



# Sandy River Water Trail

## Paddle Guide



## Visitor services along the Water Trail

An abundance of services are available for river users along the entirety of the Sandy River Water Trail.

For visitors to the lower segments of the river, the city of Troutdale offers supplies, restaurants, and gasoline all within minutes of major river access points. Contact the West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce (503) 669-7473 for more information.

Visitors to the middle and upper river segments can find a wide range of services in Sandy and the Villages of Mount Hood along US Highway 26.

The Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce (503) 668-4006 as well as Oregon's Mount Hood Territory (800) 424-3002 can help you locate these services.

EDITION 2: July 2012



Cover Photo by Steve Roelof / Western River Images: **Sandy River**



**Downtown Sandy**

## Water Trail Information:

Please contact the respective site or land managers:

### **Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD):**

1-800-551-6949

[www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org)

### **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

#### **Salem District:**

503-375-5646

[www.blm.gov/or/index.php](http://www.blm.gov/or/index.php)

#### **Metro:**

503-797-1850

[www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)

#### **Portland Water Bureau:**

503-823-7404

[www.portlandonline.com/water/dodgepark](http://www.portlandonline.com/water/dodgepark)

### **City of Sandy**

39250 Pioneer Blvd.

Sandy, OR 97055

[www.cityofsandy.com](http://www.cityofsandy.com) or 503-668-5533

### **City of Troutdale**

104 SE Kibling Ave.

Troutdale, OR

[www.ci.troutdale.or.us](http://www.ci.troutdale.or.us)

General Information: 503-665-5175

Parks and Facilities: 503-666-8303

### **Kayak Clubs and Information**

PDX Kayaker - [www.pdxkayaker.org](http://www.pdxkayaker.org)

[www.sandywatertrail.org](http://www.sandywatertrail.org)

## Welcome to the Sandy River Water Trail – a chance to explore one of Oregon’s most unique rivers!

Now naturally flowing without dams from its water source at Mount Hood, the river flows to the mighty Columbia River. The Sandy River offers paddlers and other recreationists excellent opportunities just minutes from the greater Portland area.

The 38 river miles that make up the Sandy River Water Trail features scenic basalt canyons, rare old growth forest and exciting examples of river restoration in action.

The Sandy River Water Trail Guide provides information and maps to help make your trip safe and enjoyable, with trip suggestions and resources to more in-depth information.



## What is a Water Trail?

Water trails are about connections...connections to public land, parks, open spaces, and other river access opportunities that connect people to the river while emphasizing stewardship and low impact to nature.

Water trails are stretches of rivers mapped out with the intent of creating educational, scenic and rewarding experiences for non-motorized boaters (paddlers). Water trails offer a variety of skill levels while highlighting legal and safe put-in’s and take-out access locations. Water trails also highlight public amenities, such as restrooms and garbage receptacles.

## The Sandy River

Within an hour’s drive from Portland, the Sandy River provides excellent options for river recreation. The lower, more accessible river segments attract visitors during the busy summer season, while the more challenging segments provide a chance to improve paddling skill and experience. The Sandy River provides a full spectrum of rapids, from Class I –flat water to Class IV+ whitewater rapids.

The Sandy River illustrates the complex geologic and natural forces that have shaped the Pacific Northwest. The river moves rapidly through rugged canyons with deep boulders and pools, and gravel bars shaded by tall conifer forests. Weather patterns result in more than 100 inches of annual precipitation at higher elevations.

The Sandy River takes its name from Mount Hood’s Sandy Glacier, which feeds the river with sediment-laden, nutrient rich water. During parts of the year where the snow and glacial melt account for much of the river’s flow, the Sandy can take on a distinct, clouded appearance.

# Safety Guidelines and Emergency Contacts



Adequate preparation is critical to safe paddling. Be sure everyone on board has the training, skill and experience, including self-rescue and assisted rescue experience. Learn as much as you can about the route and any hazards by scouting ahead of where you'll be boating. Keep a sharp lookout for other paddlers and navigation hazards, such as logs, strainers, and submersed rocks. Pick clean lines and learn to "read the river."

## Equipment

The single most important piece of protective equipment is a life jacket (also known as a PFD, personal flotation device). Wearing a PFD will help retain body heat and keep your head above the water. Paddlers are required to have a properly fitting, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket for each person on board if operating a canoe, kayak, raft or boat 16 feet in length or less. All children 12 and younger are required to wear a life jacket when the boat is underway. Remember, life jackets only work if you wear them. The chance of putting one on if your craft capsizes in a swift moving river is nearly impossible.



## Training and Self-Rescue

Paddling education will help you gain experience and learn how to use your strokes, read the river and how to communicate on the water. Learn self-rescue, how to rescue others and practice, practice, practice. If your boat capsizes, float with your feet in front, pointing downstream. Don't fight the current. Use your arms like oars and "steer" toward the bank. Let the current help carry you. Do your best to stay calm and relaxed. Save your energy for exiting where you can.

## Swimming Safety

All rivers have strong currents and hazards underneath the surface posing dangers to swimmers. Even though air temperature is warm in the summer months, the water is fed by snow melt and cold year-round. Even strong swimmers need to know their limitations. Don't swim alone, wear a life jacket and do not drink alcohol because it dehydrates the body and lowers core body temperature, making swimmers more susceptible to hypothermia and muscle cramping.

## Emergency Contact Information

### POLICE, FIRE, MEDICAL EMERGENCY – CALL 9-1-1

Clackamas County Non-Emergency . . . . . 503-665-8211

Multnomah County Non-Emergency . . . . . 503-823-3333

Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center . . . . . 503-674-1122  
[www.legacyhealth.org](http://www.legacyhealth.org)

National Weather Service . . . . . [www.nws.noaa.gov](http://www.nws.noaa.gov)

Paddling.net . . . . . [www.paddling.net/guidelines](http://www.paddling.net/guidelines)

Oregon State Marine Board  
[www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/safety/safety.shtml](http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/safety/safety.shtml)  
<http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/paddlecraft/paddlecraft.shtml>

American Canoe Association . . <http://www.americancanoe.org/>

## You're Responsible!

It is the responsibility of every river user to protect this incredible resource. Appropriate, low-impact use of the Sandy will ensure it stays healthy and beautiful for the future.

## Respect Private Property

While the river is a public resource, it should be assumed that property is “private” unless otherwise noted. Respect all “No Trespassing” and “No Hunting” signs (see Navigability section).

With increased access, the number of paddlers on the Sandy River will increase. Adopting the following principles can help preserve the future of the river for others.

## Leave No Trace

Please review these principles and be sure to learn more about the “Leave No Trace” training opportunities in your area. Leave a site cleaner than you found it.

## Plan Ahead and Go Prepared

- Know the waterway regulations and rules for the area you will visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, navigation hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of peak use.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.

## Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Use campfire amenities in designated parks or use a stove.
- Know the law – visit <http://www.pnwfireprevention.com> to learn more.

## When on Land, Camp and Travel Lightly

- Look for durable surfaces and stay on designated trails to prevent damaging sensitive areas.

## Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach animals or feed them. Feeding wildlife can be bad for their health, their behavior and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and securing your trash.

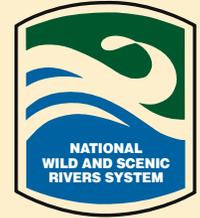
## Be Considerate of Other Users

- Respect other visitors – keep the noise level down and travel in small groups.
- Yield to others – when on the river, communicate with other users. Do not block access to a line or rapid. When on land, allow room for additional boaters who come in behind you.
- Let nature’s sights and sounds prevail – avoid the use of bright lights, radios, electronic devices and other intrusive objects in camp and while on shore.

# River Difficulty Section Ratings

## Wild and Scenic/State Scenic Waterway

In recognition of the river's remarkable values, a 12.5 mile segment of the Sandy River from Dodge Park, downstream to Dabney State Recreation Site is designated as a federal Wild and Scenic River by the U.S. Congress and is also designated as a State Scenic Waterway by the people of Oregon. These designations represent preserving what makes the river so special; amazing scenery, broad recreation opportunities, water quality and prime habitat for fish and wildlife. With the Wild and Scenic designation, restrictions are placed on certain activities such as hydroelectric development, to preserve the river's inherent character.

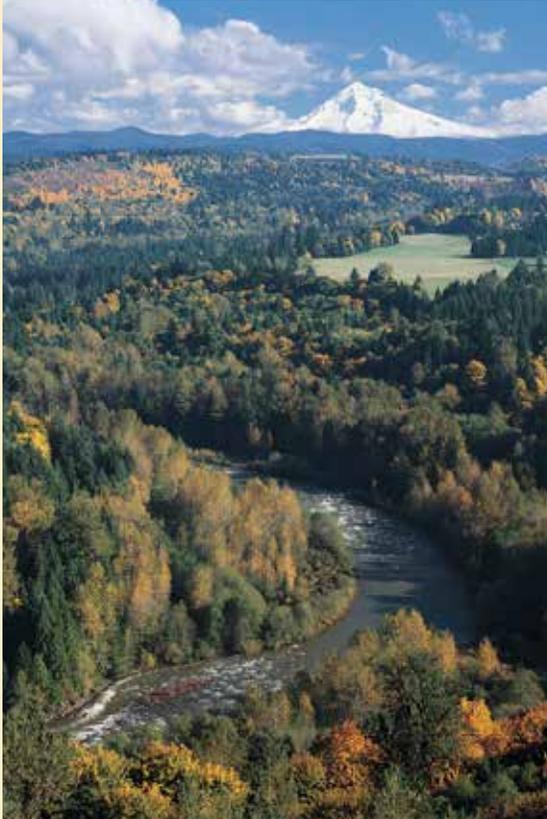


To learn more about Wild and Scenic River designations, visit [www.rivers.org](http://www.rivers.org)

For information on state scenic waterways, visit [www.oregonstateparks.org](http://www.oregonstateparks.org)

## Paddle Summaries

Put-In	Take-Out	River Class (I to V)	Optimal Boating	Craft	Experience Level
Lewis & Clark State Recreation Site	Columbia River Delta	I	Year-round	All paddlecraft (kayaks, canoes, rafts)	Beginner
Dabney State Recreation Site	Lewis & Clark State Recreation Site	I+	Year-round	All paddlecraft (kayaks, canoes, rafts)	Beginner
Oxbow Regional Park	Dabney State Recreation Site	I+	Year-round	All paddlecraft (kayaks, canoes, rafts)	Beginner +
Dodge Park	Oxbow Regional Park	II+	Year-round	Rafts at high river flows	Intermediate
Sandy/Salmon River Confluence	Former Marmot Dam Site	III	Fall/Winter/Spring	Rafts at high river flows	Intermediate
Former Marmot Dam Site	Dodge Park	IV, V	Fall/Winter/Spring	Rafts at high river flows	Advanced



## What to Expect

The Sandy River originates from the slopes of Mount Hood. The river flows nearly 55 miles to the Columbia River. The Sandy River Water Trail begins near Brightwood at RM 38 and flows to the confluence of the Columbia River at RM 0.0

## How to Use this Guide

The Sandy River Water Trail offers an exciting river experience for all levels of paddlers. This guidebook is to be used as an aid to further scouting and research to plan your floats.

The Sandy River has many access points from Dabney State Recreation Site, downstream with roads that run parallel to the river. However, the river's middle and upper sections do not have the same access. Use the information in this guide to determine put-in's and take-outs. Always develop a float plan and let other people know your plan!

The "Popular Floats" are organized based on skill level: beginner, intermediate and advance. Note estimated travel times and recommended skill levels. Do not overestimate your skill.

# Popular Floats

These six trips represent a wide range of river conditions and difficulty levels. Paddle times are estimated based on average river flows and may vary by type of craft and boater skill level. It's important to select a trip that fits your skills.

Current river levels and flow conditions can be found online at the Northwest River Forecast Center:

<http://www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/rfc/>

## BEGINNER - I

### Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site (RM 2) to the Sandy River Delta at the Columbia River (RM 0)

Once you leave the park toward the confluence, you enter the Sandy River Delta. It is not recommended to paddle into the Columbia, where open water conditions vary and high degree of skill is required.

**Estimated paddle time: 1 hour**

## BEGINNER - I+

### Lower Sandy from Dabney State Recreation Site (RM 6) to Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site (RM 2)

This popular float consists of four miles of Class I riffles and numerous access facilities. This section is lined by private property, so paddlers need to stay below the high water mark along the bank. This section is also commonly used for tubing during the summer months.

**Estimated Paddle time: 3 hours**



Sandy River Delta at the Columbia River

## BEGINNER - I+

### Oxbow Regional Park (RM 13) to Dabney State Recreation Site (RM 6)

This 7-mile float goes through swift moving Class I rapids. This is a very popular and busy section of the Sandy used by people with a variety of skill levels including anglers.

**Estimated paddle time: 3.5 hours**



Photo by Steve Roelof / Western River Images

## INTERMEDIATE - II+

### Dodge Park (RM 18.75) to Oxbow Regional Park (RM 12.5)

This scenic 6.25 mile float begins with the Class III “Pipeline” Rapid then eases into numerous pool drops. Class II rapids intertwine with sweeping vistas and abundant wildlife. This is the starting point for Oregon’s State Scenic Waterway and the federal Wild and Scenic river designation.

**Estimated paddle time: 4 hours**



River character between Dodge and Oxbow

## INTERMEDIATE - III

### Sandy-Salmon River Confluence (RM 38) to the Former Marmot Dam Site (RM 30.5)

Scenic cliffs mark the confluence of the Salmon River and the Barlow Park trail system. Paddlers get constant whitewater action with continuous Class II+ boulder gardens. The Alder Creek Rapid (Class III - IV) is known for a dangerous hydraulic effect at higher river flows. Scout/portage on the river right bank. The former Marmot Dam site, the largest dam removal in Oregon, poses many hazards due to the dynamic nature of the newly-restored river. Use extreme caution in this area.

**Estimated paddle time: 3 hours**



Sandy River at the Boulder Garden

## ADVANCED - IV, V

### Former Marmot Dam Site (RM 30.5) to Dodge Park (RM 18.75)

A 6.5 mile portion of this segment is referred to as the “Sandy Gorge,” and is considered an advanced level run. This segment should be considered for experts only with numerous Class IV-V rapids due to the changing sediment conditions. Several professional guides offer trips through the Sandy River Gorge.

**Estimated paddle time: 4 hours**



Sandy River Gorge - Revenue Bridge Rapid  
American Whitewater

Most parks have designated hours of operation and specific rules for alcohol use. Be sure to visit the park website for more information.

## Barlow Trail Park – Sandy Ridge Trailhead

The Barlow Trail Park and Sandy Ridge Trailhead are adjacent recreation sites near the confluence of the Sandy and Salmon Rivers. The area is cooperatively managed by BLM and Clackamas County. There is no boat launch or direct vehicle river access available at either site. River users are encouraged to park at Barlow Trail Park and carry boats across East Barlow Trail Rd at this time. Both sites provide vault restrooms and the Sandy Ridge Trailhead offers paved, pull through parking for vehicles with trailers. BLM has identified the Sandy-Salmon confluence area as a future river access point and day use recreation site, but no date for development has been set.

**Managing Agencies:** Clackamas County Parks, 503-742-4414; Bureau of Land Management (Salem District), 503-375-5646

**Website:** <http://www.co.clackamas.or.us/parks/barlowtrail.htm> or <http://www.blm.gov/or>

*Directions:* From the east side of Sandy, head east on US Highway 26 (Mount Hood Highway) for 11.4 miles. Turn left on Sleepy Hollow Dr soon after a large sign indicating a left turn for Marmot. NOTE: This will be the second turn-off for Sleepy Hollow Rd. Once on Sleepy Hollow, go 0.3 miles and turn right on E Barlow Trail Rd and over the Sandy River. Barlow Trail Park will be on the right in approximately 0.3 miles. The Sandy Ridge Trailhead will be on your right 0.6 miles beyond Barlow Trail Park.

## Dabney State Recreation Site

Dabney State Recreation Site marks the western terminus of the Sandy's National Wild and Scenic

River and State Scenic Waterway designations. Offering views of scenic bluffs and access to large sandy beaches, Dabney has been a popular summer destination for decades. An excellent boat ramp serves rafters, kayakers and floaters. Other amenities include picnic facilities, flush restrooms, and even a well-rated disc golf course. Recreation sites are open from dawn until dusk each day.

**Managing Agency:** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD), 1-800-551-6949

**Website:** <http://www.stateparks.com/dabney.html>

*Directions:* From I-5 take exit 300 onto I-84 E/US-30E toward Portland Airport/The Dalles; Take exit 18 toward Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site/Oxbow Regional Park; Turn left onto Crown Point Hwy; Continue onto Historic Columbia River Hwy; turn right after 2.6 miles and your destination will be on the left.

## Dodge Park

The 14-acre Dodge Park is a popular location for visitors who come to picnic, swim, camp, fish, or utilize the park as a river access point. In 2011, the Portland Water Bureau completed improvements and the park now has new camping opportunities with 5 RV and 15 walk-in tent sites. Dodge Park represents the eastern terminus of the Federal Wild and Scenic and State Scenic Waterway designations. It is the last developed site on the river until the US Forest Service campground at RM 48.

**Managing Agency:** Portland Water Bureau, 503-823-7404

**Website:** <http://www.portlandonline.com/water/dodgepark>

*Directions:* From I-205 N take exit 12 for OR-212 E/ OR-224 E toward Estacada/Mt. Hood; Turn right onto OR-212 E/Carver Rd; Continue to follow OR-212 E; Continue onto SE Compton Rd; Turn right onto SE 352nd Ave; SE 352nd Ave turns left and become SE Dunn Rd; Turn left onto SE Bluff Rd; Turn right onto SE Hudson Rd; Turn right onto SE Lusted Rd; Turn left to stay on SE Lusted Rd.

## Former Marmot Dam Site

Marmot Dam's removal in the fall of 2007 opens up new opportunities for recreation, public access and river recreation on the Sandy. The BLM has identified the site as a new day use recreation area and river access point, but at this time no date for additional development has been set. Currently, a gate prevents vehicle access to the site itself so a 1/4 mile walk from a temporary parking area is necessary. Please note that all commercial and competitive use of the site requires a permit from the BLM.

**Managing Agency:** Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 503-375-5646

**Website:** [www.blm.gov/or/index.php](http://www.blm.gov/or/index.php)

*Directions:* From I-205 take exit 12 for OR-212E/ OR-224 E toward Estacada/Mt Hood; Turn right onto OR-212 E/Carver Rd continue to follow OR-212 E; Slight right toward US-26 E/Mt Hood Hwy (signs for SE 312th Dr/Sandy/Mount Hood); Merge onto US-26 E/Mt Hood Hwy via the ramp to Sandy/Mount Hood; Turn left onto SE Ten Eyck Rd; Take the 2nd left to stay on SE Ten Eyck Rd; continue onto SE Marmot Rd; Keep Left at the fork; Turn right to stay on SE Marmot Rd; Turn right to stay on SE Marmot Rd.

## Glenn Otto Park

Glenn Otto is the most heavily-used park within the City of Troutdale's park system. In the summer the park's large beach is a popular destination for swimming and picnicking. A number of urban park amenities can be found here including shelters, playgrounds, restrooms and potable water. A small stand adjacent to the park offers café snacks (sandwiches, coffee, etc) and fishing gear. To manage summer crowds and ensure public safety, seasonal river rescue and lifeguard stations are located here.

**Managing Agency:** City of Troutdale, 503-665-5175 or 503-666-8303

**Website:** <http://www.ci.troutdale.or.us/parksfacilities/documents/glennottopark.htm>

*Directions: From I-205 take exit 22 to merge onto I-84 E/US-30E toward US-30/The Dalles; Take exit 18 toward Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site/Oxbow Regional Park; Turn left onto Crown Point Hwy; Take the 1st right onto E Historic Columbia River Hwy; destination will be on the left.*

## Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site

Located on the Historic Columbia River Highway and just south of the I-84 interchange, a signed pull-through and boat ramp provide good river access. The park is heavily visited by locals and visitors alike, often serving as the take-out location for trips originating upstream at Dabney State Recreation Site. The park has a focus on interpretation, with a self-guided botanical tour and historical panels. Recreation sites are open from dawn until dusk each day.

**Managing Agency:** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD), 1-800-551-6949

**Website:** [http://www.stateparks.com/lewis\\_and\\_clark\\_multnomah.html](http://www.stateparks.com/lewis_and_clark_multnomah.html)

*Directions: From I-205 take exit to merge onto I-84 E/US-30E toward US-30/The Dalles; Take exit 18 toward Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site/Oxbow Regional Park; Turn left onto Crown Point Hwy; destination will be on the right.*

## Oxbow Park

Located in the scenic Sandy River Gorge, Oxbow Regional Park offers the most extensive infrastructure and wide ranging recreation opportunities on the river. At 1,200 acres, the park provides river users a large trail system, a well-developed and obvious river access point and even coin-operated showers. Oxbow is also the river's best visitor information source, with rangers on site, an entrance booth and numerous kiosks. The river draws rafters and kayakers and offers anglers some of the best winter steelhead and salmon fishing in Oregon.

**Managing Agency:** Metro Parks, 503-757-1850

**Website:** <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=150>

*Directions: From I-205 take exit to merge onto I-84 E/US-30E toward US-30/The Dalles; Take exit 18 toward Lewis and Clark State Recreation Site/Oxbow Regional Park; Turn left onto Crown Point Hwy; destination will be on the right.*

## Areas Administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM-managed lands along the water trail are un-developed and do not have amenities or public infrastructure. It is your responsibility as a river user to protect the river's natural and aesthetic beauty to preserve your access. While on BLM-managed lands:

- Pack out what you pack in – Leave No Trace
- Obey camping and hunting closures
- Respect adjacent private property and stay on public land (punishable as trespassing)
- Dispose of human waste by digging a hole (4" to 6" deep) and at least 200 feet away from water sources.
- Avoid trampling riverside vegetation and stay on established pathways.

**Website:** <http://www.blm.gov/or/index.php>

**Phone:** 503-375-5646



# Navigability

## Your River Access Rights

This water trail guide is for the Sandy River from river mile (RM) 0.0, the confluence of the Sandy River with the Columbia River, to RM 37.5, the confluence of the Salmon River from the Sandy River.

The State of Oregon owns the bed and banks below the ordinary high water line because the Sandy River has been defined by the state as “navigable.” This means the public has the right to use the land for any legal activity allowed on other public lands, including hiking, camping, picnicking and boating. Going above the ordinary high water line onto private land is considered trespassing, unless it is necessary for portage (to go around) a navigation obstruction or you have permission from the land owner. If you are found to be trespassing on private land for any other purpose, you can be cited.

In addition, the following restrictions apply on public use of the bed and banks of the Sandy River (RM 0.0 to RM 37.5):

- 1) Public lands are closed to all uses between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. year-round.
- 2) No open fires are allowed at any time from May 1 to November 1 each year.

**For additional information about your navigability rights, visit:** <http://www.oregonstatelands.us/DSL>



Department of State Lands  
775 Summer St. NE Suite 100  
Salem, OR 97301-1279  
Phone: 503-986-5200

## LEGEND

### Ownership and Boundaries:

-  Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
-  Mt. Hood National Forest
-  State, Regional or Local Government
-  Private Land
-  Incorporated City Boundary
-  Portland General Electric (PGE) Area
-  Parks and River Access Areas
-  Bull Run Public Closure Area Indicator

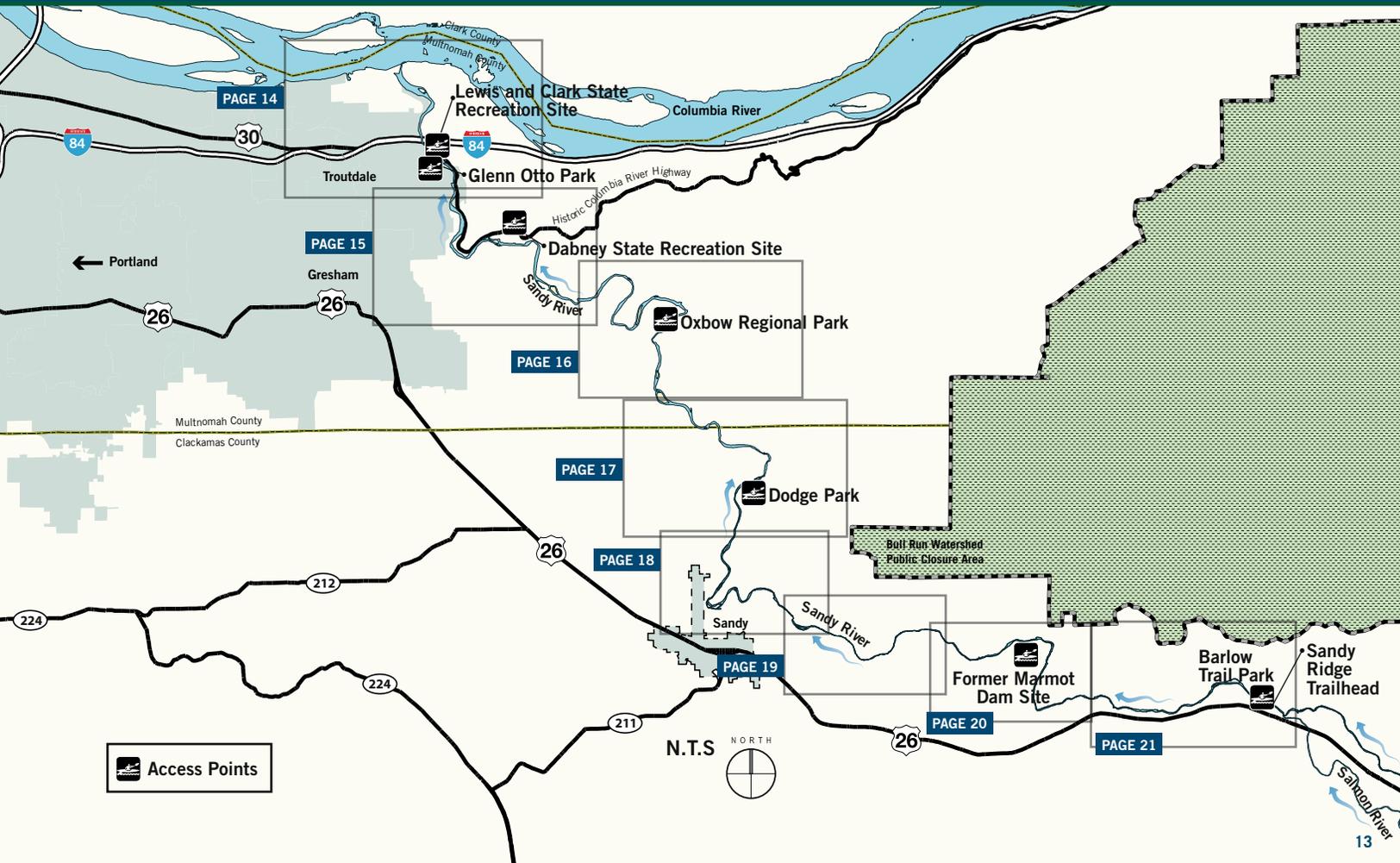
### River Features and Amenities:

-  Hazard
-  Point of Interest
-  River Mile Indicator
-  River Access

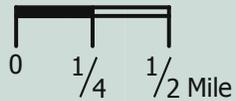
### River Rapid Classifications:

-  Class I Rapid
-  Class II Rapid
-  Class III Rapid
-  Class IV Rapid

# River Access Overview



# Glenn Otto to Columbia River - River Miles 3 to 0



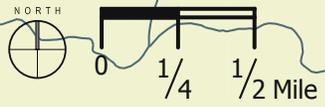




to Dabney State  
Recreation Site

to Dodge  
Park

Indian  
John  
Island





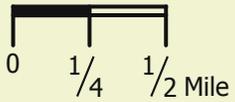
**Dodge Park**  
GPS @ shore:  
N45.51585 W122.35731  
Amenities:

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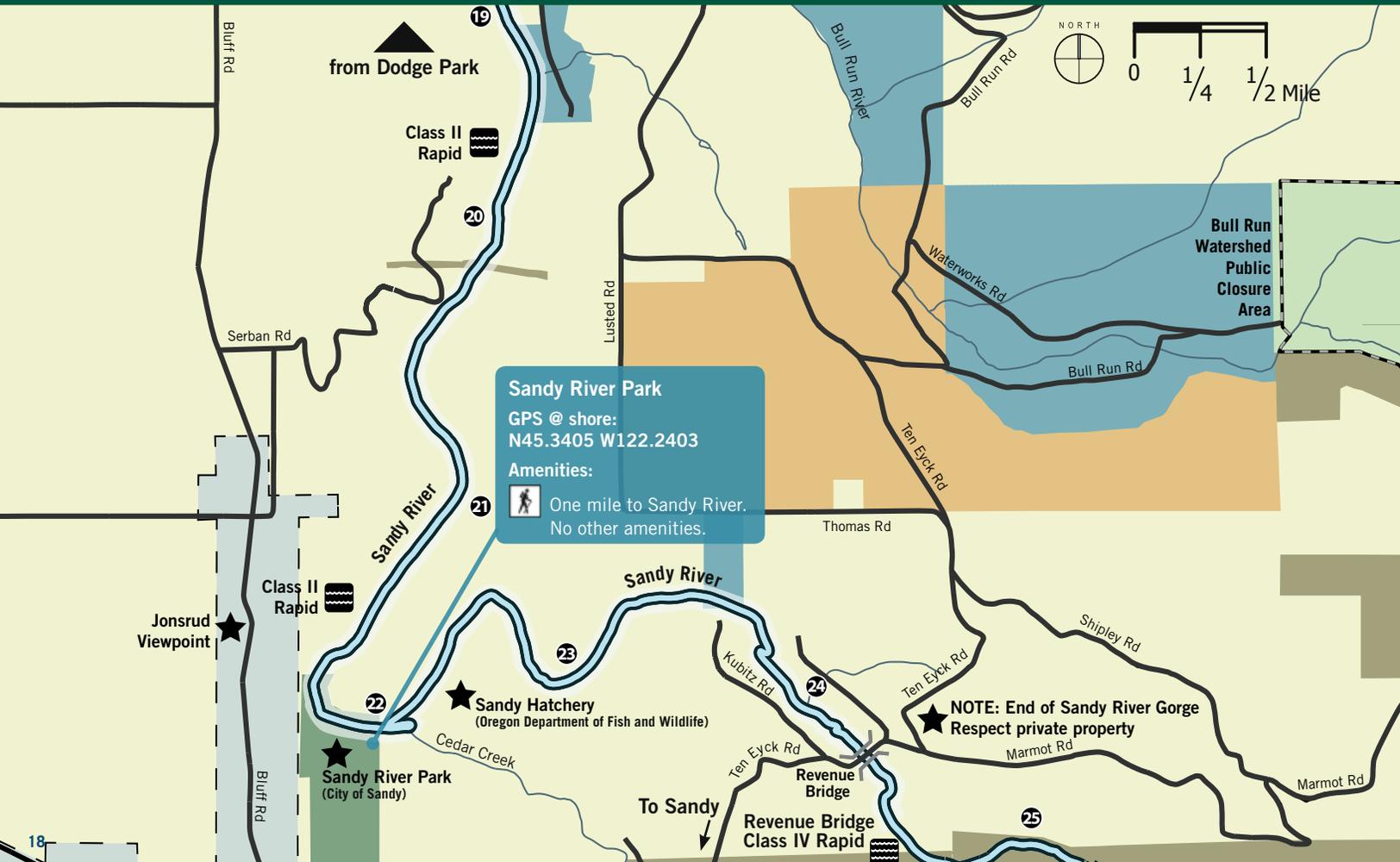
● Caution: River flows can double in volume at high water

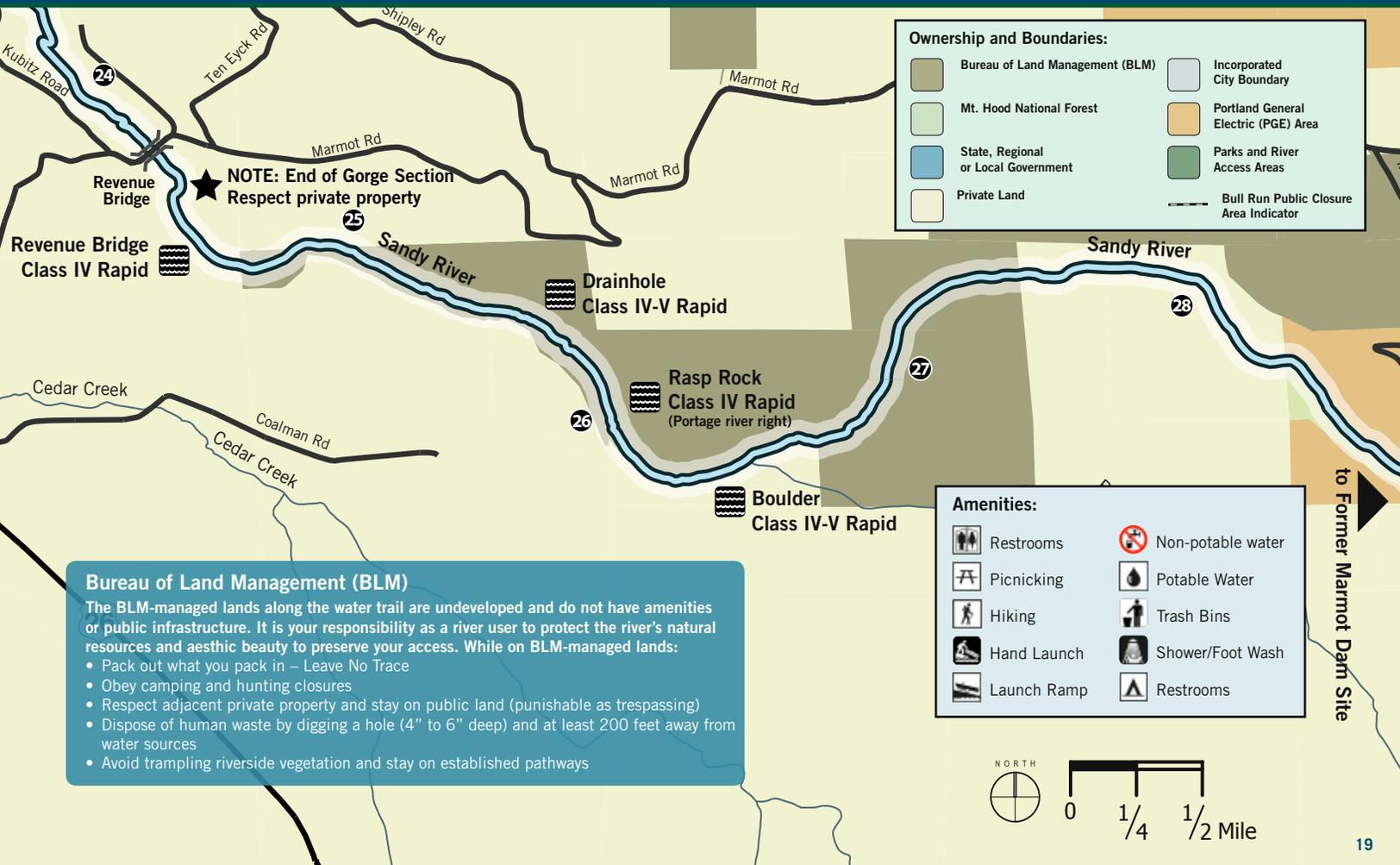
★ Portland Water Bureau Pipeline Bridge

Pipeline Class III Rapid  
**Dodge Park**  
(Portland Water Bureau)



# Revenue Bridge to Dodge Park - River Miles 25 to 19





**Ownership and Boundaries:**

	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)		Incorporated City Boundary
	Mt. Hood National Forest		Portland General Electric (PGE) Area
	State, Regional or Local Government		Parks and River Access Areas
	Private Land		Bull Run Public Closure Area Indicator

**Amenities:**

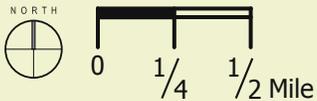
	Restrooms		Non-potable water
	Picnicking		Potable Water
	Hiking		Trash Bins
	Hand Launch		Shower/Foot Wash
	Launch Ramp		Restrooms

**Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

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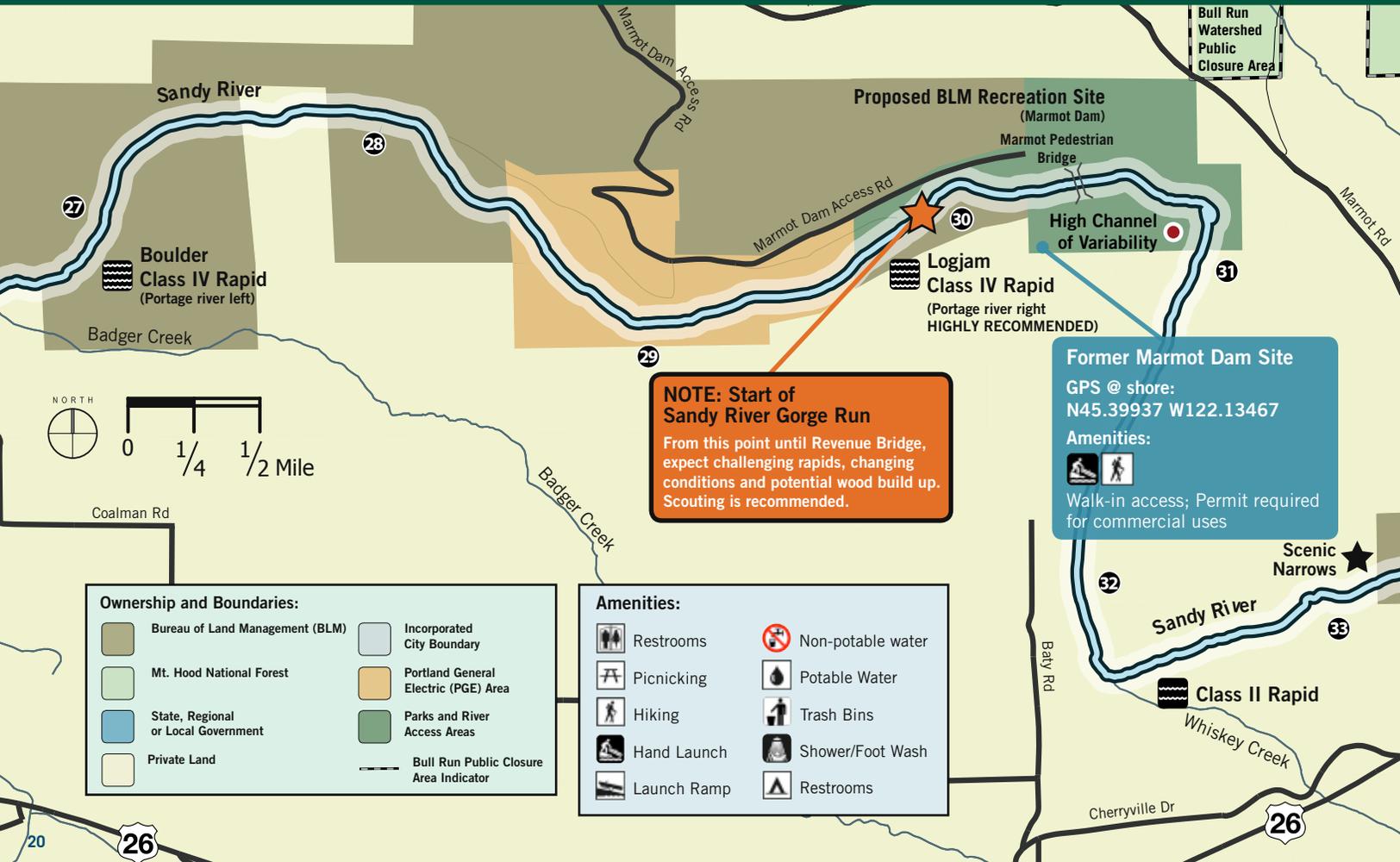
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- Obey camping and hunting closures
- Respect adjacent private property and stay on public land (punishable as trespassing)
- Dispose of human waste by digging a hole (4" to 6" deep) and at least 200 feet away from water sources
- Avoid trampling riverside vegetation and stay on established pathways

★ **NOTE: End of Gorge Section**  
**Respect private property**



to Former Marmot Dam Site

# Former Marmot Dam Site to beginning of Sandy River Gorge - River Miles 33 to 27



**NOTE: Start of Sandy River Gorge Run**  
 From this point until Revenue Bridge, expect challenging rapids, changing conditions and potential wood build up. Scouting is recommended.

**Former Marmot Dam Site**  
 GPS @ shore:  
 N45.39937 W122.13467  
 Amenities:  
  
 Walk-in access; Permit required for commercial uses

**Ownership and Boundaries:**

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Incorporated City Boundary
Mt. Hood National Forest	Portland General Electric (PGE) Area
State, Regional or Local Government	Parks and River Access Areas
Private Land	Bull Run Public Closure Area Indicator

**Amenities:**

Restrooms	Non-potable water
Picnicking	Potable Water
Hiking	Trash Bins
Hand Launch	Shower/Foot Wash
Launch Ramp	Restrooms

MOUNT HOOD NATIONAL FOREST

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- Pack out what you pack in – Leave No Trace
- Obey camping and hunting closures
- Respect adjacent private property and stay on public land (punishable as trespassing)
- Dispose of human waste by digging a hole (4" to 6" deep) and at least 200 feet away from water sources
- Avoid trampling riverside vegetation and stay on established pathways

### Barlow Trail Park

GPS @ shore:  
N45.37965 W122.03173

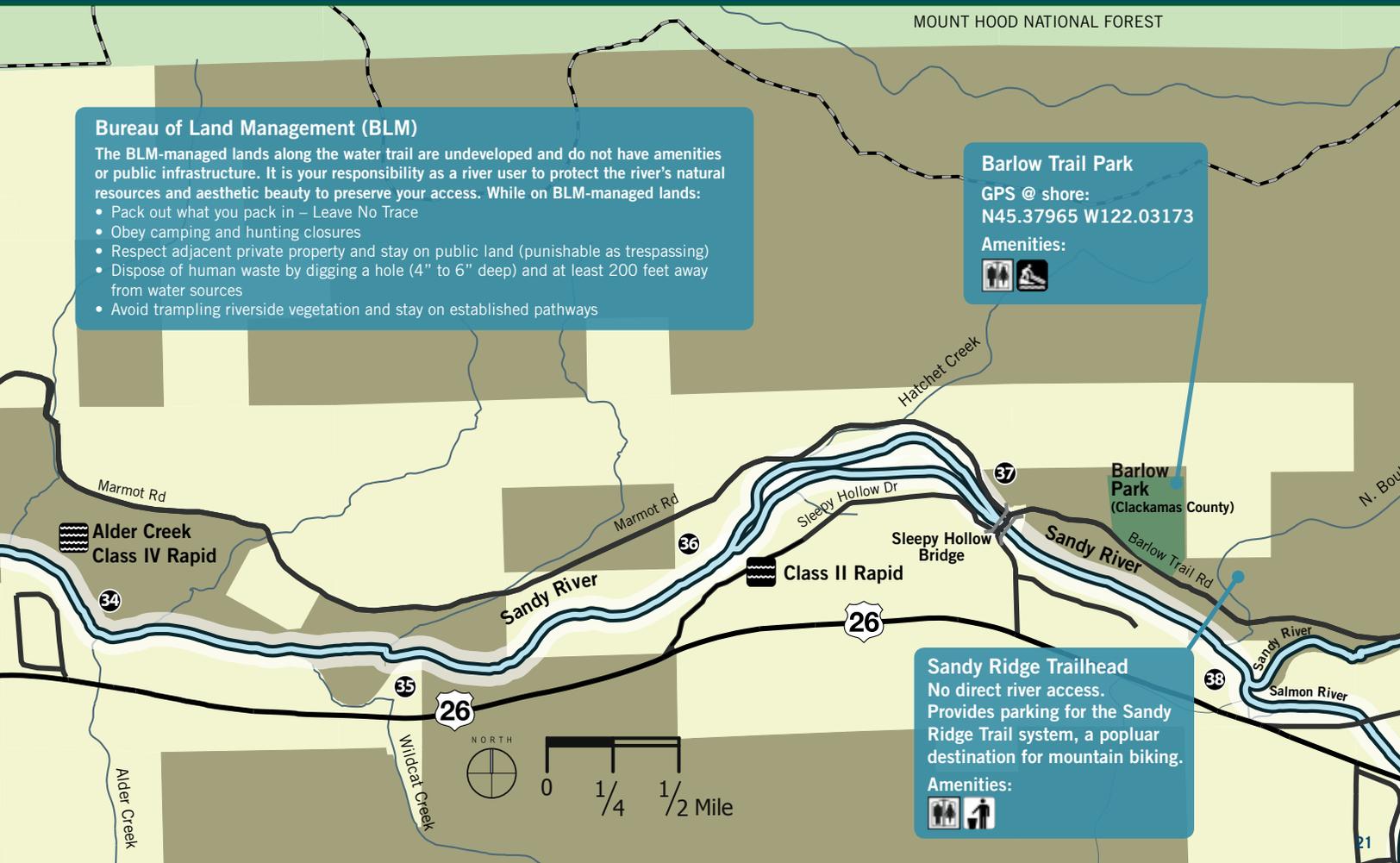
Amenities:



### Sandy Ridge Trailhead

No direct river access.  
Provides parking for the Sandy Ridge Trail system, a popular destination for mountain biking.

Amenities:



# Acknowledgements

## Sandy River Water Trail Planning Team

Bureau of Land Management

National Park Service – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

Oregon Department of State Lands

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

City of Sandy

American Whitewater



Nature  
HISTORY  
Discovery



## Sandy River Water Trail Contributors

Alder Creek Kayak and Canoe, Barlow Trail Association, Blue Sky Rafting, Camp Namanu, City of Gresham, City of Troutdale, Clackamas County, Department of State Lands, Metro Parks and Greenspaces, Multnomah County, Multnomah County Sheriff's River Patrol, Northwest Rafters Association, Northwest River Guides LLC, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Portland State University, Portland Water Bureau, Sandy River Basin Watershed Council, Sector Environmental Design, Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs, Robb Keller, Sam Drevo of Northwestpaddling.com



**Project and graphic design services provided by:**

Jordan Sector and Jim Anderson of Sector Environmental Design, LLC

## Sandy River History

Human activity in the Sandy River watershed prior to European settlement was relatively limited, consisting primarily of small settlements, hunting, fishing and berry picking. The lands along the Sandy were part of a much larger territory inhabited by the Chinook people at the time of European settlement.

The river received its name from the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which first travelled up the Sandy River on November 3, 1805. The party discovered immense quantities of sand and silt at the river's mouth, making passage treacherous. They chose to name the river the Quicksand, later abbreviated to the Sandy River.

Settlement along the lower river and the Willamette Valley was later stimulated by the opening of the Barlow Trail, first used in 1846 to bring immigrants west across the Cascades and down the Sandy River. The Barlow Trail crossed the Sandy River just east of Sandy at the present location of Revenue Bridge.

Beginning in the twentieth century, the Sandy River watershed has as an important area for timber harvest, gravel quarrying and agriculture. The river's value as a recreation destination has been recognized for a century. Recreationists used the Sandy River Rail Line (in operation from 1909 to 1931) to travel to Dodge Park to picnic, fish and dance at the Dodge Park Pavilion. Today, hundreds of thousands of visitors enjoy the river's beauty each year.

*Sources: Sandy River Characterization Report (Sandy River Basin Partners); Sandy River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (DOI)*



Photo by Steve Roelof / Western River Images





[www.sandywatertrail.org](http://www.sandywatertrail.org)