



**Metro**

600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736

# Agenda

Meeting: Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee  
Date: Tuesday, January 24, 2023  
Time: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Place: [Zoom](#)

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5:30 p.m.	Welcome and introductions	All
5:35 p.m.	Approve November 2022 meeting minutes	Carrie Butler
5:40 p.m.	Planning projects update	Allan Schmidt
6:05 p.m.	Conservation projects update	Andrea Berkley
6:25 p.m.	BREAK	
6:30 p.m.	CNRP Master Plan	Andrea Berkley
7:05 p.m.	Walk-on's and discussion	Carrie Butler
7:25 p.m.	Goals and next meeting agenda	All
7:30 p.m.	Adjourn	

**Upcoming SBAC meetings:**

Tuesday, March 28, 2023 on [Zoom](#)

For agenda/schedule information, contact Jonathan Soll at [jonathan.soll@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:jonathan.soll@oregonmetro.gov)

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# Meeting summary

## Smith and Bybee Wetlands Advisory Committee

January 24, 2023

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### Committee members in attendance

Carrie Butler ..... Port of Portland  
Eugenia Tam ..... North Portland Neighbors  
Eric Stern ..... Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes  
Jonathan Soll ..... Metro  
Max Samuelson ..... Columbia Slough Watershed Council  
Troy Clark ..... Audubon Society of Portland

### Committee members not in attendance

Daryl Houtman ..... City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services  
Pat Jewett ..... 40-Mile Loop Trust

### Others in attendance

Anna Nandihalli ..... Metro  
Ariana Scipioni ..... Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Susan Barthel ..... member of the public

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## WELCOME

Participants introduced themselves at the start of the meeting. Ariana Scipioni will be replacing Susan Barnes as Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife representative.

The November 2022 meeting summary was reviewed and approved.

## PLANNING PROJECTS UPDATE

Jonathan Soll, Metro Science Manager, gave updates on planning projects on behalf of Allan Schmidt, Senior Regional Planner. Questions on information presented will be taken back to Allan.

### St. Johns Prairie Trail

Design works continues after a break the team is working toward 90% design drawings and cost estimates by Spring 2023. Permits will be submitted to the City of Portland for land use in Spring 2023. The project is currently funded for design only at this time. Construction is not funded.

Troy inquired about being introduced to Portland Parks Planner who is responsible for the stretch from Chimney Park to the landfill bridge. Will the Portland Parks Planner be introduced to the upcoming committee meeting in March? After the meeting, Allan replied that the Portland Parks Planner will be invited again.

Susan Barthel asked how long permits are open for and that we could learn about the time range on permits. How long are they in effect? If we are only funded for planning stage, will additional permits be required? through permitting stage again if time expires? Jonathan clarified that there

are two parts: funding for trail on St J's prairie and funding for bridge over the slough. After the meeting, Allan replied that permits are not the objective. A Land Use approval will provide a three-year window with allowed extensions to start construction. The land use could expire, but we are hoping to find funding in our window or start soil pre-loading at the needed locations which technically starts construction. Soil pre—loads (surcharge load) have to sit for up to a year or more prior to construction to compact unstable soils or, in this case, trash.

### **Bridge Over Columbia Boulevard**

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has picked up the project again and has received approval from the federal highway administration to continue the project past 30% design through construction. Allan Schmidt will present the schedule to this committee when ODOT provides an approval. Portland Parks has agreed to take over local project management from Metro (Allan). Metro will remain as an advisor to the project and a major funder. These details will be outlined in a new third-party intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that ODOT, Portland and Metro will draft together and sign. Project funding and roles to complete the project will also be included.

Max inquired if approval includes construction and if it is funded. After the meeting, Allan replied that the CCB is funded enough to allow ODOT to restart the effort through construction. Costs will change but the three parties have agreed to handle that on a case-by-case basis. Allan will bring a schedule when ODOT is ready to share with the public.

### **Agency presence at St. Johns Prairie**

Jonathan shared that in a future meeting, the committee will have an opportunity to discuss the triangular parcel of land where landfill offices sit. Jonathan shared an image of the parcel on ParkMap. The triangular parcel with landfill offices is on a tax lot owned by the City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES). Metro is in ongoing negotiations with the City of Portland regarding this parcel.

Troy suggested that a letter from the committee to Metro and City of Portland, with support from Councilor Nolan could be helpful in resolving the issue. Next Thursday, Troy will be meeting Dawn Uchiyama, Director from BES. He seeks to help them understand the importance of the property for creating an opportunity for a regular presence when trail is open. Ranger presence will be critical. On the parcel, there is an informal undeveloped boat launch. Opportunity of a community boat launch should be recognized.

Susan offered this is the site of past Columbia Slough Regatta events. The launch has been repeatedly used for formal paddle events. It is also used for the BES water sampling crew boat. It is the only access between Kelly Point and the levy, a stretch of nine miles. This area is not accessible from the lakes unless water is high enough.

Max says this the informal boat launch still used by Columbia Slough Watershed Council throughout the summer on different occasions. Even with marginal improvements it could have more community use. Eric has launched from here for a Friends of Smith and Bybee clean-up event. Troy requested an agenda item in March for this property.

After the meeting, Allan clarified that WPES is looking to acquire the triangle property for their operations. There is no plan for Parks and Nature on the property other than the trail work at this time.

## **CONSERVATION PROJECTS UPDATE**

Jonathan Soll, Metro Science Manager, gave updates on planning projects on behalf of Andrea Berkley, Senior Natural Resource Scientist. Notes directly from Andrea were shared in the meeting chat.

### **CNRP**

The CNRP is being edited as we speak with final edits likely to be completed in one month's time. This includes an updated map which will show Metro ownership, Port ownership that Metro manages under IGA, and City of Portland parcels that the City and Metro are at the early stages of developing an IGA for. Question for the committee: once a clean version is produced with all edits incorporated, does SBAC want one more review period before the document goes to Metro council in the spring? If yes, how many weeks would be needed by SBAC to review?

Troy asked about sub-committee. They met once in the fall and has not met again. Revisions are unknown to sub-committee. What is the desired date for presenting to Council? Jonathan responded that approval should be before expiration of old one. First reading of the plan would be read by Council in April, second reading in May.

Eric requested to review the current draft before the March meeting. Troy would like to see it too. Carrie says two weeks is a reasonable amount of time to review. Two weeks before the upcoming committee meeting is March 14.

Jonathan shared that two draft versions will be shared: a red-line version that shows the edits and a "clean" version. Jonathan suggests Andrea would have honored sub-committee opinions and it might be challenging if the entire committee reviews the draft. After the meeting, Andrea replied that all comments from the sub-committee have been incorporated.

Troy states that the last draft reviewed by the sub-committee was awaiting comments from Gary Shepard from the Office of Metro Attorney (OMA).

Jonathan will ask for Andrea to choose a firm date for documents to be shared with the advisory committee. Jonathan shared that the Metro Council meeting date for this agenda item has not been confirmed. After the meeting, Andrea replied she will aim to share the draft at the end of February and can accept comments on major issues and requested changes; we won't have time to incorporate wordsmithing edits at this stage.

### **Installation of plastic sheet walls at water control structure**

Upcoming major projects include installation of plastic sheet pile walls in the berm on either side of the water control structure (aiming for this summer construction); beginning Phase 4 of St Johns Prairie if successful with OWEB grant (we should know more on this grant in February); and finalizing the report on the status of our Key Ecological Indicators (we are awaiting results from a drone flight to characterize a couple of the emergent wetland KEAs). After the meeting, Andrea

confirmed there will be no effects on water levels. The project is basically driving a solid wall vertically into the existing berm. The berm size, shape and configuration won't change and the water control structure will not change.

Troy inquired if an outcome will be a report on the success of the work that has been done over the last ten years. Jonathan confirms that a report will be an outcome.

### **New Metro scientist**

We have a new Associate Natural Resource Scientist on the team who will be working with Andrea and John Catena at Smith and Bybee - Jina Sagar. Jina joins Metro from almost five years of conservation planning and implementation in New Zealand. She was previously a scientist for the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership (LCEP) involved mostly in monitoring project success. Jina holds a Masters in Wildlife Biology.

A committee member inquired if Jina is a staff scientist or if she has a particular role at Smith and Bybee Wetlands. Jonathan explained she will be assisting Andrea who is the staff scientist for the site on different projects. Committee members should continue to reach out to Andrea for science topics and Allan for planning topics.

### **Bonneville Power Administration**

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) had intended to do work on their lines this calendar year. OMA has been communicating with their legal representatives about the details. Metro's preference as communicated to BPA is that the work happen by helicopter to minimize ground disturbance, and that it happens in the late summer or fall to minimize disturbance to the wetlands, birds and wildlife.

### **Pacific Power Group**

Pacific Power identified two hazardous trees (dead cottonwoods) near their lines near an active bald eagle nest. We have asked them to do the tree removal work after eagle nesting season. They are evaluating whether the hazard trees pose an undue risk to the lines that may necessitate doing the work sooner. Federal laws protecting the nests apply.

Troy asks if the committee can expect update at the March meeting? Can we expect decisions by March?

### **Requests for additional updates from Andrea Berkley, Metro Scientist**

Troy inquired about nutria management. There are many nutria and pregnant nutria; population has exploded. Jonathan explains that Katy Weil, Metro Scientist, is working to renew an IGA with USDA, with the goal to have a contract in place by March. We should not have lapses in contract authority with a partner, but sometimes things happen. In response to a question about how we set control goals Jonathan shared that population estimates and setting population based goals are tricky and expensive and that we typically hunt them until we have trouble finding them, then implement control when they become very visible again. We clearly waited a bit too long this time. Ariana offered that, "it's an invasive species. Zero is a great number." It does raise the opportunity of indigenous community control. Would the meat be contaminated considering the environmental

toxicity of the area? Susan asks how people with weapons would be perceived in a public space. Katy Weil will be invited to the March meeting to present on nutria and nutria control. After the meeting, Andrea commented that we may be seeing greater concentrations of nutria because we have been keeping the water control structure closed last winter and this winter, causing smaller pools of water for them to congregate.

Troy explained someone was measuring barrier between roadway and trail and posts were rotting out. No change has happened; posts continue to rot out. What is the status? The question will be posed to Metro Planning and Metro Park Operations.

## **WALK-ONS**

Carrie shared that Burlington Northern Santa Fe, LLC (BNSF), needs to replace compressed air pipes under its rail right of way on the north side of the Smith/Bybee Lake trail. They want to set up equipment and drill small bore holes on the Port's property adjacent to the rail tracks to facilitate this work. Carrie will email notes from the Port of Portland Property Manager, Nicole Miranda, to the committee. The project will not impact access to the trail but may impact informal/unauthorized parking spaces.

Notes from Property Manager Nicole: Will not impact access to the trail. May impact unauthorized parking spaces. Project should only take a month, start time to be determined.

Eric asked about the project hours. Carrie provided post-meeting that typical construction hours will be 6:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Troy explained that a Port of Portland employee assured us no materials or trucks would be parked on the trail. If we encounter a park on the trail, who do we call? Carrie will provide contact information for the Property Manager. Susan suggested it might be useful to have a posted notice of who needs to be contacted if there is a violation. Carrie will inquire. Eric inquired about erosion concerns. Carrie explained the work will include excavating holes that will be backfilled, replacing pipe.

Susan asked about the results of the Christmas Bird Count. Troy led the Christmas bird count on December 31. Troy reported the group had 72 species, great count.

Anna re-introduced herself as the special-use permit coordinator for Metro Parks and Nature. She can be reached for any special-use questions at [specialusepermits@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:specialusepermits@oregonmetro.gov) with more information found on the web at [www.oregonmetro.gov/specialuse](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/specialuse).

Susan asked about the placement of the water control structure and if it will change water levels. Jonathan answered it will not change water levels.

Columbia Steel Casting Company is going out of business. Troy would like to have some presentation regarding the land that this company is vacating. Would DEQ be interested in presenting? 87 acres plus little finger of land. Should we recommend purchase? Jonathan to get on agenda at negotiators meeting. After the meeting, Andrea commented that a member of Metro's Real Estate team is looking into the parcels.

## **FUTURE MEETING AGENDA TOPICS**

- Triangle property discussion, possibly formulate a letter - Troy
- CNRP master plan review - Andrea
- Nutria control – Katy Weil
- Courtney Patterson, Metro, is scheduled to attend the March 2023 meeting to discuss the bridge assessment, landfill site assessment and office space.
- January 31 hearing on slag piles at Columbia Steel Casting Company. – Max
- Update on utility work plans - Andrea

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Jonathan to follow up with Andrea and Allan about questions received from the committee.
- Andrea to send CNRP draft to entire committee no later than March 14, 2023.
- Carrie to review and edit Bylaws and Communication Plan for committee review/input
- Jonathan/Andrea to provide Metro org chart as it relates to SBWNA and give to Anna for inclusion in meeting notes

## **NEXT MEETING**

March 28, 2023  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.