

Clackamas County Water Tourism Study

Purpose:

In spring of 2017 Clackamas County Tourism initiated a comprehensive study to determine if its water recreation assets are being used to their greatest economic potential.

Method:

The study included over 3 months of site visits to the County's water bodies and surveyed 1700 statewide respondents. The results represent the interests of 1.6 million water recreation enthusiasts and a detailed inventory of the County's recreational assets.

Overall Key Findings:

- Oregon's recreational waters are visited 80 million times annually by people looking to recreate.
- Clackamas County's recreational waters attract 1.5 million visitors annually, which result in 240,000 overnight stays.
- Clackamas County's water bodies are equally good or better than the State average for recreational value.
- The public's concern for water quality, habitat quality, public access, information, safety, user conflicts, and crowds are not significantly different in the County than the rest of the state.
- Water-based recreation generated about 12 million dollars in lodging reservations in Oregon in 2016, but Clackamas County captured only about 2% of this amount. Despite above average water assets, the County is attracting below average visitation to these waters due to a combination of physical access, water-recreation management, lack of awareness, and niche product development.
- There is untapped potential for strong economic impact from visitor's fishing in Clackamas County.

Recommendations:

1. Improvements in Infrastructure
2. Coordination of Community
 - a. Foster and promote the connection between cities and their local rivers through infrastructure, policy, programs, and events.
3. Improve the Experience
 - a. Expand Tour Products - Offer packages including a variety of price points and abilities increasing the accessibility of water-based recreation. Examples include fishing gear rental, family friendly tours, and increased soft adventure offerings.
 - b. Focus on the Experience - Promote time spent bonding and creating memories while engaging in water recreation.

Next Steps:

View the full 156-page report from Crane and Associates

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/122hp73833fpsog/Clackamas%20County%20Water%20Tourism%20Report%20F.pdf?dl=0>

To discuss the Water Tourism Strategic Plan, Development Grants, or relevant projects contact Samara Phelps 503-742-5910 or email samara@mthoodterritory.com.