

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

APPROVING THE NATURAL AREAS ACQUISITION
REFINEMENT PLAN FOR THE COOPER MOUNTAIN
TARGET AREA

RESOLUTION NO. 07-3836

Introduced by Chief Operating Officer
Michael J. Jordan, with the
concurrence of Council President
David Bragdon

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2006, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 06-3672B “For the Purpose of Submitting to the Voters of the Metro Area a General Obligation Bond Indebtedness in the Amount of \$227.4 Million to Fund Natural Area Acquisition and Water Quality Protection,” recommending submission for voter approval a general obligation bond to preserve and protect natural areas, clean water, and fish and wildlife (the “2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure” or “Measure”); and

WHEREAS, at the election held on November 7, 2006, the voters approved Ballot Measure 26-80, the 2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure; and

WHEREAS, the Cooper Mountain Target Area was identified in the Measure as one of 27 regional target areas for land acquisition, building on the success of land acquisitions in the Cooper Mountain Target Area pursuant to Metro’s 1995 Open Spaces Bond Measure Program; and

WHEREAS, as provided in the 2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure, Metro has undertaken a public refinement process to establish specific acquisition strategies, goals, objectives, and a confidential tax-lot specific acquisition target area map for each of the 27 target areas; and

WHEREAS, Metro’s refinement process included the compilation of available information about each target area; biological field visits and expert analysis of maps; interviews with key stakeholders including natural resource experts, property owners, representatives from state and local government agencies, and advocates from water quality, fish, and wildlife preservation interest groups; and eight public open houses at sites throughout the region and a “virtual” open house available via the internet, at which draft refinement plans were made available for public review and participants could share their target area priorities either in-person or electronically; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2007, the Council approved Resolution No. 07-3766A, “Authorizing the Chief Operating Officer to Purchase Property with Accepted Acquisition Guidelines as Outlined in the Natural Areas Implementation Work Plan,” authorizing the Metro Chief Operating Officer to acquire properties identified on a Council-approved target area “confidential refinement map;” and

WHEREAS, the Council has reviewed the draft refinement plans and considered information it has received from citizens, scientists, advocates, and state and local governments; now, therefore

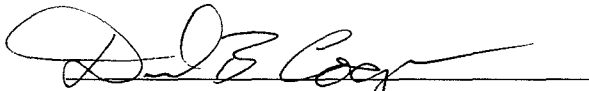
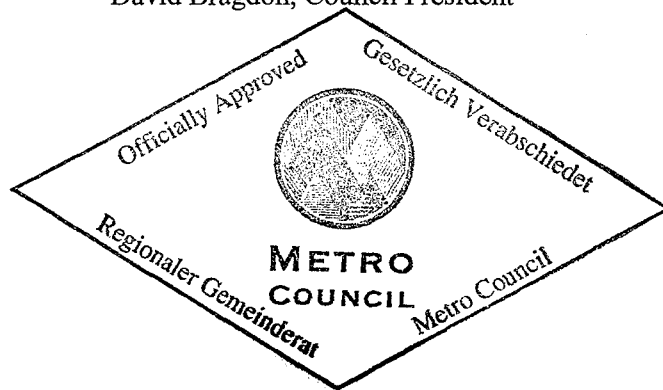
BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council adopts the Cooper Mountain Refinement Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A, including the confidential tax-lot specific map reviewed by the Council in Executive Session on September 4, 2007, and signed by Council President David Bragdon on that date, and hereby authorizes the Chief Operating Officer to acquire properties in the Cooper Mountain Target Area consistent with the Council-approved Acquisition Parameters and Due Diligence Guidelines of the Natural Areas Implementation Work Plan.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 6th day of September 2007.



David Bragdon, Council President

Approved as to Form:


Daniel B. Cooper, Metro Attorney

**2006 NATURAL AREAS ACQUISITION PROGRAM
COOPER MOUNTAIN TARGET AREA REFINEMENT PLAN**

Background

The 1995 Open Space Acquisition Program refinement goal for Cooper Mountain was to acquire 428 acres, and included a goal to provide wildlife corridors and trail linkages. To date, Metro has acquired 255.8 acres. The master plan for the Cooper Mountain Nature Park is complete and the design and engineering phase of development is underway.

The 2006 Natural Areas bond measure stated:

Acquiring remaining oak communities and streamside forests will build on the investment already made in protecting Oregon white oak and rare prairie habitat at Cooper Mountain near Beaverton.

Established science shows that the area's habitat supports several mammal species that are uncommon in urban settings, as well as an extremely diverse bird community. The regionally rare upland prairie and oak/madrone woodland habitat supports exceptional species including what is perhaps the largest remaining population of state endangered pale larkspur and breeding populations of the Northern red-legged frog.

Target Area Description

Cooper Mountain Natural Area sits on the southwestern slopes of Cooper Mountain, an 800-foot high basalt mound located near the western edge of Beaverton. The natural area provides stunning views of the Tualatin Valley and Chehalem Mountains and is comprised of remnant and recently reforested conifer forests, oak and madrone woodlands and upland prairies nestled between residential and agricultural lands. Restoration projects at the site include the reintroduction of more than 60,000 trees and shrubs in former clear-cut areas and a series of prescribed burns to enhance oak and upland prairie habitat and improve conditions for the endangered pale larkspur and other rare wildflowers. Also included are enhancements to a small quarry pond to improve habitat conditions for a breeding population of the state-sensitive Northern red-legged frog.

Site design and development of the first phase of visitor improvements as described in the adopted master plan for Cooper Mountain Nature Park is under way. Planned improvements include a network of trails and public facilities, interpretive cultural and natural history signage and a "nature house" for environmental education programs.

Refinement Process

During the refinement process, Metro staff compiled available information about the Cooper Mountain target area, analyzed maps and conducted biological field visits. Individuals were interviewed representing various government agencies, property owners, interested friends groups and natural resource experts. The key concerns expressed during the interviews are summarized in Attachment 1.

A public open house to discuss the proposed Refinement Plan was held on June 14, 2007 at the Tualatin Hills Nature Park Interpretive Center, one of eight such open houses held throughout the region. Notices of the open houses were mailed to area residents and other interested citizens. Metro also conducted a "virtual" open house by making target area informational materials, including maps, available "online" via the internet and allowing participants to share their target area priorities electronically. A total of 527 people attended the regional open houses, and the online open house had 6,363 visits from 3,419 unique visitors. More than 700 target area surveys were completed either in person or online. Eleven people responded to the Cooper Mountain survey. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included as Attachment

2. The map associated with the questionnaire for this target area is included as Attachment 3, and complete survey results are included as Attachment 4.

Findings

- The Cooper Mountain target area is regionally significant due to the rare and disappearing oak/madrone woodlands and prairie habitats it supports, and its fish, wildlife, regional recreation and water quality values.
- Acquisition to date has secured a substantial contiguous portion (231 acres) of the remaining undeveloped open space on Cooper Mountain. Targeted additions on the east, south and west perimeter of Cooper Mountain Nature Park would serve multiple conservation and recreation functions including protecting riparian forests, oak habitat, water quality and wildlife corridor linkages, and expanding public access opportunities.
- Tributary headwater creeks on the south side of Cooper Mountain contribute to the Tualatin River. They are important to protect for water quality, riparian forest habitat and wildlife linkages.
- Maintaining a contiguous open space corridor connecting publicly owned greenspaces and trails in the vicinity of the Cooper Mountain Nature Park area has support among a large number of stakeholders.
- An east-west regional trail linkage to Cooper Mountain Nature Park between the Westside Trail and proposed Burlington Northern Trail is identified in the following planning documents:
 - Metro's Regional Trails Map
 - Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation Department Comprehensive Plan (2006)
 - Metro's Cooper Mountain Master Plan (2005)
- Water quality is a significant concern on Cooper Mountain. The land south and west of Cooper Mountain Nature Park is outside the Clean Water Services boundary, and is therefore not covered by that agency's stream protection and buffer requirements.
- Cooper Mountain Nature Park provides an important buffer between residential development to the north and agricultural uses to the south.
- Eleven people responded to the Cooper Mountain survey. Additional commentary was provided orally at the open house, which was consistent with the written responses. In rank order, the public priorities were:
 1. *Map area A* – Protect forested lands along tributaries to the Tualatin River to protect rare oak habitat and natural corridors for wildlife
 2. *Map area C* – Protect lands adjacent to the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park
 3. *Map area B* – Secure a corridor between the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park and other regional and local trails and natural areas.
 4. *Map area D* – Expand the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to allow for additional recreational uses such as horseback riding and mountain biking and provide a regional trailhead off of Scholls Ferry Road.

Goals

Acquire key land parcels in the Cooper Mountain target area to build on Metro's successful efforts using 1995 Bond Measure funds to:

- Expand habitat protection of Oregon white oak and rare prairie habitat and riparian corridors along Lindow and McKernan Creeks.
- Enhance access to Cooper Mountain Nature Park by land acquisition and securing trail connections between major publicly-owned properties.
- Keep important wildlife corridors and buffers intact.

Objectives

A target area map showing the tiered objectives described below is included as Attachment 5.

Tier 1 Objective

- Acquire lands adjacent to the Cooper Mountain Nature Park to secure rare oak habitat and riparian corridors and enhance the experience of park users.

Tier 2 Objective

- Secure a corridor between the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park and other regional and local trails (including the Westside Trail) and natural areas.

Partnership Objectives

- Pursue partnership opportunities with the City of Beaverton, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District and Washington County to leverage regional bond dollars.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 07-3836, APPROVING THE NATURAL AREAS ACQUISITION REFINEMENT PLAN FOR THE COOPER MOUNTAIN TARGET AREA

Date: September 6, 2007

Prepared by: Jim Desmond
Kathleen Brennan-Hunter

BACKGROUND—REFINEMENT PROCESS

The Natural Areas Bond Measure (Resolution No. 06-3672B, “For the Purpose of Submitting to the Voters of the Metro Area a General Obligation Bond Indebtedness in the Amount of \$227.4 Million to Fund Natural Area Acquisition and Water Quality Protection,” adopted by the Metro Council March 9, 2006) provided that Metro would undertake a “Refinement Process” to “gather additional information about each individual target area and begin zeroing in on particular parcels that would be valuable to acquire” (Exhibit A to Resolution No. 06-3672B). In addition, the Natural Areas Implementation Work Plan (Resolution No. 07-3766A, “Authorizing the Chief Operating Officer to Purchase Property with Accepted Acquisition Guidelines as Outlined in the Natural Areas Implementation Work Plan,” adopted by the Metro Council on March 1, 2007) authorized the Metro Chief Operating Officer to acquire properties without further Council approval if they have been identified on a Council-approved target area “confidential refinement map.” To implement those directives, the Refinement Plans for each target area contain overall target area objectives and confidential tax-lot specific target area maps identifying priority properties for acquisition, enabling Metro staff to begin the acquisition of property and property rights as detailed in the Natural Areas Implementation Work Plan.

Additional background information, target area information, a description of the specifics of the refinement process regarding this target area, and the refinement plan’s findings, goals, and objectives are described in further detail in Exhibit A to this resolution, the Cooper Mountain Target Area Refinement Plan.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. **Known Opposition**

None.

2. **Legal Antecedents**

Resolution No. 06-3672B, “For the Purpose of Submitting to the Voters of the Metro Area a General Obligation Bond Indebtedness in the Amount of \$227.4 Million to Fund Natural Area Acquisition and Water Quality Protection,” adopted on March 9, 2006.

The voters’ approval of Metro’s 2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure at the general election held on November 6, 2006.

Resolution No. 07-3766A “Authorizing the Chief Operating Officer to Purchase Property With Accepted Acquisition Guidelines as Outlined in the Natural Areas Implementation Work Plan,” adopted by the Metro Council on March 1, 2007, established the Acquisition Parameters and Due Diligence Guidelines for the purchase of properties as part of the 2006 Natural Areas Bond Program.

3. **Anticipated Effects**

Acquisition of natural area properties in the Cooper Mountain target area to achieve the goals and purposes of the 2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure.

4. **Budget Impacts**

The FY 2007-08 budget includes budgetary authority to purchase \$35 million in natural area lands, with an additional \$15.4 million in contingency, if necessary. It is estimated, based on historical spending patterns, that this authority will be sufficient to cover the anticipated acquisition activity for this fiscal year. Additional unappropriated fund balance (\$64 million) exists for land acquisition in future years, along with the authority to issue up to an additional \$102 million in General Obligation bonds in support of this program.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution No. 07-3836.

Summary of Comments from Stakeholder Interviews for Cooper Mountain Target Area

Stakeholder(s) Interviewed

Kendra Smith, Clean Water Services (CWS)
Steve Gulgren, Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District (THPRD)
Tim O'Brien, Metro Planning
Aisha Willits, Washington County Planning
Ed Bartholemy, South Cooper Mt. Landowner Association
Eric Squires, Washington County CPO-6 Chair

Key Themes Discussed

Water Quality

- The various drainages and tributaries to Lindow Creek, primarily south and west of the current Cooper Mountain Nature Park are outside the Clean Water Services boundary, and therefore exempt from buffer requirements. Suggested concentrating on establishing buffers along these riparian zones, either through easements or acquisition. Extend all the way to Tualatin River if possible. These areas are important both for fish habitat, water quality and wildlife corridors.
- Increased volume and rate of water run-off in ditches and drainages has been noted in recent years. This is causing erosion in ditches and contributing silt to waterways.
- Lindow Creek tributaries are identified as drainage hazard areas by Washington County.
- Any land that can be kept in open space will be beneficial for groundwater.

Wildlife Habitat

- Lindow Creek and its tributaries provide a wildlife corridor south to the Tualatin River.
- Protection of remaining oak/madrone communities should also be a priority. Oak woodland noted south of Cooper Mountain Nature Park and west, across Grabhorn Road.
- Deer move north-south along 175th Avenue, and up drainages on north side of mountain to Cooper Mountain Nature Park. Visibility has increased in recent years, probably due to loss of habitat, not population increase.

Land Use / Urban / Rural Form

- The UGB bisects Cooper Mountain Nature Park with two exception areas south of Cooper Mountain Nature Park. The exception areas have to be reviewed first when UGB expansion is next considered. UGB exception areas may be valuable targets for protection, due to their potential incorporation into the UGB and subsequent development pressure.
- Cooper Mountain Nature Park forms a buffer between residential development to the north and agricultural uses to the south.
- Development/real estate speculation is high on undeveloped lands in the area.
- Trail connections are key to reducing traffic and providing alternative transportation options as development in the area continues.

Connections to existing parks, trails, public open space

- Recent master planning by Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District includes development of a Cooper Mountain Regional Trail to connect east-west between the Westside/Powerline Trail and the Burlington-Northern Trail through Cooper Mountain Nature Park.
- Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District recently acquired a 20-acre parcel just east of Cooper Mountain Nature Park, and is working with landowners to acquire right-of-way to connect the parcels by trail.
- Corridors along creek drainages could serve dual purpose as trail connections between scattered open spaces and wildlife corridors.

Miscellaneous Comments

- The group held some discussion about Measure 37 claims and development plans/pressure on parcels south of Cooper Mountain Nature Park.
- Acquisition of in-holding was mentioned as an obvious top priority by most stakeholders.
- Quarry site to west was noted by several stakeholders as having open space potential.
- Several stakeholders expressed the opinion that money will go farther for creation of linkages/corridors rather than large parcels.

Key Partners

- Clean Water Services
- Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District
- Washington County

QUESTIONNAIRE

TARGET AREA: COOPER MOUNTAIN

In November 2006 voters directed the Metro Council to extend a regionwide program and acquire between 3,500 and 4,500 acres of additional natural areas to protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat and to provide future generations opportunities for greater access to nature. Now it's time for the Metro Council to refine priorities in the 27 regional natural areas and trail corridors targeted for acquisition. The 1995 acreage goal for this target area was 428 and Metro has acquired 259 acres to date. The 2006 program will provide additional funding for protection goals in this target area.

The Metro Council wants your ideas and input. We've been talking with scientists, land-use experts, groups and individuals who have special knowledge about the natural resource values and community visions for these areas. With this information Metro has begun to identify the potential strategies and opportunities that will achieve the best results. Now we need to know: Do we have it right? What have we missed? What is most important to you?

2006 NATURAL AREAS BOND DESCRIPTION FOR THIS TARGET AREA

Acquiring remaining oak communities and streamside forests will build on the investment already made in protecting Oregon white oak and rare prairie habitat at Cooper Mountain near Beaverton.

QUESTIONS

1. **The following priorities were identified in the Cooper Mountain target area based on scientific information about benefits to water quality, habitat diversity, wildlife connectivity, restoration potential and/or public access and from information provided by key stakeholders in the area. Rank in order of importance to you from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important.**

- _____ Protecting forested lands along Lindow Creek and other tributaries of the Tualatin River to the south and west of the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to protect rare oak habitat and natural corridors for wildlife. **(Map area A)**
- _____ Securing a corridor between the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park and other regional and local trails and natural areas. **(Map arrows B)**
- _____ Protecting lands adjacent to the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to buffer existing protected natural areas from development, close gaps or secure inholdings. **(Map area C)**
- _____ Expanding the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to allow for additional recreational uses such as horseback riding and mountain biking and provide a regional trailhead off of Scholls Ferry Road. **(Map area D)**

2. **In general, what should be emphasized in the Cooper Mountain target area? Rank in order of importance to you from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important.**

- _____ Preserving lands along creeks and tributaries to protect water quality and wildlife habitat.
- _____ Preserving Oregon white oak and rare prairie habitat.
- _____ Buffering the natural area from urban development and farmland uses.
- _____ Providing access to nature for people by connecting natural areas with local and regional trails.

3. Are there other priorities that the Metro Council should consider in the Cooper Mountain target area? Please be specific.
4. Do you have suggestions about partnerships Metro should pursue or other innovative ways to leverage regional funding and enhance this natural area?
5. Are you interested in participating in Metro's Natural Areas program by selling or donating your property or selling or donating a conservation easement on your property?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please be sure to provide your contact information below.
6. Do you have any other comments about this target area?

- ☐ Please add my name to the Cooper Mountain target area mailing list for future information, public meetings and events.

Name _____

Address _____

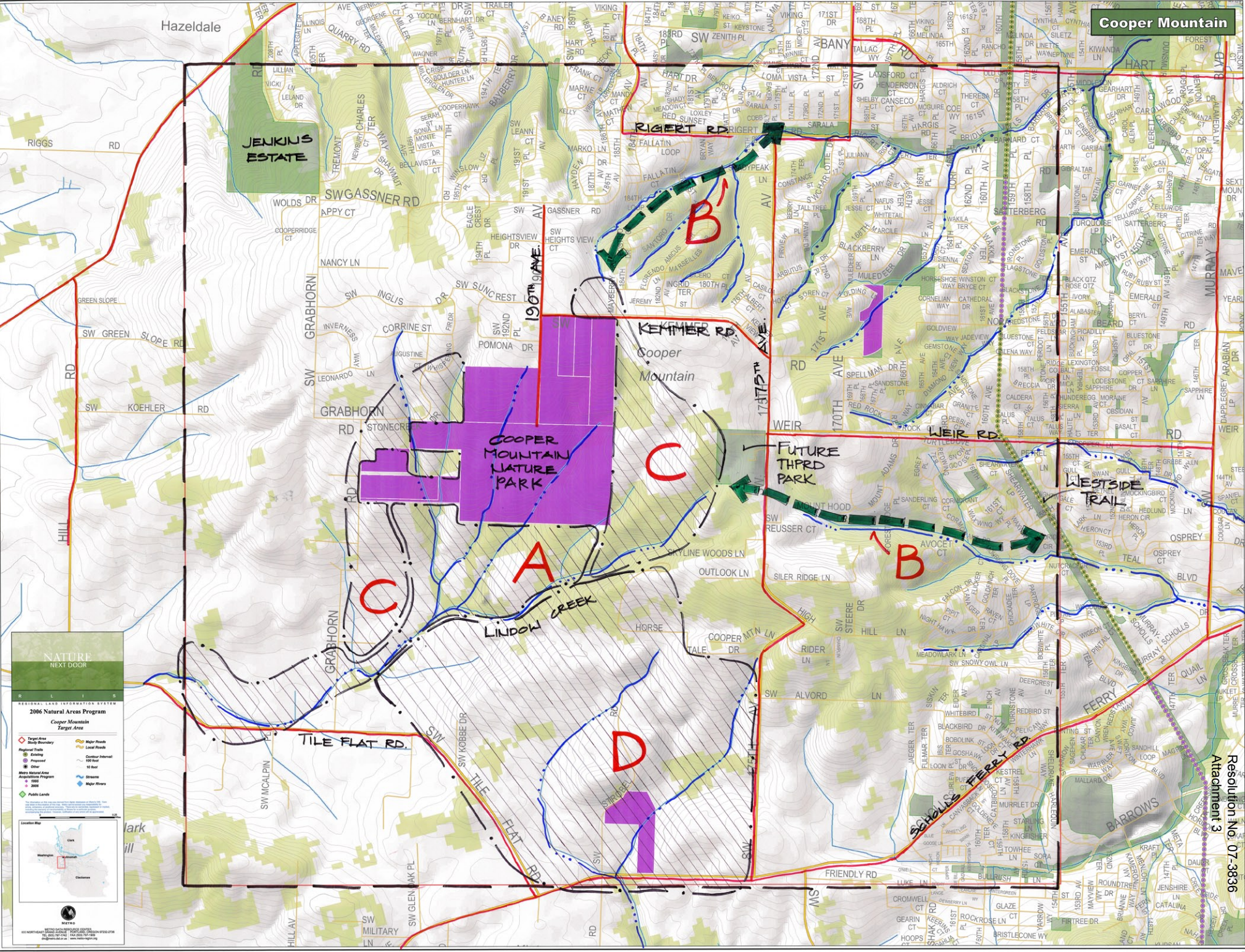
City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

**You may complete this questionnaire online at
www.metro-region.org/naturalareas**

or mail it to Metro at
600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232
(503) 797-1741



Cooper Mountain Survey Results

1. The following priorities were identified in the Cooper Mountain target area based on scientific information about benefits to water quality, habitat diversity, wildlife connectivity, restoration potential and/or public access and from information provided by key stakeholders in the area. Rank in order of importance to you.

	most important			least important	Rating Average	Response Count
Protecting forested lands along Lindow Creek and other tributaries of the Tualatin River to the south and west of the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to protect rare oak habitat and natural corridors for wildlife. (Map area A)	33.3% (5)	46.7% (7)	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)	1.93	15
Securing a corridor between the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park and other regional and local trails and natural areas. (Map arrows B)	28.6% (4)	14.3% (2)	57.1% (8)	0.0% (0)	2.29	14
Protecting lands adjacent to the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to buffer existing protected natural areas from development, close gaps or secure inholdings. (Map area C)	40.0% (6)	26.7% (4)	33.3% (5)	0.0% (0)	1.93	15
Expanding the planned Cooper Mountain Nature Park to allow for additional recreational uses such as horseback riding and mountain biking and provide a regional trailhead off of Scholls Ferry Road. (Map area D)	6.7% (1)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	86.7% (13)	3.67	15
	<i>answered question</i>					16
	<i>skipped question</i>					3

2. In general what should be emphasized in the Cooper Mountain target area? Rank in order of importance to you.

	most important			least important	Rating Average	Response Count
Preserving lands along creeks and tributaries to protect water quality and wildlife habitat.	41.2% (7)	17.6% (3)	23.5% (4)	17.6% (3)	2.18	17
Preserving Oregon white oak and rare prairie habitat.	25.0% (4)	43.8% (7)	18.8% (3)	12.5% (2)	2.19	16
Buffering the natural area from urban development and farmland uses.	11.8% (2)	29.4% (5)	35.3% (6)	23.5% (4)	2.71	17
Providing access to nature for people by connecting natural areas with local and regional trails.	29.4% (5)	11.8% (2)	17.6% (3)	41.2% (7)	2.71	17
	answered question					18
	skipped question					1

3. Are there other priorities that the Metro Council should consider in the Cooper Mountain target area? Please be specific.

As much access from neighborhoods to trails as possible.
Question 1 above: "...such as horseback riding and mountain biking" - NO. Question 1 above: "...provide a regional trailhead off of Scholls" - YES
Be sure to find connection(s) between Westside Trail & Cooper Mt. Natural Area - otherwise most people will have to drive to the park.
Allow other uses, eg - star viewing parties on the parking lot like Jackson-Bottom does.
Would like mountain bike trails.
Enlarge the existing park in line with it's original vision in 1995 (450 acres).

4. Do you have suggestions about partnerships Metro should pursue or other innovative ways to leverage regional funding and enhance this natural area? If so, please specify.

Partner with neighborhood associations in the area to help set up trail access to Metro lands.
Partner with THPRD, Beaverton & Washington County to make connection to Westside Trail.
THPRD, State, County, Fed

5. Do you have any other comments about this target area? If so, please specify.

I am VERY concerned about so MANY proposed trails in open spaces. Too many trails will push all the wildlife OUT due to TOO much disturbance! We would rather see sidewalks used to AVOID wildlife habitat! Thanks!
We should look at what are compatible activities. Is horseback riding on the same trail compatible with hikers? Who wants to step on horse shit.
We live near this area and I welcome an opportunity to use my brawn or brain as a volunteer for the Cooper Mt. Park.
Please open more trails to mountain bikes

TO PROPOSED
BURLINGTON NORTHERN
+ POWERLINE TRAIL
RIGGS RD

JENKINS
ESTATE

TIER II

COOPER
MOUNTAIN
NATURE
PARK

TIER I

TIER II

WESTSIDE
TRAIL

SEPTEMBER 2007

NATURE
NEXT DOOR

REGIONAL LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM

2006 Natural Areas Program
Cooper Mountain
Target Area

Legend:

- Target Area Study Boundary
- Regional Trails
- County
- Other
- Map Natural Area Acquisition Program
- Public Lands
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Contour Interval
- 500 feet
- 10 feet
- Streams
- Major Rivers

Location Map

Scale: 1 inch = 1 mile

Source: USGS, 2000; USFS, 2000; BLM, 2000; etc.