
Coordinated by:

**Smith & Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area
Management Committee**

Patt Opdyke, Chair

Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232
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Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 26, 2004

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Metro Regional Center, 600 N E Grand Ave., Room 270
Portland, Oregon 97232

AGENDA

Welcome, introductions	(Opdyke)	5:30 - 5:35 pm
Review Sept. & Oct. meeting notes	(Opdyke)	5:35 – 5:40 pm
St. Johns Landfill future use discussion	(Opdyke/ Stewart)	5:40 – 6:20 pm
Updates	(All)	6:20 – 6:30 pm

**Summary Meeting Notes
Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee
October 26, 2004**

In attendance:

Patt Opdyke, Chair *	North Portland Neighborhoods
Troy Clark, Vice Chair *	Portland Audubon Society
Nancy Hendrickson *	Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
Ray Piltz *	St. Johns Neighborhood Assn.
Dale Svart *	Friends of Smith & Bybee Lakes
Jim Sjulín *	Portland Bureau of Parks
Elaine Stewart	Smith & Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area Manager
Paul Vandenberg	Metro Solid Waste & Recycling
Pat Sullivan	Metro RP&G

* denotes voting SBLMC member

Consideration of previous meeting notes

As a quorum was not present at the September meeting, the notes from both the August 24 and September 28, 2004 meetings were considered. Both were approved as submitted. Due to their absence from the September meeting, both Jim Sjulín and Ray Piltz abstained from that vote.

St. Johns Landfill future use discussion

A listing of "Criteria for Landfill Uses" was compiled by Elaine Stewart and Nancy Hendrickson from previous management committee meeting discussions. **(See attached.)** The list was distributed to committee members prior to this meeting with a request to review it and bring comments for tonight's discussion. Jim Sjulín, who was unable to attend the September meeting, e-mailed his thoughts about future landfill uses. Those appear either in the "Brainstorm List of Possible Beneficial Uses" that was included in the Sept. notes or in the "Criteria for Landfill Uses." One omission from Jim's notes was research activities which will be added to the next version of such lists.

Committee discussion included the following:

- Ray Piltz reported that he presented the lists to the St. Johns Neighborhood Assn. Attendees were opposed to a complete prohibition of bicycles, and a couple of members were also opposed to prohibiting dogs.
- Current regulations against pets at all Metro facilities. Important to have very clear, consistent policy. Troy Clark would like to know what Metro policy is as it's viewed for the Management Area at Smith & Bybee Lakes. The committee can then determine whether to contest it, to recommend it be amended, to discuss it further or to agree to it.
- Habitat design/enhancement that discourages nuisance or alien species should be added to the list of activities that are encouraged.
- Describe fencing in the document— location, dimensions and wildlife passage.
- Non-natural resource related activities should not be encouraged.

- Human access to a certain degree to observe wildlife; possibility for spur(s) for viewing
- Working with two timelines.
 - Short one for Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study; list of beneficial uses for landfill is needed soon.
 - Longer-term timeline applies to reviewing the NRMP, where the SBLMC will consider more global aspects and broad principles.
- Support for keeping uses restricted at this time to a perimeter trail concept.
- Need to reformat the draft document.

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Next meeting

There was a consensus to continue meeting for an hour and to re-evaluate that as it becomes necessary. The next meeting is scheduled for December 7.

Evaluating Future Uses of the St. Johns Landfill

Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee, December 2004

Vision of future uses of the landfill: it is generally a natural meadow habitat, managed to target native species that require this quickly disappearing habitat for their survival such as Western Meadowlark and Northern Harrier. ~~Although creating a native prairie on the site is not realistic,~~ The landfill can accommodate many elements of prairie and savanna systems and provide valuable habitat for plants and animals that are disappearing from the Willamette Valley landscape. Public use is directed to areas and activities that support people's desire to enjoy the natural landscape and views, promote public safety, protect wildlife and its habitat and provide educational opportunities. The landfill cover and other environmental protection systems are well-maintained ~~and have to~~ minimize human and ecological risks on the landfill surface that are associated with the buried waste.

Criteria:

These points were used to guide whether disturbances would be encouraged or avoided:

- Noise level – noise affects visitors to the natural area as well as the wildlife that occurs there. Excessive noise detracts from a visitor's experience at Smith-Bybee. People come to enjoy nature and get away from the urban environment. Wildlife often requires low ambient noise to conduct its daily business, e.g., songbirds need to hear each other's songs and calls to find mates. Current noise levels from industrial activity, air traffic and other surrounding uses already exceed desired background levels at various times and locations. Additional noise from artificial sources is undesirable.
- Amount and type of development – most additional development within Smith-Bybee is to be ~~avoided~~ minimized. Development includes anything that cannot be classified as natural area vegetation, minor structures associated with an educational program (e.g., interpretive displays), or infrastructure required to manage the closed landfill. The geographic and visual impacts are important considerations in evaluating new development.
- Habitat continuity – habitat management should take advantage of the large blocks of contiguous habitat that are available at Smith-Bybee, including the landfill. Smaller, fragmented habitat patches have value for certain wildlife; however, many plants and animals suffer when their habitat is over-fragmented. Many of the latter species are in decline, and the landfill offers an opportunity to create, restore and/or protect habitat for sensitive, grassland-dependent species. Uses that increase the amount of habitat fragmentation or that disrupt habitat continuity are to be ~~avoided~~ minimized.
- Public access – Smith-Bybee is a valuable natural resource for the people of the Portland metropolitan area. Providing opportunities for people to enjoy the site is an important objective in managing Smith-Bybee. In order to conserve these cherished natural resource values and avoid "loving it to death", public access needs to be directed to some areas and restricted in others. Human activity – even simply walking through an area – may disturb wildlife, spread invasive plants and reduce habitat value. Much of Smith-Bybee should remain "off limits" to attract and provide habitat for plants and animals that

can spread into and be seen in public areas. Secure public access to the landfill offers a wildlife area experience, but with less disturbance to wildlife and habitat than may result from allowing public access to certain other parts of the wildlife area.

- Landfill operations – the landfill is actively managed by Metro, and closure operations are strictly regulated. There is considerable infrastructure on the site, including a multilayered cover system, collection systems for landfill gas, leachate, and stormwater, and a network of monitoring wells and piezometers. Landfill staff routinely inspect, maintain and repair all of these systems, and use the infrastructure for the routine environmental monitoring that is required by various permits. Public uses to be avoided are those that create uncontrolled risk of damage to infrastructure and interference with site management, and/or create unacceptable health and safety risks for visitors.

Activities to be Encouraged

These activities would be encouraged:

- Restoration-Enhancement and/or creation of native meadow/prairie, scrub/shrub, and savanna, riparian and wetland habitats.
- Increasing patch size and limiting “edge effects” of existing habitats.
- Habitat enhancement that discourages nuisance species.
- Monitoring and maintaining the landfill cover system, gas collection system, etc.
- Wildlife viewing.
- Environmental education, including public education regarding the landfill.
- Research related to the landfill, wildlife and plants.

Examples of disturbances that would be allowed include:

- A trail along the landfill’s perimeter, which may include a single loop or spur trail to a viewpoint, as outlined in the April 11, 2003 letter from the SBLMC to Metro Council President David Bragdon.
- Natural resource-related recreational activities that interact with the natural environment with minimal negative impact. Examples include walking, wildlife viewing, sightseeing, and fishing.
- Landfill management activities – Metro will seek ways to minimize mowing and other habitat-disturbing activities to the extent possible and practical.
- Grazing – as an alternative to mowing for maintaining appropriate landfill cover vegetation and supporting grassland habitat restoration.
- Habitat management, including but not limited to seeding and planting native vegetation and controlling exotic plants.
- Monitoring activities such as plant surveys and bird counts.
- Research activities related to landfill operations, habitat restoration, wildlife use, etc.
- Environmental education, including small kiosks, interpretive displays and guided field trips.
- Volunteer habitat stewardship activities.

Activities to be Discouraged

These activities would be discouraged:

- Activities that introduce excessive noise.
- Activities that require extensive and/or visually intrusive development.

- Activities that result in habitat fragmentation.
- Unrestricted human access to protected natural areas.
- Activities that disrupt or interfere with landfill operations.
- Recreational activities that are not related to natural resources.

Examples of disturbances to be avoided include:

- Motorized equipment of any kind such as model airplanes, mopeds, cars, motorcycles, amplified speech/music, etc. (Vehicles and equipment used by staff and contractors to maintain and repair the landfill and improve wildlife habitat are acceptable disturbances.)
- Discharge of firearms (e.g., hunting, target-shooting, paintball, laser-tag).
- Large tracts of intensively managed landscape that are not primarily wildlife habitat (e.g., ball fields, golf courses, archery ranges, etc.).
- Large tracts of development such as parking lots and large buildings.
- Development that includes the expansion of utilities such as electricity and water, unless that development is required for landfill closure operations and/or to improve wildlife habitat.
- Dogs and other pets – Metro’s current policy excludes pets, with the exception of special service dogs, from its parks and greenspaces. This policy should continue at the landfill.

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Examples of disturbances that could conceivably be mitigated include:

- Bicycles, scooters and other non-motorized vehicles – if there is a fence blocking access to off-trail areas and the fence’s construction allows target wildlife species to move as needed. Fencing would be necessary to control public access to landfill infrastructure, in order to protect health and safety, and to reduce risk of damage to the infrastructure.
- ~~Dogs and other pets on leashes or otherwise contained – if there is a fence blocking access to off-trail areas and the fence’s construction allows target wildlife species to move as needed.~~

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