

Agenda



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting: Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee (SBAC)
Date: Tuesday, March 20, 2018
Time: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center – Room 270
600 NE Grand Ave, Portland

5:30 p.m.	Welcome and introductions	All
5:35 p.m.	Approve Jan. 2018 meeting minutes	Troy Clark
5:40 p.m.	Nature education update	Heather Nelson Kent
5:55 p.m.	Columbia Blvd. bridge project update	Allan Schmidt
6:15 p.m.	South Rivergate Corridor and Port of Portland's Mitigation Sites	Sarah Wilson
6:45 p.m.	SHLAs, T-6, Amazon, RG developments	Carrie Butler
7:15 p.m.	Multnomah County jail update	Troy Clark
7:20 p.m.	Goals and next meeting agenda	All
7:30 p.m.	Adjourn	

Upcoming SBAC meetings:

Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at Metro Regional Center
For agenda/schedule information, contact Ann Toledo at 503.813.7575 or
ann.toledo@oregonmetro.gov

Metro's nondiscrimination notice

Metro respects civil rights. Metro fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that bans discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin. For more information on Metro's civil rights program, or to obtain a Title VI complaint form, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/civilrights or call 503-797-1536.

Metro provides services or accommodations upon request to persons with disabilities and people who need an interpreter at public meetings.

All Metro meetings are wheelchair accessible. If you need a sign language interpreter, communication aid or language assistance, call 503-797-1536 or TDD/TTY 503-797-1804 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays) 7 business days in advance of the meeting to accommodate your request. For up-to-date public transportation information, visit TriMet's website at www.trimet.org.

Metro protects water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and creates opportunities to enjoy nature close to home through a connected system of parks, trails and natural areas.



Meeting minutes

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee

March 20, 2018

Committee members in attendance

- Troy Clark*Audubon Society of Portland (Chair)
- Carrie Butler* Port of Portland (Vice Chair)
- Matthew Lee* Columbia Slough Watershed Council
- Jennifer Devlin* City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services
- Eric Tonsager* Oregon Bass and Panfish Club
- Emily Roth* Friends of Smith & Bybee Lakes
- Patt Opdyke* North Portland Neighbors

Others in attendance

- Sarah Wilson Port of Portland
- Heather Nelson Kent Metro, Parks and Nature
- Allan Schmidt Metro, Parks and Nature
- Melanie Reinert Metro, Parks and Nature

Committee members not in attendance

- Bill Briggs* ORRCO
- Jonathan Soll* Metro, Parks and Nature
- Pam Arden* 40 Mile Loop Trust
- Sara Henderson* St. Johns Neighborhood Association
- Don VandeBergh* Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

*Denotes voting Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee member.

WELCOME

The January 23, 2018 meeting minutes were approved.

NATURE EDUCATION UPDATE

Heather Nelson Kent introduced herself and presented highlights regarding the nature education at Smith and Bybee coordinated through Metro Parks & Nature. (*Presentation slides on file*). Heather has been in her current role as Program Manager for Metro Parks and Nature since January 2017 and oversees strategic planning and refreshing the goals for the department’s education programs.

Heather gave an overview of organizational changes since the program’s inception in 1985 through Multnomah County Parks. The program currently has four full-time naturalists (Alice Froehlich, Dan Daly, Ashley Conley, and Punneh Abdolhosseini) who are organized by function, though the program is moving back towards a hybrid model with assignments based on location.

The program provides an array of standard and customized field trips, public programs, events and outreach, sometimes in coordination with Metro communications and/or community groups. A new Education Center at the Oregon Zoo allows for more joint efforts with the Zoo Education Team. Supported programs include a volunteer naturalist program training 20 volunteers per year and the Youth Ecology Corps, a program designed to give educational and work experience to disaffected youth. Unfortunately, Project Yes, the program supporting the YEC out of Mt. Hood Community College lost its federal funding this year, so the YEC is on hiatus while other options are discussed.

Annual attendance for programs is steady at 10-11 thousand with current staffing (stabilized after an increase due to the levee in 2014). Public programs charge a small fee, but Metro can often grant fee waivers if requested. The program also provides bus funding to overcome transportation barriers and help keep program costs low for participants. Programs are held at 17 different Metro sites, with Oxbow the most frequently utilized and Smith and Bybee the second most frequently used. Scouters Mountain has supplanted some of Mt. Talbert's past programming, as it is similar, but more accessible.

Some programming is held at non-Metro sites, if requested, but Metro sites are preferred and Metro staff facilitate the programs. Heather identified a need to track the statistics of other groups scheduling programming at Metro sites. Special use permits are available at a low cost, and fees can be waived. Some outside programming acts as an extension of Metro's and allows for an expansion of capacity. Some sites are co-managed with park providers (i.e. Cooper Mountain), and those managers handle much of those sites' programming. Other sites such as Orenco allow for program collaboration with the local government. A goal is to support collaboration rather than duplication of efforts.

New sites and policy changes since 2015 led to the adoption of a system plan defining the department's mission and goals of increasing programming for racial equity. Programming should be respectful and inclusive, responsive to community feedback, align with the DEI plan and expand capacity and partnerships. Developing this has been an internal team process, and the department is starting to seek external feedback from stakeholders, Parks and Nature teams and other Metro education teams. Intended outcomes of this process are a shared vision, collaboration, identifying roles and responsibilities, staff direction, and work plans.

Heather's goals for next year include working on measurement -- Emily suggested site metrics and participation numbers -- and increasing programming as available sites have increased. There are no goals around educational standards unless participating groups request specific education goals, and staff work with teachers on requested curricula.

Troy asked the group to consider whether we should we limit the amount of access and programming with Smith and Bybee as its popularity could have impacts. The group should consider how not to impact resources and other uses with programming.

Heather was asked about programming waiting lists, and she explained that they exist, but Metro is able to meet most requests. There is not currently a system to track requests Metro cannot fulfill, though the team wants to know more about this metric. There is more demand for programming with a growing population.

Heather shared a draft of the vision document with the committee. She explained that "drag and brag" is a bad way to engage participants. The team wants to bring critical thinking skills and inquiry to the process and acknowledge that people come to programs with knowledge. They want to empower participants to share and celebrate their diversity of experiences, relationships to places, etc. Instead of focusing on education outcomes, programming focuses on the joy of being outside so participants return.

She outlined five program goals:

- Connect people to nature through education programs and outdoor experiences.
- Help ensure spaces feel safe and welcoming to the community, especially communities of color.

Emily noted that not allowing dogs relates to this goal, as some communities of color and immigrant groups have indicated off-leash dogs can make them feel unsafe.

Emily asked for clarification on the DEI strategy, and Heather explained that Metro identified a racial equity strategy, as the Council identified disparities between white communities and communities of color. By focusing specifically on and working with those communities, we can identify barriers to their enjoyment, and others will benefit. It was clarified that “people of color” in this case is a broad definition and includes Native groups, Slavic groups, and others.

- Support greater understanding and awareness of Metro’s parks and natural areas.
- Work with colleagues to support the strategic racial equity plan.
- Continue team’s professional development, cultural competency staff and volunteers, build our team and skills working across differences.

The next step is review.

Emily asked about site specific goals, and Heather explained that they had not reached that level of detail yet, but was welcome to ideas for goals to set.

The group touched on the positive impacts of other area programs at Vanport and the Mosaic Festival.

Next Steps

- Heather asked for any other programming feedback from the committee.
- Emily asked about a comprehensive management plan and felt if any were related to education, it would be good to pull that forward into the plan.
- Important remaining questions include how to bring people to the site, but not love the site to death. Consider balance of protection versus recreation and education and define priorities. It was noted that the bulk of Metro programming at Smith and Bybee is in the spring and fall, and that other groups (Audubon, Tualatin Riverkeepers) arrange programming at the site, too.

COLUMBIA BLVD BRIDGE PROJECT UPDATE

Allan Schmidt of Metro Parks and Nature introduced himself and gave an overview of two projects and kiosk plans (*presentation on file*). He hoped to get feedback on the kiosk contents and graphics, which were posted for review at the meeting. The group reviewed a map of the project area and was asked to consider the impact of multiple uses.

The prairie project starts at the end of the bridge, is fully funded by Metro, and will move faster than ODOT funded project. The map showed a line to the Overlook and a purple line for a study for a crossing over the North Slope. The project is dependent on the schedule of the bridge, which should come before the prairie, but can be somewhat in tandem. The area could be built now, but the bridge makes it useable.

Allan shared a draft schedule and noted the need for gathering feasibility information before community involvement. He shared a draft schedule: By the end of spring 2019, they hope to have the alignment picked and go forward with construction documents. In summer 2019 they would go to bid and construction and open the bridge by 2020-21.

The location and design of the bridge and prairie trail is meant to reduce impact to natural area uses and to keep humans safe and dogs off the prairie. The project must be careful of easements, contamination on the site, and movement on public and private roads. This bridge links a broader trail system and is crucial due to high velocity traffic in the area.

Troy suggested an explanatory kiosk regarding the potential for traffic hang-ups from the trains, observing that hikers can get stuck there. Allan recognized the challenges of an at-grade railroad crossing and the need to talk with Union Pacific about their schedule, etc. Queuing trains at the crossing are a new consideration, though Metro has easements and agreements to work with Union Pacific on the issue. Allan will return to this group further along.

Metro policy is that dogs are allowed on regional trails including this one, but movement over the prairie is an issue. Troy hoped to ask Councilor Hughes to push this issue. Dogs are not allowed on the prairie, but are allowed on the regional trail. Also of note, active gassing on the landfill can cause a safety concern to people and dogs. Emily reminded that feedback from communities of color has indicated that off-leash dogs can be a barrier to use. Enforcing leash rules is an ongoing issue, particularly in close proximity to the area dog park. Heather shared that Title X Metro rules are before Metro council for review, and they are keeping the policy that dogs allowed on regional trails, but not parks and natural areas. Matt asked about impacts on ground nesting birds and asked if there were any studies. Allan shared that he is working with Elaine Stewart on the need to mitigate issues. Elaine's work is being used to plan trails and fencing to keep people safe and protect the area.

Two kiosks will be installed at the site of the flood marker and near the parking lot/restrooms. Allan shared images of similar kiosks at Scouters Mountain noting the large maps that can be snapshotted with a phone for reference. The kiosks are affordable (\$2500-\$3000 apiece) and locally made in a Salem prison facility. Allan can send contents in a PDF for review and feedback – the copy has been vetted and is already public facing.

Emily asked for consideration language diversity and bilingual signage in English and Spanish. Options could include condensing the information and alternating languages. Allan noted this would require the loss of some content. Allan felt there was some sign pollution and wanted the area signage consolidated to a large kiosk. There is a Metro communications app with different languages options that could be combined with a web interface. Perhaps some multilingual signage can direct to further information in an app.

Allan announced plans to remove a canoe launch, but the group requires more internal conversation on this topic and will have to follow up with Allan before finalizing. The area is not on a public road, creating liability issues. Sunken asphalt was noted as a hazard that might need to be removed. The launch is published as a public boat launch in multiple places, and other launches along the slough have been lost, so the fate of this one is still being discussed, per Jennifer.

Next Steps

- The Committee should follow up with Allan on feedback regarding kiosk graphics, and contents as well as the fate of the canoe launch.
- Consider how bilingual signage could be implemented.
- Allan should check back in regarding train crossing concerns and share a pdf of the kiosk verbiage.
- Troy hopes to connect with Council President Hughes regarding dog issues.

SOUTH RIVERGATE CORRIDOR AND PORT OF PORTLAND'S MITIGATION SITES

Sarah Wilson works with Carrie Butler and presented on wildlife paths between and within mitigation sites around Terminals 5 and 6, Amazon, and RG developments, the South Rivergate corridor, West Wye mitigation site and wildlife undercrossing (*presentation on file*).

She shared images of elk and beaver in unlikely urban settings and postulated possible routes they had taken to reach these locations, suggesting that they may be following rail tracks among other routes. The camera in the undercrossing had captured an array of wildlife using the corridor, though new cameras are needed to detect cold-blooded species better. She shared images of an area (now fenced and gated) that is a known turtle nesting site, but which is prone to vandalism, fires, illegal camping and dumping.

Emily felt that Sarah's observations showed the importance of connecting small sites to larger areas such as Smith and Bybee and Vanport wetlands and the value of nature patches and vegetation corridors in parks.

Next Steps

- Sarah asked the group to consider the questions her observations had led her to: Which species benefit? How can the corridor be improved? How can we make a better corridor? Are species using the railroad tracks? Are there species missing from these areas? Are there opportunities for collaborative efforts?
- Troy noted that the corridor is part of S&B management area, but is not often discussed. He would like the committee to be drawn more into how to envision and manage the area's resources.

SHLAS, T-6, AMAZON, RG DEVELOPMENTS

Carrie Butler provided an overview of the area developments (*presentation on file with Sarah's*). The Port took Terminal 6 management in 2017. Swire shipping service began in January. Businesses surround the area.

PBOT has a road over rail project on Rivergate Blvd. to relieve backup of traffic from stalled trains. This is from a TIGER grant, and the PBOT project shouldn't impact the corridor except a power/utility tower might be moved. They are at 30% design with construction in 2019 or 2020. Troy asked about a public notice period, and Emily explained that the TIGER grant doesn't require public involvement.

An Amazon distribution center for large items led to a noticeable increase in traffic at shift changes in the early evening. The group wanted to find out about possible Trimet bus service to help alleviate that. Multiuse paths for connectivity planned at Lombard, Lombard-Burgard and a PBOT project for Lombard-Burgard.

Before Amazon construction last year, there was a survey on streaked horned lark nesting pairs. Four chicks were banded, and in January one of those chicks was spotted near St. Helens. The Port will continue monitoring avian activity throughout Rivergate and band nesting chicks.

The Sandy Island Conservation Area is near Kalama on a manmade dredge island. The Port has 30-year easement on the land, and HCP for monitoring has promising results so far. Monitoring continues.

They have cleared trees and scotch broom and posted signs for bird protection. Carrie shared an aerial and clarified management plans for the area. Initial work was done at the beginning of last year, including clearing and monitoring vegetation. If more removal is needed they will do 50% at a time so there is always some part of the site in a different state. In the sandy areas of the site, they tried to smooth elevations. Surveys will be done again based on observations and behavior to determine nesting pairs.

Next Steps

- Research with Trimet on possible transit solutions to increased traffic at shift change times at Amazon facility.
- Troy intended to follow up with Jonathan Soll regarding Metro's decreased/abandoned monitoring at landfill and potential movement of species of concern.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY JAIL UPDATE

Troy shared that he had contacted the County about Wapato. Kehoe offered \$10M to buy, had a 45-day due diligence period. A Tribune article suggested Kehoe had cold feet. A subsequent 30-day extension was requested and granted, bringing the timeframe to late March, so watch for media hints as to outcome soon.

The good neighbor agreement ends as soon as the property sells (signers and county, does not transfer). Metro had approached them, but they requested a large sum of money. However, if there is no buyer, Metro has an opportunity, so the Committee should keep urging Metro to move.

The group discussed the trees on the site, which is zoned industrial. The owner will have to mitigate for large established trees.

Next Steps

- Urge Metro to move regarding Wapato if sale fails at end of March.
- Emily suggested looking at required tree mitigation for industrial lands.

GOALS FOR NEXT MEETING AND WRAP-UP

- Troy plans to add two purple marten poles in Smith and Bybee at the sedge meadow. He will move the existing poles to join them in a few years due to ash growth. Water levels have made taking the gourds down and rehangng them each year difficult and impractical, so Troy has been covering the holes until the martens return in mid to late April. Troy wanted to make sure the Committee approved of his overland access to put in the poles, and he has already asked Metro for feedback. There was no objection.
- Sarah will be involved in outreach via a Watershed Council 'Wetlands 101' class on Vanport, the landfill and the undercrossing.
- Lisa Apple (environmental outreach) is leaving the Port at the end of next week, as her position is being removed per Carrie. The Committee was disappointed, but nothing can be done to change this.
- Troy plans to ask Councilor Hughes about dog issues, and follow up on a letter to Council to rescind exemptions.

- Jonathan Soll had emailed Troy to share a tight budget next fiscal year. This showed one funded project: step 3 on the landfill project. Troy needed to follow up with Jonathan on what that means.
- Ash Grove Lime contract is done, and the methane is not shipped, but flared out onsite. Metro has eliminated one flare and two remain, but will only be one left at the end. The appearance will change between now and September, and operations and trail will be affected. Troy asked them to come and give an update in September.
- The group went over which Metro Council seats will be up for election.
- Troy shared that Metro has already approached County regarding Wapato, and the committee agreed to urge action on purchase or easements if Kehoe leaves negotiations on purchasing the site. There was concern that the group would not be meeting again until the fall. Troy and Patt planned to write a letter to Jonathan Blasher of Parks and Nature (cced to Metro Council) to be shared with the committee for review and comment prior to sending. Carrie cited Troutdale as a learning point for early inclusion of buffers and upland setbacks.
- The next meeting will be in September.
- The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.