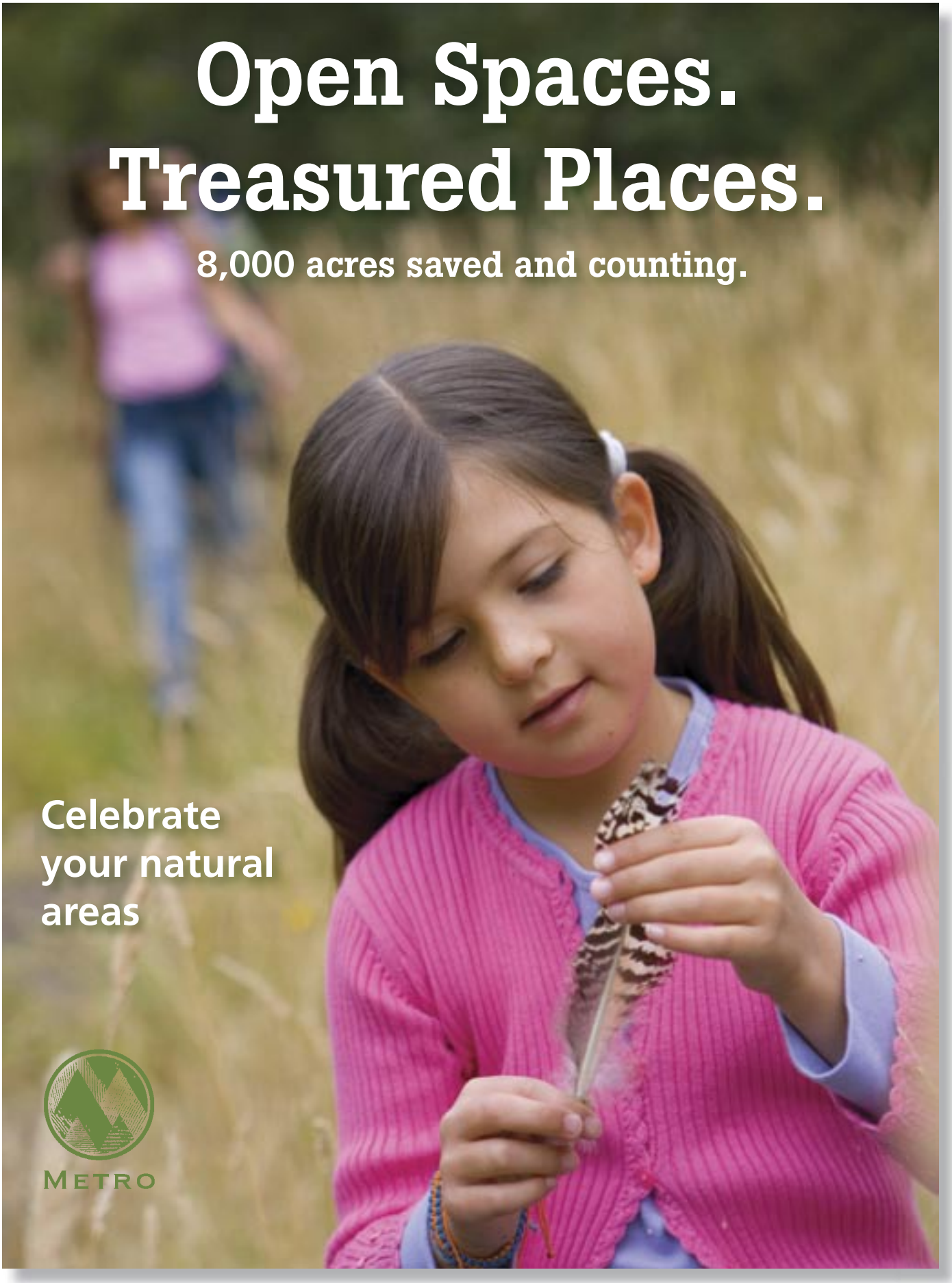
Open Spaces.
Treasured Places.
8,000 acres saved and counting.
Celebrate
your natural
areas
METRO

Dear GreenScene reader

What does it take to protect and restore health to our local rivers and streams? How do we support fish and wildlife habitat? Do we have the skill – and the courage – to restore swimmable, drinkable waterways in the Portland region for ourselves and generations to come?

We can and we did. All of us, together.

In 1995, the voters of the metropolitan region created a model program for landowners, neighborhoods, businesses and government to work together to protect land near our rivers and streams – more than 8,000 acres and counting. By approving the $135.6 million open spaces, parks and streams bond measure, voters directed the Metro Council to protect our precious butte tops, stream corridors, river canyons, wetlands and prairies with significant water quality, wildlife habitat and recreational benefits for the region. Our acquisitions include nearly 74 miles of stream and river frontage which offer an important natural buffer from development while allowing greater public access to local waterways.

This special edition of GreenScene features voices and stories from across the region. I hope you enjoy reading about some of the people, places and ideas that shaped the open spaces program and made our mutual success possible.

Let's celebrate.

Today, nearly all of the bond money has been spent and it's time to celebrate the investment we have all made in our children's future and the region's health and economy. During a special series of events from Sept. 1-11, you'll find an inviting variety of opportunities to get to know your newly acquired natural areas. I hope you'll join me in celebrating all that has been accomplished.

Eight thousand acres saved and counting. It's quite a legacy that you have given to this place. On behalf of all the citizens of the metropolitan region – those here today and those yet to come – I thank you.

Sincerely,

David Bragdon, Metro Council President

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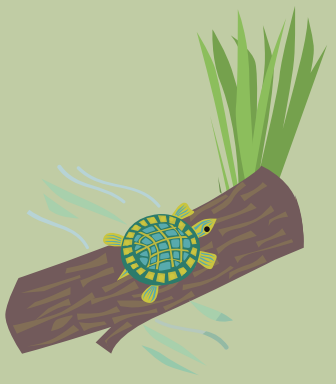


Come. Explore. Repeat.

Presented by Portland General Electric and The Oregonian

A Room With a View
First Thursday Dedication Event
Photographic Image Gallery
Featuring photos by Bruce Forster
Sept. 1

Concerts on the Lawn
McMenamins Grand Lodge
The John Bunzo Trio
Sept. 2

Bike to the MAX
Bike the Springwater Trail from the Woodstock Bike Gallery
Sept. 3

Open House in Open Space
Open Space Walking Tours
Cooper Mountain Vineyards
Sept. 4

Wildlife of the Open Spaces
Oregon Zoo Amphitheater
Sept. 5

Jude at the Aladdin
Tickets at Ticketmaster
Sept. 9

Ancient Forest Hike
With Friends of Forest Park
Sept. 10

Michael McDermott photo

Open Spaces. Treasured Places.
Celebrate Sept. 1-11

Up the River With a Paddle
Join Willamette Riverkeeper, Next Adventure and eNRG Kayaking
Willamette Park, West Linn
Sept. 10

The Harvest Fair
Sauvie Island's Annual Wintering In
Sept. 10 and 11

Legacy Breakfast and Bus Tour
Grandparents Day with Elmer's Restaurants and TriMet
Sept. 11

Sign up to be a "Treasured Friend" at these events or on the Metro web site and be eligible to win a bicycle or a kayak.

For registration information and event details, visit www.metro-region.org/parks or call (503) 797-1928.

METRO PEOPLE PLACES • OPEN SPACES

PGE Portland General Electric

The Oregonian

AM 620 KPOJ PORTLAND'S PROGRESSIVE TALK STATION

TRIMET

Promises made, promises kept

What did we get for our money?

More than 8,130 acres of valuable natural areas and nearly 74 miles of stream and river frontage have been protected by the open spaces, parks and streams bond measure.

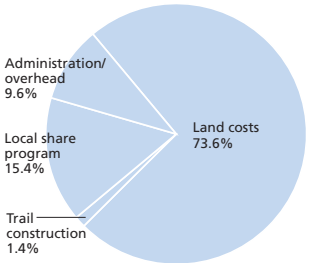
The bond measure also gave $25 million directly to local park providers for investment in local county and city park improvements and, in some cases, even more land acquisition. More than 100 local park projects in neighborhoods across the region offer biking, hiking and wildlife watching opportunities close to home.

Exceeding expectations – Metro makes your dollars work harder

The Metro Council and program staff have worked hard to stretch your open space investment. As of June 2005, more than $10 million has been leveraged from state and local partners to buy land. Seven private landowners donated their property to the open spaces program and four more provided partial donations – for a total of nearly 200 acres. In some cases, landowners donated conservation easements or agreed to a "bargain" sale of their property.

When the bond measure was put to voters in 1995, it was estimated that 6,000 acres would be protected and 13.35 percent of the bond proceeds would be spent on overhead and administrative costs. Not only were acreage goals far surpassed, but administrative costs averaged only 9.6 percent.

Willamette Narrows
C. Bruce Forster photo



Regional natural area acquisition

Gales Creek *(606 acres)*
Wetlands and riparian forests acquired along Gales Creek south of Forest Grove protect wildlife habitat and water quality near the Tualatin River and connect to other large regional natural areas such as Fernhill Wetlands.

Jackson Bottom/McKay and Dairy creeks *(493 acres)*
Acquisitions along these tributaries of the Tualatin River support water quality enhancement efforts in the Tualatin Basin and add wildlife habitat to the Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve management area.

Tualatin River access points *(398 acres)*
Acquisitions along the Tualatin River provide rare habitat types and at least four future public access points for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, picnicking and wildlife viewing.

Cooper Mountain *(256 acres)*
Oak woodland, dry native prairie, mixed conifer forest, and stream and wetland areas will be the backdrop for a public natural area being planned for Cooper Mountain near Beaverton.

Rock Creek *(117 acres)*
A tributary of the Tualatin River, Rock Creek flows through an area of rapid urban growth. Acquisitions protect some of the natural features of the area, provide wildlife habitat, help maintain water quality and offer recreational opportunities.

Forest Park buffer/ expansion *(865 acres)*
Acquisition of inholdings and adjacent buffer areas protects the future of Forest Park, a 5,000-acre park in urban Northwest Portland.

Willamette River Greenway *(959 acres)*
Acquisitions from Wilsonville to the Multnomah Channel protect fish and wildlife habitat and provide scenic value

and future river access. Specific Willamette River Greenway projects include Multnomah Channel (326 acres), Willamette Cove in North Portland (27 acres), Willamette Narrows near West Linn (472 acres) and Canemah Bluff near Oregon City (134 acres).

Tonquin geologic area
(487 acres)
This area near Tualatin links to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge and contributes scenic value to the cities of Wilsonville and Tualatin. It also features unique geologic evidence of prehistoric glacial flooding.

Tryon Creek linkages
(58 acres)
Stream greenways leading to Tryon Creek help protect water quality in the watershed as well as support the integrity of Tryon Creek State Natural Area.

Newell Creek Canyon
(280 acres)
Newell Creek flows through a forested canyon near Oregon City. Acquisitions include nearly 6 miles of stream frontage and help protect salmon and trout habitat.

Clear Creek Canyon
(520 acres)
Acquisitions along this tributary of the Clackamas River support a salmon fishery and provide habitat for more than 100 species of fish and wildlife, including coyotes, cougar, blacktail deer, elk, cutthroat trout, chinook and coho salmon and 76 species of birds.

East Buttes/Boring Lava Domes *(856 acres)*
A group of extinct volcanoes and lava domes in north Clackamas and east Multnomah counties provides unique geographic character to the region, excellent wildlife habitat and panoramic vistas.

Columbia River shoreline
(271 acres)
Riparian forest and island acquisitions west of the Sandy River improve public access to the Columbia River and preserve remaining undeveloped habitat.

Sandy River Gorge
(1,082 acres)
Acquisitions along this wild and scenic waterway and its tributaries provide important fish and wildlife habitat and water quality benefits.

Regional trails and greenways

Fanno Creek Greenway
(39 acres)
Acquisitions will help complete the 15-mile regional trail planned from the shores of the Willamette River in Southwest Portland to the confluence of Fanno Creek and the Tualatin River. These properties also provide water quality protection in a highly urbanized area.

Peninsula Crossing Trail
(1 acre)
Located in North Portland, this 3.5-mile trail connects the Columbia Slough and Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area with the Willamette Greenway. The trail is open for public use.

OMSI to Springwater Corridor
(53 acres)
Now home to the Springwater on the Willamette Trail, this critical link in the regional trails system is used by more than 400,000 people per year.

Clackamas River North Bank Greenway
(608 acres)
Acquisition of land along the Clackamas River between Barton and Clackamette parks provides significant habitat restoration opportunities, flood storage, water quality protection and future recreational values.

Beaver Creek Canyon Greenway *(110 acres)*
Near Troutdale, this tributary of the Sandy River offers an important fish and wildlife corridor. The city of Troutdale has also completed several segments of a regional greenway trail in the canyon for hiking and wildlife watching.

Burlington Northern rails-to-trails *(2 acres)*
This corridor was originally envisioned to provide public access from Sauvie Island just north of the island bridge, over the Tualatin Mountains to the Tualatin Valley. At this time, a trail option is not likely, since the railroad company has not abandoned the rail corridor as previously planned.

Native plants and trees thrive in natural areas protected by Metro's open spaces bond measure.
C. Bruce Forster photos

Building a green ethic

The Greenspaces Master Plan was the first major legislation on the agenda when Susan McLain joined the Metro Council in 1991. Biologists had inventoried the significant undeveloped natural areas in the region and the plan reflected a hope of what habitat might be protected and restored to give people the kind of outdoor experience that they enjoy and care about. Metro conducted a livability survey that year and among the top three items was "being close to nature." People clearly expressed that nature was important to them, and played a special role in their lives. "I felt proud to vote on that," Susan recalls. "It was a lot of fun to get started with something I care so much about."

Metro Councilor Susan McLain
Jeffrey Simon photo

Susan says, "It was hard to decide how to follow through on the Greenspaces Master Plan – what were the best tools to restore, acquire and preserve the area's most critical habitats? We decided to support a bond measure." In 1992, the Metro Council put a natural areas bond measure on the ballot, and it failed.

"We're not giving up," Susan insisted. Instead, she and the other councilors tried to figure out how best to give people the natural areas and parks close to home that they said they wanted. In 1995, another bond measure was put on the ballot and Metro came up with a new strategy. "We gave the public more specific information about the areas we would go after – we identified key properties and projects and promised we would purchase 6,000 acres."

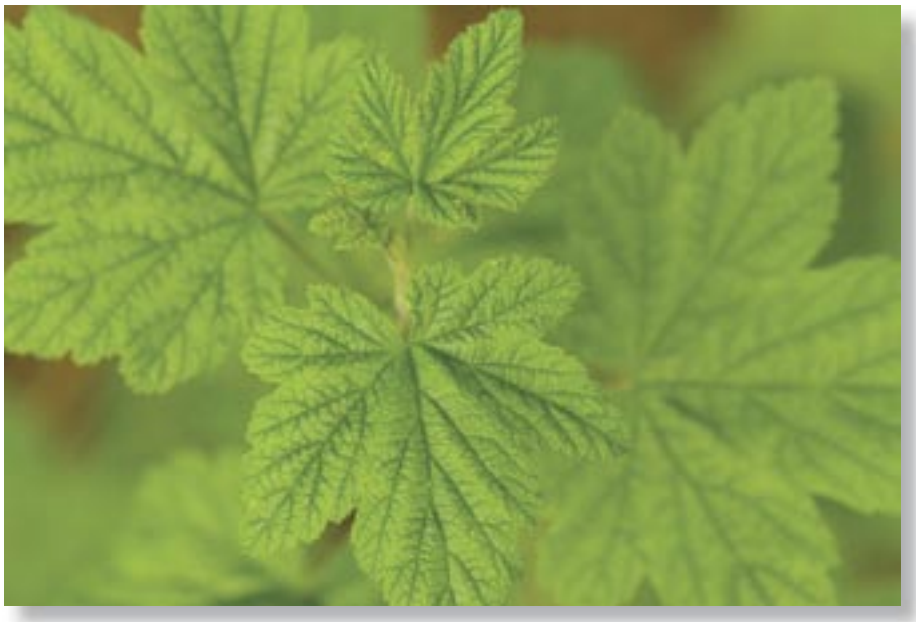
She joined the campaign's speaker's bureau and made nearly 70 presentations – sometimes two or three in one evening – to neighborhood and community groups, parks providers, even groups like water conservation agencies. She went door-to-door to convince voters to support the plan. When the $135.6 million bond measure passed, Susan says, "We took a dream and made it into a reality. We promised 6,000 acres and ultimately gave more than 8,000 acres. The bond measure was a turning point for the region."

Mike Houck, director of the Urban Greenspaces Institute and urban naturalist for the Audubon Society of Portland comments, "Councilor McLain has been one of the most consistent voices on the Metro Council for the protection and restoration of urban greenspaces. Her support for the acquisition program has been critical to maintaining the political will to go to the voters for their support."

The Regional Trails Plan was another aspect of the Greenspaces Master Plan implementation and Susan, along with the other councilors, was involved in development of the Springwater Corridor, Rock Creek Greenway Trail, Fanno Creek Greenway Trail, Peninsula Crossing Trail and more. The combination of citizen support, agency commitment and success securing some federal transportation dollars moved many projects on their way.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which provided funding for the region-wide inventory, also collaborated with Metro to create a Greenspaces grant program, and Susan was appointed to the panel that would choose the grant recipients. "That was another area I loved. I sat on the panel for close to five years, from 1996 to 2000, and it was an exciting time." With $2.2 million in grants, more than 300 project recipients leveraged that money into $9 million to carry out their work on the ground.

"These were projects that were important for restoration and education in four counties – Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington and Clark. Families and children would go out on Saturdays and plant trees, or clean up a stream. It presented people with a way to build a green ethic. It was fun, it was educational. The grant recipients were always groups that had a lot of partners. One project might have a middle school partnering with a county, a scout troop and a watershed organization. It was very proactive."



Red-flowering currant
C. Bruce Forster photo

Thousands of people volunteered over the course of the Greenspaces grant program, which inspired the Metro Council to fund a staff position for a volunteer coordinator to tap into that resource. The program matured quickly. In 2004, 1,500 volunteers donated 32,000 hours of service to Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces. "I'm proud of that," Susan adds. "We have been able to engage the community and the result is having these great natural areas that are good for habitat, good for recreation, good for clean air and clean water."

In addition to using acquisition, education and restoration to protect the region's great natural areas, the Metro Council has worked with local governments in the region to develop key regulatory programs that help improve water quality, prevent flooding and protect important fish and wildlife habitat. This fall, the Metro Council plans to adopt a fish and wildlife habitat protection plan called Nature in Neighborhoods. "It's been contentious, complicated, exciting, and a long time in coming," says Susan. "In September when the plan is complete, we'll have another success story. It will show our commitment to fish and wildlife, the forest canopy, and maintaining the beauty of the region and our connection to nature."

A fifth-generation Oregonian, Susan grew up in Clackamas County and has lived for 30 years in Forest Grove. In the mornings, she teaches English, speech and debate at Glencoe High School. Her four children and three grandchildren strengthen her commitment to protecting the region's natural resources. "Being a mother and a grandmother is a good reality test of how you're spending the public money, and what the benefits will be." She is pleased with what's coming next. "The council is looking at 2006 for another possible natural areas bond measure, to take a needed next step and continue the important and good work that we have only just begun."

Former Metro Councilor explains the willing seller approach

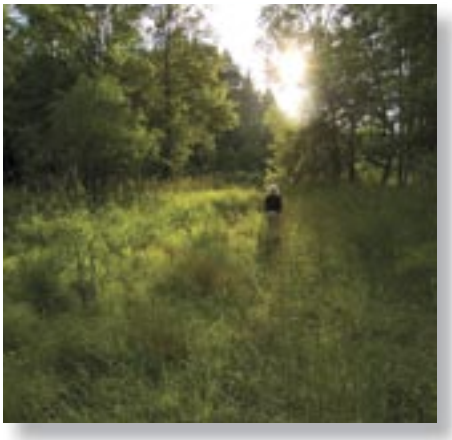
The 1995 open spaces bond measure was unanimously referred to voters by the Metro Council with the provision that it would be a willing seller program. This meant that landowners must voluntarily choose to sell their land to Metro and that the government's power of condemnation would be used, if ever, only in the most extreme circumstances. The program has remained 100 percent faithful to the willing seller policy and philosophy in all 261 transactions completed with landowners. The willing seller policy was championed by Metro Councilor, Don Morissette. In an interview with Metro staff, Don talked about why.

Q: Was the willing seller policy controversial?

A: The willing seller approach was really breaking new ground in 1994, but there was some resistance to this policy both internally and externally. There was a fear that it might not work. We proved to a lot of skeptics that it would work. Not to mention that litigation and argument cost a lot of money and a lot of money could have been wasted that wasn't. Ultimately this provided more benefit to the public.

Q: Why was the willing seller policy so important to you personally?

A: I wouldn't support the bond measure until the willing seller policy was included as a provision. I thought it was important to show that people would be far more receptive to selling their land than maybe people thought. I wanted buy-in from the community to have open space but also for us as government to learn to deal with citizens on equal footing. The message was, we're not big brother, we're just like you, trying to make the Portland area a better place for our children and our grandchildren.



C. Bruce Forster photo

I believe that government doesn't have to rely on a heavy hand to be successful. I thought that many private landowners would be shocked that we were there to work with them, not to force them.

Q: Were there other benefits to the willing seller policy?

A: I think there was a lot more support for the measure from unusual areas because we were working with people, not forcing people.

Q: Why did you think willing seller was the right approach?

A: By limiting our program to willing sellers we allowed them to see the benefits to the community rather than being deterred by their fear that we would be taking something from them against their will. The legacy of this program is so powerful. I knew it could be used effectively to motivate landowners to become willing sellers.

Don Morissette has been a home builder in the Portland metropolitan area for more than 30 years. He was president of the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland in 1992 and served as a Metro Councilor from 1994 to 1998.

The art of the deal: a willing seller program in action

by Jim Desmond, director of Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces

Springwater on the Willamette Trail
C. Bruce Forster photo

Metro officials often emphasize that the open spaces bond measure has been a strictly willing seller program, which is a nice way of saying we didn't force anyone to sell us their land using condemnation. Although it's worth noting that nearly every other metropolitan natural area protection program in the country has resorted to condemnation, the words "willing seller" mean a lot more than that.

For those of us fortunate enough to have worked on this program, "willing seller" isn't a real estate construct – it's about people and building relationships. Consider that very few of the 261 parcels of land that Metro has purchased as of July 2005 were for sale. We identified key properties and approached the landowners about selling their land. This is not-so-affectionately known as "cold calling" in the sales business, and it isn't always easy. But this strategy worked well, and along the way we met great people, accumulated some amazing stories, and learned a lot about how people in the region feel about their land and their community.

"The railroad wins"

Few of our successes were more dramatic than the purchase of the corridor that became the 3-mile Springwater on the Willamette Trail, starting just south of OMSI and proceeding south along the east side of the Willamette River, through Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge to Umatilla Street at the foot of the Sellwood Bridge.

We bought what is known in the real estate business as the "underlying fee interest" (i.e. the dirt) from Portland General Electric for a price well below market in a deal that PGE made as easy as any we ever did. But that purchase was subject to an existing right-of-way in favor of an operating rail line that had existed there for more than one hundred years, formerly called the Portland Traction line. The current owner of the railroad rights was Dick Samuels, whose company, Oregon Pacific Railroad, moved freight through the corridor and operated a seasonal excursion train known as Samtrak between OMSI and Oaks Park.

When we started the deal, many people warned me about Mr. Samuels, predicting he would be difficult to deal with as he had tangled with various city bureaus and neighbors for many years. We did some initial research to figure out if we could build the trail without his consent, as Metro did after all own the land now. But we quickly discovered the truth of what a senior partner at the Chicago law firm where I started my career had told me many years ago when he sat me down, legal pad and pen in hand, to receive what he said would be a "detailed primer" on railroad law. He uttered just three words: "The railroad wins."

Trains, trails and tuna melts

In most of the areas where Metro was buying land, if we couldn't get our first choice, there were frequently alternative sites of high quality. But this was an all or nothing scenario – there would be no trail unless Mr. Samuels agreed. So it became my job to convince him to either sell to us altogether or agree to coexist in a "rail-with-trail" scenario. I called him up in early 1996 and suggested we meet. He said I could meet him for lunch at Libbie's Restaurant in Milwaukie where, I quickly discovered, Mr. Samuels ate lunch nearly every day, and everyone knew him. I was right where I needed to be – on his turf.

We ate lunch at Libbie's every month or so for about two years, though we had six or seven meetings before I attempted to "negotiate" anything. Instead, I tried to simply listen, and learn about Mr. Samuels and his business. I came to understand that this was far more than a business for this man. He loved trains, loved them in a way that other men might love golf, or bird watching, or that I love old Marvin Gaye records. He was a buff of train history and especially the old Portland Traction line. Mr. Samuels himself drove the freight trains through the corridor at 7 a.m. His company employed his sons and his wife and they all worked together to operate the trains. Business is one thing, but a man's passionate hobby is quite another, and family usually trumps them both, so here I had the trifecta of commitment that made any discussion with Mr. Samuels about a lot more than money. Metro buying him out of his business was out of the question.

Eventually, in between Mr. Samuels' passionate opinions about overly aggressive city bureaucrats and dog owners trespassing along his tracks (despite his extensive signage including one that

read, "KEEP OUT – THIS MEANS YOU"), I began to introduce the concept of a "rail with trail." I explained that a fence would separate them and probably decrease the amount of trespassing on his tracks. I showed him photos of a similar successful project from Seattle.

Many tuna melts later, we found ourselves talking generally about relocating the track to the eastern side of the corridor to maximize the river views, how the trail could be designed to avoid any crossing of the tracks at all by trail users, and other approaches that would address Mr. Samuels' concerns – which, by then, I had been hearing about for months and come to understand and respect. He had mentioned that one of his sons was a bike rider, so I also outlined how critical this corridor was to the regional off-street trail system and the legacy he would be leaving his grandchildren if we could put a deal together. And I had learned that all he needed to operate trains in the corridor was 17 feet and that most of the corridor was 60-100 feet, so Metro would be buying a portion of his right-of-way that he didn't actually need.

When we finally did get around to talking about money, we both agreed the value of the right-of-way was not easy to assess. But Mr. Samuels had mentioned his dream of operating a rail museum someday, so I proposed the idea of Metro buying a building suitable for that purpose and trading it for most of the right-of-way and his consent to install the trail next to his operating rail corridor. We went to look at a warehouse in Sellwood that Mr. Samuels thought would do the trick, and through one of the best strokes of good luck I've ever had, the asking price was exactly what we thought the right-of-way was worth.

So we struck a deal, over lunch at Libbie's of course – Metro would pay for the track relocation (which Mr. Samuels and his sons did for a small percentage of the going rate for such a job), and acquire from Mr. Samuels all but 17 feet of the rail corridor, in exchange for the building in Sellwood.

Then we ran into a series of complications. We learned that when Mr. Samuels' company bought the rail line, Portland Traction reserved the right to approve any subsequent changes to the rail easement or future improvements in the corridor. So suddenly we were thrown into another negotiation with a railroad company in Nebraska. Meanwhile, the Oregon Department of Transportation let us know how high the fence had to be to meet their safety requirements and the city of Portland told us such a fence would violate their Willamette River Greenway requirements designed to promote wildlife passage. (Being a government agency, by the way, does not exempt you from government bureaucracy.) We methodically worked our way through each issue and the deal closed in July 1998, two years after I first started talking to Mr. Samuels.

Through it all, I came to know Mr. Samuels well and deeply respect his commitment to his work and the importance of rail traffic. And I had learned that his word was his bond. He made good on every promise he ever made me. I made sure that Metro did, too.

Debuting "our trail"

When the city of Portland built the trail and it officially opened to the public in 2002, a ceremony was held with various federal, Metro and city officials. Some people walked the new 3-mile trail while others climbed aboard Mr. Samuels' train as he drove people back and forth through the corridor. He told me that day how excited he was about "our trail."

Last weekend, my five-year-old twin daughters learned to ride bikes (without training wheels, they would want me to add), so I took them down to the trail for a ride. From the distance, I heard a train approaching. About the time I could tell for sure the conductor was Mr. Samuels, he stuck his arm out the window and waved at us, though with my sunglasses and helmet on, I'm sure he couldn't have recognized me. Over my right shoulder was the best view in town of the downtown Portland skyline. A lone kayaker was paddling near Ross Island and a great blue heron soared over the river across the trail and the tracks to a graceful, muddy landing in Oaks Bottom. One of my kids said, "Daddy, look, a train!" Job satisfaction doesn't get any better than that for me.

Remember, every time you hear the phrase "willing seller," that there are stories behind those words – 261 stories and counting.

Jim Desmond has been the director of Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces since 2003. He came to Metro in 1995 to run the open spaces acquisition program and manage a team of real estate negotiators and support staff. Before that, he was a project manager for the Trust for Public Land and a regional attorney for The Nature Conservancy. He started his career as a business attorney in Chicago.

The Springwater on the Willamette Trail was designed and built by the city of Portland with city and federal funds and money from Portland's local share of the bond measure. It is estimated that more than 400,000 people per year use the trail for wildlife watching, recreation, exercise and getting to work.

In 2003, the Springwater on the Willamette Trail won the Rail-Trail Design Recognition Award for "rail-with-trail" projects from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the American Society of Landscape Architects.

PGE continues partnership with Metro to improve fish habitat

By Stephen Quennoz, vice president of power supply for Portland General Electric

In the electric business, we know the value of connections. By working together with others in our service territory and throughout the region, we've all been able to accomplish great things for our community. One shining example of this is the environmental stewardship efforts that Metro, Portland General Electric and other partners have developed during the last decade through the Metro open spaces program.

PGE project manager John Esler (left) and Metro natural resource manager Jim Morgan translated a unique partnership into remarkable results on the ground. Their work together along the Clackamas River will benefit wild salmon for generations.
PGE photo

In 1995, Oregonians spoke loud and clear: parks and natural areas are an important investment. We couldn't agree more and as Oregon's largest utility, we've contributed millions of dollars in restoring the environment, including $3 million to enhancing fish habitat along the Clackamas River.

During the last three years, PGE and Metro have partnered to restore environmentally sensitive land in Clackamas County, an area where we operate four hydroelectric facilities. These facilities provide about 30 percent of our annual hydroelectric generation, an important renewable resource for customers.

In 2004, we worked with Metro, Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and riparian restoration specialists Inter-Fluve, Inc. to complete restoration of the former side channels along the Clackamas River. With the goal of providing habitat for juvenile salmon in the Clackamas River near the Barton Bridge, this $1.3 million project will increase the survival of young salmon migrating downstream to the Pacific Ocean, ultimately resulting in more adult salmon returning to the Clackamas River.

The project site is within 608 acres of riparian and island natural area that was purchased by Metro with funds from the open spaces bond measure. Within weeks of completing construction, hundreds of steelhead, coho and Chinook salmon were observed utilizing the cooler water and log structures of the ground water side channel near Barton Park.

We share Metro's vision of restoring river habitat so its lands can contribute to a healthy, functioning river system, and we continue to work with Metro to develop the environmental potential of natural areas along the Clackamas River and its tributaries. I'm not aware of any other utility that has this unique relationship with a government organization to restore public lands.

We have a long-standing history of incorporating environmental perspectives in our utility operations and business practices. In fact, the first aquatic biologists started working for PGE almost 50 years ago, and we now have 12 biologists working on fisheries issues where we have hydroelectric facilities: the Sandy, Clackamas, Deschutes and Willamette rivers.

Improving the environment of the rivers where our customers benefit from the generation of hydro power is an issue our customers care about, and the stewardship of these resources is a commitment we take very seriously.

PGE, Metro and local nonprofit organizations will continue to strengthen the health of the river system with two additional projects.

Clear Creek

The first project is restoration activities in Clear Creek, an important tributary that enters the Clackamas River near Carver. Metro protected 520 acres along Clear Creek as part of the open spaces bond measure, and PGE is contributing $500,000 to fund a series of projects

on this land and sites of neighboring landowners. Additional partners include Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation with a donation of $100,000 and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, which will provide project design and permitting assistance. The Clackamas Basin Watershed Council will work with landowners in the basin to gather support and cooperation for these activities. With this incredible team of partners and the support of the community, we are sure to see a lot of progress on the ground in 2005.

The goal of this restoration project is to replace culverts that restrict fish passage and add log structures to provide habitat for juvenile salmon and steelhead. Ten sites with willing landowners have been identified in the Clear Creek basin that would benefit from salmon habitat improvements. Metro's Clear Creek natural area is the cornerstone of this bold undertaking. Improvements to this area are expected to be completed by the end of the summer.

River Island

The second project is located on the former site of a mining operation upstream from Barton Park. During the major flooding in February 1996, the Clackamas River cut off a 1,000-meter meander channel and eroded more than 100,000 cubic yards of gravel from the river bank and into the mining settlement ponds. These changes damaged salmon habitat and created a refuge for non-native fish that prey on young salmon.

Metro acquired the River Island site after the 1996 flood with plans to restore the site. In 2005, PGE and its partners funded an investigation of the physical and biological changes that have resulted from the meander cut-off site. Based on the findings, PGE plans to propose and help fund a package of restoration projects to benefit salmon slated for implementation in 2006.

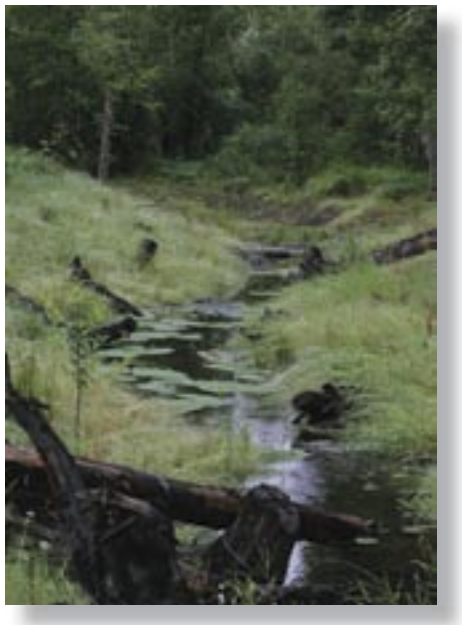
Restoring the River Island site will be a major undertaking because this area is still active with channel migration and changes in biological utilization. It's by far the largest project PGE has been involved with of this type and offers the single largest salmon habitat restoration opportunity in the Clackamas River basin.

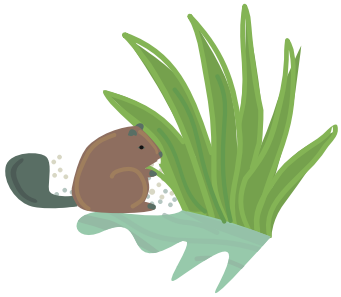
Metro's largest acquisition along the Clackamas River is a 239-acre natural area known as River Island. Just upstream and across the river from Barton Park, 130 acres were donated to Metro by Parker-Northwest Paving Co., while the remainder was purchased. PGE and Metro will work together to implement a series of restoration projects at the site that will contribute dramatically to fish and wildlife habitat on the river.
C. Bruce Forster photo

We're excited to celebrate all of the accomplishments of Metro's open spaces program. As presenting sponsor of Open Spaces, Treasured Places, PGE is proud to be a part of this historic milestone that honors 10 years of environmental stewardship and ground-breaking partnerships.

Building on our successes on the Clackamas, PGE and Metro will continue to work together to improve and maintain the health of Oregon's streams, rivers and open spaces. It's a connection that has proved to be very powerful.

Stephen Quennoz oversees all aspects of PGE's generation and power supply operations, including oversight of the operation and maintenance of PGE's eight hydroelectric power plants.





Metro, PGE and their partners moved 40,000 cubic yards of earth and placed hundreds of huge logs and boulders to recreate an old side channel system along the Clackamas River to provide vital habitat for young salmon. The $1.3 million project, the largest of its kind in Oregon, will increase the ability for coho, chinook, steelhead and trout to survive and help improve the status of salmon populations in the river.
PGE photo

"Get a shovel and come over here"

"I'm just a guy who doesn't want to pay health club dues," protests Don McCarty, who shies away from praise for the six years he volunteered as a natural area steward for Metro's Canemah Bluff property. "It's just the way I get my exercise. Rather than jogging up and down the street, I prefer to do something that helps me out and is productive for the environment." While he's recently adopted other sites closer to his home, twice a week Don got a healthy workout, trekking around the bluff with clippers, pruners, a hand saw and a bottle of water and tackling the invasive scotch broom and ivy that had enveloped the landscape.

Volunteer steward Don McCarty
Ron Klein photo

In 1998 Metro purchased Canemah Bluff, the 39 acres atop a forested ridge overlooking Oregon City, a last-minute rescue from a 139-unit housing development that was already platted and staked. Not long afterwards, Don, already a familiar volunteer, was asked to help out. He was immediately taken with the property, which encompasses a lush pristine forest, meadows and a large wetland. In the woods are tall madrone trees, huge firs and Oregon white oak. When you see something like this, undisturbed, you want to become a part of it." He would look at an ancient tree with a broken trunk and imagine its history.

But the site was smothered in invasive species. "It was like a scotch broom forest," Don recalls. "The plants were six to eight feet high. In some places you couldn't even walk. The trees were draped in deadly ivy, some vines three inches in diameter." Twice a week Don went to work, about four hours at a time.

That first spring Metro brought in a group of AmeriCorps volunteers, "eight to ten kids who were on site for at least a week." Don worked with the kids to clear out scotch broom, digging it out and amassing huge piles, before the shrubs went to seed. Another time Metro brought in a work party of about 20 people, who cleared out a dump site with about a hundred years of trash in a single morning.

Then came the goats. "There was a large area of 5- to 6-foot high extremely healthy blackberries." About two hundred goats were rented and, according to Don, "they did a marvelous job of wiping them out."

Through it all, Don worked methodically, making a bigger and bigger dent in the invasive species. Ultimately Metro purchased adjoining Canemah Bluff properties for a total of 134 acres. "It was painfully obvious what to do," he quips. "You didn't need a plan. Just attack. It seemed you never ran out of challenges. It was a great feeling to go back the next year and see one-third as many young plants and the next year almost none. One area was completely eradicated of scotch broom. But other areas seemed inexhaustible."

Don, other volunteers and Metro staff discovered by trial and error that if they cut the scotch broom below the first fresh green sprout, 90 percent of the plants wouldn't mature and go to seed. It saved them from the work of digging up the huge plants, which also had the positive effect of no longer turning up soil and exposing fresh seeds. "That was kind of a fun discovery," Don notes with a smile.

After a while areas formerly impenetrable were cleared to make noticeable trails. At one end is a spectacular view over the edge of a steep cliff looking down to the Willamette River flowing far below. The trails now wind through the meadows and woods, and Metro naturalists lead hikes around the property, which the city of Oregon City will open to the public.

While Don usually chose to work alone, enjoying the solitary work, he was frequently visited at the site by neighbor Howard Klemson, a millwright, former Oregon City mayor, and amateur historian who regaled Don with stories. Canemah Bluff sets amid the Canemah Historic District, a community of charming historic houses, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. At the far end of the property is the Canemah Historic Pioneer Cemetery, founded in 1865. Howard and another neighbor acted as caretakers of the cemetery, with its graves and headstones dating back from the early 1800s.

Don hopes that more folks will step up to volunteer as stewards for Metro's natural areas. He reflects, "When I watch people bicycling and jogging over by Oaks Park and I'm doing restoration work nearby, it makes me think that's a lot of energy going up in smoke. I want to say, 'Get a shovel and come over here.' I'd like to see more people turning in their health club dues and picking up a pruner. In an ideal world, more people would be doing something for the environment."

Become a volunteer steward

If you think Don McCarty is on to something, a volunteer steward position might be right for you. Inspired by the dedication of a handful of volunteers like Don, Metro is launching a new program that will give more people the opportunity to develop a special relationship to a particular Metro park or natural area through service and leadership.

Volunteer stewards visit their adopted site on a regular basis and work the land individually – tearing out invasive species, planting natives, removing debris and more. They also lead volunteer groups in these and similar activities from time to time, which helps facilitate a valuable community connection at these precious natural areas.

Successful candidates will be energetic people who are passionate about parks and natural areas, like working alone and with others, enjoy strenuous labor and look forward to getting their hands dirty in all kinds of weather. Stewards volunteer at least two times per month (averaging about 10 hours per month). Natural areas are available throughout Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties. Since most of the sites are not accessible by public transportation, access to personal transportation is required.

If you are interested in exploring a volunteer steward position, call Mary West at (503) 797-1814 or send e-mail to parkvol@metro.dst.or.us.

Local share projects keep nature close to home

Twenty-five million dollars of the open spaces bond funds were invested in local projects. Park providers around the region completed more than 100 projects to improve, expand or add to their parks and natural areas by acquiring new land, restoring habitat and building new trails, picnic areas, campgrounds, boat launches and other facilities.

Located in virtually every city, county and neighborhood in the region, these efforts have protected our water quality, provided fish and wildlife with places to live and offered people more opportunities for hiking, walking, nature study, recreation and escape close to home.

Salish Ponds Wetlands Park in Fairview

Wetlands and the waterfowl, bats, frogs and other wildlife they attract are often very visible signs of nature in neighborhoods. Even relatively small wetland areas pack a punch ecologically – providing essential nesting, feeding, resting and wintering areas for migratory birds and other wildlife. As with elsewhere across the nation and around the world, the once-bountiful wetlands in our region have been disappearing, lost to meeting the needs for housing, jobs and industry. Development continues to be a threat, making it ever more important to find opportunities to permanently protect wetlands and the wildlife populations that depend on them.

Salish Ponds Wetlands Park is a 70-acre natural area park in Fairview protected as part of the open spaces bond measure. Fairview Creek, two ponds with characteristic cattails and an Oregon ash woodland are prominent features. Established with wildlife in mind, the natural area is home to a variety of wildlife including herons, waterfowl, hawks, owls, songbirds, raccoons, coyote, deer, frogs, snakes and more.

The nature park has served as an important environmental education resource to nearby schools. Students from Reynolds School District worked with city staff and local scientists to conduct research and gather data on the flora and fauna of the site. Teachers attended training sessions on wetlands, data collection and stewardship. Students used their research to create interpretive signs and a brochure for Salish Ponds Wetlands Park.

Today, trails connect two adjacent schools, neighborhoods and Fairview City Hall to the wetland park, offering people the opportunity to study and appreciate wetlands and how they help protect our water quality. In addition to the trails, the park includes a fishing dock, footbridges, picnic areas, viewing platforms and interpretive signs. Habitat improvements were made by restoring native vegetation.

The land for the wetlands park was donated to the city by local residents and businesses. Funding from the local share portion of the open spaces bond measure, paired with the land donation and the help of volunteers on restoration efforts, was critical to the success of the project.

The local share program helped fund improvements at Salish Ponds Wetlands Park.

The secret place of the condors

The 28 acres are mostly forest. The land was logged once, but some old growth, including huge western red cedar trees, remains. A year-round creek, a tributary of the Clackamas, still harbors steelhead and salmon runs. In the many years they lived on the place, Joe and Marie Hewitt planted trees – Spanish yews, Douglas fir, redwoods, flowering plums, cherry, blue spruce, myrtle. "We liked trees," Joe says by way of explanation.

Joe's roots to the place sink deep. Returning from World War II, his father bought the property in the fall of 1945. Long before, a Norwegian had built a traditional V-roofed log cabin that had been badly vandalized and was uninhabitable. The Hewitt family moved into a small house that had been started in the middle of the forest. It was 2 1/4 miles off the highway, with no electricity or running water and lighted by kerosene lamps. "It was pretty primitive. I wasn't too fond of it at the start," Joe says. "We had to carry up water from the creek a quarter mile." The land around was all forest, too, and there were occasional bears and cougars.

Eventually running water and electricity were installed, but Joe left home and went to college. He and Marie were married in 1951. Later his folks left the property and the house burned down. Joe's dad died in 1967 and in 1970 Joe, Marie and his mother decided to move back to the woods. They had a well dug and built a new house.

Marie says, "I wasn't used to having so much space. I ended up enjoying it. It was very beautiful, and fun to see the wildlife. I used to look out the window and see three or four deer." Joe adds, "We'd see most everything. A lot of red-tailed hawks. Beaver dams on the creeks. Hummingbirds would come to the feeder in your hand. Just about everything that lives in the Willamette Valley was there." Their two daughters and son got interested in wildlife, too.

The Hewitts raised wolves that ran wild through the woods. "They're independent," Joe comments. "They don't belong to you, you belong to them." They had four wolves, and one had pups that they sold to Native Americans in Warm Springs. "When we first got the wolves, no one was living on the property next door, but when neighbors moved onto the place, we had to curtail them, and finally decided to give them away. We advertised, "Free wolf to a good home."

As the years passed, Joe says, the property became too much to handle. "It was getting to where we couldn't take care of it. We'd always kept two acres mowed, and that was getting to be too much." As neighboring areas became more developed, the Hewitts were troubled by people trying to camp, leaving trash, and coming up from the creek and trespassing. Marie recalls, "Once someone tried to break into the garage. I showed him a shotgun and said, 'Don't come back!'"

Metro had purchased the 46 acres next to the Hewitt's site, and was interested in their property. Besides the many trees the Hewitts had planted, the forest includes a predominantly native understory of shrubs and groundcover, with Pacific yew, red elderberry, Oregon grape, fringecup, sword fern and wild ginger. The reach of Clear Creek that runs through the property is a still-fully-functioning stream draining the Cascade Mountains that is perfect for coho and chinook salmon. What appears as a fast flowing, whitewater river during winter runoff slows in summer to pool-riffles with gravel beds and large log jams. The location and natural integrity of the property provides connectivity to the larger wildlife habitat of the Cascades, as evidenced by tracks of black bear, cougar and elk.

After Metro bought the Hewitt's property in 2003, the two adjacent sites were joined together and provided to the Oregon Zoo for their condor recovery program. It's an ideal setting and has resulted in the most advanced condor facility constructed to date anywhere. The area needed to be secluded, away from human intrusion, yet within a 30-minute drive of an international airport for emergency transport of eggs or birds to other locations in the country. Two scientists are living on the site. "They incubated the eggs in our basement," Marie comments. "The flying cages are on the adjoining property." The condors, former residents of Oregon, have successfully produced hatchlings. They're being raised in specially-constructed flight pens, for later release back into the wild.

Someday the Hewitt's place may have hiking paths so people can come and explore the trees and creek. For today, the property plays an important role in bringing an endangered species back from the edge of extinction. A new generation of condors is getting its start in a special place – a protected place with a deep ravine, a creek where salmon and steelhead still run and ancient cedars tower above the forest.

Bringing a beautiful buzzard back to Oregon

by Tony Vecchio, director of the Oregon Zoo

In 1987, the world's 27 remaining California condors were taken into captivity in an attempt to save the species from extinction. As of 2004, there are 274 birds; 114 are free-flying in California, Arizonia and Baja.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photo

When I became director of the Oregon Zoo in 1998, if someone had asked about bringing California condors back to Oregon, I would have called the notion highly improbable: A pie in the sky dream (more accurately, an endangered bird in an Oregon sky dream). Well, it wasn't long before someone did ask. The zoo's marketing manager, Jane Hartline, came into my office one day in 1999 and said she thought a great way for the zoo to participate in the upcoming bicentennial anniversary of Lewis and Clark's journey would be to bring California condors back to Oregon.

In the 1805 and 1806 journal entries of explorers Lewis and Clark, the California condor appeared repeatedly. In 1805, the explorers reported seeing "a beautiful buzzard of the Columbia," a bird that seemed larger than any they had seen before in North America. In 1806 they obtained a condor specimen and examined it. Their journal documented a bird with a 9-foot-2-inch wingspan, red head and a sound like a dog.

Of course, the California condor was in Oregon long before Lewis and Clark came to town. Condor bones more than 9,000 years old have been found in Oregon Native American middens. Also known as the "thunderbird," the condor appeared in the traditional art of the Wasco Indians and other local tribes. The native peoples of the Pacific Northwest considered it a helper who was believed to bring storms, rain, thunder and lightning.

The last reported sighting of a California condor in Oregon happened in 1904 near Drain. Populations of California condors began to decline everywhere in the wild in the twentieth century and by 1987, the world's remaining 27 California condors were taken into captivity in an attempt to save the species from extinction.

The Oregon Zoo supports wildlife conservation efforts all over the world, but some of the most important work we do helps endangered and threatened species in our own backyard. It's been a long time since condors soared through the Columbia Gorge, but they were once our local wildlife. We decided to throw our hat into the ring with the California Condor Recovery Program, even though it was a long shot and we didn't have the space to house the condors if we were accepted.

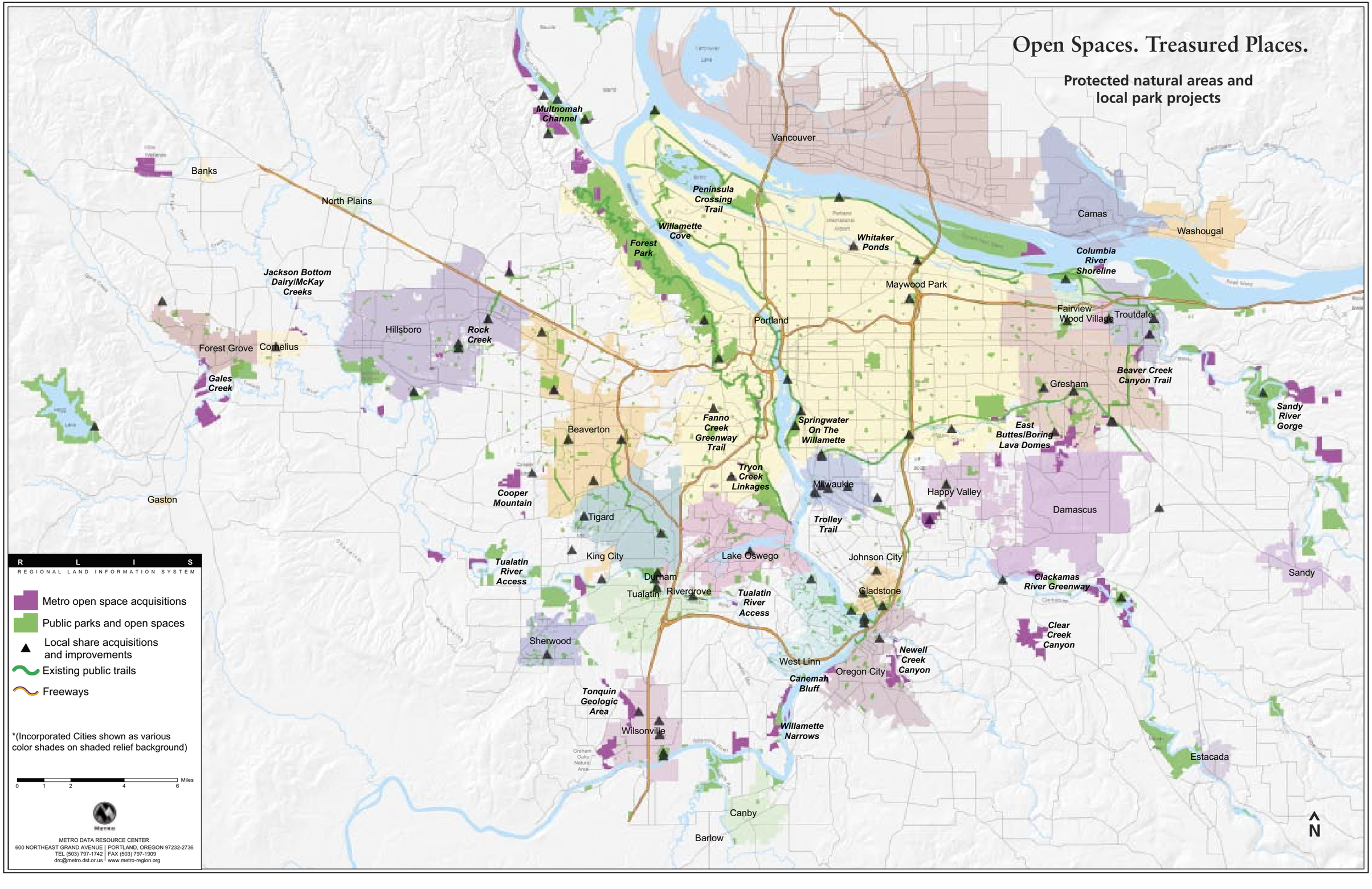
When the Oregon Zoo was invited into the program in 2001, we were only able to move ahead thanks to Metro's open spaces acquisition program. Conservation staff from the zoo and natural resource scientists from Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces Department worked together to come up with a suitable site for the condor facility. They found it in a natural area along Clear Creek in Clackamas County acquired with funds from Metro's open spaces bond measure. This unique opportunity for the zoo and the parks and greenspaces department to work together, along with the support and leadership of the Metro Council, has reaffirmed for me how committed Metro is to conservation.

Since our program got off the ground late in 2003, three condor chicks have been hatched at the Clear Creek facility. Two of the chicks, Kun Wak Shun and Tatoosh, are being raised there and are doing well. Current construction at the facility will add breeding space and a new pre-release "boot camp" to prepare juvenile condors for eventual release to the wild. Though those releases will not take place in Oregon, it brings us one step closer to a goal I no longer view as improbable – bringing Lewis and Clark's "beautiful buzzard" back to Oregon.

Tony Vecchio began his zoo career in 1969 at the Highland Park Zoo in Pittsburgh, Pa. Prior to joining the Oregon Zoo, he served nine years as director at the Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, R.I., which became a leading organization in zoo conservation and innovative exhibit design under his direction.

Open Spaces. Treasured Places.

Protected natural areas and local park projects



R L I S
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- Local share acquisitions and improvements
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Rare wildflowers return to Cooper Mountain Natural Area

Many people associate the Pacific Northwest with vast landscapes of towering firs and moist conifer forests. In truth, there are many habitats that make up our environment, including rolling and rocky landscapes of oak woodlands, savannas and prairies that once dominated the floor and rocky buttes of the Willamette Valley. Metro's Cooper Mountain Natural Area is just such a place, and one of the few remaining in the Portland metropolitan area.

Cooper Mountain lies at the western edge of Beaverton. Purchased in 1996 through Metro's open spaces, parks and streams bond measure, the site supports 247 acres of conifer forest, oak woodland and upland prairie nestled between agricultural lands and housing developments. At first glance, a walk through the site offers up a common display of grassy fields and young stands of oak trees. Closer examination reveals a world of rare and unique wildflowers at your feet. There are a number of species at Cooper Mountain found in only a few locations in the northern Willamette Valley.

Pale larkspur (*Delphinium leucophaeum*) is a perennial species found in dry upland prairie and occurs on a handful of sites in southern Washington and northwestern Oregon. It is a beautiful creamy white flower with a purple spot in the center. The plant is unique in that it can tolerate tremendously dry, exposed sites with very thin soils. It adapts to this environment by going dormant early in the growing season and growing very slowly over the first several years, often not blooming until its fifth season.

Naked broomrape (*Orobanche uniflora*) and **clustered broomrape** (*Orobanche fasciculata*) are two miniature plants that also grow in Cooper Mountain's upland prairies. Both of these plants are fully parasitic which means they get all of their nutrients from their host plant and do not photosynthesize.

Pale larkspur

Naked broomrape

Camas

Naked broomrape is a small plant that grows to a maximum height of 6 inches. It is found on rocky, thin soils growing beneath native saxifrages. Clustered broomrape is about 3 inches tall and grows in association with the plant wooly sunshine (*Eriophyllum lanatum*) in the Aster family. Both plants are annuals and are fleeting on the landscape. They appear for one or two weeks in the spring, produce seed and are gone.

Camas (*Camassia quamash*)is a native lily found in wet prairie throughout the Valley. The bulbs of this plant were a primary winter food source for Native Americans. Bulbs were collected en masse and were steam cooked in a pit for several days. After this process, the bulbs cooked into a sweet, sticky molasses-like substance. The finished products were cakes, dried and used during the winter months when little food was available.

Because of the importance of Camas as a food source, Native Americans would burn many acres of prairie each fall to stimulate production of this species. Camas and many other native prairie species are dependent on disturbances such as fire and grazing to sustain populations on a site. Without these natural disturbances, many of these native plants decline and eventually disappear from the landscape.

Cooper Mountain's prairie was dominated by tall scotch broom when Metro purchased the site in 1996. Since then, Metro scientists have employed a combination of management practices to restore and maintain botanical diversity including extensive cutting of scotch broom, prescribed burns in 1997 and 2001, and selected hand-cutting of other target noxious weeds, such as tall oatgrass (*Arrhenatherum eliatus*). In 2004, Metro closed two old logging roads running through the prairie and removed deep soil areas (which favored noxious weeds) associated with an old off-road bike course. This work was topped off by the introduction of more than 250 pounds of native grass and wildflower seed and five tons of native straw. Much of the seed introduced last year was derived from seed collected at Cooper Mountain over the past decade.

This patch of wildflowers brought to you by . . .

- Passage of the open spaces, parks and streams bond measure (1995)
- Acquisition of the Cooper Mountain Natural Area (1996)
- Hundreds of staff and volunteer hours dedicated to removing a scotch broom forest and keeping invasive plants at bay (1996 to present)
- Prescribed burns on the property which help control invasive plants and cause wildflower seeds to germinate (1997 and 2001)
- Native seed collection by AmeriCorps and community volunteers
- Contracted seed amplification by Willamette Valley seed growers and Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
- Restoration of prairie terrain by closing logging roads and removing dirt bike mounds (2004)
- Reintroduction of clarkia amoena native seed, along with 250 pounds of seed from other natives, paid for with a Greenspaces conservation and restoration grant (2004)

. . . you!

Metro Council works to provide public access to nature

In 2004, the Metro Council approved new funding for public access improvements to up to four regional natural areas protected by the open spaces, parks and streams bond measure. Plans are under way to make improvemnts at three sites – Graham Oaks in Wilsonville, Mt. Talbert near Milwaukie and Cooper Mountain near Beaverton.

With the help of the public and local park providers, each of these areas has a master plan completed or in the works that will guide the recreation opportunities and continued restoration activities at each site. The plans strike a careful balance between providing opportunities for the public to use and enjoy their new natural areas and enhancing the water quality and habitat values that made them important for protection in the first place.

Mt. Talbert Natural Area

The largest undeveloped butte in Northern Clackamas County, Mt. Talbert rises as a forested green sentinel overlooking the web of development that surrounds it and the busy I-205 and Sunnyside Road interchange just to the west. Metro, in partnership with North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District has purchased a total of 183 acres including the top and the west and north facing slopes, which are visible to tens of thousands of people who travel daily on I-205 or visit Clackamas Town Center. Both Metro and the park district have approved a master plan to make the area accessible to the public with a trailhead, parking lot, restroom and trails. Groundbreaking for this project is anticipated in 2006.

Cooper Mountain Natural Area

With an emphasis on use by hikers, the Cooper Mountain Natural Area will feature a 3 1/2-mile trail network including an equestrian loop and a universally accessible summit trail with commanding views of the Tualatin River Valley and Chehalem mountains. Two access points with parking, restrooms and picnic tables will be developed and an environmental education classroom is planned that can double as community meeting space. The master plan is still being drafted and opportunities for public involvement will continue throughout 2005. Groundbreaking for this project is not anticipated until 2007 or 2008.

Graham Oaks Natural Area

Known to many as the Wilsonville Tract, this 230-acre acquisition is at the heart of one of the most celebrated success stories of Metro's open spaces, parks and streams bond measure. The property includes a mix of forested canyons, seasonal wetlands and open farmland. In 2004, elected officials from Wilsonville and Metro adopted a master plan for public use and natural resource protection and gave the site a new name – Graham Oaks Natural Area. The natural area holds a unique place in the community – serving as an outdoor classroom for nearby students, a green buffer for a new planned development for approximately 5,000 new residents and an important link in a proposed regional trail envisioned to extend from the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge through the Tonquin geologic area to the Willamette River. Major restoration work at the site means groundbreaking for improvements is not likely before 2010.

Restoration greatest hits

When Metro's science and stewardship team leader Jim Morgan looks out over a meadow full of scotch broom or an abandoned dairy farm, he sees the oak savanna or Geyer willow marsh that thrived there hundreds of years ago. Each of the natural areas protected by the open spaces, parks and streams bond measure presents a unique challenge to Metro's science and stewardship team, but generally the approach is the same – take the land back to its roots.

"You don't reverse 150 years of degradation overnight," says Morgan, "but it is amazing how much memory is held by the landscape. If you take out some of the obstacles and start nudging it in the right direction, the land can return to its true nature."

Metro scientists begin by researching the historical conditions of each site. Sometimes old survey data and historical photos are available; often conversations with landowners and neighbors help fill in the gaps. There also are hints on the landscape – remnant native plants and evidence of changes in the hydrology.

Then they begin a careful analysis of the site's current conditions and the opportunities and limitations for restoration. Can original hydrology be restored? Does the site integrate into a larger ecological landscape? What will be the future use of the site and the surrounding area and how does that use impact restoration? Will invasive plants continue to be reintroduced by flooding or trail usage? How much will it cost and what are the available funding sources? Out of the answers to these questions, a strategy emerges and the team goes to work – often with the help of partners, grant money and hundreds of volunteers.

Despite a number of notable accomplishments among the early results of their work, Morgan won't take much of the credit. "We're just aiding and abetting,"

Metro ranger Adam Stellmacher leads a volunteer tree planting at Cooper Mountain Natural Area.
Jane Dunkin photo

he says. "We come in and wrestle with the weeds, take out a dam or plant a lot of trees, and then we stand back and let the land work its magic. Suddenly one spring, the meadow you tore all that scotch broom out of is covered in rare wildflowers that haven't grown there for 100 years. Birds start coming back. Young salmon start hanging out in the side channel you built for them. Rare frogs and turtles are breeding in muddy ponds of the tidal wetland you recreated. It's awesome."

Here is a handful of highlights:

Reforestation

Nearly one million trees and shrubs have been planted on Metro natural areas, establishing reforestation processes on more than 1,200 acres. Clear cuts and abandoned fields are being returned to native forest lands, resulting in more diverse wildlife habitat and reduction in greenhouse gases.

Putting the "flood" back in floodplain

At Metro's 326-acre Multnomah Channel Natural Area and 2,000-acre Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area, new water control structures are allowing natural resource managers to simulate historical river flooding patterns. The early returns have exceeded expectations. Seasonal flooding drowns out invasive plant species and makes way for native marsh plants. Fish, bird and amphibian use has increased significantly. Both sites are likely to provide off-channel rearing habitat for young salmon on their way to the Pacific Ocean.

Gotter Prairie

A restored wet prairie and oak/pine savanna at a Metro natural area along the Tualatin River is now the largest piece of this rare habitat type in the Tualatin River Valley. Dominated entirely by native plant species, Gotter Prairie represents Tualatin River floodplain plant communities that are now rarely found. Already the site is attracting a diverse array of birds rarely found together on a single site.

Johnson Creek dam removal

The removal of a dam at a Metro natural area on Johnson Creek in 2001 improved fish passage conditions to allow cutthroat trout and coho salmon to once again spawn upstream in this urban/rural creek. This includes access to the reach of the creek on Metro's property that contains, according to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the best fish refuge potential on Johnson Creek, with shade cover, deep pools, large woody debris and back waters. The dam was the only known structural obstacle on Johnson Creek preventing or inhibiting fish passage to the headwaters.

Knocking out knotweed

One of the biggest challenges to restoration efforts all over the globe is invasive species – plants and animals that have settled into new habitats without bringing along the predators or conditions that keep them in check in their homelands.

Metro's natural areas are no exception. On the 1,100 acres and nine miles of stream and river frontage Metro purchased along the Clackamas River and its tributaries, one of the biggest threats to riparian habitat has been Japanese knotweed. Through a coordinated effort that included funding from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, three years of AmeriCorps crews from the Northwest Service Academy, a partnership with The Nature Conservancy, and the cooperation of dozens of private landowners in the watershed, Metro has helped develop a new eradication approach for knotweed. An ongoing effort led by the Clackamas Basin Watershed Council will build on the early success and keep everyone working together.

A little help from our friends

The open spaces bond measure did not include funds for restoration of the acquisitions – only a small amount to "stabilize" the properties and protect them from degradation. The significant accomplishments described above would not have been possible without a lot of help from partners, funders, donors and volunteers.

Metro has received nearly $2 million in grant funds, donations and contributions toward its restoration efforts. In 2002, Metro and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation established the Wild Heritage Fund to help restore important and rare native habitat. Businesses, foundations and individuals are invited to contribute to this fund to expand restoration efforts. To become a partner or learn more about the fund, call the foundation at (503) 417-8700.

Volunteers have left an impressive mark on Metro's natural areas. In an average year, more than 20,000 hours are donated by volunteers helping Metro's science and stewardship team with their restoration efforts. Volunteers plant native trees and shrubs, remove fences and invasive species, lead community and school groups, collect and propagate native seeds, and help document the results of all this hard work by monitoring the plants and wildlife at restoration sites. These and many other volunteer opportunities are a great way to connect to nature and your community by helping to build a legacy of clean water and protected natural areas for people and wildlife. For more information, visit www.metro-region.org/parks or call Mary West at (503) 797-1814.

C. Bruce Forster photos

If you build it, they will come.

Metro's natural areas protect more than just trees and salmon. Native amphibians have also benefited from increases in habitat. Metro's acquisitions and restoration efforts during the last ten years have added more than a thousand acres of wetlands and forest used by native amphibians like the red-legged frog, listed as a "sensitive species" by the state of Oregon. Red-legged frogs have declined regionally due in part to losses in suitable habitat as well as pressure from non-native bullfrogs. Red-legged frogs require pond water more than a foot deep between February and July for their breeding season and for tadpoles to develop.

In 2001 Metro and its partners installed water control structures at Metro's 326-acre Multnomah Channel Natural Area, restoring seasonal flooding during the winter and spring according to historic flood cycles. Prior to this restoration, red-legged frog breeding was restricted to two very small ponds, each 3-4 acres in size. Within just three years, red-legged frogs were breeding throughout 150 acres of new wetlands created by the new regime. As an added benefit, the new flood cycle is actually bad for bullfrogs, which breed in early summer. Killin Wetlands in Banks and Gotter Prairie along the Tualatin River are also boasting expanded red-legged frog populations since wetlands were restored there.

New development maximizes and protects the value of natural areas

By Rudy Kadlub, chief executive officer of Costa Pacific Communities

Metro's Graham Oaks Natural Area (the forest and fields pictured in the foreground) borders Villebois, a new 500-acre community being planned in Wilsonville.
C. Bruce Forster photo

For residents of the Pacific Northwest, access to the region's natural resources – trees, streams, parks and trails – is an essential part of everyday life. And, as residential and commercial development continues to expand in the Northwest, developers have a responsibility to help protect and preserve these resources.

When Costa Pacific Communities first began planning for Villebois – a 500-acre master-planned community in Wilsonville – it was essential to our team to preserve as much open space as possible and we accomplished this by allowing the existing natural features on the property to guide our planning. After all, a development that is designed to minimize its impact on the land and actively works to protect natural features is simply a better development. Natural areas offer value in several ways for residents, from the obvious aesthetic value of the resources to long-term financial yields for home-owners in environmentally friendly communities.

The name "Villebois" comes from the French, meaning "village in the woods." We chose this name in part because of the emphasis we wanted to place on parks and open space in the design. But it also made sense considering that Villebois borders two large natural areas, Graham Oaks and Coffee Lake, both protected by Metro's open spaces, parks and streams bond measure. On the roads that run along the perimeter of Villebois and border these preserves, every home faces these natural areas to deliver an added value to the homeowners. These surrounding natural areas, in conjunction with the parks and open spaces inside the community, allow more beauty to be woven into the landscape and offer residents a haven from the demands of everyday life. In all, open spaces help make communities more livable and more valuable.

In addition to the psychological space and financial rewards that open spaces provide for residents, they also deliver a distinct recreational and social value. At Villebois, we've worked to nurture social connectivity through a community design that includes many spaces for people to get together. Front yard square footage has been reduced to situate homes closer to sidewalks and allow for larger common areas. Villebois features a network of trails that run through several of the property's parks and open spaces and connect the community's three neighborhoods with the Village Center. These trails also extend beyond the borders of the community and connect to a regional trail being planned for the area by Metro and its partners. The Tonquin Trail will connect Villebois to schools, employment centers, natural areas, parks and provide opportunities for recreation, exercise and wildlife watching.

As much as natural areas provide benefits for a community's residents, there is also a responsibility on the part of developers to preserve the environmental value of a property. The Villebois community was designed around existing natural features – which include trees, wetlands, natural preserves and the topographical layout of the land – to limit the effect development would have on the property.

Other measures have been taken to ensure that the land retains the natural conditions that existed prior to the development as fully as possible. This has included a comprehensive rainwater management system, which replaces the existing system, and includes sustainable management tools such as mitigation ponds, porous pavers, bio-retention cells and experimental green roofs. These tools help decrease damage from erosion, regulate the speed at which water reaches watersheds, and, ultimately, prevent unfiltered water from overwhelming rivers and streams.

For Villebois, it was critical that we consider all the many ways that open spaces create value for the community's residents. We think of it as simply doing the right thing, but it has drawn recognition for us as well. For our comprehensive incorporation of greenspaces, Costa Pacific recently received the 2005 Gold Nugget "Best On-the-Boards Site Plan" Grand Award and will be used as a model for community development by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). This recognition was incredibly flattering, but, in the end, it is encouraging to see that the incorporation of parks and natural areas into community development is just as important to others as it is to us.

Rare habitat brought back to the Tualatin River Valley

Along a sleepy bend of the Tualatin River, at the confluence of Baker and McFee creeks, the Gotter family farm is returning to nature. More than 120 acres are being transformed from agriculture to rare oak savanna and wet prairie, along with forested wetlands and riparian areas.

The Gotter family purchased the land in 1930 when Sam Gotter, the youngest of five children, was four years old. "They bought it because of me," Sam recalls. "I was ill and my folks were told they needed to get me to the country." The river floods every year, so the family installed six miles of tiles to drain the land for farming. "It was great farmland," Sam says. "We had every crop imaginable – berries, beans, corn, cucumbers, all kinds of vegetables." They also had cattle, hogs and other farm animals. The land was turned with horse-drawn plows.

A historic grist mill started by Seth Seeley in 1875 on Baker Creek was on the property. A dam on the creek created a spillway. The mill was operated by a water wheel, and farmers from the area brought their wheat and paid a toll for it to be ground. The millstone is believed to have been shipped around Cape Horn. A log flume passed through the property, too, floating logs from higher in the mountains down to the Tualatin River.

Sam reminisces, "I liked growing up there, our old home place – fishing, catching crawdads, swimming in the river, playing in the creeks and the lake."

After his parents died, Sam bought the farm and kept it. "I enjoyed being there. It was a nice place to live." But by 1994, when Sam was 68 years old, the farm became too much to manage. He kept 10 acres on a part of the property where he and his wife had already built a house and sold the rest to Jim Stahlke, who kept the farmland for two years before selling it to Metro.

The Gotter property is now returning to its roots, with a little help from Metro's natural resources team and a key partnership with the Tualatin Riverkeepers that has helped bring hundreds of volunteers to the site. In all, six plant communities will be restored on the property creating a mosaic of native plant habitats based on historical conditions. These include: wet prairie (20 acres), wetland scrub (15 acres), forested wetland (13 acres), oak savanna (22 acres), riparian woodland (23 acres), and palustrine emergent (or plants that are rooted in shallow water with most of their vegetation above water – 18 acres). It is currently the largest native prairie system in the Tualatin River Valley.

The natural vegetation of the Tualatin River watershed includes more than 400 species of plants, many now rare. At Gotter Prairie, at least 34 herbaceous and 32 shrub and tree species have been established, approximating the natural distribution of the plants. Oak savanna and Willamette wet prairie species, generally rare or absent, are included. The riparian area of McFee Creek, still a salmon-bearing stream, is being revegetated. An increasing cover of large trees will provide shade, leaf litter, woody debris and insects that benefit trout and endangered salmon.

Restoring the natural hydrology of the site and converting it back to a wetland system will increase the diversity of birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Species that are expected to return include mink, chorus and red-legged frogs, Western toad and native turtles. The greatest change is likely to come from the abundance and diversity of birds. With restoration, the wetlands system will become suitable breeding habitat or migration stopover for birds like the yellow-breasted chat, yellow-headed blackbirds, common snipe and several hawk species.

In 2002, the Gotter family donated a conservation easement for an adjacent 6-acre property. "I told Metro, I'll help out all I can," says Sam. "It's a good thing for them, and a good thing for me." What he doesn't say – maybe because it comes so naturally to him to do right by this place that has given him so much – is that it's good for the land, too.

Spotlight on Tualatin Riverkeepers

Tualatin Riverkeepers is helping people connect to the nature in their neighborhoods through hands-on restoration and education activities at Metro natural areas throughout the Tualatin River watershed, including Gotter Prairie.

Only three years old, their program engages more than 500 volunteers annually and has helped restore more than 180 acres of diverse wetland, floodplain and riparian habitat. A new nature awareness and service learning program enables schools and community organizations to participate in stewardship projects in their own neighborhoods.

Volunteers have played a big role – removing invasive plant species, planting trees and shrubs, collecting seed, monitoring amphibian egg masses, taking geyer willow cuttings, tracking plant survival rates, counting the return of bird species to the restoration sites, and removing litter and fencing. Education opportunities have brought adults building job skills from Centro Cultural, students from nearby Groner Elementary School and families from Adelante Mujeres (Forward Moving Women) to the site.

Maria Felix Vazquez, a member of Adelante Mujeres, got involved at Gotter so her two-year-old son Fernando would learn respect for the natural environment. "I want my little boy to see how wonderful it is to be able to plant a tree and see it grow."

To find out how you can get involved, visit www.tualatinriverkeepers.org or call (503) 590-5813.

Tualatin Riverkeepers photo

Idyl Wild Farm goes truly wild

The 200 acres that became Idyl Wild Farms took Nan and Paul Weber five years to find. They knew what they wanted for their dairy farm; it had to be near water, with woods, and secluded, off a main highway. From the time they were newlyweds in 1953, they scoured the ads in every Sunday's paper. Every place they'd see would turn out to be a disappointment. One realtor gave up on them.

Nan Weber enjoys a glass of elderberry blossom drink on the property where she and her husband Paul raised their family. Metro is working to restore the former dairy farm, protected by the open spaces bond measure.
Ron Klein photo

As soon as they were shown the property along the Willamette River near the Canby Ferry, Nan says, "We knew this was what we were looking for. We knew it was the right thing."

From its greenway river frontage, the 194-acre L-shaped property on Mountain Road rises and falls into gullies and hills blanketed with farm fields, woods and meadows. Newland creek meanders through. The property's thirty acres of forest are lush with trees including western red cedar, Douglas fir and red alder, with an understory of elderberries, ferns, salmonberries and wildflowers.

The Webers dug in. Thirty-five cows and a milk tank were moved from the farm they'd been leasing in Dayton. Paul and Nan built a new barn, and planted alfalfa, grass and corn for the cows, and some sweet corn for U-pick. Eventually they built seven buildings and expanded the herd of Holsteins and Brown Swiss milking cows to 400.

Children came along, four boys and a girl. They all belonged to 4H and Future Farmers of America, helped out on the farm, and each nurtured a collection of dairy animals. One cow they raised and sold became a national grand champion and eventually was resold for $62,000. Until last year that was the highest price ever paid for a Brown Swiss cow.

"It's a very special piece of property," Nan says. "We enjoyed the land. We really enjoyed the river. We always went swimming and put up a rope swing out over the water. Some years there was a nice sand beach. We had a canoe and a rowboat that we bought the kids for Christmas. In the summer, we'd get hot and sticky with the farm work, and in the evenings would go down and just drop in the river." The heifers made little trails through the woods. The children followed the trails, built tree houses and a fort by the creek. One year they ice skated on the creek. Nan muses, "My favorite part of the farm was up on the hill, so secluded, looking out on the farmstead." Every spring, Nan picked elderberry blossoms to make into a flowery-tasting drink.

When the Webers bought the farm in 1958, the surrounding area was all farmland. The opening of Interstate 205 made it easier for people to commute to downtown Portland and neighboring farmers sold their land into 20-acre lots. "Paul and I talked about this. Things got developed, chopped up, people built mansions," Nan bemoans. "As farmers, we thought, that's not the answer. We had our own little pocket out here, but we could foresee that our farm would not be forever. We thought our place would make a great youth camp or retreat. We didn't want houses – that, everybody agreed on."

Paul had heart surgery and in 1993 he died. Nan and the children discussed what to do and finally, in 2000, they decided to put the property up for sale. They ran a small ad in the Sunday Oregonian and Metro contacted her the next day. "I didn't tell them," Nan says, "but once I understood that they intended to protect our property, we didn't seriously consider any other contender."

Nan and Metro agreed to a life estate, so she can live in her green-shingled family home, surrounded by her hydrangeas and roses, as long as she wishes. Each of the children was given part of the proceeds of the sale, "so each one of them has been able to do something with this trust money, and not wait until I die or I'm too old. I'm so happy. That says it all."

The property had much appeal for Metro. Its riparian and upland forests are home to a multitude of bird species including cedar waxwings and pileated woodpeckers. With some restoration, Newland Creek can once again have runs of cutthroat trout. The creek actually decreases in temperature as it approaches its confluence with the Willlamette River due to input from colder springs. As part of the river known as Willamette Narrows, this place connects with other public lands to form a habitat corridor from Oregon City to Wilsonville. A cacophony of waterfowl can be heard from the large natural anchor of the Mollala River delta in Mollala State Park across the river.

Once Metro took ownership of the farm, they reforested a 15-acre field that had been logged, and sent biologists to survey the site's natural resources. Two big concrete silos were given to a dairy farm near Salem. Hand-hewn timbers and siding boards from the oldest barn went to Bosky Dell Nursery and the Olympic Peninsula. Dozens of volunteers came out for a big SOLV event and cleaned out truckloads of farm "junk." Currently the fields are leased for crops. One year the farm was a staging area for 900 goats used to clear brush on other properties. Nan adds, "I hope that Metro will build trails in my lifetime so I can walk all through the woods."

Now that Idyl Wild Farm is moving toward becoming a more truly wild place, Nan says, "I am so happy. I look to the future, and how many people will get to enjoy it. It makes me feel good."

Elderberry Blossom Drink

10 handfuls of elderberry blossoms
5 large lemons, thinly sliced
10 teaspoons citric acid
6-8 pounds sugar
6 quarts water

To make the syrup, combine the blossoms, lemons and citric acid and leave for 24-36 hours in a non-metallic container, then strain. Add sugar and water. Heat to just before boiling and seal in jars. To make the drink, combine one part syrup with two parts water, and add ice.

A park to love, a community to thank

by Gail Snyder, executive director of Friends of Forest Park

Six years ago my husband and I considered leaving Colorado. We looked at communities and work opportunities from the Rocky Mountains west. We quickly eliminated all but Portland. One of the few non-negotiable criteria was having a large natural area within close proximity to work and home. And by "large," I meant many thousands of acres and miles of trails. After all, I was used to having Pikes Peak in my backyard.

Without exaggeration, Forest Park was essential to our decision to move to Portland. Once we got settled, I quickly began to explore and fall in love with this wonderful park. After being in Portland for about a year, I read an article in the paper about a 73-acre "in-holding" being acquired and added to the park. That's cool I thought. I didn't realize at the time what that acquisition really meant. It was one of the many acquisitions made by Metro and its partners through the open spaces acquisition program.

Now I know Metro and its partners, Friends of Forest Park and the city of Portland, have added more than 865 acres to Forest Park as a result of the 1995 open spaces, parks and streams bond measure. Now I know that some of those acquisitions were in-holdings or privately owned islands of land within the park that caused it to be fragmented. Some of those acquisitions were "pinch points," where the park was extremely narrow. Some were key access points. Others provide a "buffer," protecting the healthier interior habitat from the impacts of urbanization around its edges. And now I also know there is still a lot more to be done!

Last December Friends of Forest Park had an opportunity to acquire some land in the Linnton neighborhood that borders on Forest Park and will provide a much-needed new access point to the park. We worked hard to raise the money. Once again, Metro stepped up to the plate. The Metro Council voted to apply some of the remaining open spaces bond funds towards this acquisition. That parcel of land is now part of the open spaces portfolio and as such is protected in perpetuity from development.

But still the work is not done. Forest Park is at risk of becoming a biological "island" if land surrounding it is developed. Instead, imagine a Forest Park that extends well past its existing northern boundary. Imagine a greenway from the Oregon Coast to Forest Park. Just imagine . . .

Ahhh, Forest Park. It is at the heart of what people love about living in this region. But Forest Park didn't happen by accident. It reflects a legacy of caring about nature and community that started well over 100 years ago and continues today. We are the stewards of today. The Metro open spaces acquisition program has given us the opportunity and the means to carry that legacy forward, and lights the way for the work we have left to do.

Gail has an educational background in physical geography. Her masters thesis work on Pikes Peak in Colorado led to her founding Friends of the Peak. Along the way, her career path took a turn toward nonprofit management instead of erosion control. Gail has worked with Friends of Forest Park for three years, and in the role of executive director for two years.

Lend a hand

Friends of Forest Park, No Ivy League and volunteers meet every Saturday morning for trail maintenance and habitat restoration work. For more infomation, call (503) 223-5449.

Saving the best natural places

By Russell Hoeflich, Oregon director of The Nature Conservancy

In 1995 the citizens of the Portland metropolitan region made the decision to invest $135 million in a portfolio of parks and natural areas throughout our three counties. Since then, Metro has used those funds strategically to stitch together a network of protected rivers, streams and natural places that provide a lifeline to our salmon, birds and a host of other wildlife.

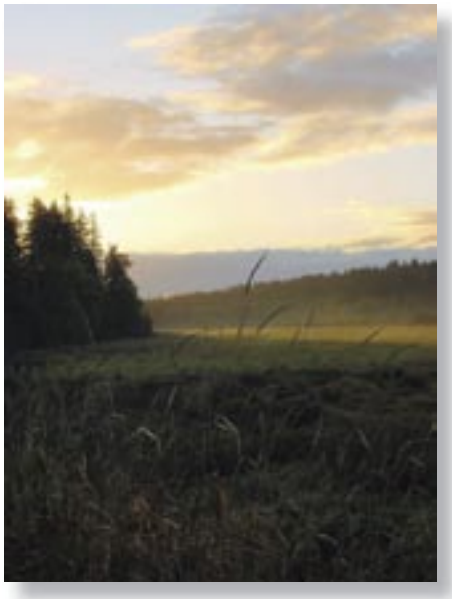
A prime example is the Sandy River Gorge, right on our region's doorstep. The Sandy is a clean, cold river – prime habitat for numerous runs of salmon and steelhead, and one of only two streams where the goal of recovering lower Columbia River fall chinook runs can be achieved. Along the banks of the Sandy, a corridor of undeveloped forests and woodlands supports healthy wildlife populations.

Metro helped preserve this gem for the public by making strategic land acquisitions from willing sellers, managing these lands ecologically, supporting invasive weed control efforts throughout the watershed, and providing education and recreational access to all.

Around the region, nearly 74 miles of river and stream frontage have been added into Metro's portfolio of public land investments, with intensive efforts put into stream bank restoration and invasive species removal to ensure that the ecological value of these assets grows over time.

Another example is Killin Wetlands, a unique natural area in Washington County. This 240-acre site was identified by the Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center as one of the last remaining examples of a type of valley bottom wetland that was once much more widespread. Metro stepped forward to purchase this critical wetland when the owners offered to sell.

These are successes and tangible results worth celebrating. However, it's important to recognize that fulfilling the promise of a fully protected network of healthy streams, wetlands and woodlands is still ahead of us. With the Portland metropolitan area's growing population, there's an urgent need to act swiftly and strategically to ensure that the most critical remaining habitats get protected.



Killin Wetlands
Jane Dunkin photo

Moving forward, how do we choose the best places to invest in habitats for fish and wildlife? What conservation strategies are most effective? And where will the resources come from? Those are the critical questions the region's citizens and leaders need to address when considering how to best protect our natural resources and our way of life.

On the first question, we are fortunate to have built a strong consensus around the highest priority needs. Science-based studies such as the Oregon Biodiversity Project led by Defenders of Wildlife and ecoregional assessments by The Nature Conservancy have helped to pinpoint where and how to best safeguard our region's rich biological diversity. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife recently drafted a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy to guide voluntary and incentive-based conservation action on a regional basis.

We've learned from these studies that in the Willamette Valley, including the Portland metropolitan region, the habitats most extensively lost to development – and the most urgent to conserve for the future – include wetlands, low elevation rivers and streams, riparian (stream bank) corridors, low-elevation conifer forests, oak woodlands, and native prairies. Metro has done an excellent job of using this type of information to focus investments on the most ecologically significant places.

On the question of effective strategies, today's political and economic climate challenges us to come up with fresh solutions. Oregon voters recently signaled that while they strongly value healthy wildlife habitats, they want to protect these resources with voluntary incentives, not heavy-handed or inflexible regulations. They want property owners to be fairly compensated for preserving habitat values on their land.

To me, that's not a problem, it's an opportunity. In the future, conservation will increasingly be achieved through voluntary incentives, fair compensation, and new tools such as land protection agreements – as well as additional land purchases from willing sellers. The good news is, there's exciting conservation work to be done and citizens willing to do it.

Future generations of Oregonians will visit vibrant natural areas like the Sandy River Gorge, Killin Wetlands and Cooper Mountain – real places with healthy ecological systems supporting a rich tapestry of our native plants and animals. They'll be grateful for the foresight shown by the people in this region at the beginning of the 21st century.

As vice president and Oregon director for The Nature Conservancy since 1986, Russ is responsible for the development, administration and implementation of a strategic plan to protect and maintain Oregon's biological diversity. The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

Nature nearby, creating livable cities

by Mike Houck, executive director of Urban Greenspaces Institute

Henry David Thoreau's aphorism, "In wildness is the preservation of the world" has long inspired the protection of the rural landscape, too often it seems to me, at the expense of preserving the urban wilds. Today I think we need a new mantra, "in livable cities is preservation of the wild." To be livable, a vibrant green infrastructure – an interconnected network of streams, parks, trails and natural areas – must permeate our cities. When ribbons of green penetrate every neighborhood, our cities will be celebrated as desirable, environmentally responsible places to live.

Cities should be and can be biologically diverse. Here in the Northern Willamette Valley, we have a head start in creating an ecologically rich region. Peregrine falcons, bald eagles, chinook salmon, steelhead trout, cutthroat trout, red-legged frogs, Western pond turtles, Western painted turtles and numerous other sensitive species still share the urban landscape with us. Nearly 300 species of birds have been recorded in our region, 163 of them nesting, migrating through, or living here year-round.

The social and educational values of "nature nearby" are best articulated by Robert Michael Pyle, who posed in The Thunder Tree, "What is the extinction of the condor to a child who has never known a wren?" To appreciate the exotic, we need access to common backyard nature. Parks and urban wilds should be within what Pyle refers to as our "immediate radius of reach," which for the very old and the very young is a short walk or bicycle ride from home.

There are also hardheaded economic reasons for protecting and restoring the region's greenspaces. Restoring floodplains and wetlands not only reduces flooding and protects water quality, but does so more cheaply than pipes and engineered solutions. It's possible to create parks and greenspaces in park deficient neighborhoods and to control stormwater by expanding the urban forest canopy, roof gardens, and creating green residential streets.

Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge offers a rich slice of nature right inside Portland city limits.
Mike Houck photo

Marsh wren
Jim Cruce photo

Properties near parks and natural areas also are more valuable. It's no accident that the sales pitch for the new condominiums at Portland's South Waterfront invokes the greenway trail, parks and proximity to Ross Island where herons and bald eagles nest and chinook salmon rest and feed. The ability to attract and retain skilled employees led Norm Thompson to locate their corporate headquarters on the Rock Creek Greenway in Hillsboro.

Parks, trails and natural areas must no longer be thought of as an extra frill, leftovers of urbanization. The 1995 open spaces bond measure has protected more than 8,000 acres of natural areas, a critical step in establishing parks and natural areas as an essential element of the region's infrastructure. Future acquisition efforts will keep us on track in creating the green armature around which our cities should be designed. This integration of the built and natural environments will contribute to the region's economic success, ecological health, civic vitality and quality of life. It will also render moot the false choice between protecting the urban or rural wilds.

Mike Houck is executive director of the Urban Greenspaces Institute. He has been urban naturalist at the Audubon Society of Portland since he founded Audubon's urban conservation program in 1980. He serves on Metro's Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee and has served on several other regional and local advisory committees related to parks, trails and natural areas.

Fall calendar

ENJOY NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS

Treasured Friends celebrate open spaces

These special events offer more ways to get to know your natural areas during the "Open Spaces, Treasured Places" celebration.

Johnson Creek open house

5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 8

Join the Johnson Creek Watershed Council for an evening of local music, excellent food, an exhibit of photography and art focusing on Johnson Creek, a guest speaker and a silent auction. Learn about the great work volunteers have accomplished for Johnson Creek this year. Explore the new Johnson Creek Watershed Resource Center and take home a gift from the silent auction. Bring your appetite and dress to sit outside in the spacious courtyard. For more information, call Jordan at (503) 652-7477 or visit www.jcwc.org. *Johnson Creek Watershed Council*

A Bug's Life in the Columbia Slough

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10

Ever wondered what creatures lurk beneath the surface of Portland's waterways? Join the Xerces Society and the Columbia Slough Watershed Council for an adventure in underwater exploration. Experience the world of invertebrates in a hands-on environment, and learn about sampling methods and identification. Bring your canoe if you have one; extra canoes will be available to borrow. Meet at Whitaker Ponds at 7040 NE 47th Ave., Portland. Free. Advance registration required; call Jeff at (503) 232-6639. *Columbia Slough Watershed Council* and *Xerces Society*

Camassia Nature Preserve work party

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10

Help restore a rare site of oak/madrone forest by removing Douglas fir trees that are encroaching on the habitat, replanting native species in old weed removal sites and pulling ivy. Learn about the history of Camassia, forest succession, urban encroachment, impacts on natural areas and the need to preserve and manage open spaces. Bring your lunch, gloves, loppers, hand saws, shovels and a good joke to share. Wear long pants to protect yourself from poison oak. To register, call Jason at (503) 802-8151. *The Nature Conservancy*

Tualatin River paddle

10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10

Join the Tualatin Riverkeepers on a paddle from Cook Park in Tigard. This beginner level trip is a great way to begin to learn how to use a canoe and enjoy the Tualatin River. Bring water and lunch. $5 for members; $10 for non-members. Canoes can be rented for $20 and are free for members. To register, call Margot at (503) 590-5813. *Tualatin Riverkeepers*

Clackamas "Down the River" Clean Up

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 11

This third annual event is a chance for boaters to give back to their river and their community. Volunteers will clean up trash along a 6-mile stretch of the lower Clackamas River, either from Barton to Carver, or Carver to the mouth. All necessary supplies will be provided. After a fun-filled day of river running and hauling out trash, volunteers will wrap up the day with a barbeque potluck and live bluegrass music at Carver Park. Meet at Carver Park; shuttles to the put-in and take-out locations will be arranged. All non-motorized boaters are welcome. Boaters with their own watercraft register by calling Kristin Dahl at (503) 772-1122. Volunteers without their own boats can work along the riverbanks or join a guided paddle raft; register by calling Jo Anne at (503) 558-0550. *eNRG Kayaking* and *Clackamas River Basin Council*

Nature discoveries

Clear Creek natural area tour

12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 24

Join Metro naturalist James Davis for a natural history tour of one of the most beautiful properties protected by Metro's open spaces acquisition program. This forested tributary of the Clackamas River has excellent water quality and significant wild fish runs. Signs of deer, coyote, beaver and river otter are common and there is a good variety of other wildlife, plants, and plenty of fungus in the fall. James will do his best to identify what mushrooms we find, but this will certainly be at the beginner's level. Bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. There will be leisurely walking for 2 to 3 miles over uneven terrain on old dirt roads. Suitable for adults and children 10 and older. Payment of $5 per adult is required in advance; children are free. Call (503) 797-1928 to register. Directions will be mailed to you. *Metro*

Portland Paddle

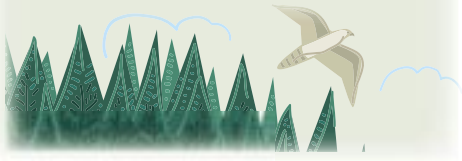
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday Sept. 24

Participate in the second annual Portland Paddle, a free canoe and kayak event for all ages, aimed at getting people on the Willamette River. Learn about and enjoy this amazing natural resource. For more information and to register, call (503) 223-6418 or visit www.portlandpaddle.org. *Willamette Riverkeeper*

Willamette Valley pines and oaks

1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 25

When we think of forests on the west side of the Cascades, we generally think of conifer forests, especially Douglas fir forests. But two other trees, the Oregon oak and the Willamette Valley ponderosa pine, were once widespread and provided impor-



tant habitat for a multitude of wildlife in the valley. One of Metro's natural areas along the Tualatin River is home to a huge Willamette Valley ponderosa pine. Join Metro naturalist Deb Scrivens for a visit to this tree and a tour focusing on pine and oak forests of the western part of the state. Directions will be mailed to you after you register. Payment of $5 per adult is required in advance; children are free. Call (503) 797-1928 to register. *Metro*

Canemah Bluff tour

1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 2

This natural area perched atop a cliff features a wonderful view of the Willamette River, a great variety of native plants, rich local history and amazing examples of the Pacific yew tree. Join Metro naturalist Deb Scrivens for a leisurely exploration. You will receive directions after you register. Payment of $5 per adult is required in advance; children are free. Call (503) 797-1928 to register. *Metro*

Salmon Festival

10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 8 and 9

The annual Salmon Festival celebrates the return of the fall chinook salmon to the Sandy River and inspires us to value clean water and healthy watersheds. The festival offers interactive cultural exhibits, river walks, engaging activities for children, arts and crafts demonstrations, music and storytelling, horse-drawn wagon rides, a fish-friendly marketplace, a salmon barbecue and a food court. Don't be afraid of those clouds – the festival is "weatherized" with entertainment, exhibits, children's activities and food areas under cover. Festival admission is $8 per vehicle at the gate. For more information, call (503) 797-1850 or visit www.metro-region.org/salmonfestival. *Metro*

Intel-SOLV Washington County Clean and Green

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15

Fifty project sites in Washington County can use your help. Choose from wetlands enhancement, native planting, invasive plant removal, litter pick-up, tree planting, trail improvement and more. Advance registration is required; call (503) 844-9571. *SOLV* *by arrangement*

Mt. Talbert natural area tour

11:30 to 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 16

Mt. Talbert is a 144-acre site on top of the largest undeveloped lava butte in northern Clackamas County. Join Metro naturalist James Davis for an autumn walk on this natural area acquired with funds from the open spaces, parks and streams bond measure. October is an active time for bird migration and forested hills like this one are prime spots to view migrating songbirds, as well as the year-round residents. October is also mushroom season and there will be a variety of fungi to challenge our beginning mushroom identification skills. Bring binoculars or borrow some of ours. There are no developed trails or facilities; walking will be on rough, muddy terrain. Free. Advance registration is required; call North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District at (503) 794-8080 by Oct. 9. You will receive directions to the site after you register. *Metro* and *North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District*

Animal tracking workshop

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22

Oxbow Regional Park is rich in tracks at this time of year, when beaver, otter, fox, mink, mouse and deer often leave clear footprints in the sand. With practice, you can learn to read the ground like a book. We will also learn to make plaster casts of animal tracks. Local tracker Terry Kem will introduce you to the basics of track identification and interpretation and the awareness and stealth skills needed to watch wildlife at close range. Suitable for adults and families. Bring a snack and meet at the floodplain parking area. Registration and a $10 fee are required in advance. There is a $4 per vehicle entry fee, payable at the gate. To register, call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Mushrooms at Smith and Bybee Wetlands

1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22

Join naturalist James Davis for an exploration of the fungus at Metro's Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. On this beginner's mushroom walk we'll be talking about the basics of mushrooms and other fungus and how to go about identifying this complicated group of strange and fascinating life forms. We will not be able to identify everything we see, but we will do our best and will enjoy the amazing variety of shapes, colors, textures and smells that make these life forms so intriguing. Meet in the natural area parking lot on North Marine Drive. Registration and payment of $5 per adult is required in advance; children are free. Call (503) 797-1928 to register. *Metro*

Ancient forest mushroom class

2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23

Join mycologist Gary Slone for a two-hour class that ends with a walk on an easy trail in the old growth forest at Oxbow Regional Park. Gary will discuss mushroom classification and edibility, and then participants will gather, identify and compare specimens. Beginning and experienced "shroomers" are welcome. Dress warmly. Meet at Alder Shelter (picnic area "A"). Registration and a fee of $10 per person are required in advance. There is a $4 per vehicle entry fee payable at the park. Call (503) 797-1928 to register. *Metro*

Smith and Bybee Wetlands paddle trips

Traveling by canoe or kayak is the best way to explore Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area in North Portland. Bring your own kayak or canoe and personal flotation device. The trip leader will contact participants if it is necessary to cancel the trip due to low water levels. Meet at the parking lot on North Marine Drive. Advance registration required. *Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes*

noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23

To register, call Troy Clark at (503) 249-0482.

noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19

To register, call Dale Svart at (503) 285-3084.

Springwater on the Willamette and Oaks Bottom

1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 5

Join Metro naturalist James Davis for a leisurely stroll along the Springwater on the Willamette Trail. This section of the Springwater Corridor provides great access to Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge, a longtime favorite bird watching spot and the first city park in the country to be designated a wildlife refuge. Explore this urban wetland and let James introduce you to the variety of wintering birds. Suitable for teens and adults. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. Meet in the parking lot of Sellwood Riverfront Park on Southeast Oaks Park Way. Registration and payment of $5 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Thanksgiving walk

10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 19

Take time to enjoy and celebrate the simple gifts of nature at Oxbow Regional Park with Elisabeth Neely, the park naturalist, Terry Kem from Deerdance School and others. On an easy walk along the river, we'll focus on opening our senses and noticing how wildlife responds to the changing season. Then gather around the campfire circle as the naturalists share the "Thanksgiving Address" passed down by the Iroquois Nation. This is a simple and moving way to express appreciation for our connections to nature. Hot drinks will be provided. Meet at the boat ramp. Free with park entry fee of $4 per vehicle. Advance registration required; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

New bird checklist available

Metro naturalist James Davis has pulled together a checklist of more than 225 birds regularly found in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. Check it out on the Metro web site at www.metro-region.org/parks or call (503) 797-1850 for a copy.

Autumn bird watching

Beginning bird watching class

7 to 9:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 13

If you are curious about the birds around you but just don't know where to start, this is the program for you. After this introduction to the basics of bird watching by Metro naturalist James Davis, you will be well prepared for the field trips and other classes or to head out on your own. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of $10 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Shorebirds and waders identification class

7 to 9:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22

Metro naturalist James Davis is offering a new class to help people learn to identify the challenging shorebird group (sandpipers, plovers, etc.). The class also will include the "large waders" (herons, egrets, etc.). The changes in water levels caused by the new water control structure at Smith and Bybee Wetlands have created a great place to study these birds during their fall migration. This class is good preparation for Metro's first shorebird field trips. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of $10 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Shorebirds and waders field trip

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 25 and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15

The water control structure at Smith and Bybee Wetlands has reconnected the wetlands with the Columbia Slough and the Willamette/Columbia system. As a result, tidal mudflats have been developing in Bybee Lake in the fall, and this habitat is a shorebird and wader magnet. The number and variety of shorebirds haven't been this good in decades, so Metro naturalist James Davis is offering these two special field trips to the mudflats near the old St. Johns Landfill. Because the landfill is closed to the public, the only way to access this area is on one of these guided field trips with limited space. You will receive directions after you register. Registration and payment of $5 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Birds of autumn class

7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 28

Join Metro naturalist James Davis for an overview of the most common birds seen in the metropolitan area from September into the winter. We will concentrate on songbirds and briefly discuss birds of prey and waterfowl. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of $10 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Owls of Oregon in Clackamas County

7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 19

Owls have always fascinated people because of their unique appearance and nocturnal lifestyle. These nighttime hunters have amazing adaptations for finding and catching their prey. Despite their popularity, owls are hard to see in the wild and remain a mysterious and confusing group of birds. Learn how owls make their living and how to tell Oregon's owls apart with Metro naturalist James Davis. This class is for adults and interested teens and is held at the Environmental Learning Center on the campus of Clackamas Community College. Registration and payment of $8 per person are required in advance. To register, call Allison at (503) 657-6958, ext. 2644. *Metro*

Autumn birds field trip

9:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 22

In October wintering waterfowl and raptors, as well as resident birds, will be at Smith and Bybee Wetlands and fall migrants will still be moving through the area. The falling cottonwood leaves sometimes cover the trail giving it that beautiful "yellow brick road" look. Flocks of noisy geese descending through the golden light make the season clear. Meet naturalist James Davis in the natural area parking lot on North Marine Drive. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. Spotting scopes will be provided. Free. Advance registration is required; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Waterfowl class

7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2

In autumn, half a million ducks, geese and swans fly over the region's wetlands and tens of thousands stay to spend the winter. Waterfowl, among the region's most abundant and diverse groups of wintering birds, are easy to identify. Join Metro naturalist and expert birder James Davis to find out who's who in this large group of beautiful birds. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of $10 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Birds of prey class

7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 9
Raptors – hawks, eagles, falcons and owls – have always fascinated people. Metro naturalist James Davis will show you how to tell these major groups of raptors apart and the key points for identifying the most common species. This class covers all the birds of prey except owls. Recommended field guide is Field Guide to Western Birds, 3rd. Ed. by Roger Tory Peterson. Meet in room 370 at Metro Regional Center. Registration and payment of $10 per person are required in advance; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

Winter birds field trip

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19
In November we see that winter has arrived with lots of waterfowl and raptors settling in at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. As the leaves fall from the trees, it is much easier to see the perched birds of prey, as well as the songbirds. The lakes are sometimes covered with ducks and geese and occasionally we see a swan or two. Dress for the cold and meet Metro naturalist James Davis in the natural area parking lot on North Marine Drive. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. Spotting scopes will be provided. Free. Advance registration is required; call (503) 797-1928. *Metro*

This isn't even the half of it!

There are more than one hundred additional wildlife watching, nature exploration and volunteer opportunities listed on Metro's online calendar. Visit

www.metro-region.org/greenscene

or click on "calendar" at the top of any page on the Metro web site for an up-to-the-minute, comprehensive listing of nature activities from all over the region.

8,000 acres saved and counting. Thank you from the Metro Council.

From left, Rex Burkholder, Carl Hosticka, David Bragdon, Robert Liberty, Susan McLain, Rod Park and Brian Newman
Jeffrey Simon photo

Metro
People places • open spaces

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

Metro's web site
www.metro-region.org

Your Metro representatives

Metro Council President
David Bragdon

Metro Councilors
Rod Park, District 1
Brian Newman, District 2
Carl Hosticka, District 3
Susan McLain, District 4
Rex Burkholder, deputy council president
District 5
Robert Liberty, District 6

Auditor
Alexis Dow, CPA

Illustrations by
Antonia Manda

If you have a disability and need accommodations, call (503) 797-1850, or call Metro's TDD line at (503) 797-1804. If you require a sign interpreter, call at least 48 hours in advance. Activities marked with this symbol are wheelchair accessible:

Bus and MAX information:
(503) 238-RIDE (238-7433).

To be added to the mailing list or to make any changes, call (503) 797-1850 option 3.

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