

Chapter 19

Sweet Home Community Resource Unit

Section One: Baseline Social and Economic Information

A. Community Description

Geographic Features

Sweet Home is a community of about 8000 nestled in the forested foothills of eastern Linn County. It serves as a gateway community to the Cascade Mountains along Highway 20, the South Santiam River basin. Two reservoirs, Foster Lake and Green Peter Lake are nearby and serve as major attractions for locals and visitors.

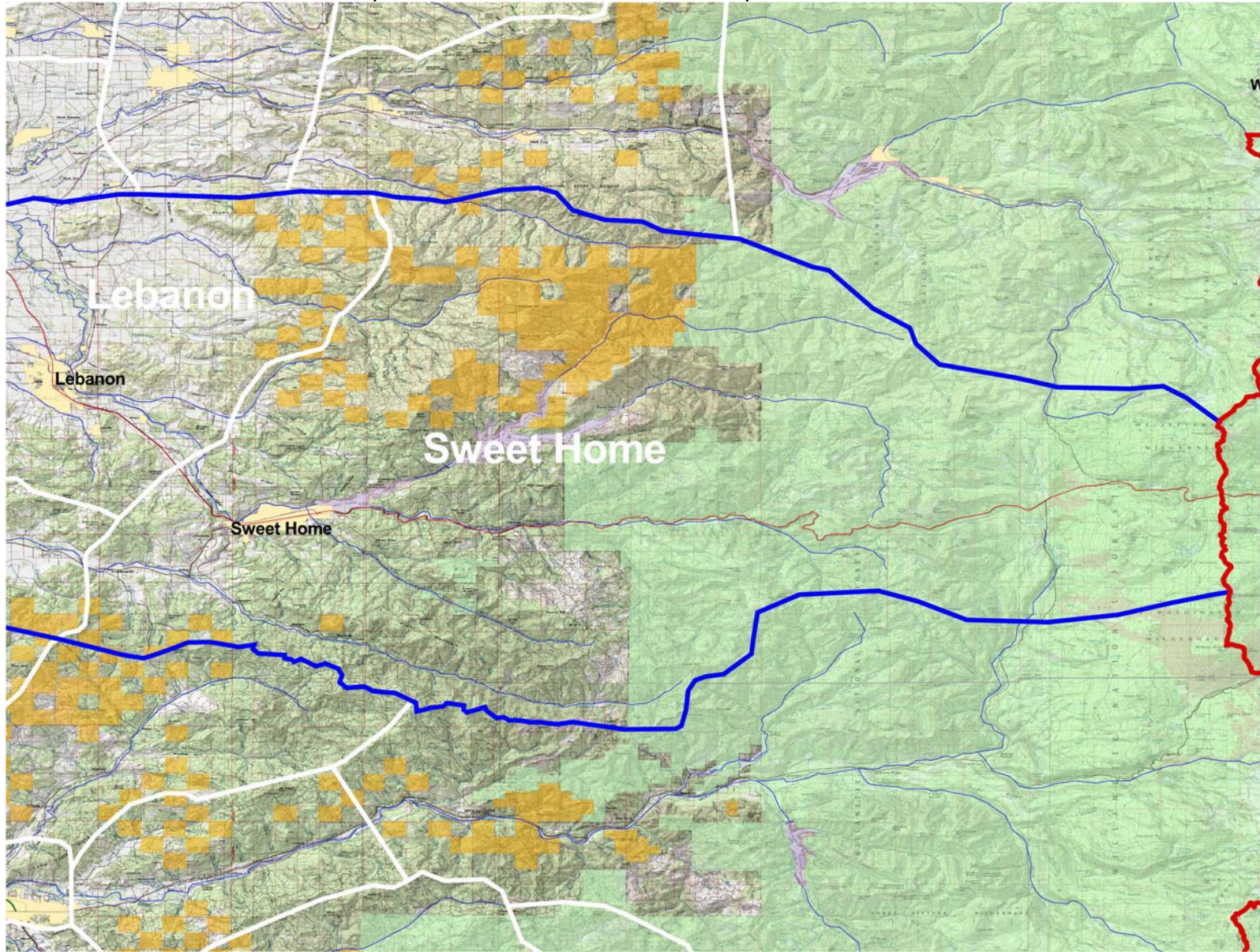
Figure 57 provides a map of this CRU. It takes in the South Santiam watershed from the crest of the Cascades on the east, to Thomas Creek in the Santiam State Forest on the north, past Lower Pleasant Valley west of Sweet Home, and south to include the upper reaches of the Calapooia River watershed.

Sweet Home has a few neighborhood areas, among them Strawberry Heights, Oak Heights, downtown, 22nd street towards the city limits, Foster and Cascadia. The small communities of Crawfordsville and Holley are also included in the unit.

Settlement Patterns

Sweet Home had a population of 6932 in 1990 and 8016 in 2000, reflecting a 14% growth (Census Data, Table Five). Sweet Home people relate to Albany and Corvallis, and less so to Eugene and Salem. Many people work in Corvallis and Albany. The new four-lane highway creates better access that has affected commuting and recreation patterns.

Figure 57
Map of the Sweet Home Community Resource Unit



"Eugene might as well be on the moon."

"Educated people relate to Corvallis, but Albany has a Fred Meyer and a Costco that brings in Sweet Home people."

"Lebanon was farming and Sweet Home timber."

"We are becoming a bedroom community."

"It's always been a commuting area but more so now because there is less of a local economic base."

Settlement accelerated with industrial timber production after World War II and with the construction of the Green Peter-Foster dams in the 1960s by the Corps of Engineers. The timber industry especially thrived in the 1970s, and began to wane in the 1980s with frequent layoffs and plant closures. When the spotted owl injunction curtailed federal timber production in 1989, it was an added and significant blow.

There is not much new residential development in Sweet Home. Some low cost housing went in two years ago between Highway 228 and Highway 20, at the end of Sunset Lane. Another affordable housing project is currently underway by Linn County. Retirement influences are being noticed in the community. The Wiley Creek Community, "Retirement living at its best," is talked about as bringing retired people in.

Cascadia Neighborhood Description

Foster and Cascadia are neighborhood areas within the Sweet Home CRU. Foster is "just over the bridge" (crossing Wiley Creek) from Sweet Home and extends up to Cascadia. It used to be a larger community but over the years has reverted to a couple stores, post office and residential areas. Foster has some of the very poor residential areas along with more expensive homes located on the hillside, offering a view.

Cascadia is a "drug haven—you don't go out there at night." Such is the reputation of this community that consistently came up in local conversation.

Like most stereotypes, it has an element of truth to it and residents talked about the problems it has had with some people and substance abuse problems. However, local people hastened to stress that the stereotype is not the whole story and went on to describe an active, healthy community.

"There are all sorts of people living in the hills of Cascadia."

Cascadia was apparently begun through construction of a hotel and spa "of sorts" to promote the local soda water ("It tastes awful"). The well was capped because of contamination problems. Settlement in Cascadia is dispersed, along Highway 20 and in the backcountry, varying in quality from run-down to moderate homes. Locals estimate the population to be about 300. There is a remnant of an old gas station, a still-operating post office, and the Triple T Mill. The small community store burned down a couple years ago, leaving only the post office as a community gathering place.

Retired people, summer vacationers, people who plan to retire, and some people with home-based businesses comprise the local population of Cascadia. Hippies were a big part of the population in the 1970s, but "they have left and young families moved in." A few cattle and sheep populate the countryside.

The Triple T mill is still a big part of the Cascadia community. Employing about 100 people, it is still a family and locally owned business. It was upgraded 4 years ago and relies on Washington logs to survive in the current market.

A state park is valued by the community, which fought to save it in the 1990s. The community also successfully fought to keep a dam off the Santiam River, which would have flooded their community. Today, an informal Neighborhood Watch connects people within the community.

After having a strong influence in the 1940s, the Forest Service left Cascadia in the 1960s—its auctioned buildings still remain. District rangers in the '50s had "green sheet sales" by which timber blowdown was sold to loggers and "money came back into the community." Currently, residents feel they have no relationship with the Forest Service.

ODOT has housing units at their site near Santiam Pass where workers live. For years, the school would run a Jeep Cherokee to pick up kids and bring them down to Sweet Home. No children of school age live there now.

"You live this far away from the malls because you want solitude."

"It's a natural thing in my lifetime—neighbors helping neighbors. After the April 7 windstorm, we started calling the elderly people to make sure they were all right."

"Californians are not easy to get to know. They are just not trustful; they are afraid to let in the community. They would consider a phone call a breach of privacy."

Current community issues in Cascadia relate to the loss of the school, to the new fire hall, and with the Forest Service. There are still bad feelings about the school consolidation with Sweet Home, which came up in every conversation.

"The school was our focal point. Whenever there were programs, everyone would show up."

"Even though the school looked poor outside, it was good inside."

"We didn't want to lose our school because we'd lose our community."

"After we lost the school district, we were promised a recreation bus to transport kids from Cascadia to Sweet Home. It only lasted one year. Now parents have to drive their kids."

Apparently, the fire district plans to construct a new fire hall in Cascadia. Residents want it placed by the church or by the covered bridge but it seems the district insists on placing it near the mill.

"They wouldn't put it in an area that we could access."

"It's hard as a community. We want to put it in the hub of the community where we could get to it. They just want our tax money."

And on the Forest Service:

"It's sad there is so little Forest Service activity in Cascadia. We feel we're locked out of Forest Service lands."

"Think of how much blow down there is in 20 years that could be harvested."

"When we have a forest fire, roads will be closed and it will be bad."

Crawfordsville and Holley Areas

Crawfordsville and Holley share about 1000 people according to local residents. Both communities have a high percentage of affordable housing and have attracted both poor and well-off people in the last several years.

The boundary for the fire district is the same as the school district and represents the break between Brownsville and Crawfordsville/Holley.

Holley was described as more diverse—agriculture, livestock, trees, with the school less important as a community institution. Youth as a percentage of the population was said to be declining. Holley serves as a bedroom community for Corvallis and Albany.

"Georgia Pacific workers from Tangent also live here." [Holley resident]

The Crawfordsville School serves as a community center with many organizations using the kitchen and the facilities.

One knowledgeable person stated that there are 365 property owners who have land along the 65-mile length of the Calapooia River.

Publics

Newcomers in the Sweet Home CRU are not oriented to timber but to urban commuting, recreation and trades and services. Some thought that the

majority of newcomers were retirees. Newcomers are said to "keep to themselves."

The retired segment of the population is perceived to be growing:

"Fifteen years ago, 15% were retired. Now it's about 25%." [Note, the census shows a 14% increase of people 65 years and older, but their proportion of the population has stayed the same at 17%]

The community has substantial numbers of "traditional" people who have made their living from the timber industry but who have adjusted to changing conditions. The business community is sizeable but still reduced and struggling with leadership since the decline of timber. The area also has a large segment of people "on the edges", working in marginal jobs just getting by, or choosing to live in isolation because they want to.

Networks

See Section Two.

Work Routines

Livelihood in Sweet Home was predicated in the past on timber production with recreation playing a secondary role. Today, those roles are reversed.

The timber industry operates at a fraction of its earlier size in this area, but it remains viable and important for the local economy. Weyerhaeuser just bought land in the area and purchased Willamette Industries, whose Foster plant employs 174 people. Observers believe that Weyerhaeuser will keep this plant because of recent investments in new technology and because it features a product consistent with Weyerhaeuser production line. Hill Limited Partnership is a holding group with 140,000 acres. Giustina has 80,000 acres between the Highways 22 and 20. Cascade Timber Consulting Company manages timberlands for Hill and also for 30-40 small timber owners, wealthy or professional people living elsewhere. Smurfit Newsprint has 50 workers and Ranier Wood Products has 42. Up the river in Cascadia, the Triple T mill still operates.

Timber production currently relies exclusively on private and imported timber:

"As the timber industry, we were like any endangered species. We had to adapt or die, and we did. You have these portfolio companies—pension companies like Cal PERS or John Hancock, who have timberlands. You have new products, like oriented strand board, where high quality wood is not essential."

The focus is on small diameter, which has a small margin. The market must be watched carefully.

"We used to offer sales according to our schedule, but now we play the market. Otherwise, we offer things people can't bid on." [Forest Service staff]

"The price of plywood is going up but the price for [timber] falling is going down. There is not much of a chance for someone like me to make it anymore so I have to take the work whenever I can." [Timber worker]

Special Forest Products is an increasingly important part of forest related employment. Secondary forest products in this area include mushrooms, sallow, moss, fern, and cascara. One practitioner noted a growing demand for white oak from local wineries that have discovered their use for wine barrels.

Bough sales are popular on Forest Service lands, not just for local people but also for companies from Washington. Special Forest Products sales get scrutiny and pressure from environmental groups also.

"The future for the small woodland owner is not tree farming as much as niche markets, secondary forest products and specialty trees."

Recreation as an economic niche is growing. The Recreational Vehicle (RV) business was said by local owners to be steadily increasing. While almost all RV business is local to the region, interstate business contributes also. The

growth is attributed to an expanding RV market—it is not just retired people now but younger people using RVs.

“Recreation is big now. The town is trying to decide whether it should be a logging theme town, like Sisters is Western.”

“Sweet Home diversified after the timber industry died to meet the needs of recreationists—gold panning, camping, hunters, boaters.”

Along with the trades and services economy that has emerged with recreation and retirement has come commuting. Residents now rely on driving to Salem, Albany and Corvallis for their livelihood. One outcome of this pattern has been the further erosion of a local business base.

“We have one third commuters. The average salary in Sweet Home is \$23,000; for the county it is \$27,000, so that tells me that breadwinners work outside of town.”

Nearly 400 businesses offer goods and services to the Sweet Home area, according to the Chamber of Commerce. The Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce and the Sweet Home Economic Development Group work to provide support services and leadership to foster business health.

Many Sweet Home residents voiced worry about the status of local business.

“Many businesses are on the edge right now. There are vacant business buildings. The recession hurt. We have high unemployment locally.”

“In the past, there were three shoe stores, 5 lady clothing stores, men’s stores and now there are not.”

“This area lost between 1500 and 2000 jobs in the last ten years.”

“We are seeing the death of the merchant class—our small businesses, our local leadership.”

"My wife and I shop here as much as we can. I just bought some boots at DanDees. You have to go out of town to buy clothes."

Whites Electronics is an employer of 170 workers, most of whom live locally. It manufactures metal detectors and has interest in public lands because its customers do recreation mining and are concerned about access to public lands.

Invest-A-Case is a titanium plant has recently come into the community.

Sweet Home has a rail line and is close to Interstate 5 corridor.

Support Services

Observers stated that Sweet Home leadership has suffered in recent years.

"In '91, things fell apart. With the decline of timber, town leadership has not been the same."

Sweet Home is a community that prides itself on caretaking and volunteerism. While there are still many individual caretakers in the community, "those people are very old and many have died." Today, groups and organizations have taken over caretaking roles, the Hope Center, the Evangelical Church, Assembly of God and the Catholic Church.

"Sweet Home has a strong volunteerism base. I don't know how it got kindled, but it's here—like resurfacing the baseball diamond."

Many residents spoke with great feeling and pride about their ability to create the new community center. The center cost \$2.5 million and houses the community center and the Boys and Girls Club. Many attribute their success to the late Jim Riggs who was a well-known and apparently highly regarded teacher, principal and mayor in Sweet Home. The story about Jim was that he would personally take people new to the community out for a day in his fishing boat where he would explain his ideas and vision. He was able to mobilize people around this vision and the community center was one outcome.

Figure 58
The Jim Riggs Community Center, Sweet Home



Another story is that the community center parcel, which was donated by the city, was on an old mill site that had accumulated many feet of sawdust. What normally would take two weeks to remove and prepare it took four days for an army of volunteers.

"The engineers could not believe what the town was able to do in such a short time."

The same thing happened when the center needed furniture. Individuals and clubs within a short while had entirely furnished the center, replete with an industrial kitchen for the Meals On Wheels program.

One older gentleman listed his civic involvement of the last several years—Chamber of Commerce, Christmas Parade, Sportsman Holiday, development of football and baseball fields for the High School, time keeper at school sports' events, and the Sweet Home Green Peter Boat and Yacht Regatta, organized to promote water recreation and now not very active. A number of

residents expressed the sentiment that younger people are not active like this anymore in community affairs.

"Younger people are not stepping in to fill the shoes of their elders."

Sweet Home prides itself on the number and success of community events it sponsors. Sweet Home Jamboree has been a very successful public event. Sponsored by a community group, this country music festival has brought enormous revenues into the area. Among other events are the Annual Awards Banquet, the Boys and Girls Club Auction, the Fishing Derby, Sportsman's Holiday, the Celtic Festival and Highland Games, the Gala Autumn Festival of Music and Fine Art, and Christmas in Sweet Home. A local group called the Ambassadors sponsors the annual Christmas parade. Holley puts on a fair each summer before school. Crawfordsville has an annual "Bridge Day" in August also.

Sweet Home was the site of the first Jobs-in-the-Woods training program spawned by the Northwest Forest Plan of 1994. It operated for a few years and successfully fostered re-training and transition for ex-loggers and mill workers. Because of this program and other economic development efforts created through the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative, authors of a recent report conclude that economic conditions in Sweet Home are better than they were in 1990. While the effects were not quantified, nor separated from changes created by other factors, such as the influx of newcomers, the picture remains clear that Sweet Home residents mobilized to respond to depressed conditions and made a difference (Draft report, Evaluation of the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative, Lita Buttolph and Lisa Tobe, March, 2002, Forest Community Research, Taylorsville, California).

School turnover in Crawfordsville and Holley is low with active parent teacher associations in each elementary school. One of the biggest challenges of the schools is dealing with low-income students who progress at much slower rates. The work of these parents typically takes them away from the home for long periods, and many students live with single parents or grandparents. The schools both have jogging trails around them. Schools are looking for Master Gardeners to operate school greenhouses.

Recreation Activities

See Section Three.

B. Themes and Citizen Issues Related to Community Life

Themes

1. "Sweet Home is tough—one of the toughest towns I know. It still has leadership, but it is on the edge."
2. "This community is a diamond in the rough. It has tons of potential that has not been realized yet."
3. "This is still an old timber town. 'Get the cut out.'"
4. "Sweet Home has a small town atmosphere." People liked that their kids feel safe in the community and that Sweet Home is close to bigger towns, the snow and airports.

Citizen Issues Related to Community Life

Although the community has diversified its economy in recent years, it still sees itself as relying on timber for a healthy economy.

"We need more timber harvest." [common]

Jobs and Business Development

"The biggest problem for larger employers is the lack of work ethic with new employees. These are people out of high school who do not come to work on time, whose communication skills are low, who do not come ready to work."

"Sweet Home lost two opportunities because of state politics—a women's prison and a police training facility."

"I wish the state would spend on Highway 20 like it did for Highway 22 because then people would go to Hoodoo from here."

"There is nothing attractive to bring people downtown. How could Sisters invent itself like that? How can Sweet Home do something similar—someplace people want to stop and spend time?"

"I'd be scared to develop a destination resort here like the golf course. Why would people come here? There's no clothing store, few places to park, no easy way to stop and shop."

"Back in the 1950s, parades were a big deal. Local commerce was very involved. Today, you don't see local businesses participate—maybe DanDee Sales and a few others, but that's about it."

"Kids leave after high school. There is not work, the mills are gone, the timber is gone. Environmentalists have killed us."

Cascadia

"I never take a call out there alone but take another officer. The area is cleaning itself up but is still a potentially dangerous place." [State trooper]

"Cascadia has seen some small changes, a small influx of newcomers, and 3 murders in the last two years."

Section Two: Communication Strategies

A. Informal Networks and Communication

Gathering Places

Mollies Bakery is the hub.

"It used to be that politicians had to go to Mollies to get known."

"Mollies is the 'county annex.'"

The high school is still an important social institution for bringing people together.

Point Restaurant

Elks Lodge, especially Sundays for breakfast.

The Wal-Mart in Lebanon

"One person from our congregation told me once, 'There goes _____. She is part of our Wal-Mart community.' Wal-Mart has become the new civil religion."

Key Community Contacts

Rolf Anderson, former District Ranger, is very involved in community affairs and in the community foundation.

Mike Aman; (541) 367-7163; principal of Holley and Crawfordsville Elementary Schools. He would be a good link to the community to talk about the scenic by-way proposal.

B. Formal Groups and Communication

Figure 59
Organizations With Interest in Public Lands in the Sweet Home Area

Organization	Contact Information	Mission
Sweet Home Economic Development Group	Karen Owen 1575 Main Street Sweet Home, OR 97386 541-367-6185	Promote industrial, commercial, and retail development; support recreation business in the community. Manages the SH Jamboree each year.
Sweet Home Community Foundation	Karen Owen	Coordinating role to replace track, pool, skate park, and other school/youth support.
Sweet Home Tree Commission		Appointed through City Council; managing Ames Creek renovation; beautification; tree planting
South Santiam Watershed Council	Tom Johnson, HS teacher	
Ron Henthorne	Oregon Department of Forestry (541) 367-6108	Helps residents deal with gates and access, especially related to hunting
Boys and Girls Club	John Sandberg	
Santiam Four Wheel Drive Association	(541) 367-7547	
Sweet Home Bicycle Club	Bruce Davis (541) 367-1988	
Sweet Home Rock & Mineral Society	(541) 259-1529	
Linn County Forest Protective Association	Sherm Callee	Mostly timber companies, some non-industrial owners, oriented to fire protection. Annual Tree Day; Outdoor day for 5 th and 6 th graders.
Linn County Forest Deputy	Rick Cambell	Control of trespass, vandalism, dumping

Linn County Game Warden	Andy Heider State Police Trooper (541) 967-2026, x 473.	Wildlife issues on private lands
Calapooia River Property Owners Association	Don Hopkins (541) 367-2986	Navigability issues on the river.
Holley Grange	Mills Maramen Dave Howard, 425	
Linn County Small Woodland Association	Ron Henthorne, ODF Crawfordsville 541-367-6108	Education on small woodlot management; specialty tree management for members

Section Three: The Public Lands Perspective

A. Uses of and Orientation to Public Lands

Recreation in the area changes according to the resource. In the lower elevations, the lakes attract high density, high technology uses (boats, higher end camping equipment). The two reservoirs, Foster and Green Peter, are enormously popular. Ironwood Mountain and its trail are very popular for wildflowers between May and July. Menagerie Wilderness is valued for rock climbing and low elevation access. While Salem people rely on Detroit Lake with the ease of access presented by Highway 22, Foster and Green Peter Lakes are used more by Albany, Corvallis and Eugene residents. Quartzville Road, that serves the lakes, has become quite impacted from recreation uses and needs management attention. It is also known as a great bicycling road because of its scenery and beautiful setting.

In the higher elevations, once Forest Service boundaries are passed, some 20 miles beyond Sweet Home, uses are more dispersed with tent camping and lower technology. The area is known to be a favorite of Corvallis professionals for hiking and skiing—"This is their playground."

"I think tent camping and just hanging in the woods is coming back. I did it as a kid, saw it go away but now people are doing it again."
[Sporting goods store owner]

Highway 20 is a recreation corridor but not a major one like Highway 22. Some residents voiced regret about this and wished for an upgraded corridor from the State, as happened with Highway 22. However, other residents pointed out that it is not an east/west corridor and that it serves no major recreation area. Our research shows that "flatlanders" value this area precisely because it is less crowded. Old time Oregonians that mourn the isolation they found on public lands in the last generation actively seek out places that remain less popular. The North Santiam Wilderness, for example, is highly valued because it is not crowded.

South Santiam River is the most used in eastern Linn County because most of the other rivers and creeks have been heavily restricted, negatively affecting usage. While trout fishing is down, salmon and steelhead are up due to the high percentage of hatchery runs. People from Salem, Albany and Springfield use the river more than residents from other areas.

Local residents are active in a variety of support activities for youth and land stewardship, including the Foster Lake Trails Committee, Riverside Clean Up, and the Fishing Derby. The Foster Lake Trail Committee is currently working with the Corps of Engineers to build a 7- $\frac{1}{2}$ mile trail around the lake. Scouts and schools, especially East Linn Christian School, a fire patrol, correctional inmates and the Corps have all helped with the trail.

Residents reported a gift by the Hill Foundation of tracts of land to be protected from development as well as land along the river to be developed for campsites. The foundation also donated land around McDowell Creek as a park, with waterfalls, trails, bridges and stairways along both sides of the creek. The county will grow timber, thin it and use timber receipts to maintain the park.

Salmon Creek Golf Course is a new development proposed on 700 acres of what were once the Morse Brothers' rock pits. The Forest Service reportedly is offering technical assistance in support of this project.

"With the golf courses, this will be a tourist destination area."

Linn County Parks has helped develop boat ramps at Green Peter and Foster Lake. Until last year, there was only one ramp at Green Peter and it was only accessible when the water level was very high. But last year, a lower ramp was completed that allowed boats on the water year round. Green Peter apparently is only filled to capacity each year in May and June as it is drained to maintain Foster Lake. There have been discussions to add a ramp at Foster Lake, off Quartzville Road and Highway 20 but there are some concerns about additional traffic flow.

"On a hot day, there are already too many people on the lake."

The lower elevation reaches have unique impacts and challenges. The decline of clearcuts on Forest Service lands has led to a shortage of foraging opportunities for herbivore herds on public lands. Consequently, herds have been relying more heavily on private lands, increasing the desire for greater access onto private lands and contributing to the increased use of gates. The large timber companies have varying policies regarding land closures and their reputations consequently vary as well. Horse users reportedly make use of higher, more scenic elevations and have not been impacting lower private lands.

The Linn County Protective Association is a group that represents just about every industrial timber company in the area. This group fields concerns from the public and manages impacts created by hunters and others on private lands. It keeps track of the opening and closing of gates, current gate policies among various companies, and vandalism.

At the same time, Forest Service personnel state that they are paying closer attention to lower elevation issues:

"We are dealing more with flatland issues, water quality, for example. There is greater regional awareness and desire for cooperation in the South Santiam Basin. A watershed perspective is happening." [Forest Service staff]

The Forest Service historically has had, and still does have, enormous ties to the local community. Presently, it is assisting with the swimming pool, the school, and a PAYCO project. On Thomas Creek, it is offering technical expertise to the Watershed Council and NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service). The Rural Community Assistance program, offered locally through JoAnn West, has been extremely well-received. The Ranger District is currently working with the Siletz and Grand Ronde tribes on the Camus Prairie Project.

Forest Service staff are active in the community, serving on various boards and playing support roles as members of the community.

The schools appear to be active in outdoor education. Biology classes have segments in ecology, and an environmental science course is being offered

next year. Forest Field Day has been held on private ground toward Lebanon for many years. The elementary school has a four-day outdoor school each year. Finally, the Ames Creek Project, supported by a three year grant from the Forest Service, is part of an after-school program of the elementary and junior high schools.

The Forest Service sells Forest Passes both at their offices and at three locations throughout the community.

Forest Service staff stated that a Quartzville Corridor Plan is needed over the next couple of years, with necessary involvement from the BLM, Corps of Engineers, Oregon Department of Forestry, and private timber companies. "It is an armed zoo out there," one staff person said. Whites Electronics, among many others, has an interest in participating in this plan.

"In the summer, families flock to the Quartzville corridor. There is dispersed camping there. Numbers must reach over 5000 on the weekends in summer. Littering in the area is bad—it must be a monitoring nightmare."

"Quartzville is designed wrong. It doesn't have camping spaces so people are camping on the side of the road. We seldom go up there in the summer."

Budget concerns are forcing consideration of closing the Sweet Home Forest Service office.

B. Trends, Themes, and Citizen Issues Related to Natural Resource Management

Trends

A diversified economy is emerging with continued need for business incubation and support.

The recreation focus in the local area is maturing, with coordination among various organizations and businesses, and a focused development strategy, managed through the Sweet Home Economic Development Group.

Themes

1. "The federal government has tied up the land. Until science overcomes emotion, public timber will not be cut."

"The 'ologists' have taken over, especially biologists. They have no motivation for a timber program."

"I'm disappointed in the Forest Service for allowing environmentalists to control the forest."

2. "Our land is disappearing." More and more people mean that the dispersed recreation experience is getting more difficult to find and that the lands experience more impacts.

3. "The Forest Service is great here. They ask us what we think."

"The Forest Service didn't mind rolling up their sleeves and helping."

"They not only rolled out the red carpet, but they laid on it to keep it warm."

4. "The future of the Forest Service is multipurpose functions of the forest—wildlife, fisheries, recreation, timber." [common]

"The Forest Service manages people now, not trees."

Citizen Issues Related to Natural Resource Management

Timber

Timber people were vocal in their frustrations about the current low levels of timber production from Forest Service lands and pessimistic about changes in the near term.

"The Forest Service has lost their timber production staff and they capitulate to environmental interests."

"The Forest Service won't pay me for work I did in the '96 flood. They are full of apologies but can't even make their organization pay."

"The district is permitted to offer 10 million board feet a year in timber and it does little if any of that."

"It's not their job to do grants, it's to make the forest more productive. They are just trying to keep their jobs, to rationalize that they are doing something."

"The State is doing the same thing as the Forest Service, caving into Portland pressure on the Tillamook Forest. They are the professionals. They should say what's appropriate."

"You can't reform the Forest Service timber program. They lost their timber personnel. They don't trust their own standards and give in to environmental interests now."

"The recent windstorm blew down hundreds of trees, many directly in the community. Yet they can't be cut. What a waste of natural resources. It's so easy to block a timber sale. The 'ologists' of this world are our worst enemy."

Recreation Interests

"There are opportunities for more vending around the lake. Food vending, rentals of boats and ski-doo's. We could use fueling stations at the lakes, more campground spots. With more capacity, more people would come here."

The Corps has multiple mandates for managing the two lakes—hydro, navigation, irrigation, domestic water, flood control and recreation. We can't just be recreation oriented. Foster Lake is at capacity for safety. The Corps lands there are needed for habitat protection—not economic development." [Corps of Engineers official]

"No one wanted to help on the mudflats case. There were drugs, alcohol, safety issues but everyone else seemed to just be glad it wasn't on their land. I talked to all the chamber companies, and not one would give me a nickel." [Corps of Engineers official]

"I am happy to sell the Forest Passes but why am I not able to offer them on sale, as the Forest Service office does? I think people get \$5 off the yearly \$30 fee if they go to the office."

"Hunters hate the trail park permits. They will intentionally park away from a Forest Service lot and walk in. It would be OK if money was being directly used for the land."

"Forest users are getting displaced onto BLM and Forest Service lands from private lands because of increased vandalism and a general lack of respect. Private timber companies are restricting access more and more."

Gates

Apparently, gates are color-coded so that people know whose land they are on. There are also signs posted with phone numbers

"Gates are now everywhere. The public is paying the price for trespass and vandalism."

"Sweet Home people feel like gates deny them access that they have a right to. They have a reputation for going around or destroying closed gates."

"Hunters are very concerned with the declining deer population. Some disease called 'hair loss syndrome.'"

"Hunting seasons are so backed up that the wildlife get no break."

"The 'Jobs in the Woods' training program funded by the federal government was useful but too short. Timber people were trained to work in industrial plants like Entek and Ore-Met Wah-Chang."

Community Development

"The Forest Service has played a very positive role because of its community involvement. The shift happened in 1995-97. They are more community minded. Funders want cohesion and a local vision of what people want. The Forest Service has helped make that happen."

"Their [Forest Service] funds have helped revitalize this community. They have been excellent, responsive."

"Just being willing to come to the meetings has been helpful. Even though they don't always have money, their leadership counts."

Highway 228 Scenic By-Way Proposal

In recent years, there has been talk about creating a scenic by-way designation for Highway 228 from Interstate 5. Residents along this corridor, the "linear" communities between Brownsville and Sweet Home, were cautious about the concept. The major response was that the designation might hurt—traffic and property rights, and was unlikely to help. However, no one knew what the designation really meant and so most voiced interest in more information.

"Increased traffic will trickle over onto Crawfordville Drive, a road that loops adjacent to 228. Many residents ride their horses along this road."

"I'd hate to see the designation force landowners to manage their property differently."

"We might get more strangers asking to hunt our property."

"The road is very dark and visibility on the road is limited. Kids speed on this road."

"The stores at Crawfordsville and Holley really hurt after the [Calapooia] River was shut down. Maybe the by-way would bring them more business. These stores are part of the cultural life of the community."

"Is 228 really scenic? Maybe it would encourage people to clean up their homes that live along the road. I can name 8 homes that have rusted cars in the front yard."

"That might make it an honor—something someone would want to see. Maybe it would bring newcomers in and help revitalize the community." [Crawfordsville resident]

"We think it's a good idea—it will help the stores and tourism. For the small woodlot owner there is probably no benefit. We better make sure there won't be effects on how private lands are managed." [Board meeting of Linn County Small Woodland Association]

Environmental Quality

"In the 1980s they told us to clean the streams, take out excess debris and make them clean. Now, it's the opposite, we need to put natural debris back into the stream, make them dirty."

"There are water quality issues for the wells up valley."

General

"The Salmon Plan basically shut down the Calapooia River. The stores in Crawfordsville and Holley suffered because of it."

"BLM has paved roads leading to the forests in the Brushcreek area, significantly increasing the use of the land. This is especially dangerous during fire season. Because there is a 'no gate' policy on

BLM land, and it's pretty much used year round, residents that live in this area have to deal with the public more than normal."

"We appreciate the information on fire that the Forest Service puts out to the 4-H."

"There are more squatters in the woods now. They move back and forth from BLM to Forest Service land. They are mostly ex-timber people who were living from paycheck to paycheck. They have no place to go."

C. Management Opportunities

Communication Opportunities

A number of Forest Service retirees live in the community and they have remained engaged in the community. At least one person, observed at an organizational meeting, was moderating on behalf of the Forest Service, explaining procedure and policy to the group. These individuals could be tapped for their communication skills and links to the community and even used for specific projects, such as scoping issues for the Highway 228 scenic by-way proposal.

Many of the contributions of the Forest Service to the local community are not visible or known to others. The agency could take steps to make sure key communicators are aware of its contributions.

"The Forest Service provided fire engines to ODF and federal dollars to support a fire protection crew, but I don't think anyone else knew this."

Action Opportunities

"Hire loggers to clean-up blow down. If the blow down is in an area where habitat around the trees can't be touched, then take logs out by air. We need to salvage timber."

"Create "Volk Walks" similar to the Albany fit walkers who are members of the Volkssport club. The walks are usually a 10K route that takes walkers through historical areas, or they are nature walks. The Albany group organized a walk around Foster Lake that attracted 200 people."

The final chapter of this report includes recommendations about timber sale programs, recreation, and other policies of interest to Sweet Home residents.

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