

Our Big Backyard



Metro

Fall 2016

Planting season

Go behind the scenes to see what it takes to plant hundreds of thousands of native plants and seeds.

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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.

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Pets policy

To protect plants, wildlife and people, Metro does not allow pets at most regional parks and natural areas. Pets can damage sensitive habitat and threaten wildlife the region has worked to protect. In natural areas where pets are not allowed, people see more wildlife and get closer to it. Seeing-eye dogs or other service animals are allowed. Please bring cleanup materials.



Parks and nature news

Parks and nature levy

5-year renewal on November 2016 ballot

Photography by Laura Oppenheimer Odom

Metro’s Parks and Natural Areas Local Option Levy protects clean water, restores fish and wildlife habitat, and connects people with nature across 17,000 acres of parks, trails and natural areas. The Metro Council is asking voters to consider the Parks and Natural Areas levy in November 2016, which, if passed, would make the funding available for five additional years at the same rate to homeowners.

About half the current levy funding maintains and restores habitat on land that has been acquired over the course of two decades and previous voter-approved bond measures.

The other half of the money improves Metro parks, opens new sites for public access, expands volunteer and education programming, and funds grants to community nature projects.

The current levy costs homeowners within Metro’s boundaries in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties 9.6 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value — \$20 for a home assessed at \$200,000. If passed, levy funding would be extended through June 2023 at the same rate as the current levy. The proposed levy would bring in about \$16 million per year.

Source: Metro Council Resolution No. 16-4690

For details about the levy renewal, including project selection criteria, go to oregonmetro.gov/nature or call Metro’s Parks and Nature team at 503-797-1545.

Like what you see?

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On the cover: Amelia Reed, a seasonal employee at Metro, gathers camas seeds at Willamette Narrows south of West Linn. Camas is a lily-like plant whose bulb was a major food source for Native Americans. The seeds will be used to restore natural areas throughout the metro region. Photography by Rebecca Koffman



Clockwise from left: Juan Carlos Gonzalez, development director at Centro Cultural de Washington County, holds up a self-heal plant and explains its uses. Looking on is Angie Jimenez, who works at the domestic violence resource center co-located at Centro Cultural. Gonzalez uses a map of Chehalem Ridge to explain some of the restoration work that Metro is doing across the site. Interns from the Zoo Animal Presenters program at the Oregon Zoo hike to Wapato Point on Chehalem Ridge. In the lead is Yaquelin Garcia, followed by Nathaniel Bowman, Jose Rojas and Dreyne Jackson. Gonzalez asks the interns to find Douglas fir cones. The cone scales have distinctive three-pronged bracts – similar to leaves – between them that look like a mouse’s hindquarters and tail.



Partnership with Centro Cultural helps connect Latinos with nature

Story and photography by Rebecca Koffman

On Chehalem Ridge, high above Gaston, nine people stand in tall grass. Their eyes are closed, palms raised and fingers outspread. Each time they hear a sound, they fold one finger down. After 10 sounds they open their eyes and gaze at the blue hills in the distance.

Finally, their guide, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, breaks the silence. “What did you hear?”

There’s a chorus of responses:

“Three different kinds of bird.”

“The wind through the grass.”

“Someone cracking their knuckles.”

Gonzalez is development director at Centro Cultural de Washington County, an education, social services and economic development nonprofit that is helping Metro bring the Latino community into the planning process for a future nature park at Chehalem Ridge. This summer and fall, Centro staff will offer bilingual tours of the 1,200-acre site to the local community and lead other outreach efforts with the Latino community.

The work with Centro Cultural is just one of a number of collaborations through Partners in Nature, Metro’s program with culturally specific organizations throughout the region to better connect diverse communities with nature. The partnership between Centro Cultural and Metro will help make Chehalem Ridge more welcoming to the region’s increasingly diverse residents. At the same time, the partnership will help Centro Cultural build capacity and allow staff to gain experience and expertise in community engagement work.

This day’s tour and the listening exercise is a test run for Gonzalez to try out his tour guide chops. His audience includes five interns participating in the Zoo Animal Presenters, an Oregon Zoo program that provides work experience and nature education to low-income teenagers from diverse backgrounds.

“I was born and raised in Cornelius, just 10 minutes from here,” Gonzalez tells the interns, “but I never spent much time in nature.”

That changed recently when Metro nature educators trained him and six other Centro staffers to lead tours of Chehalem Ridge. It was an all-five-senses immersion into the landscape and its plants and animals.

The tours are one way to achieve what Gonzalez calls “authentic community engagement.” He mentions some others. “We’re a hub for the community – 3,000 people show up for our Children’s Day event, for example. It makes sense for Metro to tag along at our cultural events.”

Also, information boards about Chehalem Ridge are on display in Centro’s lobby. “We talk to people one-on-one about Chehalem Ridge when they visit,” he says.

This deliberate, personal approach resulted in 50 additional Spanish-language responses to a survey about what programs and facilities visitors would value in a future park at Chehalem Ridge, says Ellen Wyoming DeLoy, senior community engagement coordinator at Metro. And it builds trust: “People were surprised that the government wanted their opinion, and they were into it after they understood that their voice had value.”

“When our regional and national demographics are shifting so much, it’s critical to make sure that we have diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of public involvement,” DeLoy says.

She shared some of the survey data: While a high percentage of English speakers go to nature parks alone or with one other person, Spanish speakers tend to go in groups of three to five. English speakers are more likely to go to parks for exercise, Spanish speakers for connecting socially with family. Walking and hiking in nature was a priority for everyone.

Back on the trail at Chehalem Ridge, Gonzalez holds up a small plant: “This is self-heal. Nature’s Band-Aid. Look for it next time you’re hiking and you get bit or blistered.” He puts a couple of leaves in his mouth and chews vigorously. When it becomes a slimy wad, he presses it against his wrist.

Gonzalez’s tour includes a game of predator and prey. The interns stalk across the forest floor, wincing when a twig snaps underfoot. They listen to a story about why the madrone tree has no resin, carefully examine the scales of a Douglas fir cone, feel the sinuous movement of a garter snake as it slides across their palms, taste a bud of St. John’s wort and study the contents of coyote scat.

“It’s thrilling for me that I can give this whole tour in Spanish as well as English,” Gonzales says. “I want others to open their souls to the smells, sounds and sights here.”

To learn more about the project, upcoming community events and to sign up for project updates, visit oregonmetro.gov/chehalemridge

3 Questions with Judy McLean

Story by Rebecca Koffman Photography courtesy of Judy McLean



It’s Our Nature is a year-long series of classes and field trips for adults. Northeast Portland resident Judy McLean completed the series as well as Metro’s Nature University program for volunteer naturalists in 2014.

McLean has worked as a carpenter and in energy conservation and office administration. When she’s not taking natural history classes, she plays jazz guitar, kayaks and hikes. She recently walked the Camino de Santiago, a long pilgrimage route that ends in northwest Spain.

Q. Why did you sign up for *It’s Our Nature*?

A. I retired in 2011, and one of things I wanted to do was to get out in nature more. I saw the program offered in a Metro newsletter, and I signed up immediately.

Almost every place was new to me. Even Oxbow Park, believe it or not. We got to see some awesome places that were not available to the public – newly acquired and yet to be developed. It was cool to go to places all over the broader Metro area and be opened up to a whole new world.

Q. What were some highlights of the course?

A. Animal tracking down on the Sandy River. Seeing beaver tail drags into the river was pretty cool. You can tell if it’s a beaver for sure because they have that big flat tail and it drags along and scoops the sand.

Deer tracks – what they were doing and how many of them – not just identifying the animal but learning to figure out the story by looking at the prints. I still – whenever I’m out walking – I’m looking for tracks.

I had never gone to the celebration of when the salmon spawn in the fall at Oxbow Park. To see the actual redd in the river – the female salmon spawning and making their beds and stuff – I’m getting goosebumps just talking about it.

Q. What did you learn that has stuck with you?

A. We delved into the intricate details of identification. Like on our mushroom walk, we had all the books out, knowing all the parts of things. I wish I could remember everything I learned. I don’t, but I have resources now. I have books and I have websites and I have different parks that I can go to.

One thing we did weekly was our “sit spot.” Our homework was to sit and observe and be still. I was pretty disciplined about that, even through the winter putting on my raingear and sitting out in my yard for 20 minutes and observing whatever came along. That was the first time I learned that hummingbirds actually make a sound. Now I hear hummingbirds. It was an adventure in birds and bird language, learning to hear new sounds and learning to be quiet, and learning to sit quietly and be part of nature.



It’s Our Nature: Year-long outdoor immersion series

Photography by Mary Unruh

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 Metro’s It’s Our Nature year long field trip series.

From February through November, a group of adults will immerse themselves in the region’s natural areas, and learn about natural history topics, including geology, animal tracking, birding and ethnobotany. Monthly adventures give you opportunities to dive into the natural world by learning through hands-on experiences. If you crave the behind-the-scenes story, learn by doing and don’t mind getting muddy, this year-long journey could be for you.

Classes combine theory with place, all in an outdoor setting. Naturalists take you on journeys in some of Metro’s hallmark nature parks, such as Oxbow Regional Park. Additionally, many of the classes will be held at Metro natural areas that are closed to the public, providing participants with a sneak peak of some of Metro’s hidden nature jewels.

It’s Our Nature is limited to 18 adults (ages 18 and older) who can commit to attending the majority of classes. You must be willing and able to learn outdoors in all weather conditions and in a variety of terrain. Many program sites do not have running water, shelters, or restroom facilities. Classes will usually be held on the second Saturday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Applications are assessed for the applicant’s level of interest and ability to commit to the program. Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. No deposit required. Tuition of \$300 is due upon acceptance into the program. Registration opens Nov. 8.

Details and applications at oregonmetro.gov/natureimmersion

Volunteer as a naturalist

Nature University is a free training course that teaches new volunteers about effective outdoor education teaching techniques, common wildlife and plants, nature observation and local ecology. Graduates become official volunteer naturalists and help lead nature based programs.

Application deadline: Nov. 13.
For more information and to apply, visit oregonmetro.gov/volunteer

Restoration of rare aspen grove brings more color to Killin Wetlands

Story and photography by Kate Holleran



“Did you see the aspen grove?” my colleague asked me after we finished our walk at Killin Wetlands Natural Area about four miles west of Banks.

“Yes!” I replied excitedly. Though obscured in a cocoon of cottonwood and Douglas firs, I could see the telltale shimmering leaves of quaking aspen.

Quaking aspen is the most widely distributed tree in North America, but it is rare in western Oregon. With the conversion of floodplains to farmlands and other changes over the last 150 years, many Willamette Valley aspen groves were lost, diminishing the biodiversity of the valley. The aspen forest at Metro’s Killin Wetlands is one of several small groves scattered on the floodplain of the west fork of Dairy Creek, and I was excited for the chance to restore this rare native habitat.

When I first walked this aspen woodland two years ago, it was in steep decline. Aspens are sun-loving trees. But the aspen grove at Killin Wetlands was losing out to Douglas firs and black cottonwoods, both of which grow taller and faster than aspens. In the absence of fires or other natural disturbances, the firs and cottonwoods started overtaking the aspen grove.

Fortunately, the remedy was easy. Let’s strategically remove the Douglas firs and cottonwoods to allow the prolific sprout-producing aspens to fill in the newly created gaps, I recommended.

In spring 2015, Metro staff and consultants walked through the forest many times to fine-tune our restoration strategy for this unique habitat. As summer passed, we strategically cut and removed trees overtaking the aspens.

Clockwise from top: Hundreds of aspen clones explode in a forest opening at Killin Wetlands. Kate Holleran is a senior natural resources scientist at Metro. Douglas firs were strategically removed last year to encourage aspens to grow. Aspens have flat, oval leaves.

Early this spring, I visited the aspen forest again in hopes of finding hundreds or thousands of new aspen clones. I was surprised to find that most of the regeneration looked like cottonwoods, a closely related species. The leaves were more triangular instead of the oval-shaped leaves of aspens, and they lacked the thin, flat stems that make aspen leaves tremble in a light breeze.

Relax, my colleagues told me, these are just what young aspen look like. I was skeptical and a bit disappointed. Could we have done all this work to promote aspen only to end up regenerating cottonwood?

It turns out that aspens have a strong ability to alter the shape of their leaves. This wonderful trait allows aspens to assume different leaf shapes that allow for improved photosynthesis, the process by which plants convert sunlight to energy. The adaptation provides an advantage for survival in unpredictable growing conditions.

I celebrated as the summer passed, as many of the young sprouts took on the more typical leaf shape and flattened stem of the quaking aspen. It turns out the thinning promoted both aspen and cottonwood. Autumn will be a little more colorful this year when the golden glow of the expanding woodland turns on.



Why are aspens special?

Quaking aspens have some unusual characteristics that explain their success across North America. Although aspens can reproduce by seeds, the environmental conditions in Oregon result in most aspens growing through a process called vegetative reproduction. The trees share a root system, and genetically identical clones grow upward into trees called ramets. The shared root system allows thousands of trees to share water and nutrients.

It also gives aspens an advantage in surviving fires, floods and landslides, because they can rely on trees and roots in other parts of the expansive network. Often, aspens are the pioneers after fires or landslides, blanketing the land with tens of thousands of root sprouts.

Unlike the bark of other trees, the white or sometimes green-tinged bark of aspens is living tissue capable of photosynthesis – converting sunlight into energy. This feature gives aspens a boost even in low-light levels and during winters when the trees are leafless.

The conspicuously delightful trembling of the leaves is possible because of the flat shape of the leaves and stems. The slightest breeze ignites a shimmering canopy of greens or, in autumn, spectacular yellows and reds.

Public access coming soon

There’s currently no formal public access to Killin Wetlands, but improvements in the works will allow visitors to experience a portion of the site starting in 2017.

The plan calls for 20 parking spots, an overlook, viewpoint and other amenities. A boardwalk is included in a future phase.

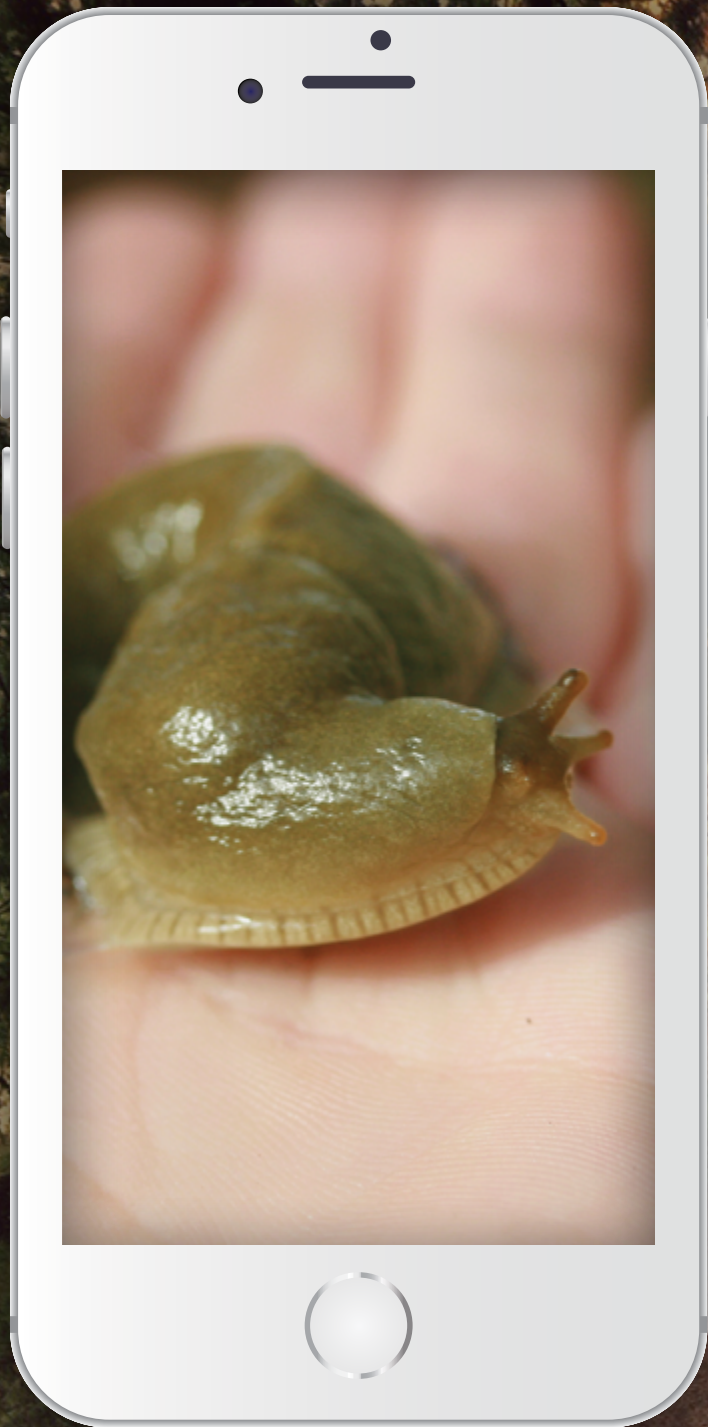
For years, devoted birders heading to Killin Wetlands parked on the side of Northwest Cedar Canyon Road and set up their scopes on the roadway. The upcoming improvements will improve safety by providing visitors with access to a portion of the 590-acre site, while also restoring habitat. The area around the aspen grove is leased for farming and is not part of the planned improvements.

In recent months, trails were laid out on the ground. Improvements to stabilize the barn are also underway, with repairs to the siding, windows, roof and doors, along with a fresh coat of paint. In the coming weeks, a colorful new addition will debut on the barn: an 8-foot square, wooden block that will be a part of the Quilt Barn Trail of Washington County.

The access improvements are paid for with money from the voter-approved 2013 parks and natural areas levy.

Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/killin

theintertwine.org



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Hiker/© Cavale Doom, Slug/©Angie Shyrigh



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Nature in Neighborhoods grants make a difference

More than 80 community nature projects in the Portland metro region have received a boost over the last few years through a combined \$3.7 million in Nature in Neighborhoods grants from Metro.

The grants support restoration, trails and nature education projects. Collectively, the projects are making habitat healthier, allowing more people from a variety of backgrounds to experience the outdoors, and nurturing the next generation of conservation leaders. The grants are paid for with money from the 2013 parks and natural areas levy.

Metro has also awarded \$13.3 million in capital grants to 44 projects using money from the 2006 natural areas bond measure.

We checked in with several recent grant recipients to see the impact that Nature in Neighborhoods grants have made in their communities.



Diverse, low-income and homeless youths are exploring and learning about natural areas in their neighborhoods thanks to a \$25,000 grant to Community Partners for Affordable Housing. Participants have explored Oleson Woods and Dirksen Nature Park and paddled along the Tualatin River with guidance from Tualatin Riverkeepers. *Photo courtesy of Community Partners for Affordable Housing*



The Audubon Society of Portland and the Columbia Land Trust received a \$34,400 grant in 2015 for its Backyard Habitat Certification Program. The money expanded the program to 550 new households and paid for a pilot outreach project with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) aimed at increasing program participation among Jade District residents. *Photo courtesy of Audubon Society of Portland*



Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors received a \$25,000 grant to provide a series of hands-on ecology lessons and outdoor experiences for 47 classrooms of students attending six diverse and low-income schools in the North Clackamas School District. The group received another \$30,000 in 2016 for a second year of programming. *Photo courtesy of Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors*



Hands-on programming for elementary through college students in North and Northeast Portland, Gresham and Fairview is possible thanks to a \$67,000 grant to the Columbia Slough Watershed Council. *Photo courtesy of the Columbia Slough Watershed Council*



Volunteers from Earthshare pull garlic mustard on Ross Island, located in the heart of Portland. Willamette Riverkeeper received \$62,000 for Restore Ross Island, a partnership effort to restore ecological function to a wildlife corridor and floodplain forest on the publicly owned Ross Island Natural Area. *Photo courtesy of Willamette Riverkeeper*

Kevin Matute receives a congratulatory hug from Henry Hays-Wehle, a crew leader with Northwest Youth Corps, upon his completion of the Opportunity Corps & Beyond program in summer 2015. Momentum Alliance and Northwest Youth Corps received \$15,000 to pilot a five-week paid internship for 10 youth leaders from diverse backgrounds to learn conservation skills. The group received another \$30,000 in 2016 to continue the program. *Photo courtesy of Momentum Alliance*

Planting season



Go behind the scenes and see what it takes to prepare for the native seeds and plants that will help restore parks and natural areas across the region.

Story and photography by Rebecca Koffman

The Big Prairie at Cooper Mountain Nature Park offers sweeping views over the Tualatin River Valley. But on a sun-scorched summer morning, Adrienne Basey, botanist and science assistant at Metro's Native Plant Center, is focusing on the earth at her feet.

She walks through tall grass searching for *Sanicula bipinnatifida*, better known as purple sanicle, a native plant in the carrot family. It's gone to seed so she can't look for its flower.

"It's fun when your eye picks up the pattern and you see things that were invisible a moment ago," she says. Soon, she bends to a twiggy plant almost indistinguishable from the brown stalks around it.

"Yes!" she says. She's there at the right time. The seed is ripe and ready to collect.

This fall, 3,500 pounds of native seeds will be sown at Metro properties. In the winter, 948,000 plants, live stakes and bulbs will go into the ground. Getting ready for this massive planting operation takes years of planning, careful science and some 11th-hour compromises. But it's important work.

Collecting wild seed by hand is the first step in restoring oak woodlands, upland prairies, wetlands and other threatened ecosystems that are being preserved at Metro sites throughout the region.

At Cooper Mountain, Basey counts the individual sanicle plants, notes how much of the burr-like seed has already dispersed – it clings to the fur of passing animals – and consults her chart to see what percentage of the seed from this wild population she can collect. Only then does she gather some seed.

Next, she heads to the pond to meet Julie Hawkins, a volunteer in Metro's Seed Scout program. Hawkins has been trained to identify wildflowers by their seedheads and carries a GPS tracker and paper bags filled with seeds of native larkspur, iris and geranium. She has volunteered to collect seeds for six years, usually at Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville near her home.

"I have some bags to check," she tells Basey. On her last visit, Hawkins tied small mesh bags over the seed capsules of Tolmie's cat's ears. Since then, the pods have burst open and flung their dark brown seeds – but only as far as the mesh.



At the end of the morning, Basey takes the gathered seeds to Metro’s Native Plant Center in Tualatin, where they will be dried, cleaned, then planted and grown out to make more seeds.

“I get really excited about seeds,” says Marsha Holt-Kingsley, the coordinator of the center. “Finding unique species, then making more – to do that conservation work feels good.”

She focuses on collecting seeds that are not commercially available. Some seeds come from unique habitats where rare and specialized plants flourish, such as the spring gold or Cascade penstemon that grow on the basalt bluffs at Metro’s Willamette Narrows south of West Linn. Others, like the seeds in the mesh bags, come from plants such as the cat’s ears that are rare in the metro area because development has severely reduced their habitat.

About 300 pounds of the seeds planted this fall will come from Metro’s plant center.

The rest comes from commercial growers.

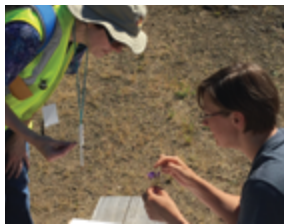
Commercial nurseries also grow the native plants and woody cuttings that help reclaim territory from invasive species, lure pollinators, stabilize stream banks, create habitat and add to the food web.

Holt-Kingsley receives requests for plants and seeds from Metro’s land managers and then contracts with commercial growers to fill the orders. Sometimes, the requests must come in two or three years ahead of when the plants and seeds need to go into the ground at Metro properties, so that the nurseries have enough time to grow the plants to the required size.

George Kral, co-owner of Scholls Valley Native Nursery in Forest Grove, supplies Metro with dozens of types of plants. For example, he is growing 45,000 thimbleberry plants for Metro that will measure one to two feet when planted in the winter.

“Thimbleberry is a mainstay for us,” says Kral, as he stands near a thimbleberry hedgerow at his nursery. It’s grown from seed he collected from genetically diverse wild plants. The hedgerow attracts pollinators, including cedar waxwing birds on this day, and produces gallons of seeds each year.

Nearby, nursery staff mash the scarlet berries against screens to extract the seeds. They will be cleaned, dried, tested for viability, weighed and sown in outdoor beds. In the next 14



months, the seeds will germinate, grow to the right size and be toughened up to withstand being taken from the ground by a mechanical lifter.

From there, the plants will go to a large shed to be sorted, counted, bundled and bagged for delivery to Metro’s industrial cooler, where plants are temporarily stored. After sorting, they will finally go out for planting in the wild.

That’s how it works in an ideal world anyway.

Kral takes Holt-Kingsley to see this summer’s crop of young thimbleberry. Half-laughing, they list some of the things that could go wrong before the plants in these neat beds make it into the earth at Metro sites this winter.

- The plants might:
- Grow too slow and not make size.
 - Grow too big and make storage and replanting difficult and expensive.
 - Be washed away by rain.
 - Be fried by the sun.
 - Be eaten by bugs or deer.
 - Be stuck in frozen ground that’s impenetrable to the mechanical lifter.

“In everything we do, weather is an overarching factor,” Holt-Kingsley says.

As planting season nears, the long process of gathering seeds, ordering plants and waiting for them to grow will culminate in millions of seeds and plants going into the ground at Metro parks and natural areas throughout the region.

Putting it together is like doing a jigsaw puzzle, Holt-Kingsley says. “It’s very satisfying when all the pieces finally fall into place.”

“I get really excited about seeds. Finding unique species, then making more – to do that conservation work feels good.”

Marsha Holt-Kingsley, coordinator of Metro’s Native Plant Center in Tualatin

Opposite page, clockwise from top: Amelia Reed, a seasonal assistant at Metro’s Native Plant Center, collects camas seeds at Willamette Narrows south of West Linn. Adrienne Basey (left) and Julie Hawkins follow GPS coordinates to locate plants whose seeds they are collecting. Basey collects data on a brodiaea flowers. Samantha Sharka and Matt Jean clean serviceberry at Scholls Valley Native Nursery near Forest Grove.

This page, clockwise from top left: George Kral, co-owner of Scholls Valley Native Nursery, and Marsha Holt-Kingsley, coordinator of the Native Plant Center, assess this year’s thimbleberry crop. Basey selects a brodiaea plant to dig up and press. Basey (right) explains to Hawkins how to distinguish between two similar types of brodiaea plants. The seeds of the purple sanicle collected at Cooper Mountain Nature Park will go to the Native Plant Center to be cleaned and grown out to make more seed. Kral measures the stem of a thimbleberry plant. Seeds of Tolmie’s cat’s ears collected from Cooper Mountain. Kral in the seed drying and storage shed at his nursery.

To volunteer at the Native Plant Center or to collect seeds, visit oregonmetro.gov/volunteer

Field guide

MASON HILL PARK



Story by Punneh Abdolhosseini

Photography by Laura Oppenheimer Odom

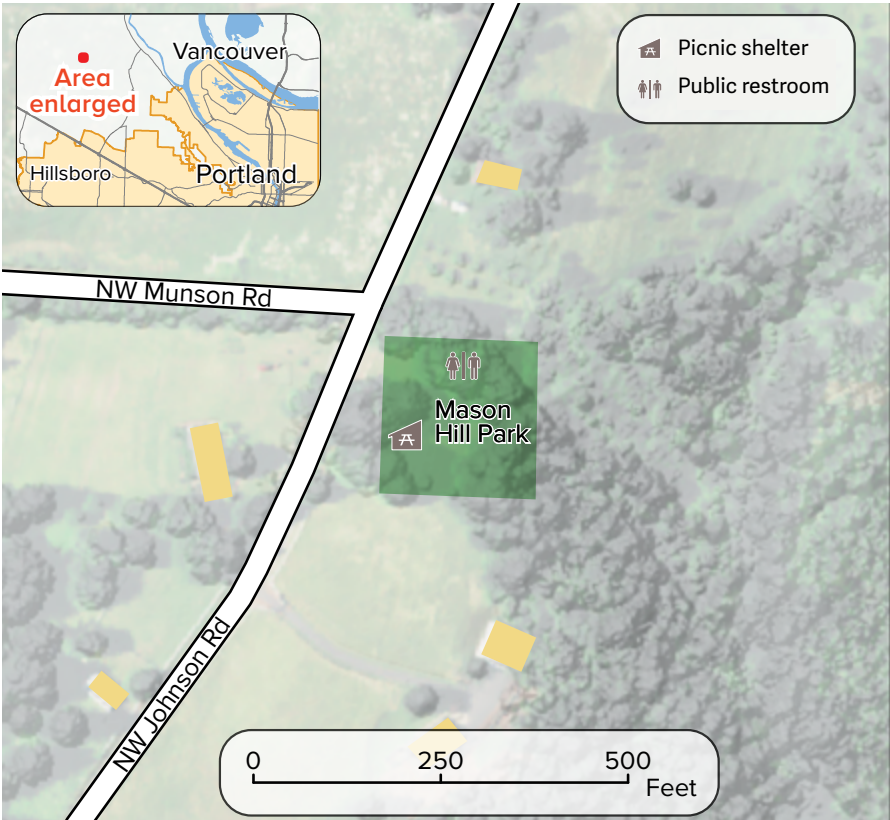
Located in the North Tualatin Mountains, Mason Hill Park offers a beautiful, tranquil environment to enjoy a unique one-acre historic site. Home to a one-room schoolhouse from 1891 to 1944, its history tells part of the story of how the region developed.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries many American students attended one-room schoolhouses. The schools were located in rural areas and taught as many as six to 40 students. Often, there was only one teacher, who sometimes slept in the classroom during the school week. Teachers would work with several different grades at the same time. Depending on the distance, students might travel by horse to attend school.

One-room schoolhouses were central to many communities, doubling as gathering spaces and Sunday churches. Multnomah County transferred Mason Hill to Metro in 1994. Today, the legacy of the one-room schoolhouse is preserved as a converted picnic shelter and park for all to enjoy. Look for the original school bell mounted on top of the picnic shelter.

Mason Hill remains loved and adored by the community to this day. Mason Hill still hosts annual reunions for neighbors and students who once attended the school.

Located off Northwest Johnson Road, this peaceful park has seen painters trying to capture the sweeping view of the Tualatin Valley’s rolling hills, and bicyclists who pull over to take their lunch break under the picnic shelter.



Mason Hill Park

GETTING THERE

From Portland, head west on U.S. 26. Take exit 61B and head north on Northwest Helvetia Road. Shortly after the road curves left, take a right on Northwest Logie Trail, which naturally becomes Northwest Johnson Road. Mason Hill Park will be on the right at the intersection with Northwest Munson Road. If you come by car, be prepared to park in a narrow roadside spot.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO

Open sunrise to sunset. No pets, please.

AMENITIES

Restrooms, picnic shelters

oregonmetro.gov/masonhill

In the neighborhood Helvetia Tavern is located in the North Plains area just south of Mason Hill Park. Stop by for a burger and learn more about this historic site. Enjoy some wine at Abbey Creek Vineyard, just 15 minutes away from the park in the heart of downtown North Plains. Or stop by the renowned Rice Museum of Rocks & Minerals and learn why it is considered one of the best museums in the nation, showcasing fossils, meteorites, gems and more.

Be on the lookout!



COOPER'S HAWK



COYOTE



BLACK-TAILED DEER



AMERICAN ROBIN

VINEYARD AND VALLEY SCENIC TOUR ROUTE AND TUALATIN VALLEY SCENIC BIKEWAY

With just a slight detour, Mason Hill Park makes a great stop as part of two scenic routes through the Tualatin Valley.

The Vineyard and Valley Scenic Tour Route takes visitors by the Old Scotch Church that was built in 1878, wine tours in Forest Grove and the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. You can also stop at various u-pick farms during the summer for berries or other fresh fruits and vegetables. Or stop by vineyards with breathtaking views of the valley below.

One of the best ways to enjoy Mason Hill is on two wheels.

The Tualatin Valley Scenic Bikeway captures some of the best scenic views of the northern part of the Willamette Valley. This friendly trail starts at Rood Bridge Park in Hillsboro and heads west to Forest Grove. After several scenic country roads, cyclists can find their way onto the iconic Banks-Vernonia State Trail, a 21-mile paved trail that travels through L.L. Stub Stewart State Park.

With either tour, bring your lunch and explore the peaceful gem that is Mason Hill.

Learn more about the routes at traveloregon.com or tualatinvalley.org

Destination guide

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
|  | Restrooms |  | Playground |
|  | Picnic facilities |  | Camping |
|  | Trails |  | Wheelchair accessible |
|  | Classes events volunteer |  | Cost
\$5/car, \$7/bus
(free with annual pass) |

1 Blue Lake Regional Park
Enjoy a fun game of disc golf, or explore a nature-themed playground, a discovery garden, sports facilities and a wetland with a viewing platform and trail.



2 Broughton Beach
Head to one of Portland's best urban beaches and enjoy a picnic, beachcombing, or a stroll along the Columbia River.



3 Canemah Bluff Nature Park
Gaze at the Willamette River below, marvel at oak trees overhead, hike and admire colorful spring wildflowers.



4 Cooper Mountain Nature Park
Hike or jog more than three miles of trails, watch wildlife or enjoy views of the Chehalem Mountains and Tualatin Valley.



5 Farmington Paddle Launch
Opening late 2016. The launch site accommodates non-motorized watercraft.



6 Glendoveer Golf Course & Nature Trail
Tee time: playglendoveer.com
Play a game of golf, footgolf or indoor tennis, or enjoy a stroll on the two-mile fitness course.



7 Graham Oaks Nature Park
Ride bikes through a restored oak woodland, stroll through a conifer forest and spot birds from a wetland overlook.



8 Howell Territorial Park
Watch for birds that flock to the park's wetlands, enjoy a picnic, and explore a piece of the region's natural and cultural history.



9 Lone Fir Cemetery
Enjoy a stroll or jog in this tree-filled community greenspace, one of Oregon's most treasured historic cemeteries.



10 Mason Hill Park
At this charming, one-acre park, bicycle through the rolling hills beyond Forest Park, take in spectacular views of the Tualatin Valley and picnic under the shelter.



11 Mount Talbert Nature Park
Slip into the forested oasis to explore four miles of trails, enjoy gorgeous views, and keep an eye out for deer, pileated and hairy woodpeckers, white-breasted nuthatches and Western tanagers.



12 Oxbow Regional Park
Explore 15 miles of trails through ancient forests, camp year-round or find the perfect adventure on the Sandy River.



13 Scouters Mountain Nature Park
Climb the steep, fir-lined road to the top of this extinct lava dome to enjoy unrivaled views of Mount Hood.



14 Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area
Take the Interlakes Trail or go by kayak to explore one of America's largest urban wetlands while spotting beavers, otters, deer, osprey, bald eagles and turtles.



Boat ramps oregonmetro.gov/boats

15 Chinook Landing Marine Park 

16 M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp 

17 Sauvie Island Boat Ramp





Get involved

CLASSES AND EVENTS

SAT. OCT. 22 SUN. OCT. 23

Salmon Homecoming

Nothing says “Pacific Northwest” like the annual return from the ocean of salmon, fighting upstream to spawn and die in the rivers of their birth. In October, witness this ancient, iconic phenomenon at Oxbow Regional Park along the Sandy River, one of the nation’s designated Wild and Scenic rivers. During the annual Salmon Homecoming, naturalists are on hand to help you see the salmon and explore other aspects of the park’s 1,000 acres of old-growth forest, hiking and equestrian trails and river beaches. Take the chill off around the campfire. Hot drinks provided.

All activities

Oxbow Regional Park
\$5/car, \$7/bus. No registration required.
Difficulty: easy.

View salmon

Join naturalists at the river’s edge. They’ll help you spot spawning salmon and tell you about the salmon’s behavior and life cycle. Borrow a pair of polarized fish-viewing glasses onsite.

Oct. 22 and 23, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
All ages.

Campfire and hot drinks

Enjoy a cup of hot chocolate or cider around the campfire. Guaranteed to take the chill off and lift your spirits for a walk in the autumn woods.

Oct. 22 and 23, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
All ages. First-come, first-served.

Explore a salmon restoration site

How do young salmon find food and refuge from floods and predators? Join the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council on a hike to learn the science behind a side channel restoration project at Oxbow’s Happy Creek. Restoring habitat lost in a 1960s road-building project, the project created deep pools, bubbling riffles and hiding places for Chinook, coho and steelhead. Learn the characteristics of good habitat and tips on native plants and salmon-friendly practices you can incorporate into your life.

Oct. 22, meet at Alder Shelter at 1:45 p.m.
Program 2 to 4 p.m. Ages 8 and older.

Mushrooms at Oxbow

Explore the incredible diversity of fungi in Oxbow’s ancient forest. In this hands-on, beginners class, learn the basics of mushrooms and other fungi. This is not an edible mushroom class.

Oct. 23, meet at Group Camp 1
11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 2 to 4 p.m.
Ages 8 and older.

Photography by Fred Joe

SAT. OCT. 8,22 SAT. NOV. 5,19 SAT. DEC. 10

Volunteer ventures

Help care for rare native plants that support regional restoration projects. Fall activities include harvesting and planting native bulbs, cleaning seeds and transplanting seedlings. No experience is needed. Gloves, tools, water and snack provided. This event is wheelchair accessible with advance arrangements.

Native Plant Center
2661 SW Borland Road, Tualatin
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Free. All ages.
Registration required. Difficulty: moderate.

WED. OCT. 12

Introduction to mushroom identification

Have you ever seen a mushroom in the woods and wondered what it was? In this talk, mushroom enthusiast Leah Bendlin will teach you the basics of mushroom identification. Learn how to start sorting species by their physical characteristics and ecology. Bring in your own finds for hands-on practice.

Metro Regional Center
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
\$6/person. Ages 12 and older.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.



How to register

Unless otherwise noted, register and pay at oregonmetro.gov/calendar

Registration and payment required at least 48 hours in advance for all classes. Classes with low enrollment will be canceled; registered participants will receive full refunds. For more information: Sandy Jamison, 503-972-8543.

SUN. OCT. 16 SUN. NOV. 6 SUN. NOV. 13

Mushroom discovery hike


Discover the fascinating and weird world of mushrooms. Join mushroom enthusiast Leah Bendlin on this woodland hike to learn about the ecological roles of fungi and how they eat and reproduce. We'll have hands-on exercises and learn how to identify mushrooms. Field guides will be provided.

Oct. 16, Scouters Mountain Nature Park
Nov. 6, Mount Talbert Nature Park
Nov. 13, Oxbow Regional Park
9:30 to 11:30 a.m. or 1 to 3 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family; on Nov. 13, additional \$5/car, \$7/bus.
All ages welcome but geared toward adults. Registration required. Difficulty: moderate.

SAT. OCT. 29

Nature through a different lens

Interested in nature photography? Gain an understanding of basic photography composition while learning about the plants and wildlife of the wetlands. Class will start prior to golden hour in order to capture the best light of the day. Cell phones, point-and-shoot cameras and all skill levels are welcome.

Smith and Bybee Wetlands
5 to 7 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family. Ages 8 and older. Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 



Free Parks Days

Get out and explore nature!


Enjoy free parking at Oxbow and Blue Lake regional parks, Broughton Beach, M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp and Chinook Landing Marine Park on Oct. 14, Nov. 11 and 25, and Dec. 23, 2016, as well as Jan. 16, 2017.

Parking at all other Metro parks and boat ramps is free year-round.

SAT. OCT. 29

Tour of Untimely Departures

Celebrate Halloween weekend at historic Lone Fir Cemetery. Ghostly guides escort groups of guests on one of two candle-lit routes where they meet some of the cemetery's residents and hear the unusual circumstances surrounding their untimely departures. Ticket sales will go toward restoring the tomb of pioneering brewer brothers George Frederic Bottler and George Michael Bottler. Wheelchair accessible with advance arrangements.

Lone Fir Cemetery
5 to 9 p.m.
\$10/person advance, \$15/person walk-in; children 12 and younger, seniors 60 and older, \$5/person advance and walk-in. Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 

SAT. NOV. 5

Life on the edge


Where the forest of Cedar Canyon meets Killin Wetlands just west of Banks, two unique habitats collide, bringing together a wealth of flora and fauna. Explore the wetland edge in search of birds, and read the stories of elk, bear and beaver in the forested upland through the tracks and signs they leave. Difficult walking.

Killin Wetlands
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family. All ages. Registration required. Difficulty: strenuous.

FRI. NOV. 11

The secret life of birds

The birds are talking. Are you listening? Learn to unravel the mysterious communications of the birds and how their various calls and alarms move across the landscape. Join a naturalist on a slow, quiet walk through the reclaimed wetlands of Blue Lake Regional Park, where coyotes, weasels and raptors share space with waterfowl and songbirds.

Blue Lake Regional Park
10 a.m. to noon
\$6/person, \$11/family. All ages. Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 

SAT. NOV. 19

Geology in action: Newell Creek Canyon

Geologic activity is taking place within the forested slopes and canyon walls of Newell Creek Canyon. Descend below the hustle and bustle along the canyon's rim with a naturalist, searching for signs of recent geologic activity and the plants and animals that inhabit the steep, shifting landscape.

Newell Creek Canyon
10 a.m. to noon.
\$6/person, \$11/family. Ages 10 and older. Registration required. Difficulty: strenuous.



Camp at Oxbow

Camp at Oxbow Regional Park this fall. Choose from more than 50 sites. Ten of the sites accommodate RVs, though no electricity or water are provided at Oxbow campsites.

Oxbow offers exclusive access to its group camp site for nonprofit organizations serving youths.

Enjoy immediate access to the federally designated Wild and Scenic Sandy River. Explore the ancient forest, enjoy the fall colors and hike along 12 miles of trails.

Book today at oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

For group camping reservations, call 503-665-4995 ext. 0.

SUN. NOV. 20

Thanksgiving walk at Oxbow

Enjoy and celebrate the gifts of nature at Oxbow Regional Park with Metro naturalist Dan Daly, Deerdance School's Terry Kem and others. Walk along the Sandy River as you focus on opening your senses and noticing how wildlife respond to the changing season. Afterwards, gather around the campfire to hear the "Thanksgiving Address" passed down by the Iroquois Nation. Hot drinks provided.

Oxbow Regional Park
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
\$5/car, \$7/bus. All ages. Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

SAT. DEC. 17

Winter solstice sunset walk

Winter solstice is near, marking the shortest day of the year. Take an afternoon walk through the majestic oak woodlands atop Cooper Mountain and learn how the winter solstice ushers in the return of the light and longer days.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park
2 to 4 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family. All ages. Registration required. Difficulty: moderate.



Tools for living

7 THINGS TO KEEP OUT OF YOUR RECYCLING BIN

Story and photography by Rebecca Koffman

This take-out container. That coffee cup. Recycling? Or garbage? Read on.

Plastics

Plastic bottles, jars, buckets and tubs can go in your home recycling bin, along with some garden pots. But keep these items out:

Plastic bags Bags and other types of film plastic jam machinery at sorting facilities. Workers spend a lot of time pulling them from the line and untangling them from conveyers.

Plastic lids They're small and thin, and can end up in bales of paper or cardboard – making those bales harder to sell and harder to recycle into new paper products.

Plastic clamshells The containers that hold salad greens, cherry tomatoes and deli foods are not recyclable at home. These became common more recently, so some sorting facilities don't have the machinery to deal with them. And the plastic they're made of can be harder to sell to recyclers. Ignore that number surrounded by a triangle of arrows – that's an indicator to industry insiders about what the plastic is made of, not what goes in your home bin.

Paper

Recycle junk mail, newspapers and paper egg cartons in your home bin, along with milk and juice cartons and cartons that hold soups and soy milk at room temperature. These cartons are not 100 percent paper, but because manufacturers have invested in ways to collect and recycle them, they're part of the home recycling system. But keep these items out:

Frozen and refrigerated food boxes Boxes that hold foods like waffles, popsicles or butter are made



with a plastic that keeps them from getting soggy. Milk and juice cartons are layered rather than penetrated with plastic, making the materials easier to separate.

Paper cups Like freezer boxes, "paper" cups for water or coffee are made with plastic, so they don't dissolve into a sodden mass when filled with liquid.

Pizza boxes Although they're cardboard, pizza boxes are often soaked with grease. In the city of Portland, toss pizza boxes in the food scraps bin. Otherwise, they're garbage.

All those batteries

No batteries should ever go into home recycling bins. But recycling batteries is a little complicated, mostly because there are so many different types.



Regular household alkaline batteries – like those AA's and AAA's – can be taken to a variety of places, including some hardware stores and other retailers, as well as Metro's hazardous waste facilities in Northwest Portland and Oregon City. Ask Metro how to dispose of other types of batteries.

When in doubt, keep it out

If you want to recycle more than what goes in your home bin, recycling centers and some grocery stores and other retailers take a variety of items for recycling, from plastics to batteries. Placing such items in your home recycling bin essentially sends them to the garbage, while often adding costs to the system along the way.

Find more online

Find the full story with videos, as well as a whole series of multimedia stories about recycling at oregonmetro.gov/news

Questions about what to toss or where to recycle? Ask Metro at 503-234-3000 or oregonmetro.gov/toolsforliving

But doesn't this mean
it's recyclable?

Ask Metro whether to toss or recycle.

503-234-3000
oregonmetro.gov/recycle

 Metro



Starting a remodeling project?

To protect your health and safety, Metro transfer stations require documentation for all loads of construction, remodeling and demolition debris that might contain asbestos. Loads without proper paperwork will be turned away.

For more information: 503-234-3000 or oregonmetro.gov/asbestosrules



Regional roundup

A SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNITY CHANGE

Story by Craig Beebe
Photography by Justin Sherrill

Greater Portland is getting more diverse – in more places.

But as we become more diverse, can we become more equitable, too?

In June, the Metro Council adopted an ambitious strategy to improve equity in the Portland region. Metro’s newest Regional Snapshot looks at where we stand today – and the challenges that must be confronted.

Here’s a glimpse at what’s inside.

As communities of color grow, greater Portland faces some troubling inequities. Non-white residents of the region have grown from just 3 percent of the three-county population in 1960 to nearly 26 percent in 2010.

Growth is particularly noticeable among young people: In the last 16 years, the number of majority-nonwhite schools in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties has grown threefold.

But a legacy of discrimination has left Oregon’s communities of color behind white residents in education and income. Children of color are more likely to live in poverty, while their parents are more likely to be transit-dependent and often have to travel further to work.

There are many faces of equity. When Metro developed its equity strategy, a group of community organizations recommended 10 kinds of equity to measure, including



economic opportunity, access to affordable housing and transportation, arts and culture, parks, healthy food and more.

The Regional Snapshot describes these areas – and how Metro is approaching each one.

Change is playing out in different ways around the region. We visited four town centers in four corners of the region to see what’s changing in each. In Forest Grove, Rockwood, St. Johns and Wilsonville, we spoke with leaders, business owners and residents on the street about what they’re seeing change and what they’d like the future to look like.

Although different in appearance, population and history, these four places have a common goal: Advancing opportunity and livability while building on their own unique qualities.

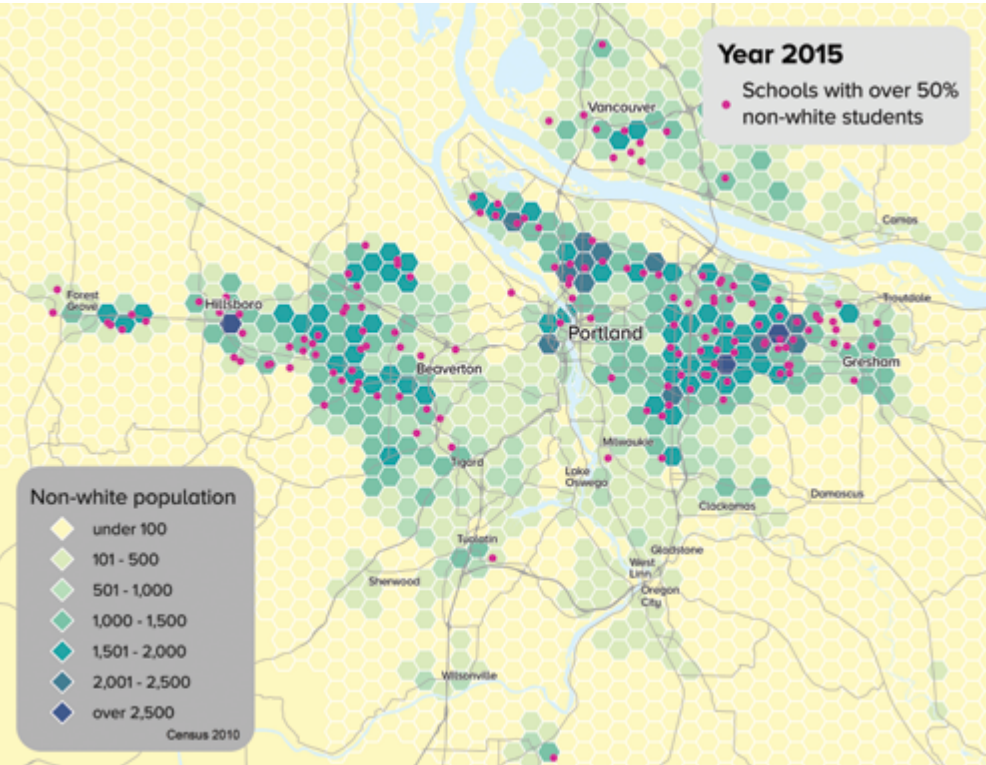
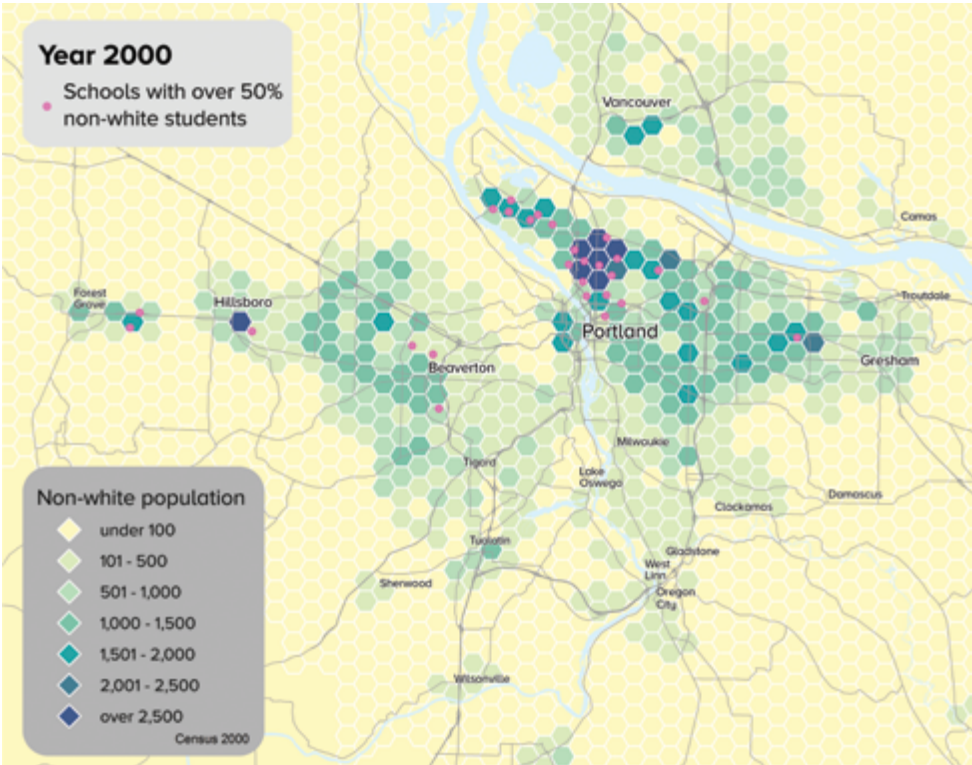
In Forest Grove, leaders hope to bring new housing and business downtown without overwhelming its iconic historic character. In Rockwood, the region’s most diverse town center, a long-vacant property could be the



catalyst for economic revitalization as a major urban renewal project nears groundbreaking. St. Johns leaders hope to maintain a quirky yet affordable atmosphere as Portland’s building boom spreads north. And Wilsonville is taking a close look at the next chapter of a town center designed decades ago.

YOU ARE HERE

Check out the whole package of interactive maps, stories, charts and more online at oregonmetro.gov/snapshotchange



Share your nature and win!



Jake Bennett, Gresham

My son, father-in-law and I had been fishing all evening on the dock at the Gilbert River Boat Ramp on Sauvie Island. I hadn't been to Sauvie Island in years. I may not have caught any fish, but I definitely walked away with a keeper.

Submit your photo

Win an annual parks pass, an overnight camping trip at Oxbow Regional Park, a tennis court session, or a round of golf for four people including cart at Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center.

To enter, submit a photo taken at a park or natural area in the Portland metro region – your friends and family, a view of wildlife or a sunset, for example. Include a description of your experience in a 50-word caption. Where were you? What were you doing? What captured your attention?

The winner will appear in this space. By submitting a photo, you consent to Metro's future use and publication of your photo. Send your photo and description by Nov. 15 to: ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov