

A person with short grey hair, wearing a black t-shirt and grey pants, is walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a dense forest. The path is covered with fallen leaves and ferns. The trees are tall and thin, with green foliage. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down the path.

OUR BIG BACKYARD

*Explore great places and more
with Metro*

A CANYON RISING

Newell Creek Canyon has majestic trees, tumbling creeks and passionate Oregon City neighbors – along with shopping carts and trash. Can it become the region's next great natural area?

pg. 08

FIELD GUIDE

Explore by foot or boat at Smith and Bybee Wetlands.

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GET INVOLVED

Eagles, hawks and falcons put on a show at Raptor Road Trip on Sauvie Island.

pg. 11

TOOLS FOR LIVING

Easy recipes to clean your home, without the chemicals.

pg. 14

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If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

So, hello. We’re Metro – nice to meet you.

In a metropolitan area as big as Portland, we can do a lot of things better together. Join us to help the region prepare for a happy, healthy future.

Metro Council President
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Suzanne Flynn



If you have a disability and need accommodations, call 503-220-2781, or call Metro’s TDD line at 503-797-1804. If you require a sign language interpreter, call at least 48 hours in advance. Activities marked with this symbol are wheelchair accessible:

Bus and MAX information
503-238-RIDE (7433) or www.trimet.org

To be added to Our Big Backyard mailing list or to change your mailing information, email ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov or call 503-797-1536.

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.
www.oregonmetro.gov/connect



Photo credits
Kathy Shearin (p. 15), Mike Houck (p. 15), Tim Miller (p. 15), C. Bruce Forster (p. 5, 12), Fred Joe (p. 13, 15).

It used to be that nature wasn’t a place we went to. It was already all around us. At some point we forgot how much nature matters – but nature never forgot about us. And that’s pretty inspiring. So let’s get out there. Let’s get back into balance with the nature around us and within us. Together, let’s rediscover our big backyard.

Welcome to Our Big Backyard, the publication formerly known as GreenScene. If you read GreenScene, you probably noticed the magazine got a new name. It got bigger. It has more pictures, more stories, more ways to get involved. We hope you enjoy exploring the nature of the Portland region – both literally and figuratively – with Metro. To send questions or ideas, email ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov.

Nature News



GEOCACHERS HUNT FOR BURIED TREASURE & NEW ADVENTURES

STORY BY *Molly Simas* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Fred Joe*

Jennifer Ashman was at Blue Lake Regional Park for a family reunion last summer when she inadvertently began a treasure-hunting adventure. Explaining geocaching to her uncle, Ashman used a smartphone app to call up the nearest hidden cache. Together they found the capsule and learned it was part of a geocaching challenge spanning two Metro parks and six caches. "I found three that day, then it was getting late and the park was closing," Ashman said. "I went home and told my husband, 'We have to do this!'"

Geocaching is essentially a high-tech treasure hunt: real life hide-and-seeking based out of online communities. As the activity has grown, so has its presence at Metro parks. Geocaching.com, the activity's largest affiliated website, serves as a forum where users can find coordinates of caches in their area and post their experiences. Hidden caches are usually small containers with a logbook and trade items. Hiders post their cache's coordinates online, and seekers record their names in the cache's logbook and the online forum.

"... it gets the family out together. We find new parks and places to go."
—Jennifer Ashman, Gracious Hands Preschool

Ashman's whole family got hooked on geocaching in 2010 when her son Levi, then a second grader, discovered it with a friend. "It teaches the kids coordination," Ashman said. "They're seeing the map, they're understanding 100 feet and counting down, they're reading the clues and thinking about it. It's giving them problem-solving ideas. And it gets the family out together. We find new parks and places to go." Ashman, who runs Gracious Hands Preschool in

Aloha, journeyed to Oxbow Regional Park to complete Metro's coin challenge with her husband, their four children and kids from the daycare.

The coin challenge, which launched in July, celebrates Oxbow and Blue Lake being open to the public for 50 years. It also provides a fun new outlet for people to engage with Metro's parks. Each cache has a code inside its lid. Geocachers who locate all six head to the park office at Blue Lake, where they receive a fact sheet explaining the significance of the six codes and a commemorative 50th anniversary coin. The challenge will run until all 450 coins have been claimed.

Park ranger Kristina Prosser, who placed the six caches – empty MetroPaint cans decorated by Metro employees – said she chose each location to draw people to a distinctive park feature.

Geocaching in Metro parks is not new. When recreational geocacher and Metro employee Justin Patterson set out to learn how many geocaches were hidden in Metro parks a few years back, he discovered them everywhere. "When Graham Oaks Nature Park opened, there were six within a week," Patterson said.

The popularity should perhaps be expected; our region is the birthplace of geocaching. Beavercreek resident Dave Ulmer hid the first geocache in Clackamas County in May 2000. He posted the coordinates online, and people promptly began to seek it out using their own GPS devices.

Realizing the growing interest, Metro created a set of guidelines and an online presence. The regional government now keeps tabs on the treasures tucked throughout its pockets of wilderness. "We welcome them as long as they're not damaging park property," Patterson said. "It gets people out in the parks and enjoying the nature we have to offer."



Something's Different Here



WHAT'S NEW AT METRO PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

SCOUTERS MOUNTAIN NATURE PARK

Construction is underway at Scouters Mountain Nature Park, where Metro is collaborating with the City of Happy Valley and the North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District. By spring, you'll be able to park your car, hike a loop trail, eat lunch under a picnic shelter and use a public restroom. Stay tuned for news about an opening celebration. Meanwhile, Scouters Mountain is already a healthier place for wildlife and people. Metro removed invasive weeds from the mountain's northern slopes and thinned a stand of Douglas-fir to keep the biggest trees healthy and create additional wildlife habitat. In February, we'll reach a major milestone: adding thousands of native plants!

GRAHAM OAKS NATURE PARK

Look for new native grasses and wildflowers at Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville, where habitat restoration has continued since the grand opening in 2010. Dog owners will also find complimentary poop-scoop bags at the north and south entrances to the Ice Age Tonquin Trail – the only area where pooches are permitted on-leash. Coming soon: new recycling bins.

M. JAMES GLEASON MEMORIAL BOAT RAMP

Parking at M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp got a little easier last year. New single-car spots wrapped up a long list of upgrades, including full-fledged bathrooms and stormwater improvements.

MASON HILL PARK

The former site of a one-room school house, Mason Hill Park has graced the rolling hills of western Multnomah County for decades. Soon, the picturesque wayside will sport new benches, tables and fencing. Look out for improvements this spring.



ANNUAL PARKING PASS

Get your annual parking pass anytime if you're a frequent visitor to Oxbow and Blue Lake regional parks, Broughton Beach, Chinook Landing Marine Park and M. James Gleason Boat Ramp. Based on public feedback, Metro transformed its pass into a tag that hangs from your rearview mirror – good for 12 months after you buy it. The new style replaces a stickered pass that needed to be renewed each calendar year. An annual pass costs \$40 per year, \$30 for senior citizens and \$10 for drivers with disabilities.

To order your pass, visit:
www.oregonmetro.gov/parkspass
or call 503-665-4995, option 0.

Verde takes root

STORY BY Molly Simas / PHOTOGRAPHY BY Tom Miller, PrettyGoodProductions



METRO GRANTS HELP NONPROFIT GROW, EMPOWER CULLY NEIGHBORHOOD

Not every nonprofit would petition to take responsibility for a buried landfill. But when the City of Portland handed over the development rights of a brownfield in northeast Portland's Cully neighborhood, Verde executive director Alan Hipólito considered it a landmark victory.

Transforming the onetime landfill into a park and neighborhood hub fulfills Verde's mission of increasing environmental wealth in underserved communities. It also pulls together Metro's nature and transportation grants, showing how they can support the same community – and nurture a growing nonprofit.

Verde began as a program within Hacienda CDC, providing job training and employment opportunities at the nonprofit's affordable housing projects. Its first endeavors were small: developing plans for a nursery and restoring stream banks.

"We felt that the sustainability community, despite a foundational commitment to equity, wasn't really supporting low-income people and people of color," Hipólito said. "And at the same time, peer organizations working in those communities weren't really engaging sustainability as a strategy. So we built a bridge."

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants fund innovative ways to integrate nature into the urban landscape. Verde has been involved in several successful projects: developing Cully Park, planting trees along the Interstate 205 bicycle and pedestrian path, and transforming an alley into a community gathering space at Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in Cornelius.

"We push our applicants to achieve beyond just the idea of nature, and Verde is accomplishing so much more. They have community members doing soil testing, kids designing the playground, everyone's learning, they're keeping jobs local. The community is being empowered."

–Mary Rose Navarro, Nature in Neighborhoods

Regional Travel Options grants support active transportation projects that reduce the number of people driving alone, improve air quality and address community health issues.

"Verde has an entrepreneurial aspect. It's putting people to work and using the grant resources they receive to create jobs for people. That's still kind of a rare model in the nonprofit world."

–Daniel Kaempff, Regional Travel Options

Now an independent nonprofit, Verde attracts national funding attention and takes on complex projects region wide.

Let Us Build Cully Park is a park and garden designed and implemented by the community that shares its name. From the start, community members worked alongside Verde and partner organizations, conducting initial outreach, soil testing, park design and construction.

Hipólito views Verde's impact as twofold. First, he said, it's important to build community members' capacity to control their environmental future. Second, he hopes that Verde's work will spark interest in sustainability as a strategy to fight poverty.

Cully Park received \$577,000 from Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants, and a companion project to improve neighborhood transportation choices received \$130,000 from Metro's Regional Travel Options program. This successful collaboration sets the framework for other antipoverty organizations to pursue the same resources, Hipólito said. "There's the potential for what we're building here to replicate and serve other like communities."

To learn more or apply for a grant, visit: oregonmetro.gov/grants



Community members have been involved in every stage of the Cully Park project. That approach paid off at a recent community meeting, said Verde director Alan Hipólito, where somebody with an environmental science background was asking smart questions. "A neighbor who had worked in the park, who the questioner knew, was able to answer all of them," he said.

3 Questions with Bill Doran

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY BY Julie Cash



People come to Oxbow Regional Park to explore an ancient forest, fish in the Sandy River, camp along its banks and gather around a campfire. But, this year, many faithful visitors will notice something (or rather, someone) missing: Bill Doran, the longtime lead park ranger. Doran recently retired, ending a 36-year stint overseeing Oxbow. Before he left, Doran took a few minutes to reflect on his four decades at the helm of the park, some of the people he met along the way and his vision for the future.

Q : What will you miss about working at Oxbow?

A : Simply put, it's being in a great place, working in nature and showing up along a river instead of a building. Working with the natural beauty of the place and keeping the park rustic are what I will miss most. Less is better for me – I've always felt that. I will miss driving through the campground during the witching hour, the time people are packing up and moving out. They have so many good stories to share.

Q : What's an interesting unknown fact about Oxbow?

A : We have people from all over the world camping here. During our chats they've told me they are grateful for this place and truly amazed. These campers are well traveled – have been all over the U.S. in the national parks – and they are not finding any other place like Oxbow anywhere. I've enjoyed visiting with people from Germany, Britain, a number of Scandinavian countries and Canada. They are really grateful to have the opportunity to camp at the most special place: our beloved Oxbow.

Q : What would you like to see if you return to Oxbow in 10 years?

A : Ten years from now, honestly, I would like to see minimal development. I lean towards the rustic side of the park. In my 36 years in the park, the biggest change has been our new camping reservation system. I see full occupancy of the campground every day of the week in the future, once the word gets out. More people should have the opportunity to experience this beautiful place I've called home for almost four decades.

Fellow park ranger Jim Caudell reminisces about Bill Doran's run at Oxbow Regional Park.

At work, it is hard to separate the man from the place. During the span of Bill's career 700-year-old trees that cause visitors to speak with reverence have added two inches to their seven-foot circumference and three feet in length to their branches, gained about 108,000 pounds and grown a couple feet closer to the stars.

In these 36 years – depending on how you calculate it – over 254 trillion gallons of the Sandy River have flowed through Oxbow. Imagine enough water to fill Crater Lake 50 times. During this time, Bill and the Oxbow crew have hosted some 7 million people, roughly the population of Hong Kong.

To go behind the scenes with Bill Doran, read the full essay: Oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

Conserving Nature, One Acre at a Time

STORY BY *Kate Holleran* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *C. Bruce Forster*



As a Metro natural resource scientist, Kate Holleran sees nature's biggest challenges and most glorious surprises – and she has the muddy boots to prove it. Go behind the scenes on her journey to restore the region's voter-protected land.



THERE'S LIFE IN DEAD WOOD

Lifting an old board off the ground at Chehalem Ridge Natural Area, my colleague Ryan Jones and I stared in delight: Three species of snakes had taken refuge under the wood. We found a beautiful tri-colored Western gopher snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*), a rubber boa (*Charina bottae*) and a Western garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis fitch*) coiled up, each in its own corner. We were as surprised by our discovery as the snakes were to be discovered. After taking a few photos, we replaced the wood and had a great day in the forest of Chehalem Ridge, just 20 minutes from Hillsboro. The unsung hero of this story wasn't us scientists, or the gopher snake, or even the rubber boa – it was the wood.

One of the definitions for dead wood in the Merriam-Webster dictionary is “useless material.” But that's just a bad rap for the real stuff. From an ecological perspective, there's no substitute for down dead wood.

Fallen trees and branches, small twigs, root wads and old logs play many roles in a healthy natural area. Fungi inoculate and begin to degrade the down wood, attracting insects that bore into the wood to lay eggs, which in turn attract foraging mice and shrews and bears and flickers, to name just a few.

This cascade of benefits to wildlife increases with the size and amount of down dead wood we leave in the forest. Small mammals and amphibians use down logs as pathways – allowing for faster or safer navigation through

"The unsung hero of this story wasn't us scientists, or the gopher snake, or even the rubber boa – it was the wood."

a chaotic forest. Yes, snakes find shelter under down wood, and so does the elusive Pacific giant salamander (up to a foot long). Down dead wood holds soil in place, soaks up and stores moisture, provides a nursery bed for seedlings and, as it degrades and disappears into the ground, feeds nutrients into the soil. That's a lot of hard work for dead wood, and hardly the example of useless material.

The history of our natural areas includes agriculture, logging and development, all activities that remove wood from the land. Down wood is often too small and too scattered to provide all those benefits to wildlife, water quality and soil protection. As part of my restoration work, I look for ways to add wood back in: leaving fallen trees from thinning projects scattered across the site, or not burning slash piles created from clearing non-native species.

Only time will create the large live trees that become large down dead wood. In the meantime, any wood – even small wood – is good.



Featured Species:

Tall Oregon grape

Oregon's official state flower, *Mahonia aquifolium*, goes way back. Collected by Lewis and Clark, it has long been used by Native Americans for its healing powers. It's the namesake of Mahonia Hall – home to the state's governor.

The tall Oregon grape, as it's known, also finds a home at many of Metro's natural areas. A favorite for restoration projects, it provides great wildlife habitat and grows in difficult conditions. It's drought-resistant. And although it prefers full sun, it can tolerate partial shade.

In the right spot, tall Oregon grape can grow to 10 feet or more. But in native habitats, it is usually browsed back by deer or elk. Shiny green most of the year, it blooms in early spring; its bright spray of yellow flowers attracts pollinators such as hummingbirds and bumble bees. Over the summer a cluster of dark blue, and very bitter, berries develop. By fall they almost disappear, thanks to birds, deer and other wildlife.



It's Our Nature:

Learn its stories

Want to find mushrooms, follow cougar tracks and watch wild salmon spawn? Join a team of experienced naturalists to explore some of the region's most spectacular places during the third year of Metro's It's Our Nature field trip series.

Starting in March, a group of adults will immerse themselves in the region's natural areas, learning about natural history topics including geology, tracking, bird language and ethnobotany. Monthly adventures give you opportunities to experience the natural world hands-on as the seasons change. If you crave the behind-the-scenes story, learn by doing and don't mind getting muddy, this year-long journey is for you.

From bedrock to tree canopy, It's Our Nature explores some of Metro's 16,000 acres of wetlands, oak savannas and woodlands, Douglas fir forests and prairies. Lessons combine theory with place: participants employ all five senses at destinations like Smith and Bybee Wetlands, Clear Creek Canyon Natural Area, Oxbow Regional Park, Canemah Bluff Natural Area, and Mount Talbert and Cooper Mountain nature parks.

It's Our Nature is taught by veteran Metro naturalists. By sharing their expertise about the region, they create a community of learners and nature enthusiasts who in turn can show others how to be careful stewards of the land and its inhabitants.

To learn more and apply for a spot, visit: oregonmetro.gov/natureimmersion

Field Guide

SMITH & BYBEE WETLANDS

STORY BY *James Davis* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Metro staff*

Smith and Bybee Wetlands is a big surprise to many first-time visitors. Passing warehouses and railroad tracks in North Portland, you don't expect to find two lakes bursting with trees, plants and animals. But this 2,000-acre natural area offers some of the Portland region's best wildlife viewing.

Your first big choice: whether to explore by foot or boat. The Interlakes Trail passes through huge cottonwoods, other wetland trees and grasslands, to several spots with great views of the natural area's two namesake lakes. This mixture of habitats provides homes for many kinds of wildlife, especially birds.

From mid-April through late June, see the lakes up-close by paddling a kayak or canoe, or venture out in winter if you're willing to brave the cold. Start from the boat launch on Smith Lake, the larger lake along the southern shore of the Columbia River. To the west, the remains of "the north Slough" give you a front-row view of many mammals as you cross to Bybee Lake.

No matter what time of year you visit, you'll find something exciting at Smith and Bybee. Discover basking turtles in the spring, creepy-crawly insects in the summer, migrating birds in the fall and soaring raptors in the winter. You can nearly always spot muskrats, beavers, black-tailed deer, raccoons, cottontail rabbits, river otters, minks, long-tailed weasels or coyotes.

This abundance of wildlife takes Smith and Bybee back to its roots. Like all land along the Columbia, this area changed dramatically as the region's population began to grow in the 1880s. From 1940 to 1990, part of the site served as the St. Johns Landfill, which accepted most of the region's trash. Metro took over management, closed the landfill and started the transition back to nature.

Today, Smith and Bybee Wetlands is one of the most outstanding places to see native wildlife in a Pacific Northwest city.

For more information, visit:
oregonmetro.gov/smithandbybee

BE ON THE LOOKOUT!



SMITH AND BYBEE WETLANDS NATURAL AREA

5300 N MARINE DR.
PORTLAND, OR 97217

DRIVING

Take Interstate 5 north to exit 307, Delta Park/Marine Drive. Head west 2.2 miles on Marine Drive and look for Smith and Bybee on your left.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO

Smith and Bybee is open sunrise to sunset.
No bikes or dogs, please.

AMENITIES

A picnic shelter, bathrooms, bike rack, drinking fountain and site map can all be found in the parking area. The Interlakes Trail is paved, flat and wheelchair-accessible.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

You're a short drive from St. Johns, where you can fuel up with coffee, grab a bite to eat or browse local shops for books, toys, cameras and more. For ideas, visit stjohnsmainstreet.org

SEASON BY SEASON

SPRING: Explore by kayak or canoe for an up-close look at lush, green scenery and abundant wildlife. Many migrating birds pass through, and 35 species of songbirds nest here. They sing like crazy during breeding season, especially early in the day. Watch for Western painted turtles basking in the sun on floating logs. Smith and Bybee has one of the biggest populations in Oregon, and one of the easiest to see. On the right side of the Interlakes Trail, a wooden railing overlooking Bybee Lake provides such reliable views, it's dubbed "Turtle Turnout." Meanwhile, hibernating animals get active and focus on breeding. Look for Pacific chorus frog tadpoles in the water, and garter snakes sunbathing on logs or along the trail.

SUMMER: July and August are quiet as birds eat, hide, molt and grow to survive the coming seasons. Mammals cruise around near sunset looking for food, but they're the hardest animals to spot; they can sense people, especially if we're talking! One group of animals that's pretty obvious: insects and spiders. Spider webs

laced with cottonwood seeds nearly cover the trees, creating a "haunted forest." In the water, phenomenal plant growth can make paddling almost impossible.

FALL: Autumn is a time of change. Migrating birds leave with their young, while thousands of ducks that nested in the Arctic arrive for the winter and feast on water plants loaded with seeds. Shorebirds, like killdeer and sandpipers, fill up on food while they head south. Look for famous black and orange caterpillars called "wooly bears," which drop to the ground and dig a place to hibernate until spring.

WINTER: Without evergreens, this wetland forest looks naked. From the Interlakes Trail, you can look right through the trees and see the lakes – an opportunity to spot mammals and big, perched birds. This is the best time to see bald eagles, red-tailed hawks and other raptors. By February, male Pacific chorus frogs call for mates in big gatherings at the edge of water. If snow sticks, you might be lucky enough to see rabbit, deer or coyote tracks.

OUR COMMON GROUND



The Intertwine is 3,000 square miles of parks and natural spaces, 1,250 miles of trails, 32 cities, 2 states, and one great idea we can all agree on.

Daycation at Fernhill Wetlands

The finest jewel in the City of Forest Grove's "Emerald Necklace" glitters in winter — and honks, warbles, and trills. Just 25 miles west of downtown Portland, Fernhill Wetlands is a former effluent holding pond that's been rehabilitated into 600 acres of world-class birding.

How-To: WALK AMONG WINTER WATERFOWL

1. **Wander the wetlands.** As you amble Fernhill Wetlands' easy 1.16 mile loop, scan for snipes and grosbeaks, osprey and egrets.
2. **Wet your whistle.** Just a mile west on Hwy 47, toast your trek at SakéOne, America's leading brewer of craft saké, right here in downtown Forest Grove.
3. **Wind down the day.** Birds of a feather soak together at McMenamin's Grand Lodge 102-degree pool. Grab a bite if you're feeling peckish.

Use TriMet Trip Planner to plan your Daycation at www.trimet.org.



"My ears perk up when I hear the kuk-kuk-kuk of a pied-billed grebe."
— Dolores Doe



NICE DAY FOR THE FLYWAY

Each fall and spring, nearly 50 neotropical bird species dot the skies of The Intertwine as they migrate along the 9,000-mile route known as The Pacific Flyway.

Some overwinter right here in Fernhill Wetlands, a natural area owned by the public utility Clean Water Services.

From buffleheads to tundra swans, Fernhill Wetlands provides a cold-weather respite for thousands of waterfowl and shorebirds.

Featured Partner:

JACKSON BOTTOM WETLANDS PRESERVE

Our passion is connecting people of all ages with the wetlands and wildlife of this amazing watershed.

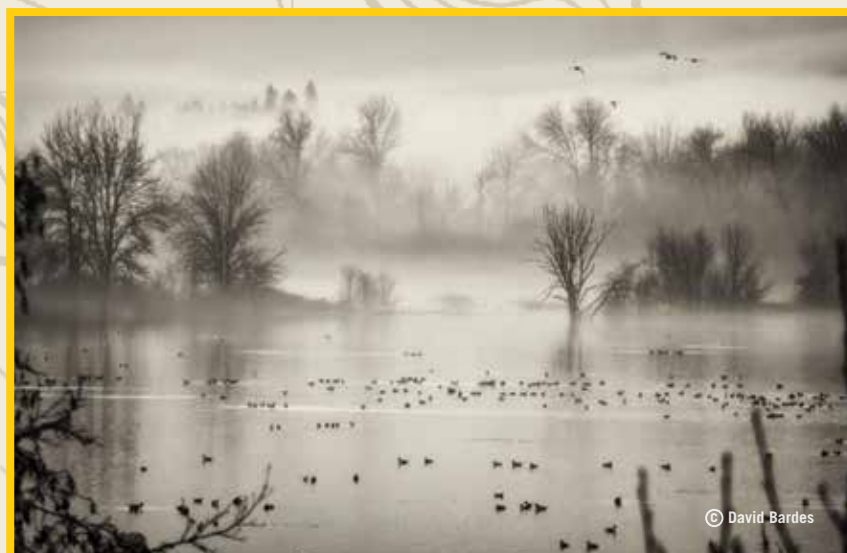
— Sarah Pinnock, Wetlands Education Specialist

Just seven miles east of Fernhill Wetlands on the Tualatin Valley Highway, Hillsboro's Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve beckons. View egrets, mergansers, pintails and

kingfishers from trails lacing the thick rushes of this 635-acre refuge. Need a warm-up? Head indoors to scope out the Education Center's dynamic displays — including the nation's only authentic bald eagle nest exhibit.



American Bald Eagle



© David Bardes

The Intertwine is:

OUR NETWORK OF
PARKS, TRAILS, AND
NATURAL SPACES

© Kevin L. Hayes

100+ ALLIANCE
PARTNERS

© Gary Witt

SOMETHING FOR
EVERYONE



THEINTERTWINE.ORG



A Canyon Rising



STORY BY *Laura Oppenheimer Odom* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Fred Joe*

**In Oregon City, Newell Creek Canyon
is on the brink of a transformation.**



After taking care of Newell Creek Canyon for more than a decade, Adam Stellmacher can give two radically different tours of the forest that unfurls along the eastern edge of Oregon City. He'll show you a majestic grove of Western red cedar trees, tell tales of coyotes and deer and herons, lead you down a zig-zagging trail to a stream he affectionately named Tumble Creek. But he can't ignore the overturned shopping carts, fast food wrappers and beer cans, tents, smoldering rings of fire, the unauthorized trails he closes only to find a new one built 10 feet away.

This year, the region is invited to help reconcile these dueling versions of Newell Creek – to transform it from a natural area with a lot of potential and a lot of problems into a beloved destination. “Nobody knows about this place. That’s what keeps me going,” says Stellmacher, Metro’s lead natural resource technician. “This is really a showcase place, and it’s a great story.”

Newell Creek Canyon has a readymade audience, surrounded by Oregon City neighborhoods and Clackamas Community College. But it’s easy to miss the natural area as you drive down Beaver Creek Road, a busy suburban thoroughfare where you can get an oil change, a tattoo or a workout. Behind businesses, the land slopes toward Newell Creek; fir and maple trees rise toward the sky.

“Wherever you approach Oregon City from, you don’t see it until you’re almost on top of it because there are a lot of trees and neighborhoods. It’s pretty well disguised,” says Oregon City Mayor Doug Neeley. “So the opportunities abound in the urban forest.”

Determined to prevent development that could damage the watershed, neighbors helped campaign for Metro’s 1995 bond measure to protect nature across the Portland metropolitan area. Sha Spady walked door to door with her 135-pound Rottweiler-German shepherd mix toting a “vote yes” placard, and helped install a solar-paneled sign along Oregon 213. As cars sped by at night, “Save Newell Creek Canyon” beamed from the dark forest.

The bond measure passed, and Metro swiftly began buying land. “This was really Metro coming in to save the day,” says Spady, who lives along the canyon on a farm her family bought during the 1940s. “But Metro saved the day because citizens of Oregon City and Clackamas County rallied to

get the votes and the support to pass the bond measure.”

Over the course of two bond measures and nearly two decades, Metro’s Newell Creek Canyon natural area expanded to 215 acres. It features some of the region’s most spectacular wildlife. On one dark, still night years ago, a cougar ran up to Spady. During a tour, red-legged frogs appeared as if on cue. And, one morning, sunlight bathed a white downy owl perched on a tree stump, calling for its mother as Spady watched in awe.

Wildlife will only multiply as the habitat gets healthier. The Greater Oregon City Watershed Council launched a major restoration project in 2012, in partnership with Oregon City, Metro, private landowners and the Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District. This spring, they’ll finish their work to control invasive plants and replace them with species that belong in a Pacific Northwest forest. People don’t realize what a treasure they have at Newell Creek Canyon, says Rita Baker, coordinator of the watershed council. “When you drive up 213, you see, ‘Oh, look at all the pretty trees.’ But you don’t really understand that, at the bottom, is a creek.”

Restoring the canyon will require a close look at the human environment, too. Like many urban natural areas, Newell Creek provides an outlet valve for the community’s transient population – and the camping, litter and habitat impacts that come along with homelessness. Stellmacher and his Metro teammates work with local police and social service agencies to move campers. They helped one couple transition to an apartment after living in the forest for more than a decade. But for every success story, problems accumulate: during a single volunteer work day, 35 shopping carts were hauled out of the canyon.



Without resources to plan the future of Newell Creek Canyon, Metro did its best to respond to problems day-to-day. “The thing is, you’ve got to be persistent,” Stellmacher says. “You’ve got to stay with it.”

The possibilities changed last year, when voters approved a levy to help care for regional parks and natural areas – and improve them not only for wildlife habitat and water quality, but also for visitors. Newell Creek Canyon is one of the most significant projects underway. During the next year, Metro will engage the community in a long-term vision: What activities should be allowed? What would make you feel safe here? How can we protect the forest while allowing people to explore it?

It’s important to find a balance, says neighbor William Gifford, who walks in the canyon daily. “By putting the trails in, you bring more people in that can destroy things. The flipside is, if you don’t bring people down there, they don’t know what it is they’re protecting.”

After a plan comes together, Metro will invest in the ingredients to carry it out. But even with new trails, signs or native plants, Newell Creek Canyon will never be “done.” Like all natural areas, Spady says, it will change over time.

“The biggest legacy we could leave after 25 years is, we’ve done nothing except provided the opportunity to heal,” she says. “And this is what it looks like.”

To get involved, visit: oregonmetro.gov/newell



Metro acquired land for Newell Creek Canyon Natural Area piece by piece, starting in the mid-1990s – good news for neighbors like Sha Spady (above). Habitat is getting healthier, thanks to a partnership with the Greater Oregon City Watershed Council, Oregon City and the Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District.

In Person:
Newell Creek Canyon

SAT
01
FEB

WINTER WALK

Join a Metro naturalist to explore the trails, trees and creeks of Newell Creek Canyon. This two-hour walk will cover uneven, sometimes steep terrain at a moderate pace.

WHERE Directions provided to registered participants

WHEN 10:30a.m.-12:30p.m.

COST Free

AGES 10 and older

REGISTER
oregonmetro.gov/calendar

DIFFICULTY

SAT
08
MAR

VOLUNTEER VENTURE

Help restore the canyon with native plants. Volunteer leaders will give you the tools and training to help plant native species in the natural area.

WHERE Directions provided to registered participants

WHEN 9a.m.-noon

COST Free

AGES 10 and older

REGISTER 503-797-1653 Or
bonnie.shoffner@oregonmetro.gov

DIFFICULTY

Get Involved



Raptor Road Trip

PHOTOGRAPH BY *Julie Cash*

Explore Sauvie Island in search of magnificent eagles, hawks and falcons that spend the winter here. On this special day devoted to raptors, naturalists and hawk experts host activities at four locations around the island. Enjoy guided bird viewing, meet live raptors up close and see hawk identification displays. Hot drinks and donuts will be available in the morning.

When you check in at Kruger's Farm Market, you'll receive a one-day Sauvie Island Wildlife Area parking permit, event guide, birding map and checklist, and picture handouts to help identify birds of prey. Allow about three hours to visit all the stations. Sponsored by the Audubon Society of Portland, Metro, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and HawkWatch International.

Learn more: oregonmetro.gov/calendar

SAT
08
FEB

WHERE Kruger's Farm Market 17100 NW Sauvie Island Road, Portland OR

WHEN 9a.m.-2p.m.

COST \$10 per vehicle (cash only, please)

AGES Family-friendly

DIFFICULTY



Classes, Volunteer and Grants Opportunities

SUN
26
JAN

STORIES IN THE STONES ON MOUNT TALBERT

Explore the rugged winter beauty of a white oak woodland. Along the way, stories in the stones and land formations help you understand the region's geology. This unique lava dome is part of a series of cinder cones and small shield volcanoes that began bubbling almost 3 million years ago. Trails are rough and steep in places. Co-hosted by North Clackamas Parks and Recreation.

WHERE Mt. Talbert Nature Park, 10695 SE Mather Rd., Clackamas

WHEN 10:30a.m.-1p.m.

COST \$5 adult, under 18 free

AGES 10 and older

REGISTER 503-794-8092

DIFFICULTY



SAT
22
FEB

WINTER BIRDS AT SMITH & BYBEE WETLANDS

Explore a waterfowl wonderland with thousands of ducks, geese and swans spending the winter. On a good day, you can see a dozen species of waterfowl and water birds such as grebes, gulls, coots, cormorants and herons. This is also the best time of year to see bald eagles and other birds of prey. Meet in the parking lot. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair.

WHERE Smith & Bybee Wetlands, 5300 N. Marine Drive, Portland

WHEN 10a.m.-12:30p.m.

COST \$6 per person, \$11 per family

AGES Teens and adults

REGISTER oregonmetro.gov/calendar

DIFFICULTY



SAT
01
MAR

STAYIN' ALIVE: WINTER SURVIVAL SHELTERS FOR FAMILIES

Take shelter! Hold the driving wind and rain at bay with simple skills that every squirrel depends on. In this family-oriented class, learn the basics of building a winter survival shelter that keeps you safe and warm without a sleeping bag or fire. You'll even get a chance to build forts by the river.

WHERE Oxbow Regional Park, 3010 SE Oxbow Parkway, Gresham

WHEN 11a.m.-2:30p.m.

COST \$6 per person, \$11 per family; parking fee \$5/vehicle \$7/bus

AGES Family-friendly

REGISTER oregonmetro.gov/calendar

DIFFICULTY



SUN
02
MAR

WINTER TWIGS OF GRAHAM OAKS NATURE PARK

Wish you could tell one evergreen from another, or identify a tree in winter by looking at its bark or buds? Can you read the history of a piece of land by looking at its forest? Unravel these mysteries and more on a walk at Graham Oaks Nature Park – a living laboratory of Northwest trees.

WHERE Graham Oaks Nature Park, 11825 SW Wilsonville Rd., Wilsonville

WHEN 1p.m.-3:30p.m.

COST \$6 per person, \$11 per family

AGES 12 and older

REGISTER

oregonmetro.gov/calendar

DIFFICULTY



SAT
18
JAN

NATIVE PLANT CENTER VOLUNTEER VENTURES

Help care for rare seeds, bulbs and plant materials at Metro's Native Plant Center in Tualatin, supporting regional restoration projects. Winter activities include harvesting and planting native bulbs, planting seeds, transplanting seedlings and maintaining the nursery. This is a family-friendly opportunity, and no experience is needed. Gloves, tools, water and snack provided. Wheelchair accessible with prior arrangement.

WHERE Native Plant Center, 2661 SW Borland Rd., Tualatin

WHEN 9a.m.-1p.m.

MORE DATES

oregonmetro.gov/calendar

COST Free

AGES 10 and older

REGISTER 503-319-8292

DIFFICULTY



SAT
01
FEB

SAT
15
FEB

First and
third
Saturdays

TUE
11
MAR

NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS RESTORATION GRANT WORKSHOP

Learn how to craft a successful application for Metro's Nature in Neighborhood restoration grants, securing funding for a project in your community. Learn what makes a successful project, network with potential partners and hear how Metro grants are transforming land across the region.

WHERE Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland

WHEN 5:30-7:30p.m.

COST Free

AGES Adults only, please

DIFFICULTY N/A



DIFFICULTY KEY



EASY



MODERATE



STRENUOUS

Destination Guide

Key



1

BLUE LAKE REGIONAL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/bluelake

VISIT: 20500 NE Marine Dr., Fairview

PARKING: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Whether you're looking for serious exercise or a lazy day on the water, a kid-friendly romp or a grownup picnic, you'll find it at Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview. Rent a paddle boat or canoe, cast a line or go for a swim in the park's namesake, a natural lake fed by underground springs. You can also explore a nature-themed playground, a 'sprayground,' a discovery garden, sports facilities and a wetland with a viewing platform and trail. Don't miss the gold-level disc golf course!



2

BROUGHTON BEACH

oregonmetro.gov/broughton

VISIT: 4356 NE Marine Drive, Portland

PARKING: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Throw on your swimsuit and flipflops, grab your towel and head to one of Portland's best urban beaches. Across from Portland International Airport, Broughton Beach provides a clean, safe, sandy place to play along the Columbia River. You can enjoy walking, beachcombing, sunbathing, picnicking, swimming and more. On a clear day, you have a great view of Mount Hood.



3

CANEMAH BLUFF NATURAL AREA

oregonmetro.gov/canemah

VISIT: 815 Fourth Ave., Oregon City

Canemah Bluff Natural Area is a perfect place to gaze at the Willamette River below, marvel at oak trees overhead, photograph colorful spring wildflowers and learn about this historic area in Oregon City. Start your journey at Canemah Neighborhood Children's Park, where you'll find picnic tables, a playground, a basketball court and restrooms. Continue into the natural area, following more than a mile of unpaved trails through a mosaic of habitats. Birders can spot chipping sparrows, red-breasted sapsuckers, white-breasted nuthatches, orange-crowned warblers, hawks and eagles.



4

COOPER MTN. NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/coopermountain

VISIT: 18892 SW Kemmer Rd., Beaverton

Hike, jog, watch wildlife or simply enjoy views of the Chehalem Mountains and Tualatin Valley at Cooper Mountain Nature Park, just south of Beaverton. More than three miles of trails pass through forests, prairies and oak woodlands. If you are quiet and lucky, you might catch a glimpse of rare animals such as Northern red-legged frogs and Western gray squirrels. Young visitors can explore a nature-inspired playground, and adventurers with wheelchairs can enjoy a three-fourths-mile loop trail.



5

GLENDOVEER GOLF COURSE & FITNESS TRAIL

oregonmetro.gov/glendoveer

VISIT: 14015 NE Glisan St., Portland

TEE TIME: playglendoveer.com or 503.253.7507

In the mood for golf, tennis, jogging or a stroll? Make a beeline for Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail – a hub of sports and community in outer Northeast Portland. Beginners often start with the relatively flat, par-71 west course; experienced players take on hills and bunkers at the par-73 east course. A covered driving range is heated during colder months. Reserve one of four indoor tennis courts, sign up for lessons – or enjoy the two-mile fitness trail. Whichever sport you choose, refuel at the Ringside Steakhouse.



6

GRAHAM OAKS NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/grahamoaks

VISIT: 11825 SW Wilsonville Rd., Wilsonville

Ride your bike through a restored oak woodland, stroll through a conifer forest and spot birds from a wetland overlook at Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville, where three miles of trails let you choose your adventure. Watch for native wildlife such as white-breasted nuthatches, Western bluebirds, orange-crowned warblers and Western gray squirrels. Five plazas make ideal spots to rest, reflect and learn about Graham Oaks' history, from Kalapuyan tribes who gathered food to the family that farmed the land. Explore beyond the park on the regional Ice Age Tonquin Trail.



7

HOWELL TERRITORIAL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/howell

VISIT: 13901 NW Howell Park Rd., Portland

Visit a piece of Oregon's past, nestled among farms on Sauvie Island. The region's natural and cultural history come together in one serene setting at Howell Territorial Park. Bring a picnic to enjoy under the shelter, bring binoculars to watch for birds that flock to the park's wetlands, bring a basket to pick apples from the pioneer orchard. Learn about Sauvie Island and the families who shaped it, and relax in the shade of an authentically restored 1850s farmhouse. Howell also makes a great place for a wedding.



8

MASON HILL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/masonhill

VISIT: NW Johnson Rd at intersection with Munson Rd., Portland

Mason Hill Park provides a scenic wayside for cyclists exploring the rolling hills beyond Forest Park, in western Multnomah County. Home to a one-room schoolhouse from 1891 to 1944, the park still feels light years removed from modern life. Lollygag in the shade, take in spectacular views of the Tualatin Valley and eat a picnic lunch under the shelter, which has the original school bell mounted on top. If you come by car, be prepared to park in a narrow roadside spot.



9

MOUNT TALBERT NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/mounttalbert

VISIT: 10695 SE Mather Rd., Clackamas

A forested oasis towers above busy roads, shopping centers and neighborhoods in Clackamas. Slip into Mount Talbert Nature Park to explore the four-mile trail network, check out the views and enjoy a picnic. Keep your eye out for deer, Western gray squirrels, pileated and hairy woodpeckers, white-breasted nuthatches and Western tanagers. Mount Talbert is the largest in a string of extinct volcanoes and lava domes that stretch across the east side of the region.



10


OXBOW REGIONAL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

VISIT: 3010 SE Oxbow Parkway, Gresham

PARKING: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Oxbow Regional Park provides a perfect launch point for swimming, kayaking, rafting or fishing in the majestic Sandy River Gorge. When you’ve had enough water, explore 15 miles of trails through Oxbow’s ancient forests. Reserve a camping spot for the night, and gather around the fire for nature activities and music. You might bump into mink, beavers, raccoons, fox, deer, osprey, songbirds, elk, black bears or cougars. Every fall, nature puts on one of its greatest shows: salmon return to their spawning grounds to lay their last eggs, before dying in the waters where they were born.





Coming soon: opening this spring

11

SCOUTERS MTN. NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/scoutersmountain

Rising above Happy Valley, Scouters Mountain Nature Park offers a lovely vantage point to admire Mount Hood – and slip into a shady forest. Climb the steep, fir-lined road to the parking lot. From there, you can walk a loop trail or enjoy lunch under a handsome picnic shelter. If you ever visited the Boy Scouts lodge that used to stand here, you might recognize salvaged pieces. Although the land is now a public park, its spirit of adventure remains.





12

SMITH AND BYBEE WETLANDS NATURAL AREA

oregonmetro.gov/smithandbybee

VISIT: 5300 N. Marine Drive, Portland

Surrounded by warehouses and port terminals in North Portland, Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area is one of the region’s best-kept secrets. Take the Interlakes Trail or go by boat to explore one of America’s largest urban wetlands. Either way, you might find beavers, river otters, black-tailed deer, osprey, bald eagles and Western painted turtles. You’ll also find a water control structure that is restoring this network of sloughs, wetlands and forests.



Boat Ramps | oregonmetro.gov/boats

13

CHINOOK LANDING MARINE PARK

VISIT: 22300 NE Marine Dr., Fairview

PARKING: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

With six launching lanes on the Columbia River, Chinook Landing is one of Oregon’s largest public boating facilities. The park offers picnic and viewing areas, wetland and wildlife habitat, disabled-accessible docks, an archery range, restrooms and a seasonal river patrol station.

14

M. JAMES GLEASON MEMORIAL BOAT RAMP

VISIT: NE 43rd Ave. & NE Marine Dr., Portland

PARKING: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Minutes from downtown Portland, the Gleason boat ramp provides a convenient public launch on the Columbia River. Recently upgraded amenities include extra launch lanes, boarding docks, restrooms, single-car parking, river maps and a river patrol office.

15

SAUVIE ISLAND BOAT RAMP

VISIT: Burlington Ferry & Sauve Island Rds., Portland

Enjoy the quiet waters and wildlife of the Multnomah Channel. Recent improvements include a new launch ramp, parking lot, accessible restrooms, lighting and native landscaping.

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Tools For Living

Make a clean sweep

For a clean home without the chemically floral scents of detergents, air fresheners and bathroom sanitizers – or their toxic side effects – use this quick guide. It'll help you convert your cleaning cupboard from an array of single-use products into a frugal, effective toolkit.



Cleaner	Find it	Use it	Replace it
BAKING SODA (SODIUM BICARBONATE)	Grocery store baking ingredients aisle	Scrub sinks, pots and stains; polish sterling or silver plate	Abrasive cleaners like Ajax and silver polishers
WHITE VINEGAR	Grocery store condiments aisle	Clean glass; remove soap scum, grease and mineral deposits	Window cleaners like Windex Drain cleaners like Drano
HYDROGEN PEROXIDE (3%)	Pharmacy or grocery store first aid aisle	Brighten whites in the laundry, disinfect surfaces	Chlorine bleach
PLANT-BASED LIQUID SOAP (CASTILE SOAP)	Grocery store natural products section	Wash cars, mop floors, wash clothes, clean marble counters	Liquid car wash, laundry detergents, floor care products
WASHING SODA (SODIUM CARBONATE)	Grocery store laundry supplies aisle	Cut oven grease, remove wine stains, boost cleaning power of laundry soap	Oven cleaners, all-purpose cleaners like OxiClean



Cleaning recipes

WASH THE WINDOWS

Is winter’s gray gloom invading your living room? Days are short, yes, but maybe your windows need cleaning. Brighten your indoor life with a quick window wash:

- 1 Mix 1 quart warm water with 1/4 cup white distilled vinegar or 2 tablespoons lemon juice (or use both).
- 2 Pour into a spray bottle. Label it.
- 3 Extra boost: use a squeegee to swipe windows fast, and a straight-edge razor to lift off bug specks or paint. Old washcloths, thin and lintless, also make great window-cleaners.
- 4 Don’t forget the screens: remove a year’s worth of dust, pollen and urban dirt by wiping down screens several times with a rag rinsed in dish soap and warm water.

KEEP MISERY AT BAY

The best defense against a cold or the flu: frequent hand-washing with soap and water, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Antibacterial soaps, it says, are not needed and are, indeed, part of the problem: bacteria are developing resistance to them.

Plant-based soaps (like Kirk’s Castile bar soap and Dr. Bronner’s Castile bar and liquid soaps) are basic tools for keeping healthy this winter. Try this for an antibacterial boost:

- 1 Add 10 drops of tea tree oil to 4 ounces of liquid Castile soap.
- 2 Mix and pour into a pump (maybe an empty bottle of that antibacterial liquid soap you used to buy).

For more recipes on green cleaning visit: oregonmetro.gov/greencleaners



Regional Roundup



WILLAMETTE FALLS

At the base of North America's second-highest volume waterfall is one of the Portland region's most promising development sites: the former Blue Heron mill at Willamette Falls.

But for all its potential, nestled between the falls and the resurgent commercial district of downtown Oregon City, Blue Heron is also full of questions. Officials from Oregon City, Metro and other partners are working with the public to create a vision for the 23-acre site.

A lot depends on who owns the property, which has been managed by a bankruptcy trustee since the mill closed in 2011. As of December, Portland-based Langley Investment Properties had reached a tentative agreement to buy the land; the deal could take as much as two years to complete. Regardless of the outcome, Oregon City residents will get some clarity this spring, when the City Commission is slated to approve planning and zoning.

Metro awarded Oregon City a \$300,000 grant to support the effort, and leaders from the regional government have been pushing for years to open up public access to the waterfalls. State leaders are on board as well; the Oregon Legislature committed \$5 million to prepare the land for development, provided the plan meets the approval of the governor.

To see Willamette Falls Legacy Project updates and give feedback, visit: rediscoverthefalls.com

CLIMATE SCENARIOS

How should the region curb greenhouse gas emissions? This year, you can weigh in on three possible approaches: continuing on the present path, sticking to long-term plans or launching new approaches that are more aggressive – and more expensive.

The Metro Council is expected to come up with a strategy by December, meeting the Oregon Legislature's requirement that the region cut tailpipe emissions from passenger vehicles by 20 percent per person.

Metro officials believe most of those cuts can be achieved simply by sparking the kind of development already planned in the region's cities – walkable downtowns and small business districts close to communities that most residents call home. But that won't get the region all the way to the mandate, leaving Metro and local officials to figure out a way to close the gap. To join the conversation, visit: oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios

BOOSTING TOURISM

A proposal to boost tourism in the Portland region is one step closer to reality after Multnomah County, Portland and Metro all approved a finance plan for a proposed Oregon Convention Center hotel.

The \$198 million, 600-room Hyatt hotel would be built just north of the convention center. The public would directly contribute \$14 million, with Metro supporting a \$60 million construction bond that would be repaid by room taxes on Hyatt visitors.

In return, Hyatt would hold 500 rooms to recruit conventions – many of which opt for sites with large hotels nearby.

Metro officials hoped to finish a development agreement with Hyatt and its construction partner, Mortenson Development, early this year.

To stay up-to-date on these projects and more, visit: oregonmetro.gov/news

Native plants bring nature home

BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES HELP KEEP YOUR GARDEN HEALTHY

Glimpsing the speckled wing of a spotted towhee or getting buzzed by a rufous hummingbird in your own backyard is thrill enough. But winged friends not only add beauty to your home and neighborhood, they also eat common garden pests like aphids and root weevils.

Bring beneficial wildlife to your yard by planting native plants. Metro and local partners have created a comprehensive native plants guide for Willamette Valley yards with details on wildlife benefits, sun and water requirements and other information.

Native plants and natural gardening practices:

- Save water, energy, time and money
- Attract birds, butterflies and beneficial wildlife to your yard
- Keep local streams and rivers healthy
- Protect fish and wildlife habitat

Ask Metro for a native plants guide at 503-234-3000, find one at a Master Gardener booth in your community or download it at: oregonmetro.gov/nativeplants



Ask Metro

WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?

Recycling specialist Patrick Morgan answers calls to Metro's recycling hotline about everything from plastic containers and light bulbs to jigsaw puzzles, toilet seats and aluminum boats. After you chat with Patrick – or any of the hotline's recycling experts – the world is a bit less confusing.

Q : What happens to the plastics I recycle at the curb?

A : For the plastics recycled curbside, there are well-developed markets where those materials can be sold. The most important thing is to put only what is allowed in the curbside bin. Resist the urge to throw in other items.

Q : Can I recycle jigsaw puzzle pieces?

A : If they're cardboard, recycle them at the curb. (Or, if the puzzle has all its pieces, consider donating it.)

Q : What about holiday light strings?

A : The copper wire inside light strings is valuable. Take them to almost any recycling depot that accepts metal.

RECYCLING INFORMATION HOTLINE:

8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m | Monday through Saturday | 503-234-3000

METRO'S ONLINE RECYCLING TOOL:

oregonmetro.gov/findarecycler



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

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Portland, OR

It's (Y)our Nature

Michael Barton | Graham Oaks Nature Park

"My son, Patrick, looks for bugs along a trail at Graham Oaks Nature Park while I take a photo. In the background houses skirt the north side of the park, a reminder that in Wilsonville and much of the Portland metro region, nature can be close to home. On this spring visit, we enjoyed the trail through the open savanna, where it will take some time for all the newly planted oaks to grow – as well as the trail winding through the oak woodlands, providing plenty of opportunities to turn over a log and look for more bugs."

- Michael Barton, Portland



IT'S (Y)OUR NATURE

What does nature look like through your lens? For a chance to appear in this space and win tickets to Portland's Centers for the Arts, submit a photo taken at a Metro park or natural area – your friends and family, a slice of wildlife or a beautiful sunset, for example.

Send your picture to :
ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov
(as big as possible, please) and describe your experience in 100 words or less. Where were you? What were you doing? What captured your attention?



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