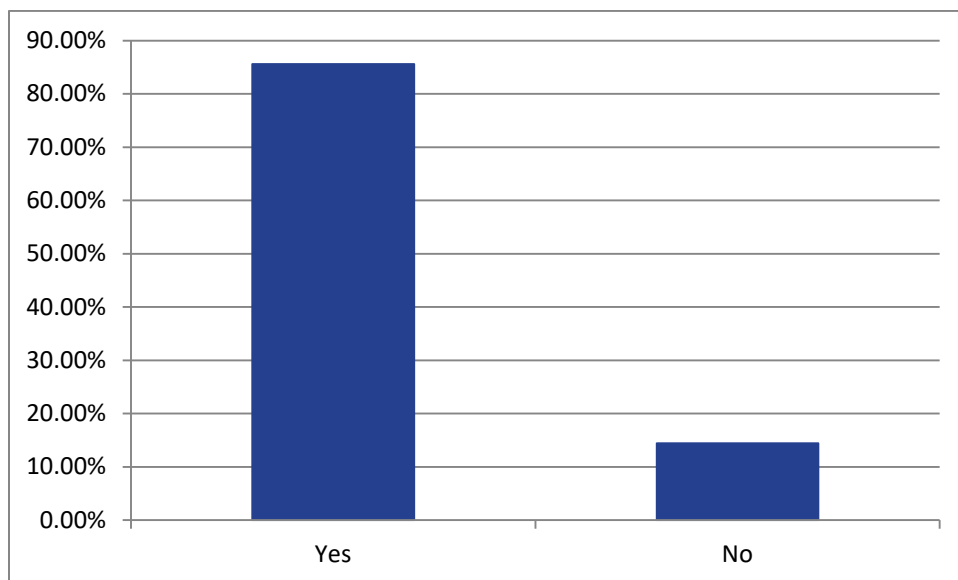
### ***Question 2: Do you utilize the boat launch during the off-season (October through March)? [This question was only asked of participants who answered “yes” to Question 1.]***

73 respondents answered the question of if they utilize the boat launch during the off-season. 34 respondents skipped this question. Of the 73 who answered 28 said “yes” and 45 said “no”.



**Question 3: Have you used the camping facilities at Crow Butte before?**

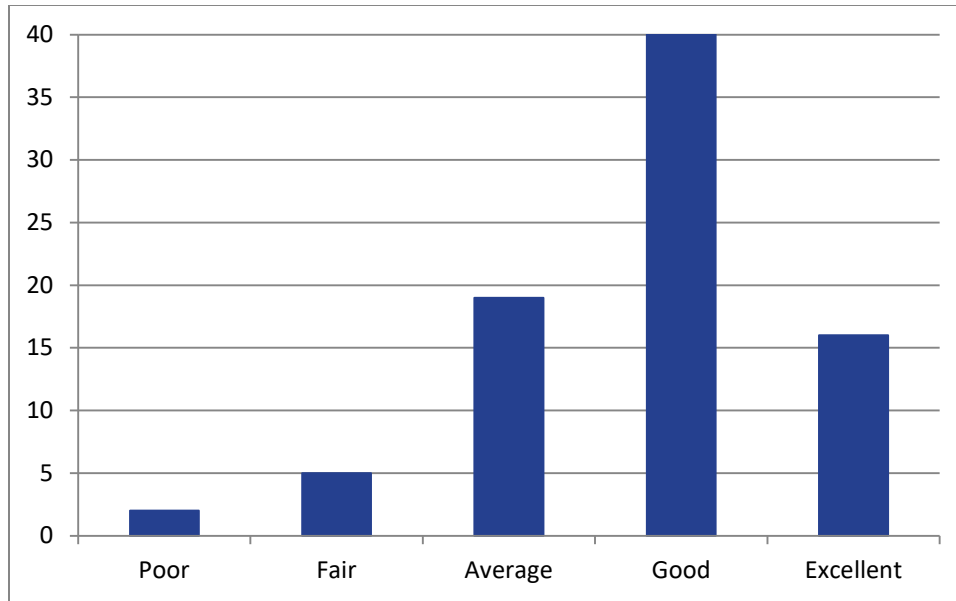
Overwhelmingly the response in regards to if respondents use the camping facilities was “yes”. Of the 104 responses 89 answered “yes” and 15 answered “no”.



**Question 4: How easy did you find the reservation process? [This question was only asked of participants who answered “yes” to Question 3.]**

When asked to rate the reservation process respondents could choose between “poor” “fair” “average” “good” or “excellent”. Fifty-one percent of respondents indicated “good” followed by 22 percent rating it “average”, 19 percent rating it as “excellent,” 6 percent for “fair” and 2 percent rated it “poor.”



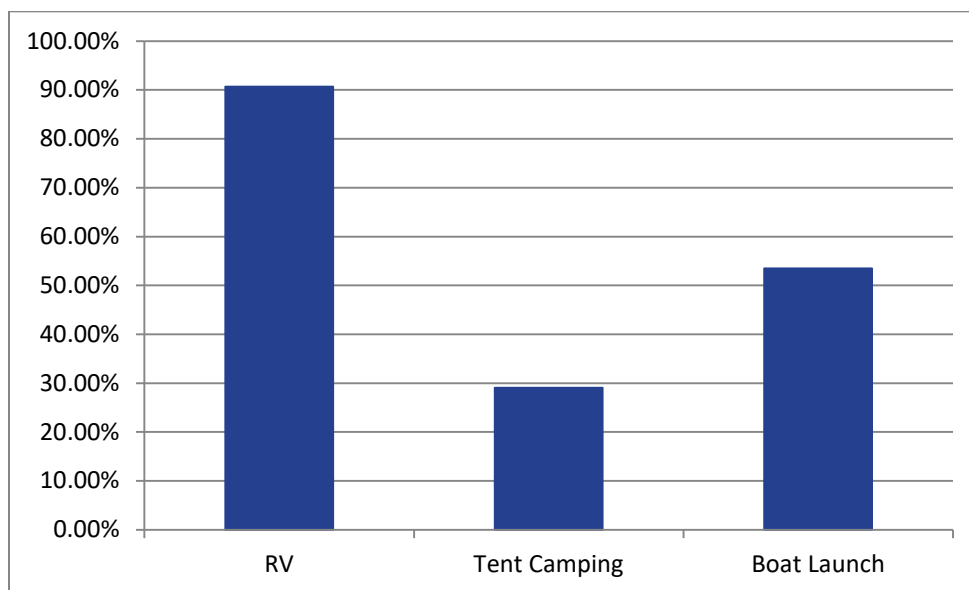


**Question 5: How many nights do you typically stay when you camp at Crow Butte? [This question was only asked of participants who answered “yes” to Question 3.]**

There was a wide range of responses when asked how many nights the respondent typically spent at Crow Butte. Answers ranged from one night to 10-12 nights. The average response was 3 nights. The response that occurred the most was two nights.

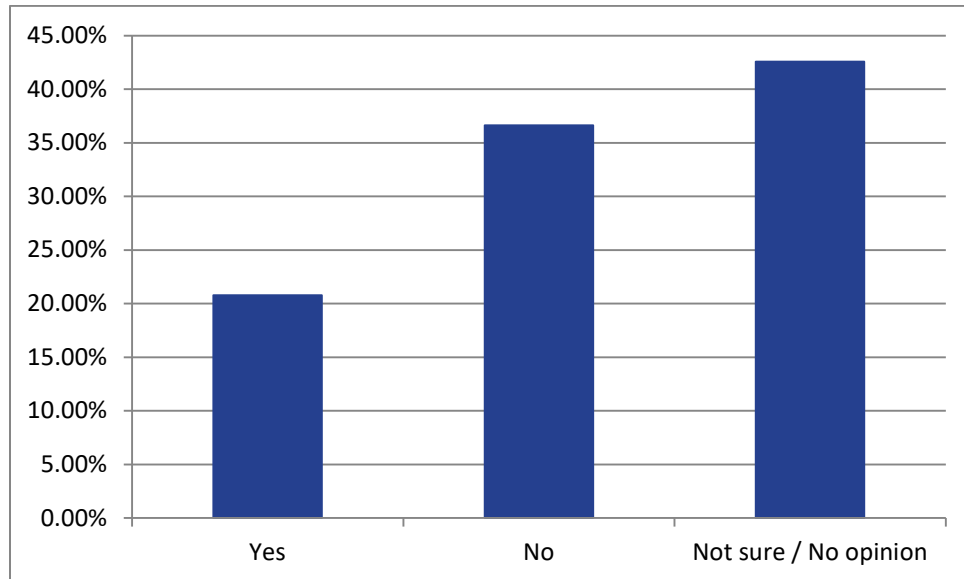
**Question 6: When you camp at Crow Butte, do you use: (check all that apply:) RV, Tent Camping, Boat Launch [This question was only asked of participants who answered “yes” to Question 3.]**

On this question, participants checked all responses that applied. Of the 86 responses, 78 used the RV area, 25 participated in tent camping, and 46 used the boat launch.



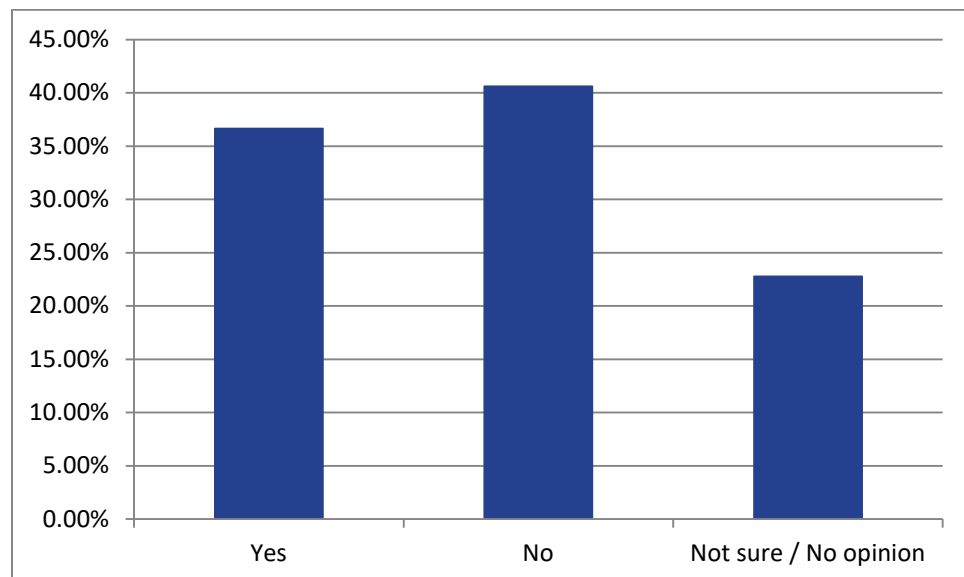
**Question 7: Do you think the boating area needs to be upgraded?**

When asked if the boating area needs to be upgraded 101 people answered, and 6 skipped the question. The majority, 43, said “not sure/ no opinion”; 37 answered “no”; 21 answered “yes”.



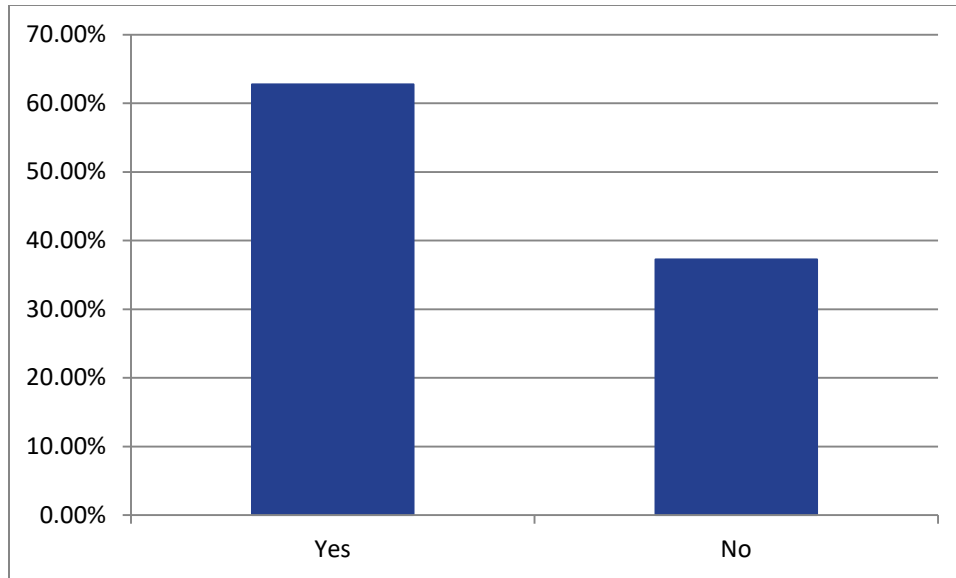
**Question 8: Do you think the RV camping area needs to be upgraded?**

Responses were split on whether or not the RV camping area needs to be upgraded. 37 responded “yes”, 41 responded “no” and 23 responded “not sure/ no opinion”.



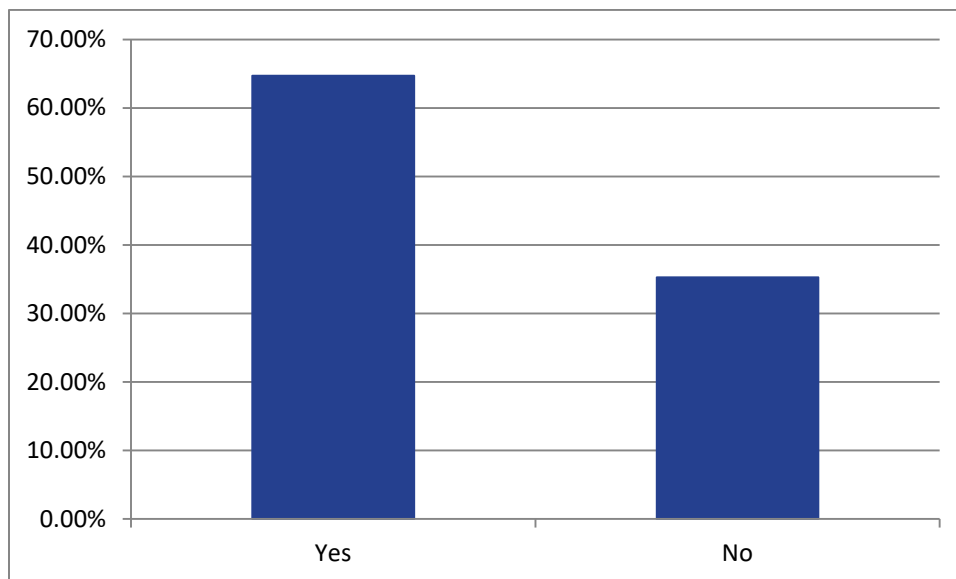
**Question 9: Do you bring children to the park?**

The majority of the 102 responders indicated that they brought children to the park. 64 responded “yes” and 38 responded “no”.



**Question 10: Do you participate in any water sport activities at the park?**

Almost double the respondents answered “yes” to this question than answered “no”. 66 respondents indicated “yes” and 36 indicated “no”.

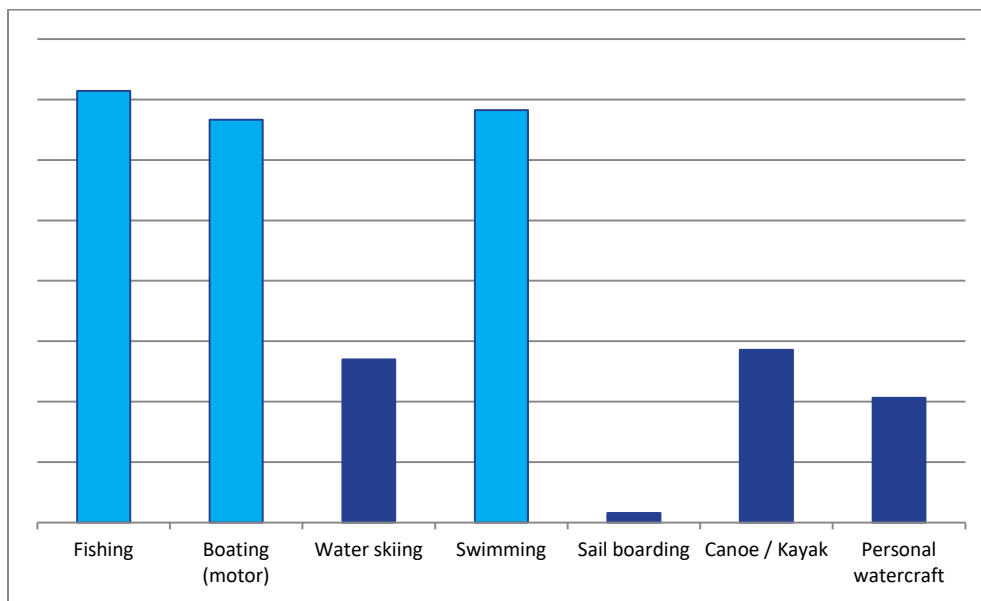


**Question 11: Which water sport activities do you participate in at Crow Butte? [This question was only asked of participants who answered “yes” to Question 10.]**

The survey provided seven responses for water sport activities – fishing, boating (motor), water skiing, swimming, sail boarding, canoe/ kayak, and personal watercraft. Respondents could also choose “other” and specify the type of water sport or activity they did at Crow Butte. Respondents could select as many of the choices as they wanted to.

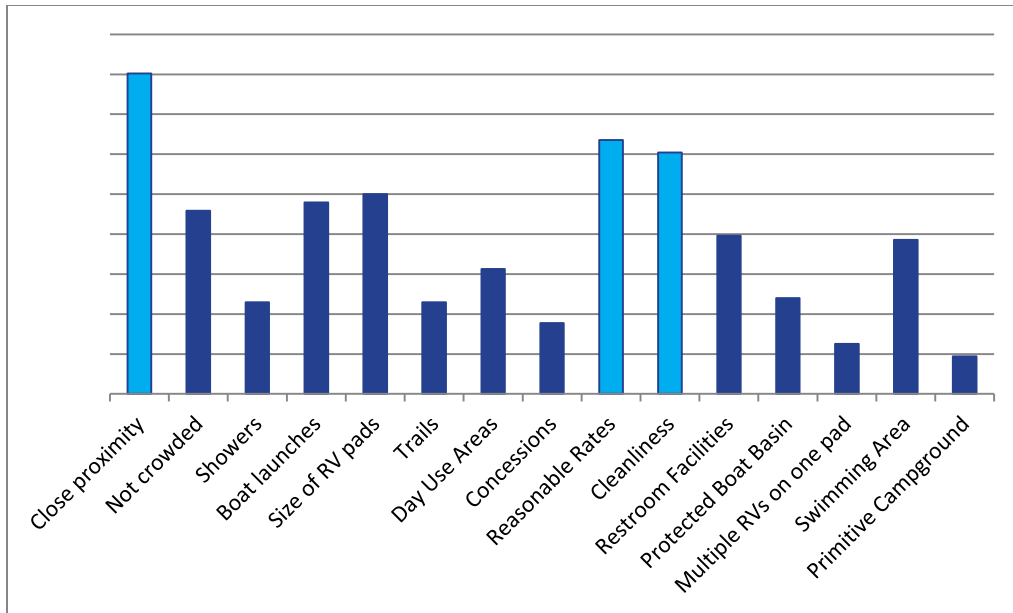


The top three water sport activities were fishing, swimming, and boating (motor) with all getting over 40 responses. These were followed by canoe/ kayak, water skiing, personal watercraft, other activities, and sail boarding. The other activities that were specified included: Sailing, paddle boarding, rafting, and kids just playing in the water. In a 2008 survey, the same question was asked and that year the top three responses, in order, were boating, swimming and fishing.



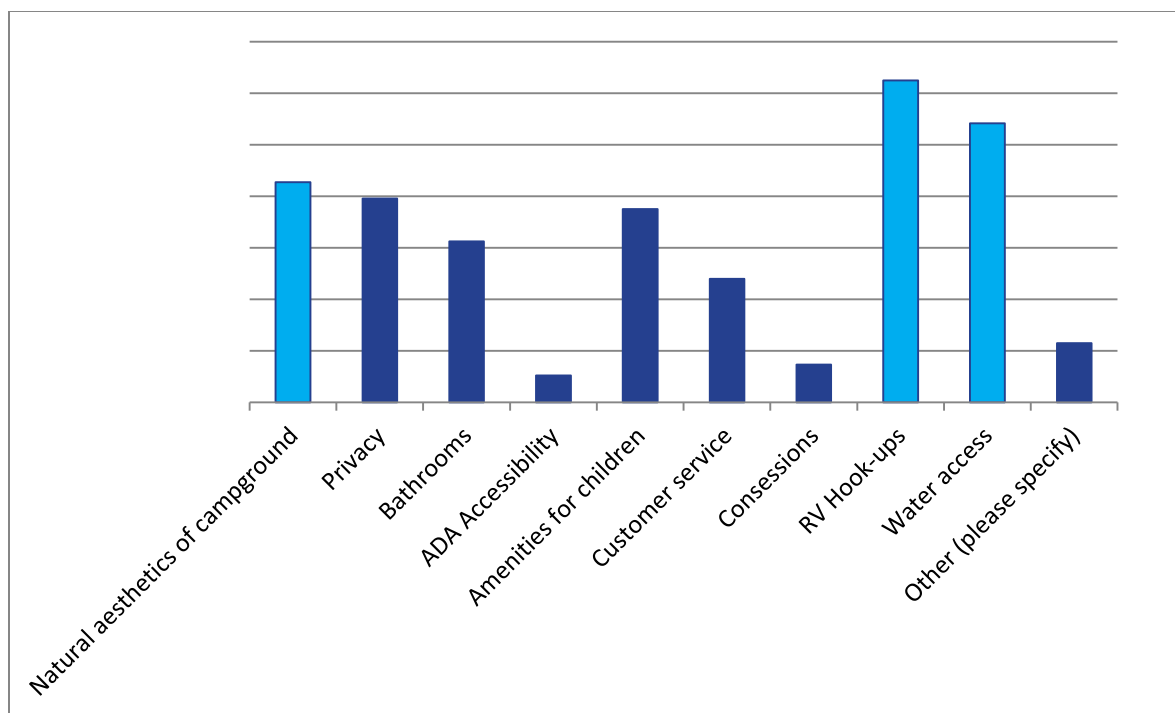
**Question 12: What amenities attract you to Crow Butte?**

Respondents were able to check multiple answers about what attracted them to Crow Butte. There were 96 responses to this answer. Most of the respondents indicated “close proximity” with 77 respondents picking that, followed by 61 for reasonable rates, 58 for cleanliness, 48 for size of RV pads, 46 for boat launches, and 44 for not crowded. The remaining answers, ranked by number of responses were: restroom facilities, swimming area, day use areas, protected boat basin, trails, showers, concessions, multiple RVs on one pad, and primitive campground. In a 2008 survey, the same question was asked and the top five responses (in order) were cleanliness, reasonable rates, size of RV pads, not crowded, and boat launches. This shows that sentiment about the park’s best features have not changed much over the years.



**Question 13: In general, what is most important to you in a campground?**

Respondents were asked to choose from 9 listed options, or specify another answer. Respondents could pick multiple answers. The most important amenity in a campground, according to this survey, is RV hook-ups with 60 respondents indicating that. Water access was a close second with 52 respondents selecting that. These were followed by natural aesthetics of campground (41), privacy (38), amenities for children (36), bathrooms (30), customer service (23), other (11), concessions (7), ADA accessibility (5). Answers listed as “other” included RV accessibility’s; a grassy, shady area for dogs to be off leash; legal cannabis state; dog friendly; firepits and wind blocks; have not seen campground; destroy the spiders!; Dave & Christy, they were the best!; quiet areas for tent campers -- no generators/radios/RV’s.



**Question 14: What other services you would like to see at Crow Butte Park?**

This question of the survey did not have any pre-set questions; rather the respondent had a text box to fill in with their thoughts. Answers included:

- *More camp sites for the busy weekends*
- *Secure Long Term Boat Moorage*
- *Swimming areas*
- *I love close by but don't have a boat. I would like to be able to purchase a season pass or something similar. We love going down to enjoy they area!*
- *Clean bathrooms*
- *WiFi would be awesome! Develop more walking trails...maybe from primitive camp around tip of island. Promote wind surfing destination. The main channel side of the island has some nice areas already beach friendly. It seems to work very well down river in The Dalles and Hood River area. This could be a big draw to your camping areas. We would like to see expansion to boat marina...maybe a secured area where people can rent seasonal boat slips. This has worked well in other parks...the area is secured by a locked gate limiting access on certain sections of the dock.*
- *Gated area for seasonal boat moorage / overnight sleepaboard*
- *More gazebo shelters for day picnickers*
- *more campsites*
- *The beach area along the campground could be greatly improved to attract kayakers and other water sports.*

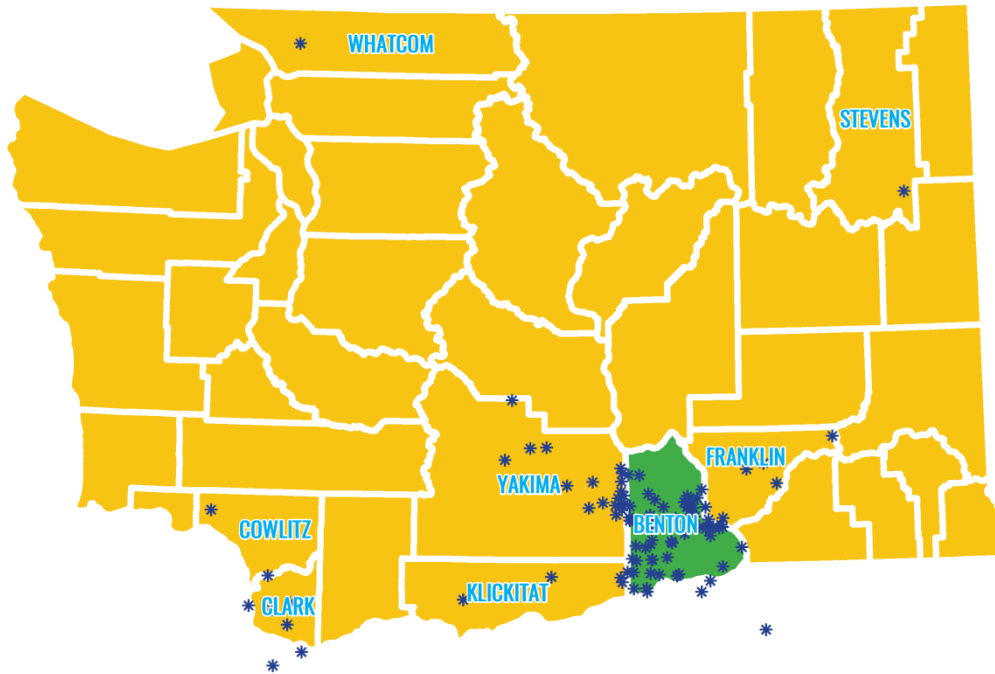


- *A grassy, shady, area for dogs to be off leash; benches &/or tables would be nice as well.*
- *Nice fish cleaning station, with running water*
- *More campsites*
- *More camp spots around docks, maybe more parking in boat launch area I am disabled and can not walk good so very Important to me and other alike*
- *The reservation system could be better. I would like to see the option to cancel on the site so that someone else might have the opportunity to camp. The only way we ever get a spot is to email the campground host and see if there is anything open. Usually we can get in that way.*
- *More camping spots always fills up too fast*
- *I would love to see it open year round for locals and I would also love if there were a parking pass available for purchase for the locals. We don't own a boat so we were told we cannot buy a boat parking pass to park our vehicle to take the children to the park. \$5 to park each time we go to the park gets expensive when the kids want to go often.*
- *Restrooms and showers need to be updated/replaced! Haven't changed in over 30 years. Spiders are a big concern the last 2 years, spraying during our stay was very disturbing.*
- *I would like to see less spiders. They are horrible in July*
- *Works fine for us*
- *More spots...amphitheatre*
- *Would like to see rules enforced like they were in years past. Dogs on leashes being a big one. Bathrooms used to be spotless. Last few years they haven't been good. However The last weekend in October of 2019 they were good. Upkeep of hookups and camp spots have been neglected the past few years as well. Garbage left from previous campers.*
- *Can't think of anything*
- *Destroy the spiders!*
- *I would like to see more camping spots on other places of the butte*
- *More bug spraying*
- *Open fish cleaning station*
- *Upgrade showers in RV park.*
- *Cleanup camping pads and fire pit areas.*
- *Better care of grass at RV exits points to camp area.*
- *Non smoking/drinking camp host.*
- *Enforce dogs on leashes rule.*
- *Day use/better rule adherence*
- *I cant think of anything extra I would want to see.*
- *Nothing*
- *More parking for boat trailers*

- *Better reservation process.. I don't believe customers should be able to reserve their spots for 5+ years at a time, with no down payment. If so, I would have paid in cash for a 5 year reservation! Many times there was empty spots on a holiday weekend because of "reserved spots". Not cool with me..*
- *bait shop before the launch, like night crawlers, or sturgeon bait sold at the entrance house, including ice, pop and snacks*
- *Swimming pool*
- *Keep it open*
- *I honestly cannot think of anything.*
- *Biking trails and walking paths*
- *Boat docks at the campground area.*
- *Evening events for kids. Maybe karaoke on weekends or a band.*
- *We would like to have a little more developed swimming area, away from boats. We love the campground. Good job!*
- *Wifi*
- *Earlier check in time, 48hr reservation cancellation policy , Not have to pay in full at time of reservations . Most parks require only first night or 10 percent for deposit.*
- *More sites*
- *Earlier check in time and 48 hour reservation cancellation refund and not have to pay in full at time of reservation.*
- *Nothing that I can think of.*
- *Love the place! Just one thing. I would like to see announcements of when the waters are ok to swim in. I live in Kennewick and this is my favorite park, but my kids don't like the drive and not be able to swim. I follow you on Facebook and I'm always ready for the green light when they post about the weather being good there.*
- *it is perfect as it is... do not over do it add unneeded stuff that would change from a campground to a resort..*
- *Easier access to the swimming area, more of a beach type*
- *Cable tv would put you over the top*
- *More camp sites. Maybe special programs like kids fishing derby*

**Question 15: What is your zip code?**

This question was used to help understand where those who responded are from. Zip codes provided indicate respondents reside throughout Washington and Oregon. A majority of the zip codes were from the Tri-Cities area. One postal code from Canada was listed. The location of survey responders is shown on the following map:



**Question 16: Please provide any additional comments:**

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments they wanted to be known. Responses included:

- *It is a beautiful location with established landscaping great potential for a year round recreational area*
- *It is well maintained. Love the area*
- *The spider infestation has been very annoying the last 2 years.*
- *We love CB. Your number one assets to the success of your park are really the staff. We have been going to the park for 30+ years. We usually spent 30-40 days a year there. Before I retired in 2014 I was the supt/principal at Paterson School. The school and park worked together collaboratively to provide outdoor education experiences for our students. This is great for Park and great for school...definitely a win win. That program actually went away when the Port took over the Park.*
- *I have been looking forward to being able to sleep aboard my sailboat and leave it in a safe environment for seasonal use*
- *Would like to see firewood bundles sold at campground and better beach access along the campground.*
- *The Camp Hosts & crew are great to work with and the park is always well kept / clean.*
- *Our family has come there for over 40 years annually. Great camp hosts*
- *We have been going to Crow Butte for years and really like it! Thanks for keeping it clean, assessable and beautiful.*



- *Last year, the restroom/shower area was, at times, closed or non functional. They don't seem to get cleaned on a regular basis either.*
- *Need an arborist to clean up the mature trees. Pave the RV pads.*
- *Thank you for asking for opinions*
- *The play area is nice*
- *Our family reunion is always here, great place for Washington and Oregon residents. We love Crow Butte, thank you!*
- *Reservation system sucks now. Someone can go in and reserve as many spots as they want and leaves even less opportunity than there use to be to get in.*
- *Day use can get really get out of control with garbage and people. Don't like it when the day use people spill into the campground.*
- *None*
- *Seriously destroy the spiders, they have gotten bad over the last few years. Love the park been coming to the park for 30 years. It is something that my family and I look forward to every year. One other thing about the spiders lol. We used to love hiking to the other side of the island and playing in the sand dunes. We used to hang out on the beach on the south west side side of the island by the sand dunes. Last time we hiked over, there was no beach access because the brush had overgrown and any small path through the brush was guarded by thousands of spiders and webs. It would be cool to see that area become accessible again. The Port of Benton county does a great job running the park. Your staff is very friendly and courteous. Keep up the great work.*
- *What is there is nice it just needs to expand to other parts of the butte*
- *The spiders are awful*
- *Love the boat area upgrades but would be nice to have better boat launching area.*
- *Thanks*
- *I was told I could reserve 5 spots for the next couple years.*
- *i tow my boat to Crow Butte around 10-15 times per year during the open times of the camp ground, if other amenities were available i would use them almost every time if it was a reliable source to get what i needed*
- *The last 2 years there have been a crazy spider infestation. I have been going to crow butte the past 20 years and always remember spiders but not covering out tent and trickling down from trees as you are eating diner at the tables. The playground was covered as well where my young kids couldn't use the railing or slides.*
- *Fences between spots*
- *Keep it open*
- *Beautiful place and hiking and views*
- *"We love camping here. The playground is excellent - our g'kids have so much fun. Lots of times, we come with a group of retirees and have such a nice time.*
- *We love that your park is SO clean, clean restrooms -very well maintained."*

- *Love this campground. We pull our boat out instead of mooring it because we are afraid to leave it over night unattended. maybe some mooring bouyies in front of the camping spots on the water for those of us chickens would ease congestion at the boat launch.*
- *Please expand the number of RV spots.*
- *Really Enjoy being able to park our RV in the overflow by the boat dock. Like the option of no water/power charges*
- *Should have a frequent camper program. We're there three to five times a year!*
- *We love Crow Butte park but there needs to be a reservation cancellation policy and check in time should be earlier we lose 3 hours coming or going.*
- *There needs to be a reservation cancellation policy. I love this park ♥ The hosts are so welcoming and accommodating!*
- *Love this park!*
- *the park just needs some clean up maintence to make it pretty again*
- *Swimming area is gross. Goose poop all over the beach. Saturday's are also crazy with kids that don't seem to be parented.*
- *Well done*