II-C. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION PLAN: ROADS, TRAILS, BRIDGES, OVERLOOKS AND CROSSINGS

State Route 7 Highway Corridor

SR 7 is a key regional transportation corridor along the park's northern and eastern boundary, from the Ohop Creek Valley eastward to UW Center for Sustainable Forestry at Pack Forest. The highway provides the two primary entries to the park – the main entry to the park's Central Plateau and the other at Pack Forest. Three trail crossings of SR 7 are also planned – two grade-separated under crossings and one at-grade crossing.

Much of the corridor is owned by State Parks, UW or Nisqually Land Trust. There are some privately held properties along the north side of the highway corridor between the Ohop Creek Valley and Mashel River Bridge. Management of the corridor will maintain and enhance the riparian and forest vegetation while creating a rich visual "State Park" experience.

Vehicle Circulation

The new entry drive from SR 7 along the north side of the park is located mid-way along a straight and level portion of the highway, maximizing sight distance for both east and west bound traffic. The new entry road leads to internal park roadways that provide vehicular access and parking to the Village Center, People's Center and the Ohop Equestrian Center on the park's Central Plateau. This new road sweeps to the west immersed in the forest setting, first passing the park Welcome Center on its way to the main park intersection leading east along a loop drive to the Village Center and west to the Ohop Equestrian Center. The Village loop also provides paved access to the three main campground loops.

The park road continues south, utilizing a portion of the existing Mashel Prairie Road. A new roundabout provides limited vehicular access to existing in-holding properties along Mashel Prairie Road. From the controlled access roundabout, a western leg follows an existing unpaved road grade to the limited river access point near the confluence of Ohop Creek and the Nisqually River. A new road to the east leads to the false summit of the central ridge and the People's Center.

The second entry off of SR 7 is located across from the entry to UW Center for Sustainable Forestry at Pack Forest. This roadway provides access to the East Mashel Plateau and the Backcountry Horse camp, Group RV/Tent camp and Backcountry and Challenge Course Bike area. An existing unpaved road grade provides a limited river access point near the confluence of the Mashel and Nisqually Rivers.

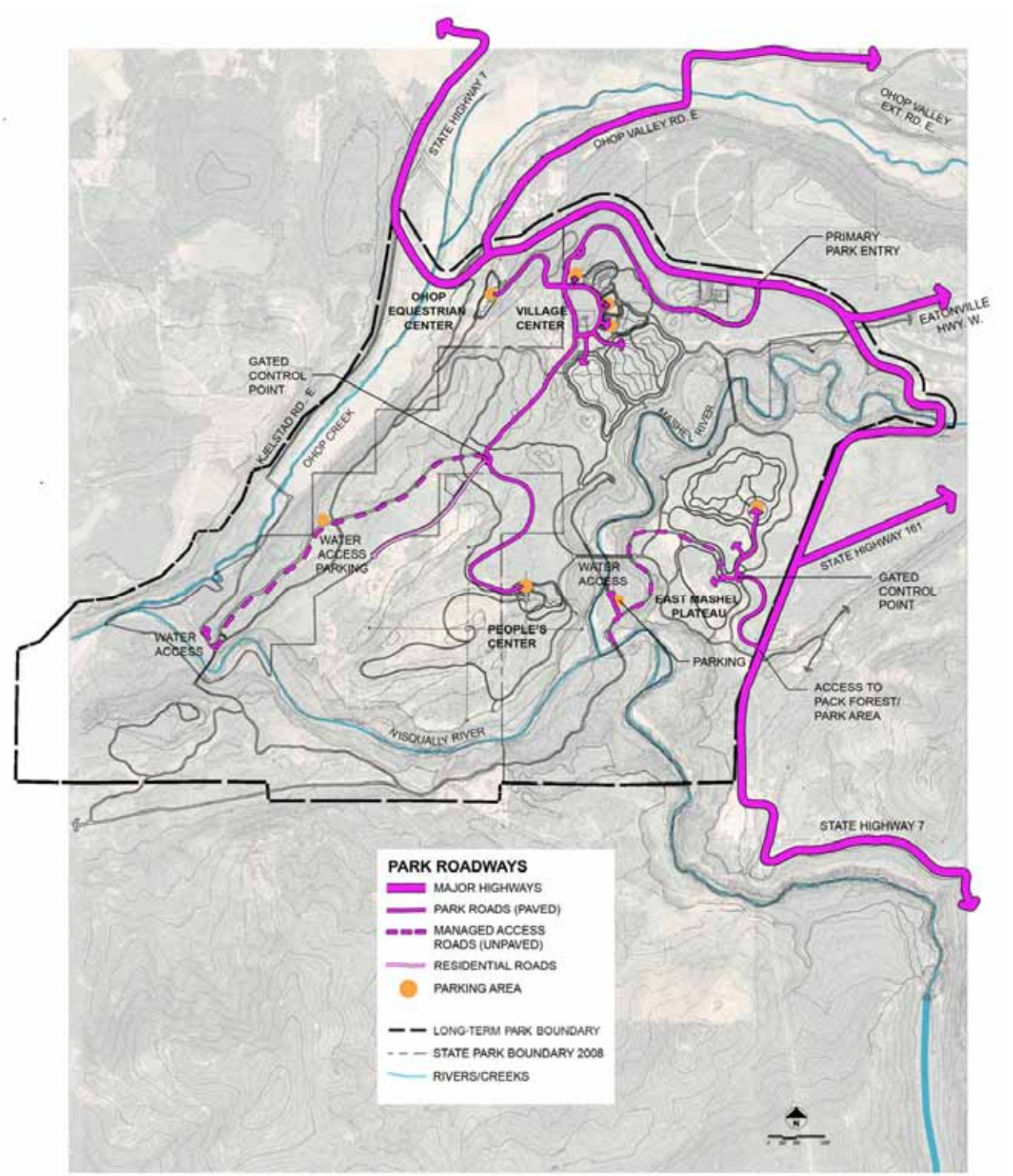

Figure C-1: Vehicle Circulation Plan

Emergency, Service and Maintenance access

Emergency, service and maintenance access is provided via these same roads and drives. In addition, an existing logging road descends to the west bank of the Mashel River, and a replacement low bridge provides access between the Central and East Mashel Plateaus.

Trails

The park is stitched together by a network of trails, some of which are shared by multiple modes of transportation, some of which are devoted to individual modes.

A paved multi-use bike and pedestrian trail connects, via a primary loop, the Village Center and the People's Center. Spur trails link to the Ohop Equestrian Center to the west and across the Mashel River to the facilities on the East Mashel Plateau. Both of these spur trails link to regional connections (the Ohop Valley Trail and the connection to Pack Forest and Eatonville trails). The main park roads are also open for bike use.

In addition to these paved trails, unpaved trails and boardwalks provide pedestrian access to other areas of the site. These include loops around Ohop Valley, the Observatory, the South Side of the Nisqually and the East Mashel Plateau.

Figure C-2: Trail

Equestrian trails occasionally share or parallel pedestrian and multi-use trails, but usually maintain a separate circulation system. Recreational riders originating at the Ohop Equestrian Center follow mostly existing roads down to the confluence of the Ohop with the Nisqually, cross Ohop Creek and parallel Kjelstad Road E. north up to the SR 7 crossing of the creek valley. It is possible to ride up to the People's Center and over to the existing logging road down the west side of the Mashel River valley, across on a low bridge to the Backcountry Horse camp on the East Mashel Plateau. The undercrossing at SR 7 provides access to trails in the Pack Forest.

Bridges and Overlooks

The topography of river valleys shapes the park's circulation system. The plan includes three high bridges spanning the Mashel and Nisqually Rivers from plateau edge to plateau edge. These high bridges provide connection between park land use areas, extraordinary canopy and up-in-the-air experience and allow visual access to river corridors without directly impacting them. Trails along the bluff edges will also occasionally lead to dramatic cantilevered platforms that look down on the river valleys.

<u>High Bridges</u>

- North Mashel River Bridge – Village Center to East Mashel Plateau (pedestrian only)
- South Mashel River Bridge – People's Center to East Mashel Plateau (pedestrian and bike accessible)
- Nisqually River Bridge at confluence with Ohop Creek (pedestrian only)

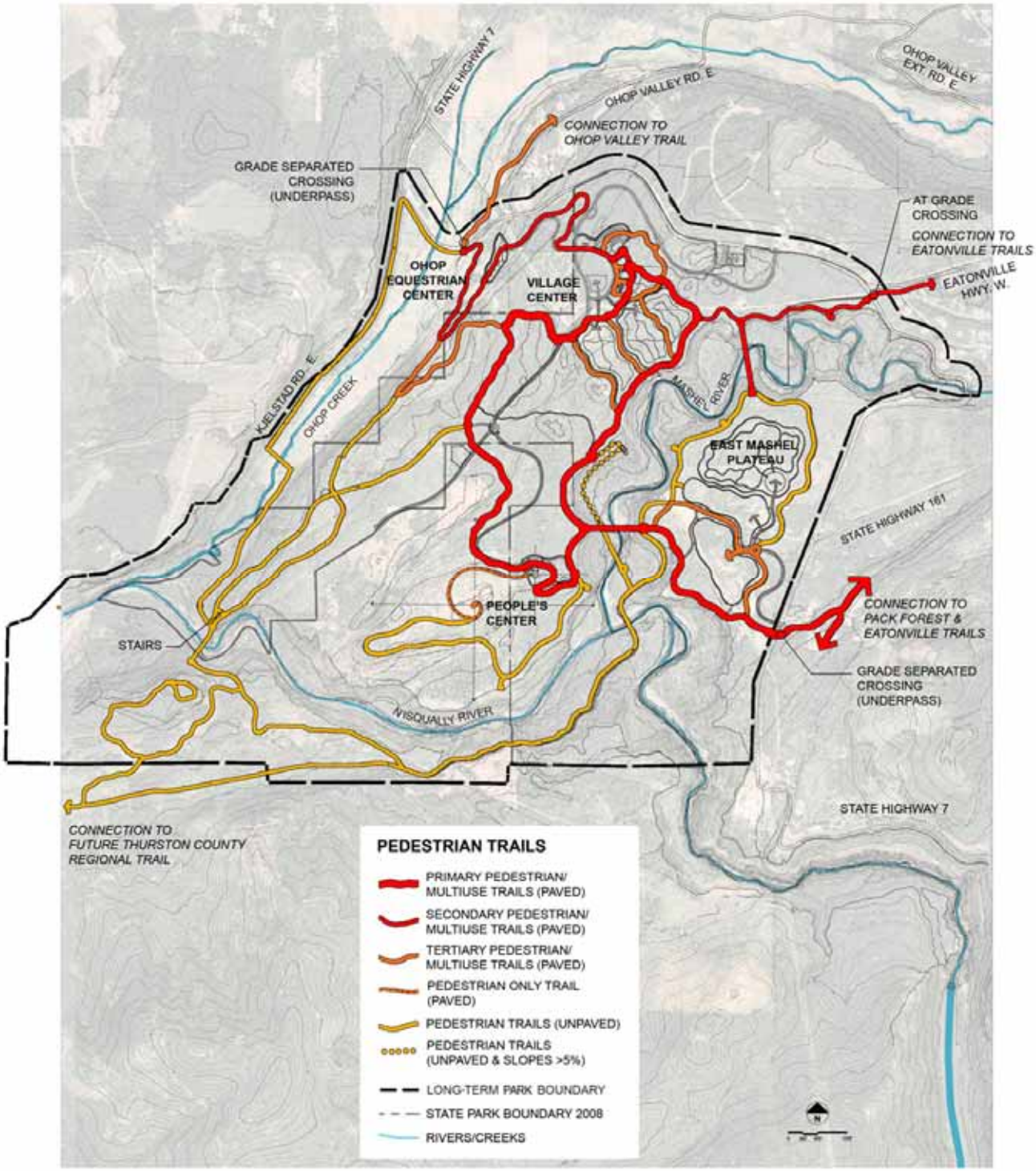

Figure C-3: Pedestrian Circulation Plan

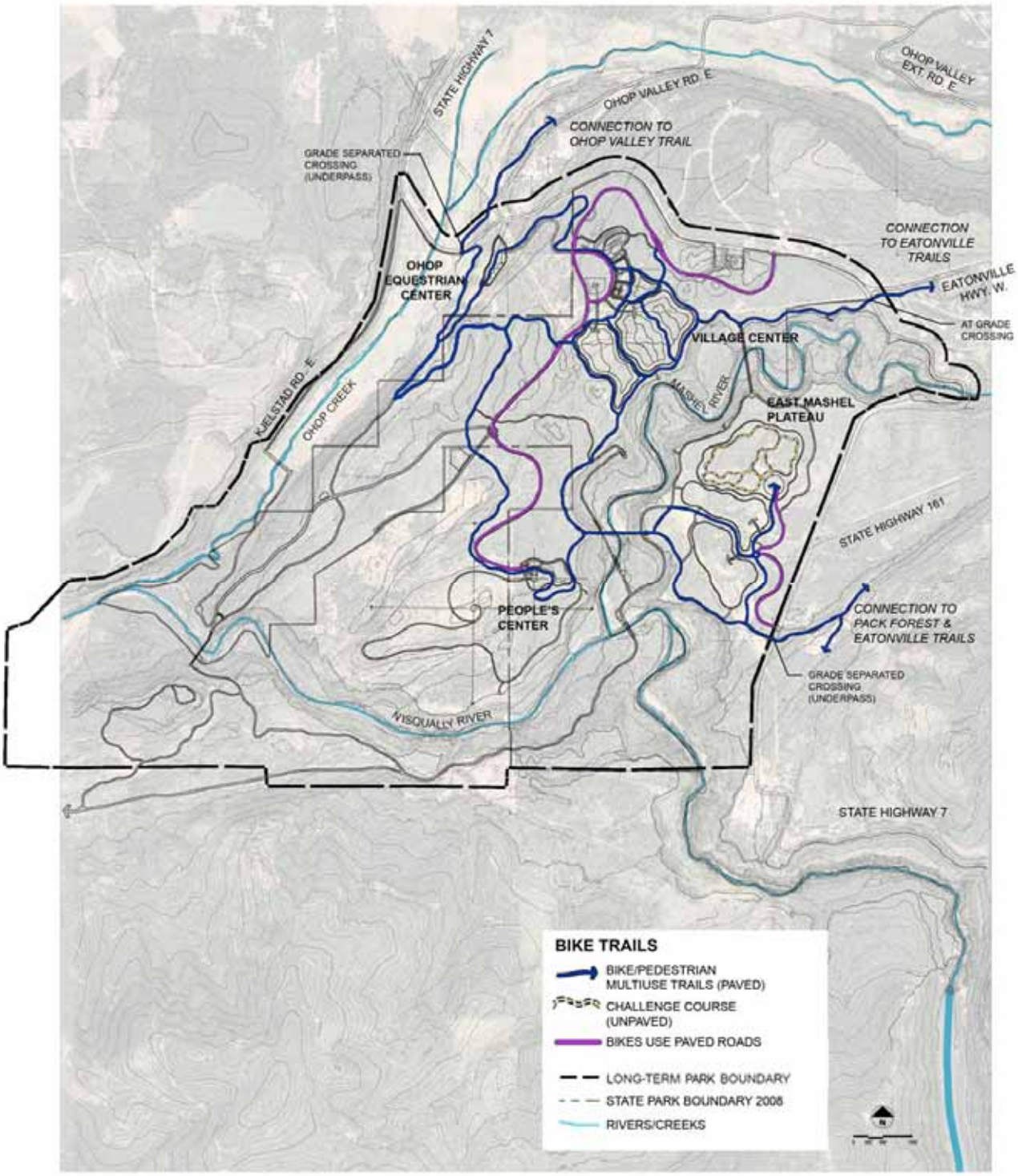

Figure C-4: Bike Circulation Plan

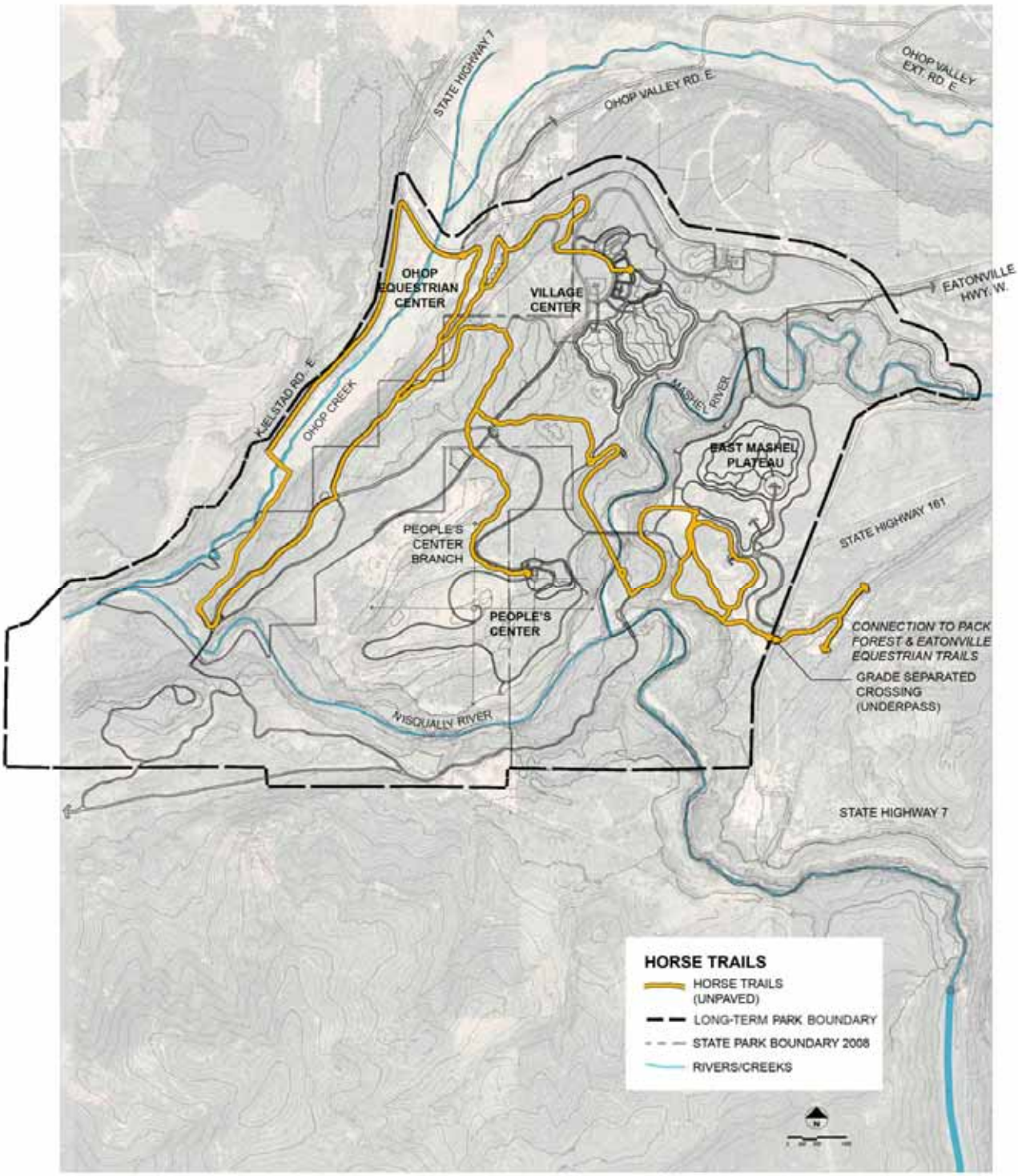

Figure C-5: Equestrian Circulation Plan

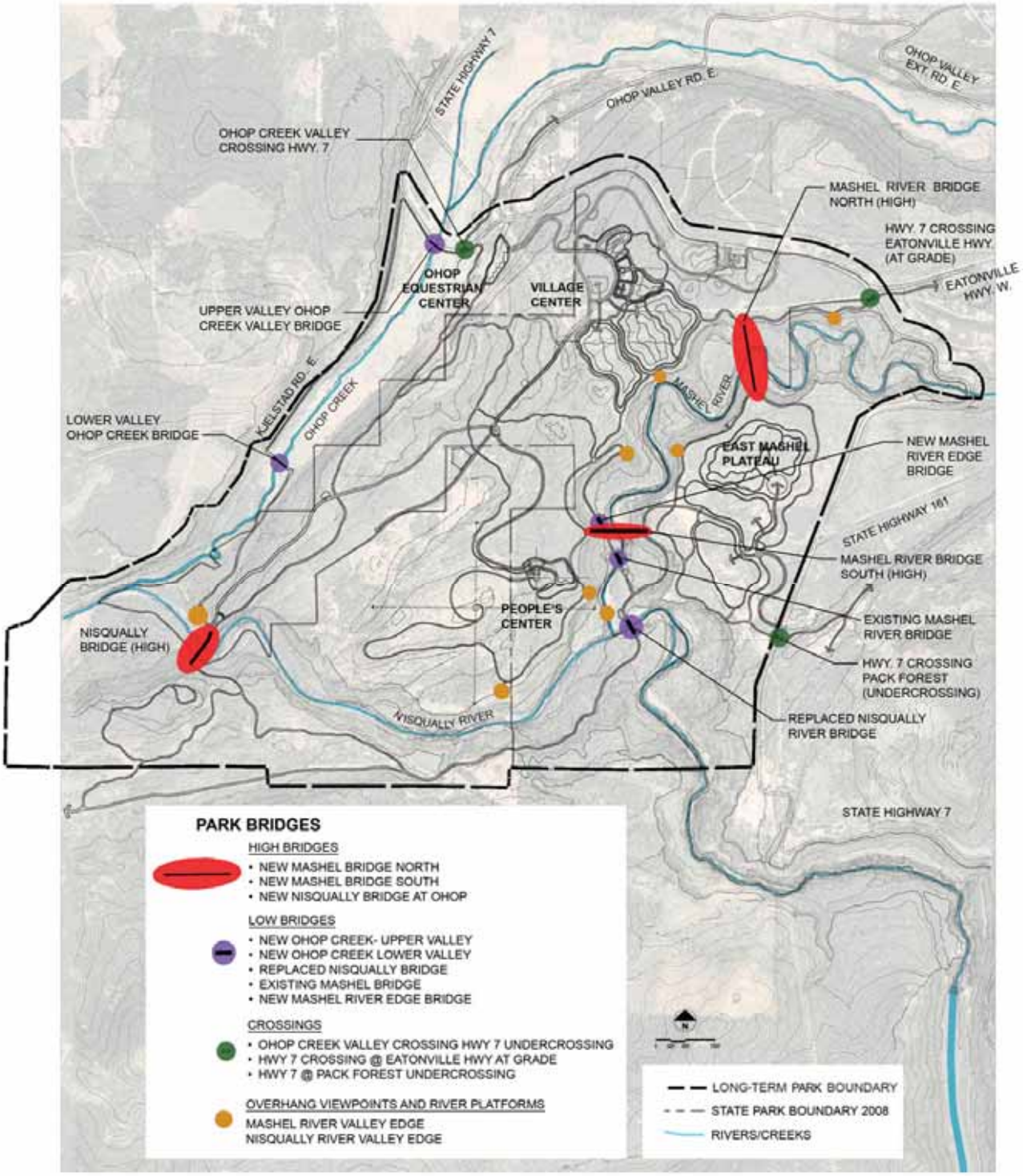

Figure C-6: Bridges and Crossings

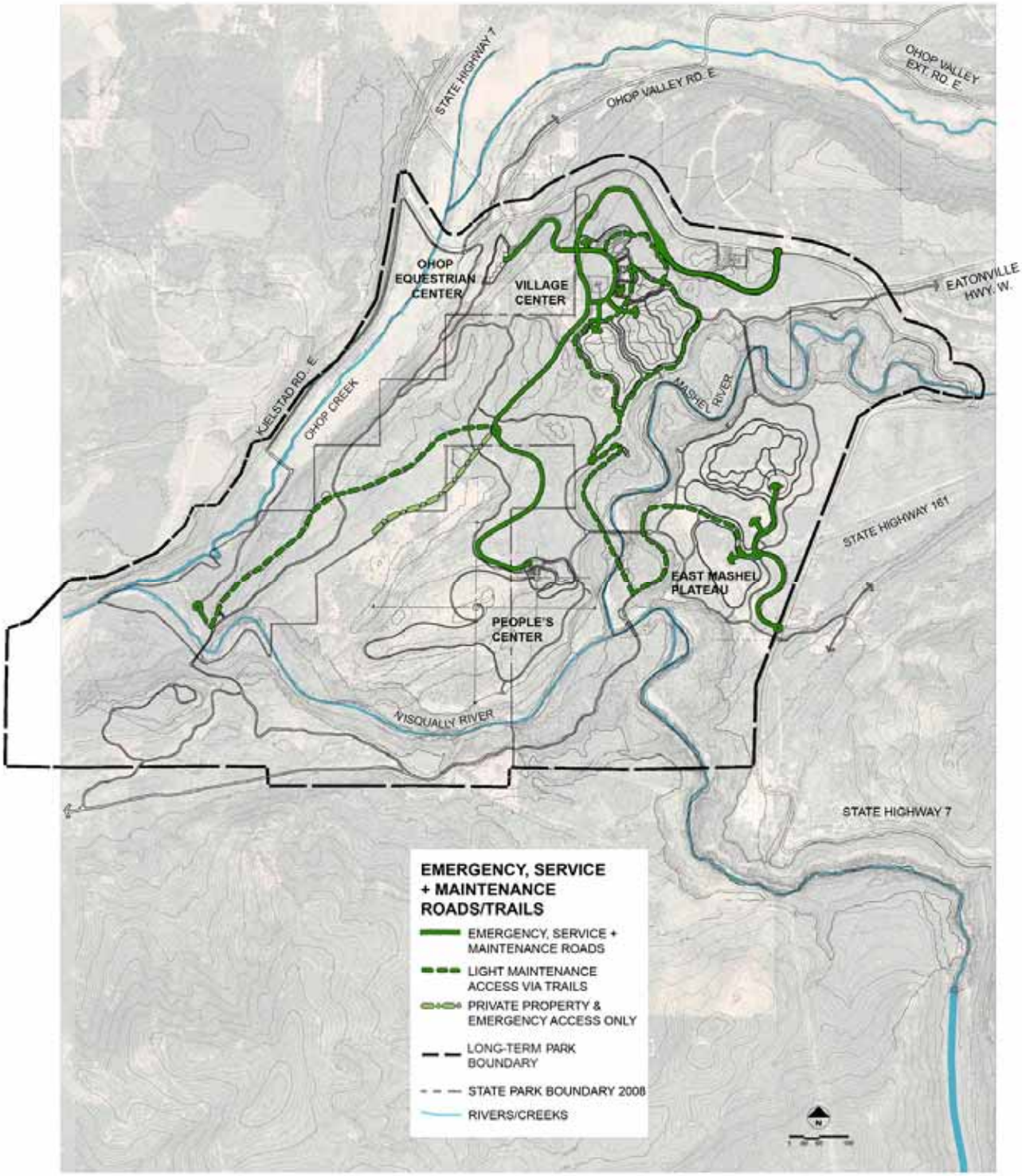

Figure C-7: Service Circulation Plan

Figure C-8: High Bridge with Interpretive Panels

Low Bridges

As mentioned in the Land Use Plan (Development and Land Use Issues) and in the Stewardship Plan (River and Creek Valleys Stewardship Prescriptions), potential impact will be studied with the Nisqually Tribe and mitigation measures and potential evaluated.

- North Ohop Creek Bridge
- South Ohop Creek Bridge
- Mashel River Edge Bridge (at washed-out section of old logging road)
- Existing Mashel River Bridge
- Nisqually River Low Bridge at Mashel River/Nisqually River Confluence

Overlooks

These important park elements provide a dramatic and focused experience for the visitor. Perched on the edge of valley bluffs, or over river currents, these overlooks are located to support the interpretive and educational message of the park while allowing people to experience each quality of the season, view, and place. Overlooks are set back from primary trails and accessed by way of spur trails that enhance the feeling of reaching a special place.

Figure C-9: Overlook

Highway Crossings

- SR 7 Undercrossing at Ohop Creek Valley (Pedestrian/Bike)
- SR 7 At-Grade Crossing at Eatonville Highway W. (Pedestrian/Bike)
- SR 7 Undercrossing at UW Pack Forest (Pedestrian/Bike/Equestrian)

Transit

The park site is not currently accessible by transit service. The nearest Pierce County Transit bus route service is located 13 miles away in Graham. As the Park is developed and visitation increases, there may be demand for shuttle service between Eatonville, the Park site and Mt. Rainier. A logical pick-up point is the Village Center.