

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

APPROVING THE NATURAL AREAS ACQUISITION
REFINEMENT PLAN FOR THE WILLAMETTE
NARROWS AND CANEMAH BLUFF TARGET AREA

RESOLUTION NO. 07-3858

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 Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff Target Area was identified in the Measure as one of 27 regional target areas for land acquisition, building on the success of land acquisitions 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

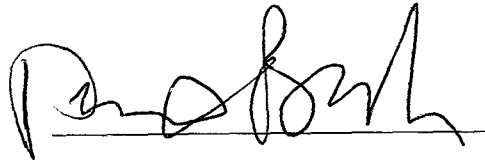
WHEREAS, Metro’s refinement process included the compilation of available information about each target area; biological field visits and expert analysis of maps; interviews with key stakeholders including natural resource experts, property owners, representatives from state and local government agencies, 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

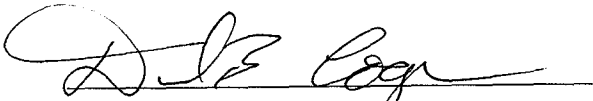
BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council adopts the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff Refinement Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A, including the confidential tax-lot specific map reviewed by the Council in Executive Session on September 4, 2007, and signed by Council President David Bragdon on that date, and hereby authorizes the Chief Operating Officer to acquire properties in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff 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.

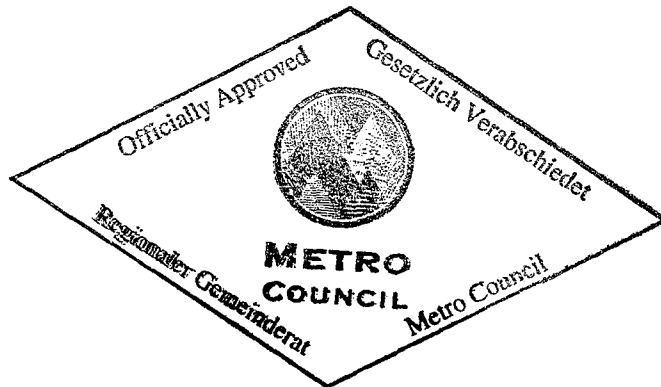


David Bragdon, Council President

Approved as to Form:



Daniel B. Cooper, Metro Attorney



**2006 NATURAL AREAS ACQUISITION PROGRAM
WILLAMETTE NARROWS AND CANEMAH BLUFF TARGET AREA REFINEMENT PLAN**

Background

In 1995 the refinement goals for the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff were included within the broader Willamette River Greenway. For the Willamette Narrows, the successful acquisition of 472 acres acquired far exceeded the initial 75-acre goal. In the Canemah Bluff, the initial acreage goal was 390, with a final acquisition total of 134 acres. Refinement plan goals focused on fens, ponds and small drainages and acquiring and protecting islands in the Willamette River. The 606 acres that have been protected by Metro in this area are located along the eastern and western banks of the Willamette River. Protected areas include some small islands in the Willamette River as well as a very important peat fen. Due to their proximity and similar natural resource values, the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff target areas were combined for the 2006 bond.

The 2006 Natural Areas bond measure stated:

Descending the Willamette River, this greenway forms the corridor gateway to Willamette Falls, Oregon City, and urbanizing areas of the lower Willamette River. Flowing through islands and past steep Bluff, this portion of the river retains a sense of wildness like no other reach of the lower river. The narrows provide high quality wildlife and important fish habitat.

The science information recognized that this unique area is under pressure from increased development. Oregon white oak and rare wildflower habitats exist in the area. River habitat values are high because of the diverse topography that includes steep Bluff and plateaus.

Target Area Description

Just south of West Linn, at its confluence with the Tualatin River, the Willamette River flows through a stretch of steep cliffs and rocky islands called the Willamette Narrows. Upland Bluff offer views of the river, trees and huge basalt rocks, while lower portions offer sandy beach access to the river. Although the area is just minutes from West Linn and Oregon City to the north and Wilsonville to the west, it can feel untouched and remote. The Willamette Narrows is home to deer, coyote, frogs, salamanders, osprey, owls, heron, woodpeckers and numerous songbirds. In the future, it will offer access to people for an extraordinary natural area experience close to home. Many of the region's most unique plant species, including the rare Delphinium (leucophaeum) and the culturally significant camas, are found on these sites. The oak woodland and upland prairie habitats found here in abundance have nearly disappeared in other areas of the Willamette Valley.

The protected Peach Cove Fen located in this area is believed to be the only wetland of its kind remaining in the Willamette Valley. The 20-acre shallow lake and associated emergent marsh sit in a depression scoured in bedrock by the Bretz (aka Missoula) Floods thousands of years ago. A floating peat mat rises and falls as the lake level fluctuates with seasonal rains.

Refinement Process

During the refinement process, Metro staff compiled available information about the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff 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 18, 2007 at the Athey Creek Middle School Commons, 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 surveys were submitted either in person or online. Twenty-two people completed surveys about Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff. 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 Willamette Narrows/Canemah Bluff area contains large, contiguous forests and a diverse system of wetlands, fens, small drainages, rock outcrops and basalt cliffs.
- Among several rare species of note is the white rock larkspur, a state-listed endangered plant species that occurs here and only six other places in the world.
- The steep river Bluff and plateaus in the target area are relatively unique within the region. The shallow soils of the rocky plateaus support wet meadows and Oregon white oak-Pacific madrone woodlands. Oak-madrone habitats are also found on a group of basalt islands within the target area, which have been preserved for conservation purposes.
- The islands and the large expanse of forested land along both river banks provides unique scenic values, creating some of the most dramatic river views in the northern Willamette Valley from vantage points in West Linn and Oregon City, and along the Interstate 205 corridor.
- Significantly more land within the target area is now in public hands, compared with a decade ago. The area has seen relatively low impacts from development, due in part to past Metro acquisition efforts, as well as the area’s steep slopes and other physical constraints. Nevertheless, development pressures have increased as land values throughout the area have risen, and numerous Measure 37 claims have been filed in the area.
- The existing base of public lands in this target area provides an opportunity to establish a publicly accessible regional natural area.
- The area identified for acquisition and protection is a regionally significant natural and cultural resource, due to biological, geologic, and scenic values. Stakeholders and the public have emphasized the ecological benefits of aggregating parcels and completing connections to and between protected natural areas.
- Twenty-two people completed surveys about Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff. Additional commentary was provided orally at the open house, most of which was consistent with the written responses. In rank order, the public priorities were:
 1. *Map area A* – Protect large blocks of forested areas along the west side of the Willamette River from Willow Island to the Oregon Golf Club.
 2. *Map area B* – Protect scenic views of the Canemah Bluff.
 3. *Map area C* – Provide recreational access and/or rest stops for canoeing and kayaking from Rock Island to Fish Eddy.

Goal

Acquisition of strategic additions in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff target area will protect the unique biological, geological and scenic values of this area and allow for a publicly accessible regional natural area to be established.

Objectives

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

Tier I Objectives

- Acquire property adjacent to existing public holdings that are essential to the establishment and management of a publicly accessible regionally significant natural area.
- Prioritize acquisition of unique landscape forms (kolks, fens, rock outcrops) and rare plant communities (oak woodland, prairie, isolated wetlands).
- Secure protection of remaining gaps in riparian areas on the west bank of the Willamette River between existing public holdings and Peach Cove fen.
- Acquire lands to extend public ownership of forested Bluff and protect scenic views of Canemah Bluff from the river and nearby publicly owned lands.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 07-3858, APPROVING THE NATURAL AREAS ACQUISITION REFINEMENT PLAN FOR THE WILLAMETTE NARROWS AND CANEMAH BLUFF 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 Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff 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 Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff 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. 07-3858.

Summary of Comments from Stakeholder Interviews for Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff Target Area

Stakeholder(s) Interviewed

Jim Labbe, Portland Audubon Society
Bob Sallinger, Portland Audubon Society
M G Devereux, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Dept.
Doug Neely, City of Oregon City
Alice Norris, City of Oregon City
Ken Worcester, City of West Linn
John Christy, Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center

Key Themes Discussed

Link or aggregate existing holdings

- 1995 bond acquisitions were very successful (469 acres). 2006 bond should build on that base.
- Contiguous forested areas with connections to riparian areas.
- Areas of particular importance that were mentioned by stakeholders include:
 - The steep, rocky bluffs on the east side of the river.
 - Forested areas along the west side of the river.
 - Fens, ponds and drainages throughout the target area.

Emphasize land with rare or diverse plant communities

- White rock larkspur is a state-listed species, is within the target area and should be protected.
- Presence of rare Oregon white oak – Pacific madrone habitat.
- Riparian values are high. Focus on river-related ecology.
- Fens, ponds, and drainages also contribute to unique habitat for plants and wildlife.

Prioritize riparian corridor

- Value of target area is related to Willamette River. Unusual stretch of the lower river for its topography and natural state.
- Both river banks have high scenic value as viewed from the water and from opposite banks. Canemah Bluff is especially scenic and unique as viewed from the west.
- Plant communities and wildlife are unique for this section of the lower Willamette.

Miscellaneous Comments

- Pressure from residential development is increasing.
- Access to natural areas should be allowed where it is feasible.
- Biodiversity is highest priority
- Could serve dual purpose as trail connections between scattered open spaces and wildlife corridors.

QUESTIONNAIRE

TARGET AREA: WILLAMETTE NARROWS AND CANEMAH BLUFFS

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. Metro has acquired 472 acres in this target area since 1995. 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

Descending the Willamette River, this greenway forms the corridor gateway to Willamette Falls, Oregon City and urbanizing areas of the lower Willamette River. Flowing through islands and past steep bluffs, this portion of the river retains a sense of wildness like no other reach of the lower river. The narrows provide high quality wildlife and important fish habitat.

QUESTIONS

1. **The following priorities were identified in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluffs target area based on scientific information about benefits to water quality, habitat diversity, wildlife connectivity and/or restoration potential and from information provided by key stakeholders in the area. Rank in order of importance to you from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least important.**

- _____ Protecting large blocks of forested areas along the west side of the Willamette River from Willow Island to the Oregon Golf Club. (Map area A)
- _____ Protecting scenic views of the Canemah Bluffs. (Map area B)
- _____ Providing recreational access and/or rest stops for canoeing and kayaking from Rock Island to Fish Eddy. (Map area C)

2. **In general, what should be emphasized in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluffs target area? Rank in order of importance to you from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.**

- _____ Protecting rare or unique plant communities (e.g., Oregon white oak, white rock larkspur, sphagnum bog).
- _____ Securing trail corridors for walking and hiking.
- _____ Protecting historic, archeological and cultural resources.
- _____ Protecting the area's scenic values and important views.
- _____ Providing access to the Willamette River for recreation and wildlife watching.

3. **Are there other priorities that the Metro Council should consider in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluffs 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 Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluffs 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

NATURE NEXT DOOR

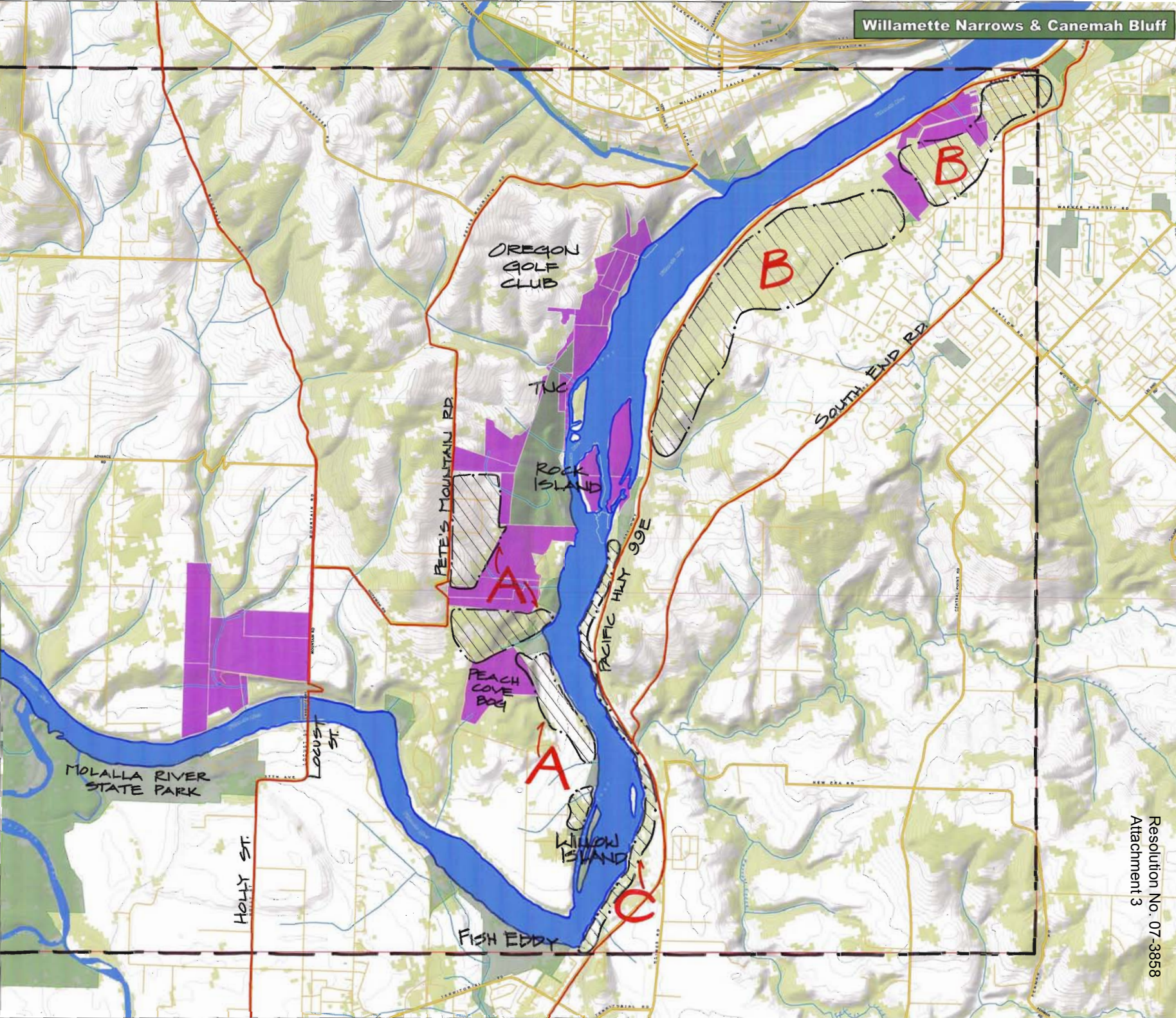
REGIONAL LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM

2006 Natural Areas Program
 Willamette Narrows & Canemah Bluff Target Area

◆ Target Area Study Boundary
◆ Metro Natural Area Acquisitions Program
◆ Public Lands

— Major Roads
— Local Roads
— Contour Interval: 100 Foot
— 10 Foot
— Streams
— Major Rivers

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 metro@metro.or.gov www.metroregion.org



Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluff Survey Results

1. The following priorities were identified in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluffs target area based on scientific information about benefits to water quality, habitat diversity, wildlife connectivity and/or restoration potential 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 large blocks of forested areas along the west side of the Willamette River from Willow Island to the Oregon Golf Club. (Map area A) | 68.4% (13) | | 10.5% (2) | 21.1% (4) | 1.53 | 19 |
| Protecting scenic views of the Canemah Bluffs. (Map area B) | 15.0% (3) | | 55.0% (11) | 30.0% (6) | 2.15 | 20 |
| Providing recreational access and/or rest stops for canoeing and kayaking from Rock Island to Fish Eddy. (Map area C) | 20.0% (4) | | 30.0% (6) | 50.0% (10) | 2.30 | 20 |
| | <i>answered question</i> | | | | | 20 |
| | <i>skipped question</i> | | | | | 2 |

2. In general, what should be emphasized in the Willamette Narrows and Canemah Bluffs target area? Rank in order of importance to you.

| | most important | | | | least important | Rating Average | Response Count |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Protecting rare or unique plant communities (e.g., Oregon white oak, white rock larkspur, sphagnum bog). | 45.0% (9) | 5.0% (1) | 20.0% (4) | 15.0% (3) | 15.0% (3) | 2.50 | 20 |
| Securing trail corridors for walking and hiking. | 30.0% (6) | 20.0% (4) | 15.0% (3) | 15.0% (3) | 20.0% (4) | 2.75 | 20 |
| Protecting historic, archeological and cultural resources. | 9.5% (2) | 38.1% (8) | 9.5% (2) | 4.8% (1) | 38.1% (8) | 3.24 | 21 |
| Protecting the area's scenic values and important views. | 19.0% (4) | 14.3% (3) | 42.9% (9) | 14.3% (3) | 9.5% (2) | 2.81 | 21 |
| Providing access to the Willamette River for recreation and wildlife watching. | 5.3% (1) | 26.3% (5) | 10.5% (2) | 47.4% (9) | 10.5% (2) | 3.32 | 19 |
| | <i>answered question</i> | | | | | 22 | |
| | <i>skipped question</i> | | | | | 0 | |

3. Are there other priorities that the Metro Council should consider in this target area? If so, please specify.

Water quality protection.

Connecting trails and making the land available for public use.

Bike camping. Leave Portland on bike and camp at Molalla State Park or Champoeg.

Protecting water resources and natural trees and vegetation in historic Canemah Bluff is important. On property associated with 202 5th Avenue there are lots next to Ganong Street and a natural wetlands pond that should be acquired and saved. Metro's William Eadie knows about this opportunity. The associated property (6 1/2 acres) to the south that includes a big meadow and all of the land that feed the old Historic Canemah Water Works should be acquired too.

Narrows: It is a sensitive area and too many people will destroy it so Metro needs to be careful by keeping it protected from damage of the public.

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.

Nature Conservancy.

Native American Tribes??? They have lots of history here.

Nature Neighborhood Challenge Grants could be used to acquire some of this land.

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

Lovely area- hope this area high on your list.. :)

None of the priorities are really least important.

I like the idea of the continuous acquisition along the Willamette River. Also, I would like the wildlife corridors that run into the Willamette Narrows to be protected.

This area is extraordinary, rare and precious. The Metro-owned area(s) should be enlarged and protected. Once hiking trails are put through, invasive weeds will follow.

SEPTEMBER 2007
NATURE
NEXT DOOR

REGIONAL LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM
2006 Natural Areas Program
Willamette Narrows & Canemah Bluff
Target Area

- Target Area Study Boundary
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Metro Natural Area Acquisitions Program
- Contour Interval: 100 foot
- 1995
- 2006
- 19 foot
- Streams
- Public Lands
- Major Rivers



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