4| Detailed Analysis of Preferred Alternative

Alternative 3 scores the highest and is the Preferred Alternative for the initial design and construction phases of the Nisqually New Full-Service State Park. Out of 1,300 acres of parkland, approximately 20 acres will be utilized for the proposed improvements. Overall, these improvements will expand the recreational opportunities within the park and fulfill State Parks missions, goals and objectives. This chapter provides a detailed description of the Preferred Alternative design. A site analysis summarizes the background information gathered, technical evaluations, and basis of design.

4A. Preferred Alternative Description

As described in Section 3, the Preferred Alternative proposes a new roundabout at the current Mashel Prairie Rd entry, a full-service campground with facilities, a loop trail to the Mashel River overlook, and paved managed access to the Nisqually River (Figure 6). This alternative offers visitors the most diverse recreational opportunities, and supports environmental education, camping, wildlife viewing, hiking, bicycling, equestrian riding, beach access, and non-motorized craft launch into the Nisqually River.

Park Entrance

The proposed roundabout at SR7 is the safest option of all the entry alternatives as it forces drivers to slow down from both directions before entering the park resulting in slower speeds and a potential reduction in the number of accidents and injury severity. The roundabout will
provide a branding opportunity for the park. There is an opportunity to create a significant feature in the center of the roundabout that will signal visitors’ arrival to the park. Regular patrons will be accustomed to the location as it will remain where it is currently, and visitors will continue to use Mashel Prairie Rd as the entry road.

**Buildings and Facilities**

The proposed facilities for Alternative 3 will provide necessary administration and support for the full-service campground (Figure 8). During design development, the details and character of each building will be refined to reflect the original design intent in the 2010 Master Plan. If applicable, these buildings and facilities will adhere to the OFM State Facilities Workplace Strategies and Space Use Guidelines.

**Welcome Center**

The welcome center is a 1,000-square foot building where park patrons can gather information and campers can check-in. It is located on a one-way road with a passing lane, nine available parking stalls for staff and visitors, and one ADA accessible stall.

**Staff Residence**

The staff residence provides on-site housing for State Parks staff and is accessed by a private one-lane road. The building is roughly 2,500 square feet and will have electrical, sewer and water.

**RV Dump Station**

Just north of the staff residence, the RV dump station is located along a pull through loop road with a passing lane. The RV dump station allows for recreational vehicles to safely dispose of their wastewater.

**Well House and Reservoir**

A single-lane, controlled access road originating from the RV dump station loop leads to the well house and water reservoir. The well house is approximately 225 square feet and the reservoir area is approximately 9,100 square feet. Eight-foot fencing secures the site. The well house contains the well, pump, pump controls, and all water treatment facilities. The reservoir is the potable water storage facility that gravity feeds to the welcome center, campground, staff residence, and administration and maintenance facility.

**Administration and Maintenance Facility**

Approximately one mile south on Mashel Prairie Rd is the administration and maintenance facility. Six parking stalls plus two ADA stalls are provided for visitors, and eight parking stalls are provided for staff. The administration building is approximately 2,400 square feet and the maintenance building is approximately 4,800 square feet. The administration building will support State Parks’ staff administrative operations and the maintenance building will provide space for storage and maintenance of park equipment (Figure 9).
Figure 8 – Welcome Center, Staff Residence, and RV Dump Station
Figure 9 – Administration and Maintenance Facility
Mashel River Overlook and Trail
A ten-foot-wide paved ADA accessible loop trail from the current day-use area, leads visitors on a journey to a unique experience – the Mashel River overlook. A dramatic cantilevered platform extends over the Mashel River bluff and offers a reward for the adventurous; views of the Mashel River and Mt. Rainer. The platform is an open grated fiber reinforced plastic mesh allowing patrons to see through it, producing the experience of walking over the edge of the slope and floating in air. The platform is approximately 650 square feet and comfortably accommodates 20-30 people (Figure 10).

Campground
The preferred campground loop includes 52 total campsites with six different camping experiences available. Campsites are nestled into the surrounding forest with generous spacing between each campsite (approximately 60-80ft), and campers access their campsites on asphalt paved roads. Water and power are available at each campsite. Combined shower and restroom facilities, and dumpsters are spaced evenly through the campground loop.

There is a large equestrian camp loop with a shared picnic shelter, enclosed dumpster, and enclosed manure bin. Another group camp loop provides RV campsites and a shared group shelter. All RV campsites are accessed by back-in angled parking. The park cabin sites are supported by shared parking stalls, potable water spigots, picnic tables and campfire rings. The following is a description of Alternative 3 camping opportunities and facilities.

- (4) universal pull-through campsites – 3,900 square feet each campsite
- (30) back-in RV campsites – 2,200 square feet each campsite
- (2) ADA back-in campsites – 2,800 square feet each campsite
- (8) universal equestrian campsites – 1,700 square feet each campsite
- (2) universal pull-through equestrian campsites – 4,300 square feet each campsite
- (6) universal park cabins – 500 square feet each cabin
- (2) group shelters – 600 square feet each shelter
- (3) restrooms/showers/dishwashing stations – 2,000 square feet each building
- (20) parking stalls with (5) ADA van accessible stalls – 5,500 square feet total
- (5) dumpsters – 600 square feet each dumpster enclosure with access road

Nisqually River Managed Access
Controlled access allows visitors to enjoy the Nisqually River and Ohop Creek area, while simultaneously allowing staff to monitor and maintain the habitat and environment (Figures 11-13). The Nisqually River Managed Access is comprised of two main areas:

- Subarea A consists of the access road and the visitor area at the Nisqually River
  - One-lane paved road with (5) pullouts
  - Turnaround loop road
  - ADA single vault restroom
  - Interpretive kiosk
- Horse hitching area
- (11) parking stalls with (3) ADA parking stalls
- Paved walkways & bicycle rack

- Subarea B consists of gravel trails, boardwalks, and viewing platforms along the Nisqually River and Ohop Creek
  - 10-foot-wide gravel trail with 3-foot-high wood split rail fence
  - 10-foot-wide boardwalks with 3-foot-high coated steel handrails
  - (3) overlook viewing platforms
  - Interpretive components along the trails and viewing platforms

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Figure 10 – Alternative 3: Mashel River Overlook

- 1 1/2’ micro mesh grate decking
- 10’ by 20’ platform
- Interpreтив panels
- 36’ steel handrail
- Theatre step @ 18" 3 steps
- 10’ cantilever
- 8’ micro piles
- Steel I beam w/ steel or wood subdecking
- Al. 101.5
- Al. 100.00
- 1/2” = 1’-0”
Figure 11 – Alternative 3: Nisqually River Managed Access Concept Plan