

Metro | Agenda

Meeting: Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee (SBAC)
Date: Tuesday, November 29, 2016
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center – Room 270
600 NE Grand Ave, Portland Oregon 97232

5:30 p.m.	Welcome and introductions	All
5:35 p.m.	Approve Sep. 2016 meeting minutes	Troy Clark
5:40 p.m.	Planning projects update	Dave Elkin Mel Huie
6:10 p.m.	General updates	Troy Clark
6:20 p.m.	Hydrology updates: channel dredging, water control structure, and restoration work	Jonathan Soll
6:50 p.m.	Dog policy position statement	Troy Clark
7:25 p.m.	Goals and next meeting agenda	All
7:30 p.m.	Adjourn	

Upcoming SBAC meetings:

Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at Metro Regional Center
For agenda/schedule information, contact Christy Carovillano at 503.797.1629 or
christy.carovillano@oregonmetro.gov

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 **Metro | Minutes**

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee

November 29, 2016

Committee members in attendance

Troy Clark*Audubon Society of Portland (Chair)
Carrie Butler*Port of Portland (Vice Chair)
Bill Briggs*ORRCO
Emily Roth*Friends of Smith & Bybee Lakes
Jennifer Devlin*City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services
Jonathan Soll*Metro, Parks and Nature
Pam Arden*40 Mile Loop Trust
Patt Opdyke*North Portland Neighbors
Sara Henderson*St. Johns Neighborhood Association

Others in attendance

Christy CarovillanoMetro, Parks and Nature
Dave ElkinMetro, Parks and Nature
Mel HuieMetro, Parks and Nature

Committee members not in attendance

Adele Rife*Columbia Slough Watershed Council
Don VandeBergh*Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Eric Tonsager*Oregon Bass and Panfish Club

*Denotes voting Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee member.

WELCOME

Approval of the September 27, 2016 meeting minutes was delayed until later in the meeting to allow more time for committee members to arrive.

PLANNING PROJECTS UPDATE

Dave Elkin, a principal regional planner with Metro Parks and Nature, presented an update on work he has done to further investigate and scope out the prioritized projects for Smith and Bybee Wetlands from the Comprehensive Natural Resource Plan (CNRP). Dave then joined Mel Huie, another Metro Parks and Nature principal regional planner, in jointly providing an update on the Columbia Boulevard bridge project.

Public access improvements

Viewing platform renovation

Dave spoke with Monty Woods, Metro's Interim Parks Operations Manager, about the potential for viewing platform renovations, and Monty's park rangers team is on board with the project, so Dave will move forward with additional planning on this project. Renovations will include replacement of the existing wood railing system with a metal railing system.

Additional seating

Dave shared the good news on this project that additional seating can be put in as necessary, specifically to meet ADA requirements for distances. He will put together a trail map to lay out where some of the seating might go (Turtle Turnout and other locations), and noted that the park rangers will be able to handle

installation and he will continue to look into some additional seating options which may include natural materials. Overall, it should be a fairly smooth process as Metro's review of the CNRP and permitting process allows the installation of seating for ADA improvements.

Signage upgrades

For the trail map kiosk, in regards to land use and permitting, as long as no additional area is disturbed, it can be replaced. The replacement can also be handled by the park rangers. Dave mentioned that updating the graphics can take some time, but he has the green light to go ahead and do it.

For the entrance sign, things are more difficult. The current Metro standard entrance sign is different from what is out at Smith and Bybee now, and replacing it would disturb additional area, so a new sign would need to be designed to fit old structure. Dave also said the PBOT right of way is not in the area of the entry sign and the sign cannot be moved to where it is. Emily Roth asked if the sign can go somewhere else, to which Dave replied that there are other potential solutions that can be looked at.

The parking lot signage was not in the original signage needs discussion, and Dave asked the committee if they also wanted that replaced. Troy said the no dogs signage in that area has been removed and definitely needs replacing, and the actual kiosk sign in parking lot is empty. Dave said he will look into replacing the kiosk in this area.

Improving ADA access to the Interlakes Trail

The restriping of former bus parking area can move forward in transitioning to a single ADA parking stall.

Interlakes Trail extension

Dave said for a successful trail extension project, he felt he would need to come back with a larger project proposal in the future. Troy Clark was hoping for more discussion on this project and asked if Dave can consider two to three different design options including cost estimates. Dave said based on the discussion at the last meeting, it sounded like there needed to be a larger conversation on the goals and objectives of this project that he would like to hear in order to inform his further scoping. Troy also asked about timing and when the committee can expect further news on the trail extension, and Dave responded that he will consider it in the fall. Troy closed out this topic by suggesting a site visit by committee in summer to look at various trail options.

Next Steps

Dave will begin the design for the viewing platform renovations, additional seating, signage upgrades and ADA parking stall this winter. Then, once the weather begins to dry up in spring or early summer, construction can move forward. Dave will continue to keep the committee updated on these projects including attending the January meeting to provide a progress report.

Emily asked where the funding for these projects will be coming from. Dave said he believes it will be the Smith and Bybee Fund, and not levy funds. Jonathan Soll said they can look into matching it one to one like they have done with the restoration projects and Troy asked if the committee can do anything in terms of influencing this. Jonathan will look further into this.

Columbia Boulevard bridge project

Mel and Dave are working together on the Columbia Boulevard bridge and St. Johns Prairie trail project. These two projects will be designed and constructed in parallel with each other (see maps [Attachments 1 and 2](#) for

details). The bridge project is planned to be constructed first and the St. Johns Prairie trail project immediately after.

About a month ago, federal funding was secured through ODOT to build the bridge over Columbia Boulevard which will allow people to get from the end of the new Pier Park bridge, through Chimney Park, over Columbia Boulevard and to St. Johns Prairie (yellow dotted line and circle on [Attachment 1](#)). There will be a lot of public outreach as well as significant design requirements involved in this project especially with the multiple and various landowners involved.

At this point, the project team has just been meeting to discuss the project as a whole and identify key issues. The current tentative timeline is to put out a request for proposals for design services in the spring or early summer and be under contract with a design firm by mid to late summer. The design phase should take approximately a year to 18 months, followed by construction which would last about year or more depending upon site conditions, with an estimated completion date in 2020. Once the bridge is constructed, construction will begin on the St. Johns Prairie trail; however, both projects will be combined for discussion and comment in public meetings.

The project area also has an active railroad line that cuts between the two BES owned properties that will have to be crossed as well. BES owns the road between their two properties in this area with an easement to a trucking line. Troy asked Jennifer Devlin about the BES owned "Triangle" property and whether BES was looking to get rid of it. Jennifer replied yes they would like to as there are many issues with it including potential contamination and an industrial zoning overlay. It was clarified that the new Columbia Boulevard bridge will be owned and maintained by Portland Parks.

Patt Opdyke asked about handicap access for the bridge. Dave said they will have to meet ADA requirements which have a 5% slope maximum, and with the bridge needing to be about 20 ft high, the ramps leading on and off will need to be about 450 ft on both sides to meet the requirements. Dave also noted that the land in the project area has soils that are compressed as they are loaded, which is a major issue for structural engineers.

The question was raised as to whether putting the trail and bridge in the current proposed location will conflict with any efforts regarding the streak horned lark. Jonathan said yes there is a high potential for conflict, but he also thinks it can be mitigated with a visual barrier. The topic of dogs was also brought up again since the Columbia Boulevard bridge will be landing in the Chimney Park dog park.

Sara Henderson asked if there was any idea yet how long Columbia Boulevard would be closed during construction. Mel said with previous similar bridge projects, such as the one over McLoughlin Boulevard, he doesn't recall the major roads needing to be closed at all and it could possibly be done overnight, but they will have to work with PBOT to determine this.

Troy said at the last meeting it was mentioned that there was the possibility of project plans going public next summer, and questioned whether this was still a reasonably accurate timeline. Dave said probably not, that it would most likely be closer to fall because ODOT's procurement process is longer than they originally thought.

Next Steps

Dave will provide another update at the January meeting.

GENERAL UPDATES

Troy Clark said Christian Gaston from Multnomah County reached out to him to say he still had not heard anything from their legal department on the status of Wapato and the good neighbor agreement, so there is nothing new to report. Troy will continue to keep his fingers on this so the committee knows what to expect.

Emily Roth asked whether the recent levy renewal means more money will be allocated to Smith and Bybee. Jonathan responded that he will discuss this during his restoration update.

The September 27, 2016 meeting minutes were approved as written.

HYDROLOGY AND RESTORATION UPDATES

Jonathan Soll provided an update on the various hydrology and restoration projects going on at Smith and Bybee Wetlands.

Hydrology updates

Metro is honing in on the preferred alternative for this project with OTAK, the consulting engineer company. The key design features Metro was looking for are: being able to draw down Smith Lake effectively in late summer, limiting tidal influence on Smith Lake, accommodating beaver and balancing the amount of dredging with having a channel that is functional in the present and has a reasonable life-expectancy. A range of options were developed and modeled and Metro and the consultants (OTAK) are narrowing in on something that may have more upfront costs, but limited long term maintenance. Metro staff believe that nutria rather than hydrology were primarily responsible for sediment in the channel so they hope that nutria control combined with good design will provide a reasonable long-term solution.

One new development Jonathan shared was in regards to the removal of all the dredged material. They have come up with an alternative that would avoid the expensive hauling of this material, and instead have it be spread to a number of other places on site to raise the surface elevation up to be more suitable for planting ash forest. This would allow for a more continuous ash forest that provides better habitat than the current smaller fragmented sections. Permitting agencies seem amenable to this proposal, and it would greatly reduce the cost of the project.

Jennifer Devlin asked if ash forest was called out in the CNRP as wanted and a desired future condition. Jonathan responded that they are actively restoring ash forest, and although raising the surface level is not specifically in the CNRP, it is ultimately reforestation, which is. He also added that Elaine Stewart, Metro's Smith and Bybee Wetlands lead scientist, thinks it will be great for the forested habitats and weaving them together.

Troy Clark mentioned that the channel is twice as wide as it was 25 years ago and is it possible to narrow it up again. Jonathan replied that it can be, but he doesn't know if the current plan being considered has an active narrowing component. He said the active channel itself would be narrowed, but there would still be upper lower benches. Jonathan also noted that the water control structure will have two tide gates when reengineered, and so they need to take full advantage of that by adapting the channel.

The question was asked whether the recent native plant establishment out in the wetlands will affect the sedimentation at all, to which Jonathan replied that he does think it will improve it because it will hold more. He added that the main problem with the channel came from the nutria, of which control is long term and ongoing, and he also feels the filling in of collapsed areas would not be an efficient use of money.

Jonathan said he should have a preferred alternative to present to the committee at the January meeting.

Carrie Butler asked for an update on the Corps of Engineers Rivergate Consent Decree funding proposal Metro submitted earlier in the year. Jonathan said they are getting close to having it go to Mikey Jones for comment. He would have 45 days to comment and Jonathan is hoping to have a firm answer by the January meeting because they would like to use these funds for the water management project.

Restoration updates

Metro planted approximately 125,000 bare roots in phase one of the sedge meadow restoration. Ash and shrub planting will be done in February 2017. Phase two of the prairie creation at St. Johns landfill recently seeded approximately 40 acres, but it was a tough year for seeding with the early rains.

Emily Roth inquired about the cottonwood trees amongst the Interlakes trail that seem to be dying off, and asked if Metro was planning on doing any replenishing of them or just relying on natural recruitment. She suggested that it might be nice to replenish them as they contribute to the signature character and environment of Smith and Bybee wetlands. Jonathan said he will follow-up with Elaine on this topic because he doesn't know and update the committee in January with what he learns.

Jonathan also provided an update on the Metro parks and natural areas levy which was recently renewed. He said they do intend to keep funding Smith and Bybee projects with the levy renewal, but they do not have a work plan for levy two yet, and will be taking the next year to complete it since the spending does not start for 20 months. Jonathan said they should be including the next phases of the landfill prairie creation, ash forest expansion, and sedge meadow restoration. He will keep the committee updated and plan to talk about phasing, what's next, and how much is expected to be spent at a future meeting. Jonathan also reiterated that he hopes there will be levy money to match the Smith and Bybee funds for the upcoming access projects. He said once they have a new planning manager again, they will have them come to discuss this at an upcoming meeting.

Finally, Jonathan provided an update on the replacement director search. Metro's COO has internal Parks and Nature short-term interims filling the position through the end of the year, then there will be a full interim director selected to carry the department through the hiring process, and they don't expect to have a full time person in the position until the end of June at the soonest.

Next Steps

Jonathan offered to share the document from OTAK that outlines the ten different alternatives for the channel management project, as well as the email chain about the general direction of the project with any committee member that was interested. Carrie and Jennifer said they would like to see them.

If selected by the January meeting, Jonathan will share the chosen preferred channel management alternative with the committee along with an update on the cottonwood trees from Elaine.

DOG POLICY POSITION STATEMENT

Metro has a history of providing an exemption to their no dogs policy for regional trails that go through their properties. Troy Clark has concerns about how an exemption on the planned regional trail at St. Johns Prairie may affect Smith and Bybee Wetlands, and so has met with all seven Councilors about keeping the no dogs policy in effect even once the regional trail is opened.

Troy has also drafted a letter to the Council ([Attachment 3](#)) stating his position that he hopes to have the committee review and vote on whether it should be sent as the committee's official position. He doesn't think it is quite time to send the letter yet, but also doesn't want to wait too long.

Pam Arden asked for clarification as to whether this is an issue mainly because of the trail going from Pier Park to the Chimney Park dog park and then on to St. Johns Prairie. Troy replied it would be an issue anyway, but with dog park there, it makes the issue even bigger and they need to think about what the presence of dogs will do with the birds who make their home in the area. Carrie Butler agreed but added that this is already an issue on the other side with the port trail.

Emily Roth asked what Troy heard from Councilors. Troy replied that six of the seven Councilors were very amenable but the seventh was not interested. He also said that Council President Tom Hughes felt the Council needed to meet to review all properties and determine which would allow dogs and which would not. Troy added that Mike Guebert from the landfill staff will be coming to January meeting to update the committee on landfill management and how he feels the trail will impact things.

As for the draft letter itself, the general consensus was agreement on the position but that adjustments would need to be made and Troy said he was happy to adjust the letter as recommended. Emily thought the important parts to emphasize were the impact on wildlife and the amount of waste that having a dog in a natural area will create, but also said a no dogs policy will be hard to enforce. Jonathan Soll followed up by saying that Cooper Mountain Nature Park is a great example of how enforcement can help to reduce the number of people bringing in dogs. He also said they could add to the letter that with the presence of dogs, the people who come to Smith and Bybee for a wildlife experience will have way less of that experience. Sara Henderson also said they should be sure to emphasize the uniqueness of Smith and Bybee Wetlands and how allowing dogs would drastically affect things there, especially with the proposed trail going right through the center of the site, and not along an edge.

Troy then reiterated that he is still not sure of the right timing for sending the letter if that is what is decided. Emily said it should be included when the Columbia Boulevard bridge has its public meetings. Troy agreed, but said for this to happen, Metro Council will need to decide on it before it goes to the public. Jonathan said he assumes there will be a trail master plan process that has various alternatives and that Council would ask the committee to approach this subject then. He encourages a preemptive strike, and suggested the committee ask Dave Elkin about master plan process plans.

Patt Opdyke weighed in and said in terms of political path, the committee and letter can help create a framework for the Council's discussion on this item so they are not a voice among many but more providing background and a historical base to inform them. She said Troy has set the stage by talking with the Councilors, and now the letter can reinforce this. She thinks January after it is voted on and finalized would be the appropriate time to send the letter since Dave mentioned fall for public outreach on the bridge.

A vote was taken on whether the committee would work on the letter and language in concept for further discussion at the next meeting. Pam said she would need to take the topic to the 40-mile Loop prior to voting, and so abstained. The vote was a yes for the remainder of the committee. Troy asked that everyone take the letter home to read and edit as they felt necessary. Christy Carovillano also sent the letter to the committee electronically following the meeting. It will then be discussed more in depth at the January meeting and the committee will plan to vote at that meeting as to whether to send the letter to Council.

GOALS FOR NEXT MEETING AND WRAP-UP

- Dave Elkin will provide another planning projects update.
- Jonathan Soll will look further into the possibility of levy funds matching the Smith and Bybee Fund for the funding of the planning projects and update the committee on what he learns.
- Jonathan Soll will share the OTAK channel management options document with Carrie Butler and Jennifer Devlin as requested.
- Jonathan Soll will provide an update on the chosen preferred channel management alternative; share the restoration work proposals for next year at the January meeting (however, budget determinations will not be finalized yet by that date); and share what he learned regarding the cottonwood trees around the Interlakes trail.
- Committee members will review and edit the draft dog policy position letter prior to the January meeting to allow for further discussion and a vote on whether to send it to Metro Council.
- Mike Guebert from St. Johns landfill will attend the January meeting to discuss his perspective on the regional trail project.
- Troy Clark will provide an update on Wapato and the good neighbor agreement if there is one.
- A discussion on a possible committee site visit in the summer will be tabled until the March meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.



St Johns Prairie Trail & Chimney Park Bridge over Columbia Boulevard

PROJECT 1

Chimney Park Trail & Bridge over Columbia Boulevard

- — — — Proposed trail
- Proposed bridge over Columbia Blvd.

PROJECT 2

St Johns Prairie Trail & Overlook

- — — — Proposed trail - Phase One
- - - - - Proposed trail - Phase Two

⋯⋯⋯⋯ Existing regional trail

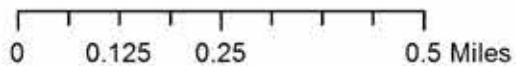
| | | | | Railroad

▭ Metro

▭ Port of Portland

▭ BES

▭ Portland Parks



North Portland Willamette Greenway Trail



Legend

- North Portland Willamette Greenway Trail Alignment
- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Other Existing trails
- Easement Needed
- Parks and/or Natural Areas
- Bond Measure Acquisitions
- Railroads

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Metro

Re: Metro Dog Policy

Dear Distinguished Councilors,

This letter comes to alert you to the serious implications that may follow allowing dogs into the Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area (SBWNA) when the regional trail opens to the public in this area. We are urging this Council to enact the necessary policy measures that will continue to prohibit dogs on this Metro property.

The SBWNA Advisory Committee (SBAC) was formed in 1990 to advise Metro on the management of the SBWNA trust fund. This Advisory Committee is made up of a variety of stakeholders invested in the protection and enhancement of this area. Metro has a standing no dogs policy in the SBWNA which this committee fully supports. However, this prohibition may change when the section of the 40 Mile Loop Regional Trail is completed through the area. There is currently an exemption permitting dogs on regional trails through Metro properties. It is this exemption we want rescinded in the SBWNA.

There are a number of reasons we feel that the current restriction on dogs should continue at the SBWNA. First is the unique status of this natural area in the Metro portfolio of properties. The SBWNA is the second largest Metro property and the only property with a trust fund dedicated to the management of the area. Its location within the City of Portland makes it quite accessible to the public including school outings. The easy access makes the natural area vulnerable to over use. Adding dogs to this concern jeopardizes its functionality for wildlife habitat.

Second, the SBWNA has been recognized and selected to be an Important Bird Area (IBA). This IBA designation is recognized internationally. The goal of the IBA program is "to identify the most critical places for birds in our state." The recognition of the SBWNA as critical habitat is further enhanced by the fact that as industrial and residential infill and loss of available wildlife habitat occurs all over the Metro region, the SBWNA is gaining ever increasing importance as a wildlife area. Thirteen song bird species identified as in steep decline in the 2016 Partners in Flight Landbird Conservation Plan use this area throughout the year.

Third, in 2015 Metro scientist Lori Hennings produced a reference work and literature search for Metro on the impacts of dogs on wildlife. This paper was requested to help Metro understand this contentious topic. The research was quite clear that dogs have an adverse impact on wildlife "on or off leash." The presence of dogs restricts movement, nesting and colonization of wildlife. This point directly affects a wildlife enhancement goal called out in the Comprehensive Natural Resources Plan (CNRP) for the area. An effort is under way to attract streaked horned larks, a threatened species in Oregon, to the St John's Prairie in hopes the species might become a permanent resident species. The introduction of dogs, even on leash, will jeopardize all the work being done for this bird species.

Fourth, if dogs on leash are permitted into the area, a permanent ranger presence will be required to insure that any person allowing their dog off leash are warned or ticketed. This will be a new and permanent budgetary expense that could be avoided by maintaining the No Dog Policy.

Finally, the presence of dogs on leash and the multi-modal status of the regional trail will bring difficulties for bicyclists and dog walkers alike. This regional trail will be a 12 foot wide paved trail with little room on the edges for dog walkers to move for bicycles. Furthermore, management of the methane collection system on the old landfill is still required. People and dogs leaving the trail to avoid

bicycle conflicts may introduce problems, even hazards, with people coming into contact with existing landfill infrastructure.

It is the view of the SBAC that these many concerns are quickly obviated by maintaining the No Dog Policy at the SBWNA. We recognize that this position will require Metro Council to adopt language to nullify the exemption for dogs on regional trails through Metro properties. We urge Council to take that position and protect this very valuable and vulnerable resource from the serious consequences that will accompany dogs being allowed at the SBWNA.

Sincerely,

Troy Clark, Chair SBAC

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