

**Summary Meeting Notes  
Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee  
January 25, 2005**

**In attendance:**

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|----------------------|---|
| Patt Opdyke, Chair * | North Portland Neighborhoods              |
| Troy Clark *         | Portland Audubon Society                  |
| Larry Devroy *       | Port of Portland                          |
| Brenda Hanke *       | St. Johns Neighborhood Assn               |
| Nancy Hendrickson *  | Portland Bureau of Environmental Services |
| Jim Morgan *         | Metro                                     |
| Jim Sjulín *         | Portland Bureau of Parks                  |
| Dale Svart *         | Friends of Smith & Bybee Lakes            |
| Bill Egan            | Oregon Bass & Panfish Club                |
| Elaine Stewart       | Smith & Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area Manager |
| Paul Vandenberg      | Metro Solid Waste & Recycling             |
| Pat Sullivan         | Metro Regional Parks & Greenspaces        |

\* denotes voting SBLMC member

**Introductions**

Introductions included new member to the Committee Larry Devroy of the Port of Portland.

**Consideration of December 7, 2004 meeting notes**

Two amendments were made to the meeting notes: 1) Hanke requested that the notes include her statements that the St. Johns NA does not support Metro's "no pets" policy for Smith-Bybee, and 2) Svart requested that the notes include his statements that the Friends organization does not support kiosks, interpretive displays or other constructed elements within the Smith-Bybee area boundary. The meeting notes were approved as amended. (Five in favor, none in opposition and two abstentions – Troy Clark and Larry Devroy)

**Trails Feasibility Study**

The Management Committee reviewed the trails feasibility study progress and its own recommendations. The committee then decided whether or not to make additional recommendations or comments to Metro.

Elaine Stewart began the process by providing some background on the trails feasibility study. The main goal of the study is to examine potential alignments and to gather pertinent facts for evaluating each of the potential trail segments. Maps of the alternative trail alignments were displayed for the committee's reference.

Included in the display were existing trail sections at North Marine Drive, Peninsula Crossing Trail, and the stretch of the Slough Trail that was recently completed by the Port of Portland as part of the Rivergate consent decree work. In the feasibility study, several potential routes to connect these existing sections were evaluated. Only one trail segment was completely eliminated and that was the Columbia Boulevard segment which was not wide enough along parts of it to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle lanes.

A copy of a letter dated April 11, 2003 from the Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee to David Bragdon was distributed in which a recommendation was made for a trail alignment onto and around the St. Johns Landfill connecting to the community of St. Johns. There was also a recommendation for a feasibility study be done to determine whether a trail segment is necessary and feasible between the landfill and N. Portland Road (Peninsula Crossing Trail) and what alignment it should follow. Stewart pointed out that Metro's feasibility study implemented this recommendation, however, Metro did not include a "no-build" option.

Stewart led the committee through the following process: looking at the evaluation process used by the technical working group convened for the feasibility study, looking at the four alignments that the technical working group forwarded for further review and consideration by the Metro Council, and deciding whether the Management Committee will provide further comment to Metro.

The technical working group and the consultants worked through dozens of criteria and rated each of the potential trail segments against those criteria. The technical working group included members representing the Management Committee, the 40-Mile Loop Land Trust, the St. Johns Neighborhood Association, Metro's Solid Waste & Recycling Dept., Metro's Parks and Greenspaces Dept., Portland Parks, and the Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes. Elaine briefed the committee on the represented groups' perspectives.

Friends of S & B Lakes did not feel that the trails should be considered in isolation; they wanted the larger perspective to be considered in looking at the overall alignment issue. They feel paddling is the best way to see the wildlife area and that there are existing viewpoints at the canoe launch and the viewing blinds. The only trail need is to somehow connect the Port Trail over to Peninsula Crossing. They Friends were concerned about sensitive habitat and especially concerned about the south side of Smith Lake and its importance as a wildlife corridor. They also thought that Metro did not have adequate resources to manage additional public access.

St. Johns Neighborhood Association's greatest concern is access, concern about whether Metro is going to begin to charge fees to the site, and about the permissibility of bicycling and fishing. Their desire is for good access from the neighborhoods onto the landfill, good connection to the Port's recently completed slough trail segment and to Peninsula Crossing Trail. Ideally, that access would be multi-modal. A perimeter trail going around the landfill would be acceptable; they preferred going through the ash grove on the south of Bybee Lake but would not insist on disrupting sensitive habitat. Any segment would be acceptable as long as it provided good access from Chimney Park into the wildlife area and multi-modal trail connections.

The City of Portland commented on the three components of a trail most important to them: 1) connection to Kelley Point Park, 2) access to St. Johns neighborhood and 3) and a slough trail / connection along the slough. The City considered impacts to the ash grove area would be too great, preferring a route that would go around the north side of the landfill. They also prefer a multi-modal route that would connect into the neighborhood and would consider putting some kind of a placeholder trail segment along the slough, but would not build it if it would be too close to the eagle or heron nests. They prefer a multi-modal trail on the south side of the slough but realize that it may take years to negotiate an alignment through private property.

40-Mile Loop Land Trust's first preference was an alignment through the ash forest, along the east side of the landfill, and along the south side of Smith Lake. The ability to see views from various vantage points is important to this group. Neighborhood connections were very important, including those to Peninsula Crossing, to N Marine Drive and to Delta Park.

Metro's recommended alignment passes through the ash forest, along the east side of the landfill, into the neighborhood, and over to Peninsula Crossing via Fessenden or Smith. The ideal situation, according to Metro, would not be to place trails into either of the habitat patches (ash forest or south side of Smith Lake), but Metro felt the above-described route would be a compromise to all of the interests involved. Metro also considered a trail near either the eagle or heron nests was not the best option. Metro wants to forward an option that doesn't involve a bridge over North Slough, because the bridge may not be feasible.

After sifting through the input from the various member groups, the technical working group settled on four possible trail alignments to be advanced for further consideration.

**1) South slough alignment** – crosses to the landfill via a bridge over North Slough, traverses the landfill's north and east sides on the existing perimeter road, crosses Columbia Slough via the landfill bridge, follows the slough upstream to N Portland Rd., crosses the slough again at the N Portland Rd Bridge and connects to Peninsula Crossing. There would also be a neighborhood connection going at least to Pier Park.

It was noted that in every alignment still under consideration there is going to be recommended a connection that goes at least from the landfill to Chimney Park.

**2) Landfill alignment** – crosses to the landfill via a bridge over North Slough, traverses the landfill's north and east sides on the existing perimeter road, crosses Columbia Slough via the landfill bridge, goes into the neighborhood via Chimney and Pier parks and would go either via Fessenden or Smith street to connect with the Peninsula Crossing Trail.

**3) South Lake Shore alignment** – crosses to the landfill via a bridge over North Slough, traverses the landfill's north and east sides on the existing perimeter road, makes the same connection into the neighborhood. This alignment differs from the "south slough" by connecting with the Peninsula Crossing Trail via the south side of Smith Lake (= north side of slough).

**4) Ash Grove alignment** – this alignment goes through the ash grove, crosses the water control structure, traverses the east side of the landfill, crosses Columbia Slough via the landfill bridge, goes into the neighborhood via Chimney and Pier parks and would go either via Fessenden or Smith street to connect with the Peninsula Crossing Trail.

Stewart noted that as the discussion progressed among the members of the technical working group, there seemed to be near consensus on the "south slough" route; six out of the seven representatives would have been satisfied with that alternative.

Morgan mentioned that for a number of years, a significant number of bird surveys had been conducted of both Smith and Bybee Lakes and a great deal of important data had been collected. Much of the wildlife, particularly shorebirds and waterfowl, use the south side of Smith Lake extensively. He did not see that reflected, however, in the materials reviewed by the technical committee. It would seem like a good use of resources to inject that data into the equation when weighing the pros and cons of trail alignment. Stewart responded that much of the data was given to the consultants and it should be included in their final report.

Svart added, for the record, that he has some of the same concerns as Morgan. He knew all the data had been collected over the years and would like to see all that data evaluated.

Vandenberg said that any trail alignment which is limited to the perimeter road and secured by fencing would be acceptable. If any of these alignments is taken to the Metro Council, there should be qualifying language with respect to the North Slough bridge that further study is required because of uncertainties regarding bank stability and groundwater movement.

Brenda Hanke echoed the summation described by Stewart earlier as to the most important criteria to the St. Johns Neighborhood – access. This has been noted in the record. The South Lake Shore alignment may be the most appealing to neighborhood residents but if the alignment selected has access through Pier Park and Chimney Park that would likely be adequate.

Patt Opdyke expressed her continuing concern about any northern alignment of the trail because of the proximity to Bybee Lake and she would like to think something could be created on the western side which would be the original alignment. If the landfill could not sustain the weight of a bridge perhaps there could be a bridge that goes from the trailhead over to BES property. To Patt, it's very important to protect Bybee Lake; she pointed out that the Natural Resources Management Plan calls out Bybee Lake for added protection.

Moving forward, Sjulín felt it was important to vote on what had been presented. Morgan stated that it was important to recognize and to have on record that the committee is seeking alternatives because there are sentiments that even the preferred alignment is a compromise and that even the alignment that seems to have the most support is difficult to accept.

**ACTION ITEM: Decision whether to make recommendations and/or comments to Metro.**

It was moved and seconded that the committee endorse the South Slough alignment as the preferred alignment of the four options.

Discussion on the motion: the question was raised as to whether there should be an amendment to the original motion that if the footing of the bridge onto St. Johns Landfill is not feasible, the route to the west be considered. There was no further support expressed for that amendment. A point of clarification was then made that the motion that was moved and seconded contained no "what ifs". If, therefore, that alignment is not feasible, the committee will consider another recommendation.

The motion passed. Five were in favor: Sjulín, Clark, Svart, Devroy, and Morgan; two were in opposition: Hendrickson and Hanke. The Chair abstained.

Additional comments:

Bill Egan suggested the Metro staff recommend to the Oregon State Marine Board that electric motor powered craft only be allowed in the North Slough from the junction with the Columbia Slough.

An open house for the Trails Feasibility Study will be held on Feb. 16 from 4:30 to 7:30 pm at the City of Portland's Water Pollution Control Laboratory in North Portland. Flyers will be sent to committee members and interested persons in the next few days.

The meeting was adjourned.