

FALL 2012

GreenScene



INSIDE:

Tell Metro what you think.

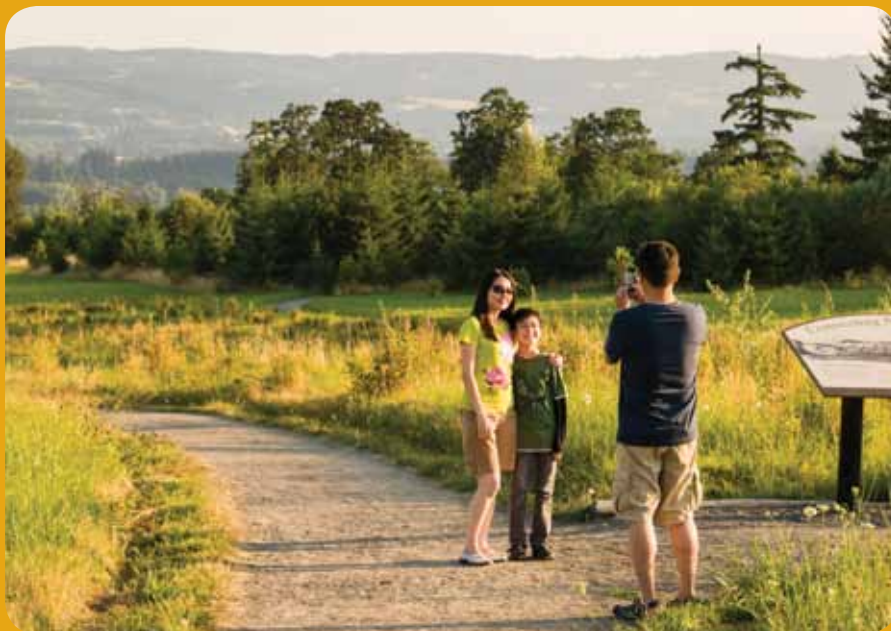
Should Metro ask voters
to approve a 5-year parks
and natural areas levy?

Find out more on page 2.



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Should Metro ask voters to approve a 5-year parks and natural areas levy?



Jim Cruce photo

One of the things that makes this region special is its easy access to the great outdoors. But it's more than that. Time and again, the region's residents have made it a priority to protect rivers, streams and water quality and to preserve habitat for salmon, birds and other wildlife.



In fact, that commitment to preserving what makes this region unique is unique in its own right. With the approval of two bond measures (1995 and 2006) in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, voters directed Metro to build a region-wide network of natural areas, parks and trails that help protect clean air and water, preserve habitat, and provide opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Today Metro owns and manages more than 16,000 acres of land – more than a third of all the public parks and natural areas in the region.

With the future of these special places in mind, the Metro Council is considering the best way to make the most of the region's parks and natural areas, and to maintain them sufficiently and consistently now, avoiding the more costly repair and clean up that comes with a lower level of maintenance.

Independent panel recommends levy

While the voter-approved bond measures provide funds to purchase land, the law prohibits the use of bond money for maintaining and operating these sites. In July an independent advisory panel of 15 business, conservation and community leaders from around the region considered Metro's work to acquire, restore and operate regional parks and natural areas, and the associated challenges of taking care of them.

To meet these challenges, the panel recommended the Metro Council refer to voters a 5-year levy of between 10 and 12 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. At 10 cents per \$1,000, the average homeowner would pay \$20 a year to:

- ensure water quality for people, fish and wildlife
- protect and restore habitat
- control invasive weeds
- give people more – and safer – opportunities to enjoy nature, particularly in areas where people have limited access today
- provide children more opportunities to experience these special places, and increase volunteer opportunities
- ensure that all residents of the region can benefit.

The panel came together from all over the region – most of us had never met. Our discussions were robust as we considered how to continue to maintain parks, protect water quality and preserve habitat. We encourage our fellow residents to think through these important questions and tell the Metro Council what they think.

– Fred Miller, advisory panel chair and former
Portland General Electric vice president

Tell Metro what you think. Take the survey.

Tell the Metro Council whether you think a 5-year levy to maintain and operate Metro's parks and natural areas should be referred to voters. A quick online survey will ask you:

- How important is preserving water quality, wildlife habitat and providing people with great places to enjoy nature? Does the panel's recommendation reflect your priorities?
- What should the levy support? Controlling invasive weeds and protecting habitat? Increased access for walking, hiking, fishing?

- When should the council ask voters to approve a levy?

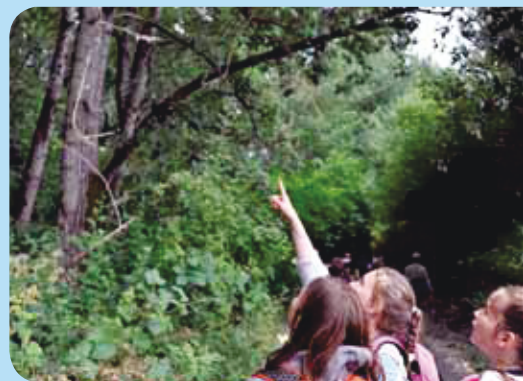
Learn more about the advisory panel and its recommendations and take the survey by Nov. 19.

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Take the survey at
www.oregonmetro.gov/nature.

Prefer another way to weigh in?
Call 503-797-1741.

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What do Metro's parks and natural areas look like?

Turn the page and explore.

This edition of GreenScene takes you on a trail that connects communities, and highlights restoration projects that will revive some of the region's lost oak habitat and transform an industrial tree farm into a diverse forest.

You can also check out summer snapshots of your neighbors exploring, restoring and connecting with beauty that's close to home.

Best of all, you can discover ways to get out there, too – to see salmon spawning, hunt for mushrooms, identify wildflowers, kayak the Willamette Narrows and more.

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Metro is committed to protecting and restoring habitat where native birds, fish and plants can thrive. Below, find out about the restoration of valuable oak habitat in the Willamette Narrows. Then, turn the page to learn about a project at Chehalem Ridge that's transforming a tightly planted industrial timber lot into a diverse forest.



Metro preserves valuable oak habitat at voter-protected natural areas across the region

Major restoration project underway at the Willamette Narrows natural area near West Linn

On a warm June morning, a Pacific wren warbled complex melodies in a canopy of craggy oaks. Seed-heavy native grasses like blue wild rye and brome bowed in a breeze. Atop rocky outcrops, prairies bore delicate blooms of purple brodiaea and native triteleia, a white lily – the latest in a succession of color at Metro's natural areas in the Willamette Narrows.

This sun-dappled oak woodland is a spectacular landscape, encompassing steep Willamette River cliffs and rocky islands. But scientists know that something is amiss. Douglas fir and Oregon ash are rapidly shading out the Oregon white oak and other plants that are part of the oak community.

At Metro's 16,000 acres of voter-protected natural areas and parks, oak habitats have become a top priority for protection and

enhancement. Just a few hundred years ago, much of the region's now conifer-rich landscape was light and open oak woodlands and prairies. In fact, it's estimated that as much as 1 million acres in the 3.3 million-acre valley were covered in Oregon white oak savanna and woodland. Today, only 8 percent remain.

The Willamette Narrows natural area, which spans more than 500 acres, contains some of the largest contiguous expanses of Oregon white oak trees in the Portland area. That's why Metro is taking steps this year to make sure they thrive.

Oak management: an ancient practice, revived and updated

Since settlement here began, nearly all of the valley's oak habitats have been converted to agriculture or urban uses. Settlement also brought fire suppression, causing further declines in oak acreage. For centuries,

Metro scientist Elaine Stewart was thrilled to find this white rock larkspur – *Delphinium leucophaeum*, a federal species of concern – in the Willamette Narrows in mid-June. "I don't think there's another place in the region with so many delphinium," she said.

indigenous people nurtured oak habitat, setting fires in oak woodlands and savannas to improve hunting and the production of plants they relied on for food. These frequent, low-intensity fires killed oak competitors while the oaks thrived. The oaks also benefited from natural fires. Without fire to burn off competing vegetation, faster-growing Douglas firs eventually overtop and shade out oaks.

Metro's goal at the Narrows is to "release" the oaks – that is, eliminate their competition and maintain a plant community rich in native biodiversity. Non-native and invasive plants have been removed and the most significant work comes this fall: Metro will fell or top some 650 trees that stand between the oaks and the sun, freeing up water, nutrients and light for the oaks.

"We're going to benefit a group of species that depend on this habitat, such as the white-breasted nuthatch," said Metro's Elaine Stewart, project manager for the Willamette Narrows restoration work.

“The land cannot take care of itself; invasive species, without action by humans, take over native plants,” said Metro scientist Elaine Stewart.



Marked with an “S” for “snag,” this Douglas fir tree in the Willamette Narrows will have the top cut off; the rest will be left as a source of food, rest and shelter for wildlife. “Not every fir will be cut,” Stewart said. “We wanted to target tree removal.”

“A suite of species – plants and animals – is associated with Oregon white oaks,” said Susan Barnes, conservation biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. “We need to take actions to protect what is left, to re-establish oaks through planting of new trees and to enhance other areas by oak release.”

For Metro, managing natural areas is an ongoing commitment

Those actions include ongoing data gathering and analysis, and a good amount of hand labor. In late October, staff will sow seeds of native wildflowers and grasses collected by volunteers from Metro’s Native Plant Center.

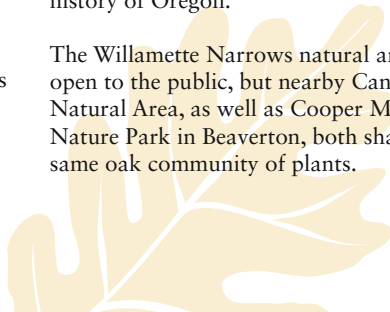
Continued commitment is necessary, too, because one thing is certain: invasives come back. Their seeds can remain in the soil or be brought on the wind, in animal droppings and on the soles of shoes. In addition, the region is increasingly vulnerable to exotic species that arrive by boat, in nursery stock, and in tire treads. Invasives are the number one reason ongoing management is vital for natural areas.

“For millennia, this place and other habitats were in equilibrium,” said Stewart. “Now, the land cannot take care of itself; invasive species, without action by humans, take over native plants.”

That stewardship shows. And anyone can experience the results by going for a walk among the oaks, says Jonathan Soll, manager of Metro’s science and stewardship division.

“When people hike in an oak savanna or oak woodland for the first time, they are amazed,” Soll said. “They often don’t realize these kinds of places exist here ... that a significant portion of the Portland area was once oak woodland and prairie. Oaks are part of the history of Oregon.”

The Willamette Narrows natural area is not open to the public, but nearby Canemah Bluff Natural Area, as well as Cooper Mountain Nature Park in Beaverton, both share the same oak community of plants.



Willamette Narrows kayak trip Saturday, Sept. 29

Join Metro’s science team and eNRG Kayaking on this half-day paddling expedition in the Willamette Narrows, a stretch of steep cliffs and rocky islands home to deer, coyote, frogs, osprey, owls, heron and songbirds. Find out more in the calendar on page 13 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/calendar.



Growing the region’s parks and natural areas

- As a result of two voter-approved bond measures (1995 and 2006), Metro owns and cares for 16,000 acres of land – more than a third of the region’s natural areas and parkland.
- Metro’s parks and natural areas protect 90 miles of river and stream banks that provide habitat for salmon, birds and other wildlife and help protect water quality.
- Metro staff and volunteers fight the ongoing battle against invasive plants, so far removing and replacing them with 1.7 million native trees and shrubs, many grown at Metro’s own Native Plant Center.
- Metro has awarded grants for hundreds of community projects to purchase new natural areas, restore existing ones, add play areas and provide education and volunteer opportunities.



Metro scientist Kate Holleran points out Chehalem Ridge Natural Area during a public tour of the property.

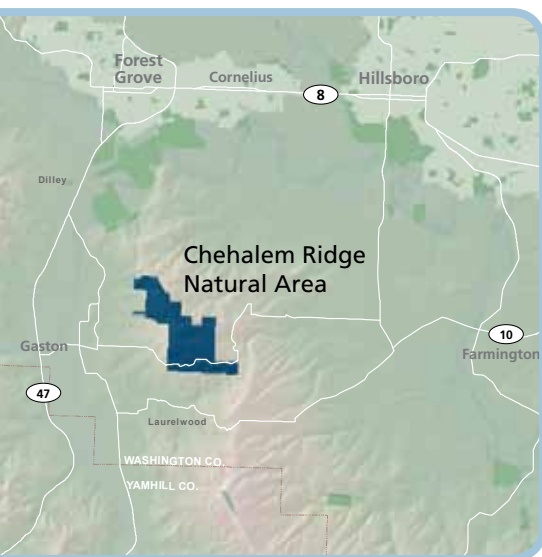
Metro purchased the 1,200-acre Chehalem Ridge Natural Area in 2010, using funds from the region's voter-approved bond measure, to protect the forested land near Gaston.

Chehalem Ridge Natural Area begins transformation from industrial tree farm to diverse forest

rows. It's an efficient landscape, profitable for the timber company that raised Douglas firs here for pulp. For wildlife, not so much.

This summer, Metro's 1,200-acre Chehalem Ridge Natural Area started to come back to noisy, dynamic life in a program of Douglas fir thinning, shrub and tree planting and removal of invasive species. Metro scientists and technicians are teaming with a local sustainable forestry firm, a father-son logging duo from Rainier, and students and researchers at nearby Pacific University to study the site, and plan and implement five to six years of restoration work.

This transformation has been in the making since early 2010, when Metro invested funds from a natural areas bond measure to buy this signature property near Gaston. Someday, if resources are available to develop visitor amenities, people could explore trails and savor views of five Cascades peaks. For now, the focus is on creating a healthy landscape for wildlife and people.



Twenty years before Metro purchased the 1,200-acre Chehalem Ridge Natural Area, half of it was planted for commercial timber production. To help the land return to a more natural and diverse mosaic of habitats, Metro is starting to thin trees.

"I saw my first flying squirrel back in here," said one longtime Chehalem Ridge farmer, leaning on a walking stick. He nodded to what was once an oak and fir woodland.

But on a rainy June Saturday, in an area densely planted in timber, the silence is conspicuous. No bird calls, no scuttering of squirrels or snakes. Tour participants saw a forest floor unnaturally tidy and brown. Trees are planted 8 to 10 feet apart in croplike

Someday, if resources are available to develop visitor amenities, people could explore trails and savor views of five Cascades peaks.

Caring for the land is a big project in the Chehalem Mountains, the tallest peaks in the Tualatin Valley. Forming the valley's southern boundary, they were uplifted by tectonic forces and blanketed with rich soils during the last ice age. Since the 1850s, humans have planted orchards, wheat, wine grapes and timber on the mountains' slopes. Nearly half of the Metro property is densely planted in fir – roughly twice the density of a similar but more naturally evolved forest.

The objective is to transform this industrial forest into what it had been for millennia: a diverse mosaic of old growth upland forest, nectar- and fruit-producing shrublands and cool stream corridors.

"The goal is land that has a high value to wildlife," said Metro natural resources scientist Kate Holleran, who is managing the restoration work at Chehalem Ridge.

That means a variety of tree species, tall trees with large limbs and natural cavities, and snags and down wood. In the work to create such habitats, nature is a powerful ally.

"The nice thing about this property is that the forest will change fast," said Scott Ferguson, lead forester with Portland's Trout Mountain Forestry. His firm is working with Metro to thin and manage the land. "Only in Oregon and a few other places can you cut trees and, in two years, the land will look very different." Credit the rain and good soils.

Restoration takes time

Work crews are thinning trees to create openings in the former timber plantation. In 50-foot-wide openings, just one or a couple of "legacy" trees will remain. They exhibit what Ferguson calls "wolfy growth" – big branches and full crowns – that makes excellent habitat for wildlife. Further planning will happen once soils and plants begin to respond to the newly available light, water and nutrients. More thinning will take place through 2016.

"We're thinning at multiple densities to learn how the forest will respond," Holleran said.

Metro will also analyze how the understory, or lower growing plants below the forest canopy, responds when competition is removed. "In the natural world, forest gaps occur in all different sizes," Holleran said. "Some are tiny: a big tree falls over, 20 feet of soil are exposed, and red alder comes in to colonize that." Some natural gaps are larger, caused by blow-downs or fires.

The 35 to 50 acres of timberland thinned this year were once farmed for wheat, before being converted to timber production. These acres offer an excellent laboratory for forest managers as they observe results of different thinning strategies.

"The goal is land that has a high value to wildlife," said Metro scientist Kate Holleran.

This relatively blank environmental slate offers many options to bring the land back to a more diverse state. In some of the new gaps, shrubs, hardwoods and native perennials from Metro's Native Plant Center will be planted. In others, the land will be left untouched, and scientists will watch what happens.

"In a natural forest, there is a native seed bank," Holleran said. "Since these lands were agricultural fields we don't know if there is a native seed bank left, or if it was sprayed – or if it will respond."

In addition to creating a forest mosaic, thinning in the dense stands will create firebreaks that slow or stop wildfires. Other parts of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area were not planted in timber; they consist of a more open habitat of Oregon white oaks. These areas historically would have remained oak woodlands as fires – both human-set and natural – eliminated the oaks' faster-growing competitors. Now, limited thinning will



Firs once destined for the pulp market are densely planted on Chehalem Ridge. Over the next several years, the trees will be thinned, and a more diverse forest habitat will replace the fir monoculture.

remove firs and maples and provide the oaks with the light they need to thrive. (Read more about Metro's work to preserve valuable oak habitat on page 4.)

Timber removed over the life of the project will be sold either as pulp or for lumber.

By 2016, when the thinning cycle ends, the land will have gotten a jumpstart in the natural transitions created by centuries of fire, wind and other forces. As a group of interested neighbors stood in the rain learning about the changes coming to Chehalem Ridge, one asked Ferguson, "What will you do when you're finished?"

A natural area this large will always require monitoring and hands-on care. But, when it comes to forest thinning, Ferguson's answer was succinct: "We'll watch it grow."

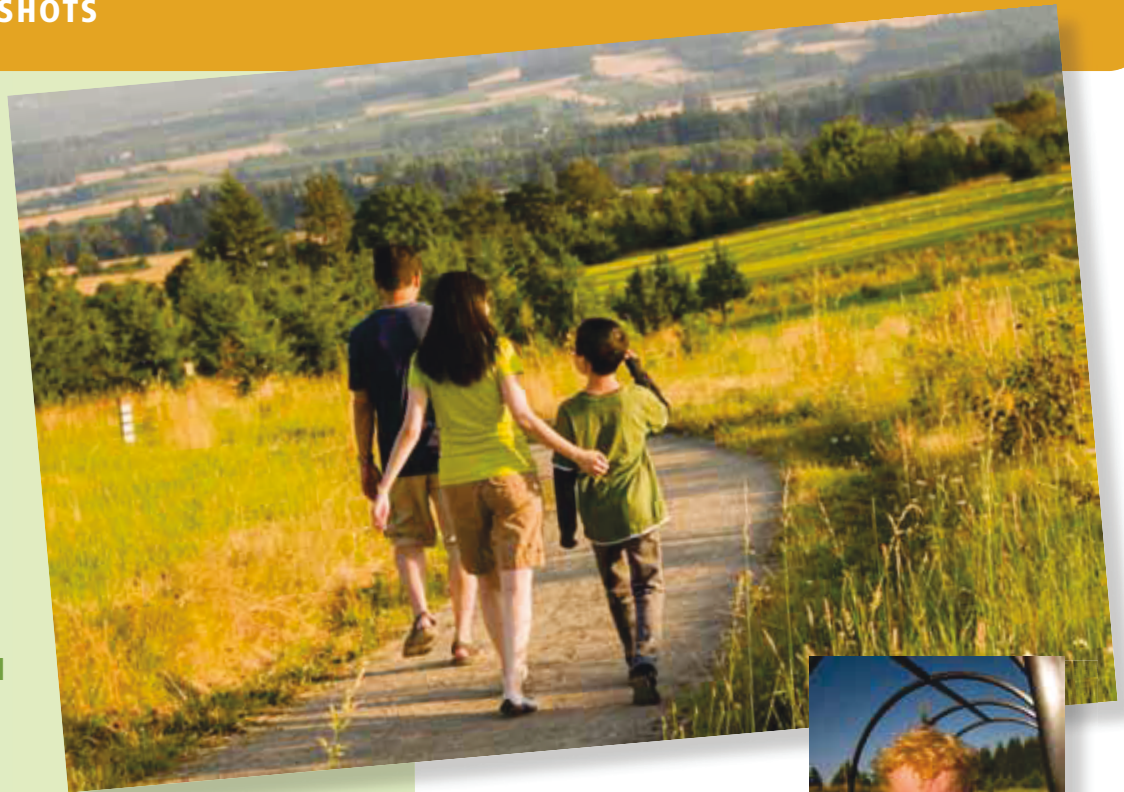


Chehalem Ridge restoration walk Saturday, Oct. 6

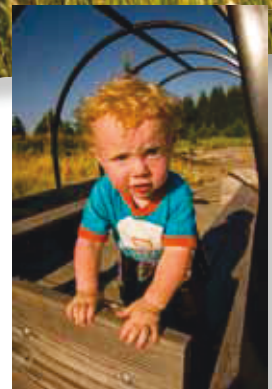
Chehalem Ridge is not yet open to the public but you can be one of the first to explore newly thinned sections in Metro's 1,200-acre Chehalem Ridge Natural Area, and witness the transition of a timber crop into a diverse, mature forest. Find out more in the calendar on page 13 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/calendar.

Explore, restore, come back for more

This summer, thousands of people visited or volunteered in Metro's parks and natural areas. They hiked, biked, spent time with their families and enjoyed a little peace and quiet. And some worked a few hours, too, to keep our natural areas healthy and thriving. Were you out there? Check out our summer snapshots and see if we caught your favorite spot.



Families make memories at Cooper Mountain Nature Park near Beaverton, one of three major regional parks opened by Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program. Nestled at the junction of suburban neighborhoods and rural landscapes, Cooper Mountain offers visitors 3.5 miles of trails through rare habitats.



A towering oak at the 250-acre Graham Oaks Nature Park signals the past – and the future. With young oak trees growing bigger every year, the park will someday look like the oak woodlands that Native Americans likely found here hundreds of years ago. (Read about Metro's work to restore oak habitat on page 4.)



A cyclist takes a break from a ride on the Tonquin Trail, which will someday stretch 22 miles, to enjoy the air and the view at Metro's Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville. A decade of restoration at Graham Oaks has helped create healthy habitat for native birds and mammals – and a learning laboratory for human visitors.



Metro naturalist Dan Daly explores Oxbow Regional Park with students from Project YESS, an education and workforce program at Mt. Hood Community College that helps young people prepare for the GED, develop job search skills and transition to college or advanced training opportunities. In a typical year, 14,000 people across the region participate in Metro-sponsored conservation education programs, including school field trips, public tours and events, special group programming and volunteer naturalist interactions. Thousands more people, young and old, experience Metro properties through partner-led conservation education programs.



Oregon Zoo day camp kids help remove the invasive knapweed before it goes to seed at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. Volunteers around the region help take care of natural areas by planting trees, pulling ivy and doing other important work to preserve these natural areas.



A great blue heron scopes out a sheltered spot at Metro's Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. At nearly 2,000 acres, Smith and Bybee is the largest protected wetlands within a city in the U.S.



Blue Lake Regional Park is one of the region's most visited parks, loved for its easy access to cool summer fun and picnicking for the thousands of families who visit the park each year.

Get out there!

Fall is a great time to enjoy the region's special places. Check out a list of guided adventures on page 13 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/calendar.

Or explore on your own. Discover places to go at www.oregonmetro.gov/placesandactivities.



Fanno Creek Trail: a true community connector



Fanno Creek in Tigard, in July when water flow is low.



The trail crosses wetlands near Tigard's library, east of Hall Boulevard.



After 35 years, much of the Fanno Creek Trail is complete through Washington County, offering a car-free route from Portland's Garden Home area through Beaverton and Tigard.

A rutted footpath once followed a creek through the Tualatin Valley, guiding generations of native peoples on migrations between the falls of the Willamette River and the Oregon coast. In 1847, immigrant Augustus Fanno followed this path. Finding rich soils along the unnamed creek, Fanno claimed the land. Later, railroad builders chose this time-tested route for a new kind of transportation corridor. By the 1970s, much of the rail line went unused – but the ancient pathway was not forgotten by the generations that followed.

A vision was born: a 15-mile walking and biking greenway to connect Portland to the cities on its southwestern flanks. Today the Fanno Creek Trail, despite some remaining gaps, does exactly that. Creating it has been like assembling a five-city jigsaw puzzle.

“The Fanno Creek Trail is much greater than the sum of its parts,” says Kathleen Brennan-Hunter, Metro’s Natural Areas Program director. “So many different organizations and agencies have brought pieces of it to the table.”

The plan started in 1975: a trail from the Willamette River in Portland to Fanno Creek’s confluence with the Tualatin River in Tualatin. Over the next quarter century, major sections were built in Beaverton and Tigard. Besides running across or near land owned by scores of public and private interests, the trail passes through five cities, two counties and many neighborhoods, across busy roads, and along a floodplain vital to the health of wildlife and water quality.

Since 1995, Metro has taken the lead in trail planning, land purchases and procurement of easements, using funds from two voter-approved bond measures. The cities of Beaverton, Durham, Portland, Tigard and Tualatin have secured permitting and funding, and designed and built trail segments; Clean Water Services has planted thousands of trees and restored sections of floodplain to a more natural hydrology. Other significant players include Washington County, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District plus other public agencies, private landowners, neighborhood groups, conservation organizations and resident volunteers.

The result: a trail used by an increasing number of commuters and recreational walkers and bicyclists.

One July morning, Susan Frost stopped along the trail to join two fellow walkers peering into summer-shallow Fanno Creek. “I’ve seen eagles, herons, a white egret, coyotes and even a honeybee swarm in an old oak,” she said. “I feel energized by the beauty on the trail. Every day I see something new.”

The greenway’s beauty – its creeks, wetlands and woodlands – is as multifaceted as the wildlife and humans that pass through it.

Closing gaps in the trail benefits water, wildlife and people

A regional trail isn’t truly regional until enough discrete segments have been connected. In 2012, the Fanno Creek Trail is reaching this benchmark, thanks to the commitment of local partners and community volunteers.

In June, a 0.6-mile segment opened in Beaverton, between Scholls Ferry and Denney roads. With two short on-road connections at either end, this segment closed a gap between Garden Home and the trail’s longest contiguous stretch: 3.8 miles from Denney Road in Beaverton to Woodward Park in Tigard. This segment, said Wendy Kroger, was 18 years in the making. Until 2011, she was the head of THPRD Trails Advisory Committee and one of the trail’s most vocal advocates.

“I was a cheerleader, a visionary, a polite prodger,” Kroger said. “Some advocated that this segment should run along Allen Boulevard. But we lobbied hard to have it run through the natural area, writing letters, testifying, speaking on behalf of permitting and funding requests.” That meant a lot more

property acquisitions and restoration work. But the result is stunning: an urban oasis with a trail winding artfully around native plants and creek bends under a canopy of tall firs.

In Tigard, two trail gaps are getting closer to construction and a new acquisition will offer a large piece of parkland along the trail. When new sections open, walkers and bikers will be off the streets and next to the creek.

Trail work is not all about closing gaps, Brennan-Hunter said – it's also improving Washington County's water quality. Since 2006, Clean Water Services has converted 800 feet of once-straightened stream channel in Beaverton's Greenway Park to 1,200 feet of meanders and floodplain, and planted 80,000 native plants.

"I feel energized by the beauty on the trail. Every day I see something new," said trail user Susan Frost.

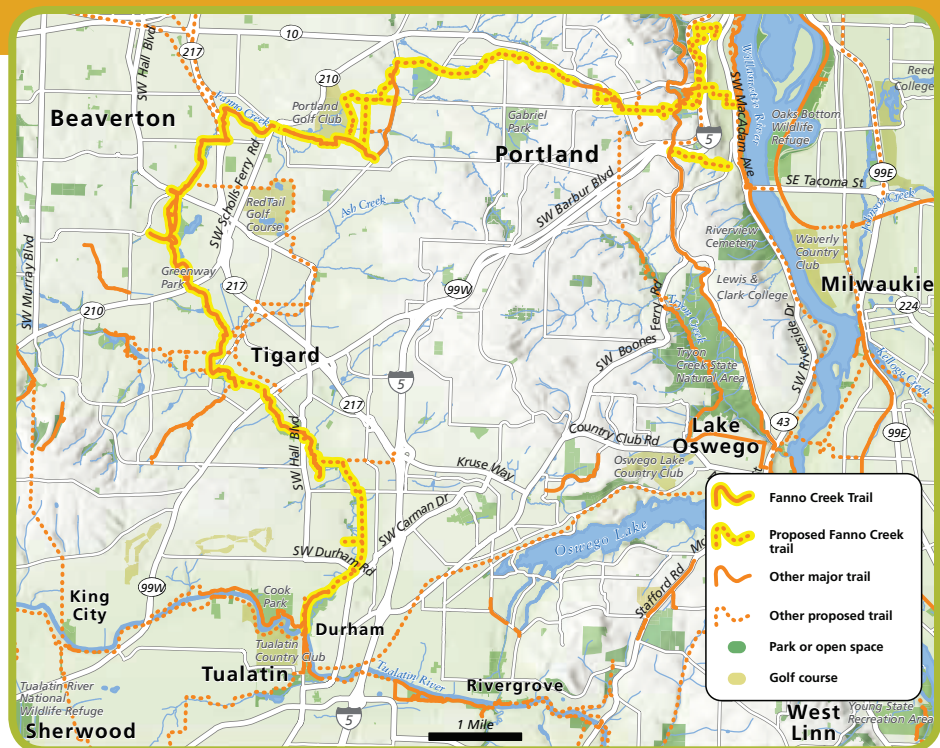
This focus on water quality and wildlife habitat was not a primary goal of trail planners, who in the 1980s and 1990s developed trail-side parklands in the style of traditional urban parks, with playgrounds, ball fields and picnic shelters. Joe Blowers is a middle school teacher and president of THPRD's board of directors. He and his students have been working on Fanno Creek tributaries since 1994. Blowers called out Englewood Park in Tigard as a place where growing knowledge about riparian habitat has changed greenway design.

"When it first opened, the park was grassy, with lawns mowed right up to the creek," Blowers said. "Today about 11 acres, especially in wet areas, are left unmown and have been replanted in native plants – swaths of marshy grassland, Ponderosa pines and willows."

The trail's newest section in Beaverton highlights state-of-the-art trail building and streamside restoration. As it returns to its more primeval roots, the greenway, once a near-monoculture of invasives, again offers mammals, amphibians and fish a refuge in an otherwise intensely urban setting.

Play, commute, connect

One trail element still missing is signage, making it a bit challenging to find some trail segments. Way-finding signs scheduled to be installed next year along the entire trail length



will help bicyclists and walkers navigate, particularly in the gaps.

"We're really close to completing the acquisitions, but there are still gaps over big streets," Brennan-Hunter said.

Most of the trail's street crossings have pedestrian-activated or painted crosswalks. But one of the busiest crossings still to address is at Hall Boulevard in Beaverton. There, a tunnel and bridge were rejected as too costly. People must leave the trail, walk to a stoplight and then return. The solution, due in 2013, will be a mid-block crossing, with a pedestrian-activated crosswalk that triggers a red light for cars.

It may take 10 more years to build out remaining gaps in the entire 15 miles of the trail, from the Willamette River to Tualatin. Even so, the trail is already a busy regional corridor that offers places to play, a beautiful commute, and connections to downtowns, neighborhoods and shopping.

As one cyclist pedaled the nearly flat length of the trail on a warm July day, she drafted off a dragonfly, heard freight trains wailing in the distance, nodded to countless other bikers and walkers, and tasted a few early berries along the way. The Fanno Creek Trail – a regional gem created by the vision and persistence of hundreds of people over nearly 40 years – combines community involvement, urban planning and Oregon beauty.



Fanno Creek Trail walking tour Saturday, Oct. 13

Explore the Fanno Creek Trail in Tigard, combining fitness and nature in a fun-filled morning with local author Laura O. Foster. Learn about the creek's past, and efforts to protect it for decades to come. Find out more in the calendar on page 14 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/calendar.



Salmon homecoming at Oxbow

Oct. 13, 14 and 20, 21

Spicy scents of autumn trees, giant golden leaves on maples and the silvery chatter of American dipper in the river. These are the smells, sights and sounds of Oxbow Regional Park in the autumn. Witness the return of wild salmon to one of the Pacific Northwest's premier rivers – the glacier-fed Sandy – just 45 minutes from downtown Portland. On the second and third weekends in October, enjoy viewing salmon on both Saturdays and Sundays.

On Saturdays, learn about fungus in a mushroom class in the ancient forest or take part in a rafting trip on the Sandy River to see the fish up close. Sunday will feature a guided tour of a salmon restoration project at Happy Creek. See schedule on this page for full details. Programs are free with a \$5 parking fee per vehicle and registration is not required (except for the rafting trip). Leave pets at home. For more information, call 503-797-1650 option 2.

Salmon viewing 11 to 3:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

Naturalists are on hand at the river's edge to help spot spawning salmon and interpret their behavior and life cycle. Special salmon-viewing glasses are available on loan. Salmon viewing proceeds rain or shine. The trail is unpaved and fairly level; wear good walking shoes. Inquire at the entry booth for starting location of the salmon viewing then follow the signs to the salmon! Suitable for all ages.

Beginning mushroom classes

2 to 4 p.m. Saturdays only

Celebrate the abundance of fall by exploring the incredible diversity of fungi in Oxbow's ancient forest. In this beginners mushroom class learn the basics of mushrooms and other fungi and how to go about identifying this complicated group of strange and fascinating life forms. This hands-on introduction will get you started identifying mushrooms and deepen your appreciation of



the amazing variety of shapes, colors, textures and smells that make these life forms so intriguing. Suitable for adults and children age 12 and older. Meet at Alder Shelter (group picnic area A) at 1:45 p.m.

Happy Creek salmon restoration walk

2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 14 only

How do endangered young salmon find food and refugia from floods and predators? Join Russ Plaeger from the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council to learn the science behind a side channel restoration project at Oxbow's Happy Creek that will create deep pools, bubbling riffles and plenty of places to hide for juvenile Chinook, Coho and Steelhead. Learn about the characteristics of good habitat and

get some tips on native plants and salmon-friendly practices that can be implemented where you live. Suitable for adults and children age 8 and older. Meet at Alder Shelter (group picnic area A) at 1:45 p.m.

Salmon on the Sandy River rafting trip

10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 20 only
Northwest River Guides and Metro have teamed up to provide a rafting adventure on the lower Sandy River (Class 1+, moving water and riffles, no rapids). See spawning Chinook salmon from the raft as you learn about their incredible journey and life cycle. Travel through the ancient forest of Oxbow Regional Park and past the ghostly remains of a buried forest. This 4-hour float starts and ends at Dabney State Park and includes equipment rental, instruction and shuttle to the launch site. Snack provided, bring a sack lunch. Cost is \$45 per adult, \$30 per child under 12 (must be 8 years old to attend); all minors must be accompanied by an adult. Advanced registration required. For more information or to register, call 503-772-1122 or visit www.northwestriverguides.com.

Find your next adventure

If you've ever biked along a local trail, played with your kids in the neighborhood park, gone for a hike in Forest Park, or relaxed on a bench beside a nearby river or lake; then you've experienced The Intertwine. It's our region's network of parks, trails and natural areas.

Walk, hike, bike, bird, paddle, play... enjoy the wide variety of adventure possibilities right outside your door.

Discover the region's best places to play and check out community classes, walks, tours and other events led by local leaders, naturalists and area residents on The Intertwine's searchable, interactive map and easy-to-use calendar.

Your portal to nature in the city: www.TheIntertwine.org



Fall calendar

How to register for Metro nature activities

You can register and pay online for Metro activities. Go to Metro's online calendar, find your event by searching or browsing, and follow the instructions.


www.oregonmetro.gov/calendar

For questions or to register by phone, call 503-797-1650 option 2.

Native Plant Center volunteer ventures

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays, Sept. 8 and 22, Oct. 6 and 20, Nov. 3 and 17, and Dec. 8 and 15


Volunteer at Metro's Native Plant Center in Tualatin and help care for the rare native seeds, bulbs and plants that support regional restoration projects. Fall activities include harvesting and cleaning native seeds, planting native seed and plugs for prairie habitat seed production, and harvesting bulbs for restoration plantings. No experience necessary. Gloves, tools, water and snack provided. Advance registration required; call 503-797-1653. *Metro*

 by arrangement



Volunteers spent a sunny July afternoon collecting native camas seed at Clear Creek Natural Area. The seed will go to Metro's Native Plant Center in Tualatin, which provides an essential supply of rare native seeds and plant stock to support Metro's restoration projects.

Big zoo experiences for little ones

Zoo Experiences are two-hour morning classes that offer hands-on activities for children between 3 and 8 years old and adults. Each class is tailored for a specific age range and includes a featured tour of at least one zoo exhibit, a story, craft and snack. Many include an animal visitor! The cost for one child with adult is \$29; discounts apply to Oregon Zoo members. For more information and to view the full schedule, visit www.oregonzoo.org/events. 

Hiding in plain sight
10 a.m. to noon Saturday,
Sept. 22 | Ages 5-6

Cougars and bobcats
10 a.m. to noon Saturday,
Oct. 13 | Ages 7-8

Animal tracking workshop at Oxbow
10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday,
Sept. 22

Oxbow Regional Park is rich in tracks at this time of year, when mink, beaver, otter and black bear often leave clear footprints in the sand. Learn to read the ground like a book. Metro naturalist and tracker Dan Daly introduces you to basic track identification and interpretation, and the stealth skills needed to watch wildlife up close. Suitable for adults and children 10 and older. Bring water and a snack and meet at the floodplain parking area. Registration and payment of \$11 per adult or family

required in advance; see this page for instructions. There is a \$5 parking fee per vehicle payable at the park. *Metro*

Willamette Narrows kayak trip

8 a.m. to noon Saturday,
Sept. 29

South of West Linn, the Willamette River flows through a stretch of cliffs and rocky islands called the Willamette Narrows – a perfect place to explore by kayak. Join Metro's science team and eNRG Kayaking on this half-day paddling expedition, which introduces you to Metro's restoration work in the Narrows. The area can feel remote; it's home to deer, coyote, frogs, osprey, owls, heron and songbirds. All minors must be accompanied by an adult (no children under 12). Expect Class 1 river conditions – moving water, riffles and no rapids. \$25 per person; kayak provided with registration; see this page for instructions. Details will follow registration. If you have questions, call 503-797-1545. *Metro*

Family Nature Explorers – Discover Clear Creek Natural Area

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday,
Sept. 29

Clear Creek Natural Area is a 580-acre jewel not yet open to the public, but you and your family can have a behind-the-scenes tour now with a Metro naturalist. There's plenty to discover in this large and diverse natural area. Explore the rolling hills and prairies – and Clear Creek – for interesting plants and animals and climb on a real beaver dam. The program covers specific topics but be ready to explore any cool nature experience. Some walking off trails. Family Nature Explorers programs are for parents and children 4 years or older. Advance registration and payment of \$11 per family required; see this page for instructions. Details will follow registration. *Metro*

Chehalem Ridge restoration walk

9 a.m. to noon Saturday,
Oct. 6

Perched above the town of Gaston, Metro's 1,200-acre Chehalem Ridge Natural Area is a majestic place – but it's also a work in progress. Be one of the first to explore newly thinned sections of this signature natural area, where Metro is helping transition a timber crop into a diverse, mature forest. Along the way, you might hear bird calls or spot a glistening Cascade peak in the distance. Be prepared to walk three miles at a moderate pace, including uneven terrain off the main path. Free, but registration is required; see this page for instructions. Details will follow registration. If you have questions, call 503-797-1545. *Metro*

Ancient forest mushroom class

2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7

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 discusses mushroom classification and edibility, and then participants gather, identify and compare specimens. Beginning and experienced "shroomers" ages 12 and older are welcome. Bring your own mushroom specimens for ID. Meet at Alder Shelter (picnic area "A"). Registration and payment of \$11 per adult or family required in advance; see this page for instructions. There is a \$5 parking fee per vehicle payable at the park. *Metro*

Get friendly with plant families

1 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7

Have you ever wished you knew the names of trailside wildflowers? If so, this class at Cooper Mountain Nature Park is for you. Plant families are key for flower identification, and autumn is the perfect time to begin this study as you can browse field

Nature University

Discover the naturalist in you!



Every year thousands of children and adults visit Metro's parks and natural areas for school field trips and summer programs. Volunteer naturalists make these wonderful experiences possible by working with Metro staff naturalists to lead these activities and programs.

If you love nature, enjoy working with children and have access to personal transportation, consider becoming a

volunteer naturalist by attending Nature University. No special experience is required but a background in natural history and working with groups is helpful. At Nature University, you receive the training needed to become a qualified and confident Metro volunteer naturalist.

Nature University is a 12-week training course where volunteers are taught time-honored techniques of nature


observation, principles of place-based education, and how to lead Metro's established programs at Oxbow Regional Park and Smith and Bybee Wetlands. Students learn about common wildlife and plants, the ecology of wetlands and ancient forests, and effective teaching techniques.

Nature University classes will meet in 2013 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesdays, Jan. 22 through April 8 at

different locations. There is some homework between class meetings. In exchange for this unique training, graduates are expected to provide a minimum of 40 hours of service within the first year, which is about 10 school field trip programs. Expectations include availability to help with class field trips during school hours in the fall and spring and on some weekdays or weekends in the summer.

Enrolling in the class of 2013

More information and application materials are available at www.oregonmetro.gov/natureuniversity. You may also send email to sandra.jamison@oregonmetro.gov or call 503-972-8543. Completed applications must be received by Friday, Nov. 2, 2012.

guides all winter in preparation for spring. Dissect flowers, dive into books and practice sketching and journaling plants. Plant lists for Cooper Mountain, resources for further study, and hot tea and snacks provided. Suitable for adults and youth 16 and older. Children must be registered and accompanied by a registered adult. \$8 per person, with advance registration required; call Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District at 503-629-6350. *Metro and THPRD* 

Fanno Creek Trail walking tour

9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 13

Explore the Fanno Creek Trail in Tigard, combining fitness and nature in a fun-filled morning with great views of the creek as it meanders through three city parks and other natural areas. Enjoy the area's beauty and see the habitat that is home to birds, fish and other critters – and learn how Metro and its partners have worked together to bring this vision to life. Local author Laura O. Foster gets you up to speed

on the creek's past, as well as efforts to protect it for decades to come. Meet at the Tigard Public Library at 8:45 a.m. Free, but registration is required; see page 13 for instructions. If you have questions, call 503-797-1545.

Metro 

Mount Talbert Nature Park walk

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 27

Explore the trails and discover the plants and animals that live on the largest undeveloped lava butte in northern Clackamas County. Especially interesting this time of year is the variety of colorful fungi along the trail. Discuss basic mushroom identification and bring binoculars or borrow a pair on site for bird watching. The trail is steep and uneven in places. Suitable for adults and children 10 and older. Advance registration and payment of \$5 per adult (18 and older) is required in advance; call North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District at 503-794-8092. *Metro and NCPRD*

Thanksgiving walk at Oxbow

10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18

Take time to celebrate the simple gifts of nature at Oxbow Regional Park with Metro naturalist Dan Daly and Terry Kem from Deerdance School. While walking along the Sandy River, open your senses and notice how wildlife responds to the changing season. Then gather around the campfire circle as naturalists share the "Thanksgiving Address" passed down by the Iroquois Nation. Hot drinks provided. Consider bringing a sack lunch for after the program. Suitable for adults and families. Meet at the boat ramp at 10:15 a.m. Free, but registration is required in advance; see page 13 for instructions. There is a \$5 parking fee per vehicle. *Metro*



Unless otherwise stated, Metro's family pricing is for two or more adults from the same household. Free for children under 18.

Cancellation policy Metro's program fees are nonrefundable. If you must cancel a registration, you may transfer credit to another class upon request.

No dogs policy Due to a conflict with wildlife, dogs are not allowed at Metro parks or natural areas.

Get out there!

Blue Lake Regional Park

20500 NE Marine Drive, Fairview
503-665-4995

Oxbow Regional Park

3010 SE Oxbow Parkway, east of
Gresham
503-663-4708

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

5300 N. Marine Drive, Portland
503-797-1650

Mount Talbert Nature Park

10695 SE Mather Road, Clackamas
503-742-4353

Cooper Mountain Nature Park

18892 SW Kemmer Road, Beaverton
503-629-6350

Metro's Natural Techniques Garden

6800 SE 57th Ave., Portland
503-234-3000

Graham Oaks Nature Park

11825 SW Wilsonville Road, Wilsonville
503-797-1545

Oregon Zoo

4001 SW Canyon Road, Portland
www.oregonzoo.org
503-226-1561



Together, we're making a great place



Metro works with communities in the Portland metropolitan area to create a vibrant, sustainable region for all.

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

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Join Metro's online
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GreenScene: Your guide to great places and green living.

About Metro

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

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

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Metro | *Making a great place*

On the cover

Summer greens the trail at Cooper Mountain Nature Park (photo by C. Bruce Forster).

Photos

Unless noted, photos provided by Bruce Forster Photography or Fred Joe Photography, or courtesy of Metro staff.

If you have a disability and need accommodations, call 503-972-8543, 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 (7433) or www.trimet.org

To be added to the GreenScene mailing list or to change your mailing information, call 503-797-1650 option 2.

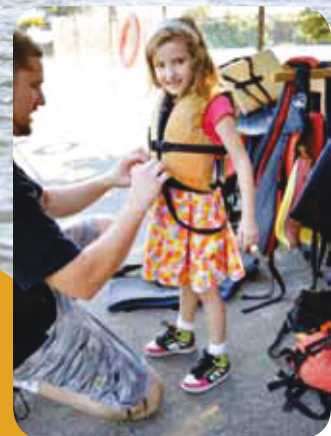
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Tell Metro what you think.

Learn more on page 2 or visit www.oregonmetro.gov/nature.

