

Our Big Backyard



Metro

Fall 2018



The magic of Oxbow

Explore an illustrated scene from Oxbow Regional Park with a tear-out watercolor poster.

Page 8

3

Creating safe and welcoming parks

Equity action plan to guide parks and nature work

4

Reducing barriers to parks

Accessibility improvements coming to Metro destinations

14

8 things you shouldn't recycle at home

Are you mistakenly putting these items in your recycling bin?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Parks and nature news	2
Oxbow poster	8
Field guide	10
Destination guide	11
Get involved	12
Tools for living	14
Regional roundup	15
Share your nature	16

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

Tom Hughes

Metro Councilors

Shirley Craddick, District 1
Betty Dominguez, District 2
Craig Dirksen, District 3
Kathryn Harrington, District 4
Sam Chase, District 5
Bob Stacey, District 6

Auditor

Brian Evans



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 trimet.org

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

oregonmetro.gov/parksandnaturenews
facebook.com/oregonmetro
twitter.com/oregonmetro
instagram.com/oregonmetro

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



This majestic Oregon white oak at Howell Territorial Park might be 150 to 300 years old. In recent years, Metro natural resources scientist Curt Zonick and others have restored the oak's surroundings with native grasses and wildflowers. *Photo by Jonathan Soll*

Follow OregonMetro on social media

See more photos from Metro parks and natural areas by following OregonMetro on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.



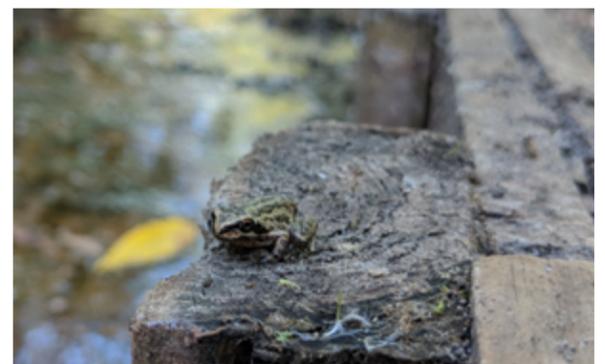
Called the most beautiful terrestrial orchid of North America, the tiny fairy slipper orchid likes to grow in shady forests and woodlands, like those at Oxbow Park. *Photo by Sarah Wyllie*



Enjoy the fall leaves at Scouters Mountain Nature Park, which offers visitors a great view of Mount Hood. *Photo by Jan Sonnenmair*



From bald to fluff in just a couple of weeks! Oxbow staff heard loud chirping from outside the park office this spring and found these steller's jays. The birds build their nests with leaves, moss and sticks held together with mud. *Photos by Hayley Mauck*



Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area is full of creatures you might miss if you don't stop and look closely, like this tiny Pacific chorus frog enjoying the view from its wooden balcony. *Photo by Kate McKenney*

Like what you see?

Sign up for the print edition of the quarterly magazine, change your address or save paper by switching to a digital subscription. Email ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov or call 503-797-1545.

On the cover: Essie Ashton (left) and Zahara Beamer explore a forested trail at Oxbow Regional Park as part of Camp ELSO, a weeklong outdoor science camp every summer providing hands-on learning programs for youth of color. *Photo by Joshua Manus*

Saying welcome to Metro's parks

Story by Cory Eldridge. Photography by Cory Eldridge and Fred Joe.



In summer 2017, two buses pulled up to the Coho picnic shelter at Oxbow Regional Park. About 150 people, mostly moms and kids, mostly immigrants and refugees from Africa and a few from Nepal, piled out of the buses and into the sunshine and piney air. They were all people served by IRCO, the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, which had teamed up with Metro to host a picnic. The day was hot, but there was shade under the Douglas firs and barbecued hot dogs and chicken, rice, salad, samosas and other fried goodies to dig into.

For IRCO, the event offered their clients a few hours to sit in the grass, lounge in the sun, watch the Sandy River – to enjoy a dose of nature therapy. For Metro, the event allowed staff to welcome these new community members to a place they'd never been, to make it clear that Oxbow is not only open to them but that it also belongs to them.

It's an idea that many people in greater Portland take for granted, but one that many people of color and immigrants might not assume unless someone reaches out and says, "You're welcome here. This is your place."

Efforts like this have slowly become more common at Metro parks and natural areas.

This fall, Metro is releasing the Parks and Nature Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. The plan brings together Metro's work to protect clean air and water and connect people to nature with its commitments to improve racial equity in the region. The document sets down dozens of specific actions Metro will undertake over the next five years to increase racial equity, diversity and inclusion in its parks and nature work.

For Metro, racial equity means that race would no longer be a reliable way to predict a person's life outcomes on measurements like education level, health or wealth, which are currently very closely related to race. In the process of creating racial equity, every group and community in greater Portland would see its well-being improve.

"It's important work that we have to take on individually and collectively," said Jonathan Blasher, director of Metro's Parks and Nature Department. "What gets me

excited is seeing the small successes people have... People see that this isn't some big magical or mystical work. It's about treating people with respect and integrity and acknowledging historic wrongs."

This means making sure that people of color feel welcome and safe when they visit Metro destinations. It means creating job training and mentoring for people of color so that the department's workforce looks like the people it serves, which isn't true now. It means that Native Americans, both those with close historical ties to the region and those with tribal roots in other parts of the country, will have meaningful and easier access to cultural resources on Metro properties, all of which are land ceded by regional tribes in the early years of colonization.

Through these and other efforts, Metro hopes that more people of color will gain the benefits of parks and natural areas.

While the racial equity plan is new, Metro in recent years launched several programs with a focus on racial equity.

One example is Connect with Nature. As part of planning for the future East Council Creek and Gabbert Butte parks, Metro wants to hear from people who are often left out of the open houses and processes where community members influence the plans of park builders. So along with offering the usual ways for the public input, Metro worked with community organizations to bring people of color, many of them immigrants and refugees, to a set of workshops where they helped shape these future parks. For many of the participants, it was the first time they'd been part of a government decision process, and they felt empowered to get involved in more.

Connect with Nature is now being turned into a toolkit for other park providers to use when they create a new green space.

The racial equity action plan takes examples like Connect with Nature and finds how their lessons, spirit or outcomes can be applied throughout the department. This is important because racial equity at Metro's parks and natural areas isn't something that can be achieved with a project here and a project there. It requires the entire department to work together.



Clockwise from top left: Dishaun Berry of Get Hooked teaches campers from Camp ELSO about the life stages of fish at Blue Lake Regional Park. Claire Dolan and Madelyn Joe hike at Mount Talbert Nature Park. Metro nature educator Renee Robinson teaches a young park visitor. Teenagers working with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization play at Oxbow Regional Park.

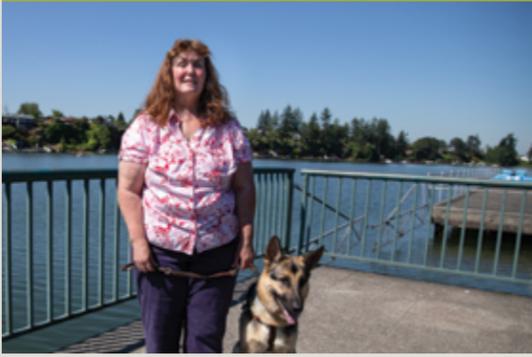
And that's what it took to create this plan. Over about 18 months, more than a quarter of the parks and nature staff were involved in developing it. That led to a plan that connected very closely to day-to-day work. Staff members were also greatly influenced by input from community members, whether from workaday interactions or through listening sessions hosted by Metro.

While the plan offers a path to achieving greater equity, it's just a start.

"It's an ongoing, unfolding process," said Sheilagh Diez, the community partnerships project manager in parks and nature. "The more we change, the more we shift the way we do things, the more we will uncover what we need to be doing."

Learn more about racial equity work in parks and nature
oregonmetro.gov/nature

Find out more about the racial equity work across Metro at
oregonmetro.gov/equity



3 questions with Patricia Kepler

Story and photography by Elayna Yussen

Two weeks before high school graduation, Patricia Kepler lost her vision. Dreams of becoming a photographer were set aside, but Kepler has not let blindness slow her down. Fueled by passion and compassion, she built a career advocating for people with disabilities. Kepler is an accessibility specialist at Portland Community College and is active on Tri-Met's Committee on Accessible Transportation and Metro's Committee on Racial Equity. She previously served on the Oregon Disabilities Commission.

Outside of her advocacy work, Kepler enjoys being outdoors. "I love to be on the water or on a trail or at the beach, and I'm on a dragon boat racing team," she said.

Q. What keeps you motivated in your advocacy work?

A. Every small victory motivates me. I've had some setbacks. There are times when I felt like I just wanted to lock my doors and stay inside. But when I see changes happen it's pretty amazing.

One time I arrived for my daughter's school field trip to Multnomah Falls and the bus driver said I couldn't be on the bus with my guide dog. I was so angry. I had this moment thinking I could stay on the bus and call the media. But I didn't want to wreck my daughter's field trip so I got off the bus trying not to cry.

Those are the things that hurt, when the rejections first come at me. With family support, I found the courage to get back out there. After that trip, I spent several months talking with a risk manager about what they did wrong, and eventually they changed the policy.

Q. Tell me about dragon boat racing.

A. My team is Blind Ambition. We formed in 2002 and were the first team of blind paddlers in Oregon and in the United States. It's so cool because it's a sport where you don't need an accommodation. You're equal out there on the water. It's more about team building and community involvement.

We've competed in regattas in Arizona, California, Washington and Canada. The furthest we traveled was to Washington, D.C. It was so cool to race on the Potomac River. With all the history there, it was the ultimate statement of independence.

Q. What is something anyone can do to make public spaces feel more inclusive?

A. Take the time to be friendly and just say hello. People tend to be afraid to communicate with a person that's different. They get tongue-tied and standoffish rather than treat them like a person.

Accessibility improvements coming to Metro parks

Story by Elayna Yussen. Photography by Pierce Girkin and Julie Cash



From top: From top: Georgina Moran worked on the Access Trails project to create online maps, photos and videos for people of all abilities to decide whether a trail or park would meet their needs. Community members in May discussed barriers to access at Metro-owned parks, public spaces and possible solutions at meetings.

"Metro did a good job distributing focus across elements like playgrounds and shelters, which are nice to have, as well as essential elements like parking and restrooms," said Georgina Moran, a project coordinator at Access Recreation and member of Metro's ADA transition plan advisory committee.

"Nothing for us without us," said Moran, who uses a wheelchair. "It's really cool that we were engaged and brought together at a point where we could actually give some really good input."

The transition plan will take years to implement, though some accessibility improvements are already underway. Construction is scheduled to begin this fall on two universally accessible, inclusive play areas linked by a quarter-mile trail at Oxbow Regional Park. One play area will have a sand and water theme while the other will offer nature-based skills and camping experience.

Inclusivity is second nature to Lupine DeSnyder, a Metro volunteer coordinator.

"I don't like isolation," DeSnyder said. "In designing volunteer projects or events, we may have folks with vision impairment or mobility issues, but my goal is not to separate them from public programming. Every work day that I design, I make sure there are projects and possibilities for people with all skills."

Metro staff is also revising informational materials and working to make more maps, photos and videos available online, which will help potential visitors make informed choices.

Lewis is encouraged to see Metro investing time and resources in this work. "We're waking up fast and working to integrate this thinking across our planning and design process," she said.

From rugged coastline and salmon-filled rivers to the majestic peaks and valleys in between, Oregon offers endless opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors.

But not everyone can easily access parks and nature. Approximately 15 percent of Oregonians live with some type of disability, such as mobility and cognitive disabilities, according to the 2016 U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

Metro is taking steps to ensure that people of all abilities feel welcome and safe in public spaces and enjoy access to programs and facilities. The Parks and Nature Department is working to develop and implement a transition plan that would bring parks into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"I think everybody should have access to the outdoors," said Nicole Lewis, a senior regional planner at Metro who is leading the ADA transition plan. "It's fundamental to the human experience to have that connection."

"Compliance with ADA is just a starting place," she said. "This is an opportunity to focus on diverse accessibility needs and envision a more inclusive experience for all park visitors throughout the planning and design process, beginning as early as site selection."

As a first step, Metro hired consultants from WT Group to evaluate all of Metro's park destinations for barriers to public access. With data about needed improvements – from playground surfacing, parking and trails, to the height of grab bars in restrooms – a three-phased approach is under development to achieve ADA-accessible hiking, picnicking and other outdoor programs across Metro's public sites. The plan could take 10 to 12 years to implement and cost at least \$7 million.

Get involved

To find nature education classes and volunteer events, turn to page 12 and visit oregonmetro.gov/calendar

Grant Butte Wetlands restoration benefits native turtles

Story by Kate Holleran. Photography by Kate Holleran and Jeff Barna



Early in June I received a great email: “Turtle logs are gathered, loaded and delivered.” I headed out to Grant Butte Wetlands in east Gresham to check them out. Stacked next to an earlier delivery, the logs were bent and crooked, and a few had a little rot. Nice-looking turtle logs, I thought.

Turtles have been trudging across the earth and swimming in oceans, rivers and ponds for more than 200 million years. They have evolved to help them persist through tough times. Though turtles can claim almost the entire world as their habitat, each species has specific habitat features that allow it to thrive.

Oregon has two native turtle species: western painted and western pond turtles. Both are declining in numbers due to habitat loss and degradation. Fortunately, several Metro parks and natural areas have native turtles, and Grant Butte Wetlands is one of them. Here, western painted turtles have been reproducing along Fairview Creek and its wetlands. When Metro and the City of Gresham acquired the land in 2014, we knew we had the opportunity to improve the habitat for turtles.

Grant Butte Wetlands is an almost – but not quite – complete homeland for native turtles. The slow-moving waters, muddy bottom of the channel and wetland provide places to forage, hide and hibernate. The shallow water provides good habitat for younger, smaller turtles, especially because of abundant aquatic vegetation to feed on and hide from predators like great blue herons and raccoons.

It’s only missing some turtle-friendly down wood and improved nesting areas. Turtles jump-start their day by sunning themselves on rocks or down wood and stretching out their necks and toes to absorb the sun’s heat.

As cold-blooded ectotherms, turtles need sunny basking sites to control their body temperature.

For hundreds of years the wetlands were a willow swamp that likely had many down logs bordering the waters. More recently the land was used for agriculture and grazing, and the wood that provided basking sites was removed. A recent survey of the area confirmed that there are few places for turtles to pull out of the water and hang out in the sun.

Fortunately, we can easily fix that. Contractors this fall will move the logs we’ve collected out to the water’s edge. Tucked along the banks, the wood will provide basking sites. Placed in the water, the logs become places young turtles can forage and hide under. This simple, easy and inexpensive work will help the turtles that make Grant Butte Wetlands their home.

Harder to do, but equally important, is improving nesting habitat. Western painted turtles need sunny banks of sandy or gravelly soils for nesting. Unfortunately, dense pasture grasses cover much of the potential nesting sites. We think the lack of good nesting areas has sent females on long treks, including crossing five lanes of Southeast Division Street in search of places to lay their eggs.

Two years ago, we started working to improve nest sites. A small but sunny rise near the wetland was our best opportunity. We’ve been thinning out the grass and creating small, bare spots. We hope the combination of new basking logs and improved nesting habitat will entice more western painted turtles to make Grant Butte Wetlands home.

To report turtle sightings and find tips for creating turtle-friendly habitat at home, visit oregonturtles.com



Oak guidebook, mapping project help protect increasingly rare habitat

Story by Elayna Yussen. Photography by Fred Joe

Oregon white oak woodlands, savannas, and prairies once dominated the Willamette Valley and supported a wide array of plants like camas lilies and animals like western gray squirrels and white-breasted nuthatches. Today, native oak and prairie habitat is an increasingly rare part of the local landscape.

To address the decline, Metro partnered with the Intertwine Alliance, Kingfisher Ecological Services, the Urban Greenspaces Institute, Portland State University’s Indigenous Nations Studies program and many other organizations to map existing oaks in greater Portland. The group created a 51-page guide with tips, resources, and detailed information for community members to protect and enhance oak habitat in urban and suburban settings.

White oaks are now found in five to 10 percent of their original range in the Willamette Valley, says Lori Hennings, a Metro senior natural resources scientist and co-leader of the mapping project.

“What’s left is fragmented, making it hard for animals and plants to move between,” she said. “We need to know where the oak trees are, so we can do effective conservation and outreach.”

The six-year mapping effort yielded data that will do just that. The mapping project was supported by Metro, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Wildlife Foundation, and Clackamas and Tualatin soil and water conservation districts.

Oak habitats have deep cultural significance to Native Americans, who carefully managed them for generations and cultivated the land for foods such as acorns, camas, deer and elk. Project leaders hired Savahna Jackson and Sequoia Breck through the Native American Youth and Family Center and PSU’s Indigenous Nations Studies program to manage about 200 volunteers to map oaks with their smart phones for two summers.

Hennings believes that everyone can make a difference and offers three tips:

Preserve. Don’t cut a native oak tree down unless absolutely necessary. A mature oak takes generations to replace.

Plant. Plant native oak trees and encourage neighbors to do the same. They will contribute to essential ecosystems and help connect oak habitats, creating “critter corridors” for plants and animals to travel.

Pamper. Remove invasive species and plant native flowers and shrubs like snowberry that grow naturally with oak.

Learn more about ways to enhance oak habitat in the *Oakscaping Guide*: bit.ly/2MqHayT

Northwest Family DAYCATION



LOOKING FOR A FAMILY-FRIENDLY ADVENTURE?

It's closer than you think!

Download the **DAYCATION APP** and find curated Daycations covering over 3,000 sq. miles of natural areas, urban gems, and family activities.

It's free. It's fun. And it's all right here!



WWW.NWFAMILYDAYCATION.COM



Oxbow Regional Park welcome center to open this fall

Story and photography by Elayna Yussen



It's an exciting time of year at Oxbow Regional Park. Fall colors are starting to show and thousands of salmon are making their annual expedition from the Pacific Ocean up the Sandy River to spawn and die where they were born.

Those attending this year's Salmon Homecoming will get to see the park's new welcome center. The center is the first of its kind on a Metro property and will serve as a hub for the park. It's a first stop for visitors to get oriented with maps and general park information, and the center's educational elements are designed to spark visitors' curiosity about nature.

"The purpose is to create a welcoming and safe environment where people can get inspired to go out and explore on their own," said George Winborn, a communications specialist at Metro who worked on the center's educational and interpretive components. "Everything that's in the nature center is textural and excites a kid to touch it and feel it."

That textural experience begins with the Sandy River pattern etched into the sidewalk outside the welcome center. The river pattern flows from the sidewalk into the building, ending at a 6-by-6-foot perspective map illustrating the connection between Mount Hood, the Sandy River, salmon, plants and other wildlife at Oxbow.

Kids can follow 11 sets of wildlife tracks from the front door to the reception area where they'll discover what animal – perhaps a bear, beaver, squirrel, or deer – made them.

There's a floor-to-ceiling engraved metal panel with hidden animals to find and a display of seasonal plant and wildlife cards.

The 2,600-square-foot modernist timber frame building designed by DAO Architecture also houses staff offices, public restrooms, a locker room and a multipurpose room.

"We've put in about three times more function than would normally be incorporated in a building this size," said Chris Woo, a construction project manager at Metro who oversaw the project.

Money for the new building came from the parks and natural areas levy that voters approved in 2013 and revenue generated from prior salmon festivals at Oxbow.

"With staff growing and visitors increasing, we're excited to have more space to operate and conduct daily business with a little breathing room," said Kendra Carrillo, lead park ranger at Oxbow.

She believes the welcome center will improve park operations and visitor experience. Seven new parking spaces will ease congestion at the main entrance and allow visitors a chance to stop at the center.

Carrillo said park staff commonly field questions by phone that range from curiosity about exposed trees on the banks of the Sandy River to the last major eruption of Mount Hood and how the park formed.

"With the educational aspect, it is going to give us more opportunities to engage the public

about the history of the park and how that relates to specific features you can see or look for while recreating," she said.

Christine and Clifton Bruno have been involved with the salmon festival for many years and know Oxbow well. "Our families both grew up fishing smelt along the Sandy so we have a special relationship with the space," Christine Bruno said.

They've helped identify different points of interest in the park from both natural and indigenous perspectives.

"For example there's a cedar grove along one of the trails," Christine Bruno said. "It's a perfect spot where people would make a camp because it's already sheltered."

The welcome center opens up new opportunities about what's possible at Oxbow, they said. They are considering projects or demonstrations the indigenous community could do, like using cedar planks to build a temporary shelter.

"It's going to make it feel like more of a destination for the community," Clifton Bruno said. "A place to show people everything Oxbow has to offer...besides just a shelter to have lunch in."

Salmon Homecoming

Turn to page 12 for details about Salmon Homecoming Oct. 13 and 14.



Bald eagle



Steller's jay



Pygmy owl



Black-tailed deer



Morel mushroom



Beaver

The unique habitat of the ancient forest includes towering Douglas firs, cedars and hemlocks and supports a variety of wildlife.

The Sandy River is home to native Chinook and coho salmon, as well as steelhead, sturgeon, Pacific lamprey and smelt. Ongoing restoration work creates side channels and log jams that provide vital habitat.



Oxbow Regional Park

ILLUSTRATION AND TEXT BY SOFÍA BASTO



In recent years, erosion exposed a forest of tree trunks buried by floods more than two centuries ago.

Every fall, Chinook salmon swim upstream from the ocean to the waters of their birth to lay eggs before they die. Salmon and lamprey are significant to many Native American tribes.

Sofía Basto
8.2.18

Field guide

OXBOW REGIONAL PARK



Turn to page 12 for details about Salmon Homecoming Oct. 13 to 14.

Story by Dan Daly

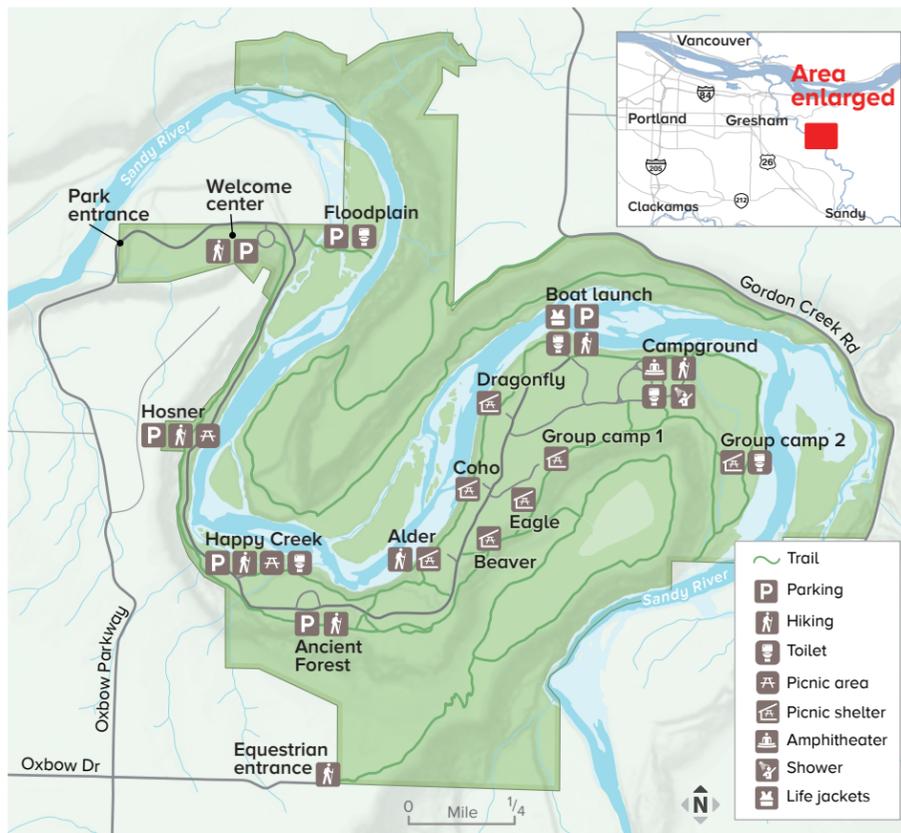
Photography by C. Bruce Forster and Fred Joe

A river flows, glassy green and silent along a cliff carved by a winter flood, then slows and chatters along gravel and sand bars bright with flecks of mica. Here, in 1,000 acres of river, forest and ridge, you're sheltered from the rush of life in one of Oregon's extraordinary places, Oxbow Regional Park on the wild and scenic Sandy River.

Oxbow's human history dates back since time immemorial to the indigenous peoples who continue to hold deep relationships with the land and water here, fishing, gathering, celebrating and caring for the land. Place names in the park today hearken back to early European settlers, whose homesteads, bootlegging and failed attempts at building a sawmill gave way to a Multnomah County park in 1963. In 1994, recognizing the regional draw of the park, the county transferred it to Metro.

Change comes to Oxbow on nature's timetable. Follow the water upstream to the glaciers and snowfields of Mount Hood, where eruptions sent massive flows of sand and gravel into the valleys below, burying the forest beneath 60 feet of sand more than two centuries ago.

An ancient forest towers above the river, but even it changes. In 2009 a microburst threw massive living trees to the ground like match sticks, bringing sunshine to parts of the forest floor that hadn't seen the light for centuries.



Oxbow Regional Park

3010 SE OXBOW PARKWAY, GRESHAM

DRIVING

From Portland head east on Division Street until it branches at Oxbow Drive, near 302nd Avenue. Veer right onto Oxbow Drive, turning left on Oxbow Parkway. Head down the canyon, into the park.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO
Open sunrise to sunset. No pets, please.

AMENITIES

Bathrooms, picnic areas and shelters, boat launch, camping (tent, pull-through, ADA accessible), playgrounds, pedestrian/equestrian and bike trails, nature programs, summer campfire shows.

oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

In the neighborhood Historic Troutdale offers art galleries, restaurants, a farmers market and seasonal fairs. U-pick blueberry and Christmas tree farms are woven into the countryside. With lodging, a theater, winery, brewery, concert venue and spa, McMenamins Edgefield can turn a walk in the park into a mini vacation.

Change also comes by human hands. Voter-approved parks and natural areas levies allow for the restoration of vital side channel habitat, giving threatened salmon and steelhead fingerlings a place to hide and feed on their way to the ocean.

Wildlife thrives in the park, and people can follow their footprints in the sand. Oxbow and protected lands around it offer an ideal home for large animals like elk, black bear and cougar. From mountain biking to riding the rapids, Oxbow has something for everyone.

Be on the lookout!



PYGMY OWL



FAIRY SLIPPER ORCHID



MAIDENHAIR FERN



BLACK-TAILED DEER

Season-by-season highlights

FALL: As fresh rains recharge the rivers, Chinook salmon return to begin their ancient spawning ritual. Attend Salmon Homecoming, where participants can see these fish. Salmon draw in bald eagles and raccoons, and some leave tracks in the wet sand as they search for the carcasses of fish that have spawned. Mushrooms are popping out of the ground all over the park.

WINTER: When winter rains swell the Sandy, the river is at full strength. Climb from the river bottom to the park's highest point (Equestrian Trailhead), and you will traverse more than 13 million years of Oregon's finest geological strata, best seen when the summer foliage is down. Winter steelhead brave the currents, and lucky fishermen are rewarded with more than cold fingers and stellar scenery. Roosevelt elk are sometimes seen at dusk on the floodplain.

SPRING: The ancient forest buds out and reaches for the sun. Osprey return to repair their nests, raise their young and share their fish catch with bald eagles. Ferns unfurl. Rufus hummingbirds flit from bloom to bloom, and hikers join the Swainson's thrush in a springtime banquet of salmonberries and huckleberries. Seek the wildflowers of the forest floor, like wild ginger, Menzies' larkspur, starflower and fairy slipper orchid.

SUMMER: Reserve a campsite and catch a campfire show in the evening. Come out for a day of hiking and river play. To escape the weekend crowds, hit the trail and leave the masses at river's edge. Reserve a group picnic shelter for a work meeting, family reunion or wedding. Ride on horseback down alder ridge by parking at the equestrian trailhead. Listen for the metronome-like toots of the pygmy owl, which are active in the daytime. Deer abound.

Destination guide

 Restrooms	 Playground
 Picnic facilities	 Camping
 Trails	 Wheelchair accessible
 Classes events volunteer	 Cost
	\$5/car, \$7/bus (except Oregon Zoo)

Blue Lake Regional Park

Enjoy a fun game of disc golf, or explore a nature-themed playground, a discovery garden, sports facilities, swim beach, and a wetland with a viewing platform and trail.



Broughton Beach

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



Canemah Bluff Nature Park

Gaze at the Willamette River below, marvel at oak trees overhead, hike and admire colorful spring wildflowers.



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.



Farmington Paddle Launch

Farmington accommodates non-motorized watercraft and is a great starting point to bike nearby rolling hills.



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 nature trail.



Graham Oaks Nature Park

Bike through a restored oak woodland, stroll in a conifer forest and spot birds from a wetland overlook.



Howell Territorial Park

Watch for birds that flock to the wetlands, enjoy a picnic and explore a piece of the region's history.



Killin Wetlands Nature Park

Enjoy a picnic or visit the trails and viewpoints in search of rare plants and animals.



Lone Fir Cemetery

Enjoy a stroll or jog in this tree-filled community greenspace and treasured historic cemetery.



Mason Hill Park

At this charming, small park, bicycle the rolling hills beyond Forest Park, enjoy amazing views of the Tualatin Valley and picnic under the shelter.



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.



Oregon Zoo

Enjoy community events and learn about wildlife and habitats from the Northwest and around the world. Admissions and more information: oregonzoo.org



Orenco Woods Nature Park

Enjoy a leisurely jog, stroll or bike ride on a network of trails while taking in views of the gently rolling hills, open meadows and forests. Children will have fun exploring the nature play area.



Oxbow Regional Park

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



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.



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.

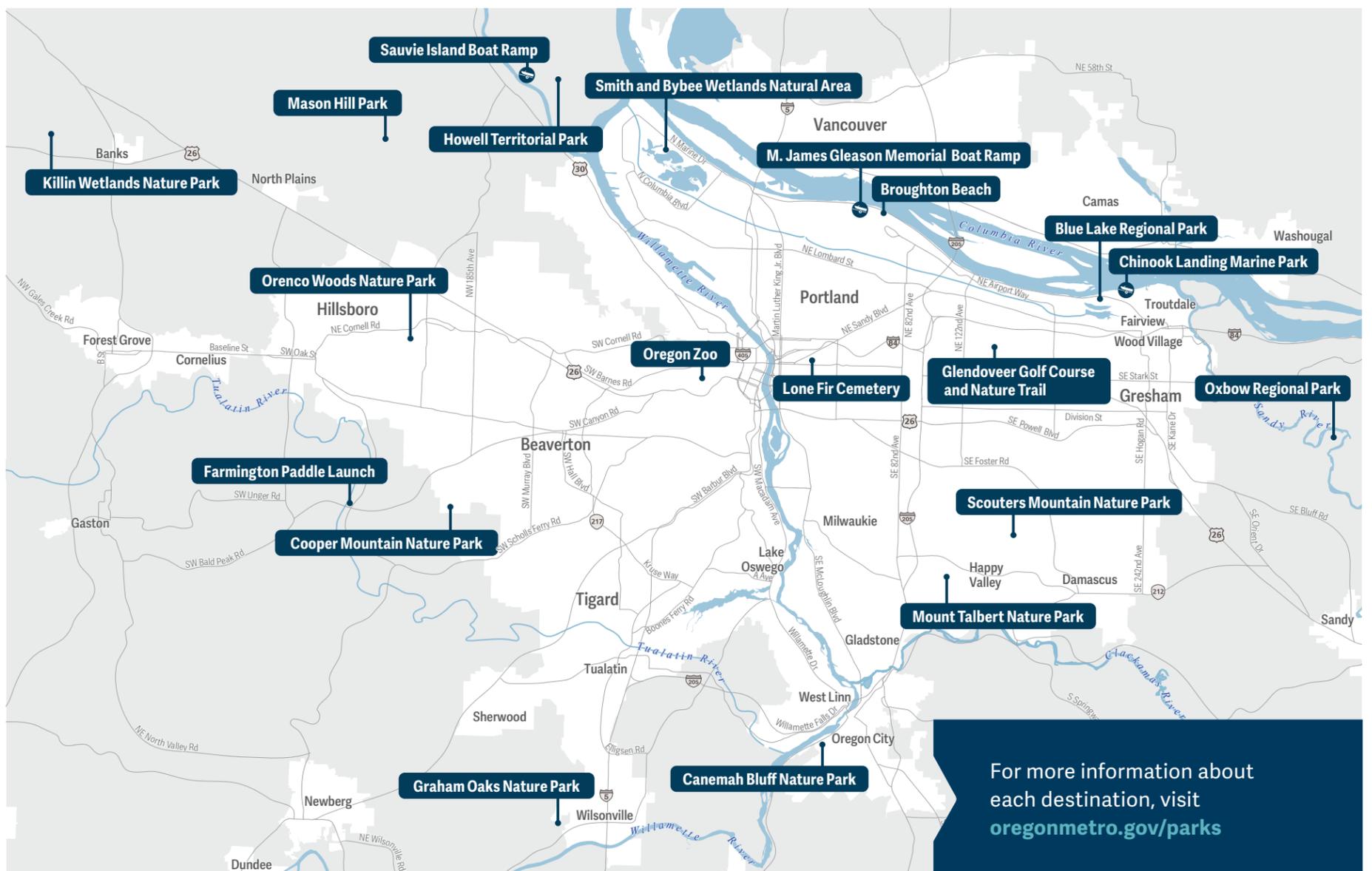


BOAT RAMPS oregonmetro.gov/boats

Chinook Landing Marine Park \$

M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp \$

Sauvie Island Boat Ramp



For more information about each destination, visit oregonmetro.gov/parks

Get involved

CLASSES AND EVENTS

SAT. OCT. 13

SUN. OCT. 14

Salmon Homecoming

Witness the ancient cycle of Chinook salmon returning to the river of their birth to spawn, creating the next generation. Salmon Homecoming is a collaboration with the Native American community to honor the salmon by sharing traditional sciences, stories, songs and a salmon bake. Come out to Oxbow Regional Park to spot the salmon in the Sandy River, a designated National Wild and Scenic River. Learn about and enjoy the 1,000 acres of old-growth forest, hiking trails, river beaches and wildlife.

All activities

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

View salmon

Join Metro staff, volunteers and community members at the river's edge. Get help spotting spawning salmon and learn about the behavior and life cycle of salmon. Borrow a pair of polarized glasses for the best fish viewing.

Oct. 13 and 14, 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. First-come, first-served.

Oct. 13 and 14, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
All ages.

Explore a salmon restoration site

Join Metro scientist Brian Vaughn to learn the science behind restoration work happening on the banks of the Sandy River. The work is being done to improve water quality and restore habitat for native fish, including salmon, steelhead and Pacific lamprey. On this 2-mile hike, participants will visit a recently constructed log jam, look for native fish spawning in the river and learn the characteristics of healthy fish habitat.

Oct. 13, meet at Alder Shelter at 1:45 p.m.
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. 14, meet at Eagle Shelter
1 to 3 p.m. Ages 8 and older.



Photography by Cory Eldridge and Fred Joe

SAT. OCT. 6, 13, 27

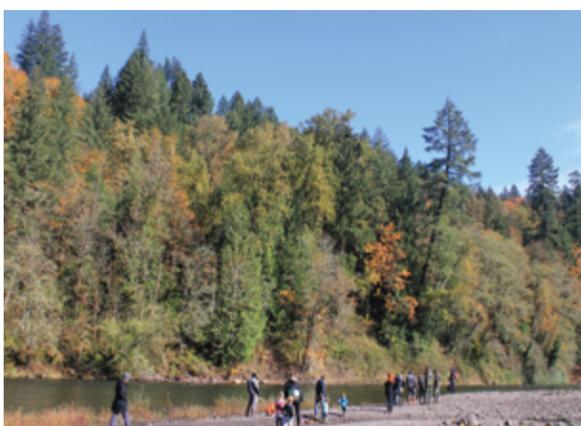
SAT. NOV. 3, 17

SAT. DEC. 1, 8

Volunteer ventures

Help care for rare native seeds, bulbs and plant materials 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 snacks provided.

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



Registration, accessibility information

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 or to request communications aids, sign language interpreters and other modifications: Nature education team, 503-220-2782.

SAT. OCT. 20

Moss and lichen of the Pacific Northwest

Diminutive but darling, Northwest mosses and lichens are renowned for their abundance and diversity. Grab your hand lens and join a naturalist in taking a closer look into the enchanting world of mosses and lichens. Learn about their ecology and how to identify them. The morning class will focus on moss, the afternoon on lichen. Join one or enjoy the series.

Orenco Woods Nature Park
Moss: 10 a.m. to noon
Lichen: 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family per class.
All ages but geared towards adults.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.

TUE. OCT. 23

Introduction to mushrooms

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 finds for hands-on practice.

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

TUE. OCT. 30

Tryon Creek Cove Trail open house

Help choose the path for a new trail segment through the Tryon Creek Cove area, connecting Tryon Creek State Natural Area with Lake Oswego's Foothills Park. Lake Oswego and Metro are working together to link these two gems and improve access to the Willamette River. Come to an open house to learn how community feedback is shaping options for crossing Oregon 43 – and give your opinion about next steps. For more information, visit oregonmetro.gov/tryoncreekcove

Lake Oswego City Hall, Council chambers
380 A Ave., Lake Oswego
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Free. All ages.
Registration not required. Difficulty: easy.

TUE. OCT. 31

Haunted forest

Enjoy a trick-or-treat path through the "haunted forest" at Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center. This event is family friendly, and costumes are encouraged.

Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center
4 to 6 p.m.
Free. Recommended ages 12 and under.
Registration not required. Difficulty: easy. 

SAT. NOV. 10, 17 SUN. NOV 18

Mushroom discovery hike

Discover the fascinating and weird world of mushrooms! Join local mushroom guide Leah Bendlin on this woodland hike. Learn about the ecological roles of fungi, their forms, and how they eat and reproduce. Practice with hands-on exercises and learn how to identify mushrooms. Field guides will be provided.

Nov. 10, Mount Talbert Nature Park
Nov. 17, Oxbow Regional Park
Nov. 18, Scouters Mountain Nature Park
9:30 a.m. to noon or 1 to 3:30 p.m.
\$6/person, \$11/family;
Oxbow parking: \$5/car, \$7 bus.
Ages 8 and older.
Registration required.
Difficulty:
Mount Talbert: strenuous.
Oxbow: easy.
Scouters Mountain: moderate.

SAT. DEC. 15

Winter solstice 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. Meet at the Nature House.

Cooper Mountain Nature Park
2 to 4 p.m.
\$10/person. All ages.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy.



SAT. JAN. 12

Winter pruning techniques

Join Metro arborist Howard Rasmussen for a classroom session on the many aspects of pruning trees in the winter. Emphasis will be placed on fruit trees, but the basic principles apply to ornamental and wilderness trees. Subjects will include safety, tools, terminology, desired outcomes and how to get there. A follow-up hands-on session in the field will be offered on a future date if there is strong interest from class participants.

Blue Lake Regional Park, Lake House
9 a.m. to noon.
Free. Ages 16 and older.
Registration required. Difficulty: easy. 



Free Parking Days

Get out and explore nature!

Enjoy free parking at Oxbow and Blue Lake regional parks, Broughton Beach, Chinook Landing Marine Park, and M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp on Oct. 18; Nov. 11, 15 and 23; and Dec. 20.

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

MON. DEC. 17 WED. DEC. 19 FRI. DEC. 21

The Grinch's candy cane hunt

Help! The Grinch discovered all the candy canes on the Glendoveer golf course, and he's planning on turning them green. Please help find the candy canes before it's too late. After all the candy canes are found, head inside to warm up with some hot cocoa and enjoy a showing of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

Glendoveer Golf and Tennis Center
1 to 2:30 p.m.
Free. Ages 2 to 11.

Registration required at playglendoveer.com/events/event-registration starting Dec. 1. Difficulty: easy.



Help find frog and salamander eggs

Learn the basics to volunteer as an amphibian egg mass monitor.

From late January through April, volunteers pull on chest waders and visit wetlands throughout the region to search for four types of frog and salamander egg masses. The four amphibians serve as indicator species, which can be used to help gauge whether regional restoration efforts are helping more native amphibians thrive. It also helps scientists survey their numbers as well as the overall health of wetlands in the region.

Learn more and sign up to be notified when the volunteer orientation is scheduled: bit.ly/2wjMtJT



Tools for living

8 THINGS YOU WANT TO RECYCLE AT HOME – BUT PLEASE DON'T

Story and photography by Faith Cathcart

Oregonians want to do right by the environment. But with changes to recycling markets causing ripples across Oregon, the US and Europe, it can be confusing.

Here are eight things to keep out of your home recycling bin:

1. Plastic bags

Do not put any kind of plastic bag in your recycling bin. Plastic bags, as well as “film” plastic like the stuff wrapped around toilet paper, create costly headaches for recycling facilities. They jam up machinery and shut down work. Some retail locations such as grocery stores may take plastic film for recycling. Check with the stores you visit.

2. Plastic to-go containers

These containers are everywhere, packaging anything from hardware supplies to deli items and produce. The triangular chasing-arrow recycling symbol on many of them can be confusing because that symbol does not indicate what goes in your home recycling bin. Although some of these containers used to be recyclable at local facilities, changes in recycling markets have left them with no place to go. They belong in the garbage.

3. Plastic bottle tops and lids

They are too small or too flat to be sorted properly. Bottle tops are often made from a different plastic than their bottles and cannot be recycled with them. Plastic lids – like the tops of yogurt or spreadable butter tubs – often end up at paper mills where they contaminate the recycling process. They go in the garbage.



4. Frozen and refrigerated food boxes

Most of these food boxes are penetrated with plastic to protect against freezer burn and soggy packaging. But it's impossible to separate the plastic from the paper for recycling. Milk and juice cartons are exceptions – although they look similar to that waffle box or microwave dinner container, they aren't made in the same way and can be recycled. Otherwise, as a general rule, if it came out of the freezer or fridge, it goes in the trash.

5. Coffee cups

Most disposable coffee cups, like frozen food boxes, are treated with a plastic or wax coating



to help keep the beverage hot and the cup from leaking. These coatings are hard to separate from the paper, and that means disposable cups are not recyclable or compostable.

6. Take-out pizza boxes

There is no way to separate the cardboard from greasy pizza remnants. And these food bits contaminate the recycling process. Good news for residents of Beaverton, Forest Grove, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie and Portland: You can put them in your yard debris bin. Otherwise, throw them in the trash.

7. Styrofoam

It's proven difficult to find a technology that recycles foam products – packaging foam, packing peanuts, egg cartons, meat trays, and cups – into something usable without being too expensive. But one facility, Agilyx in Tigard, is working on it. They'll take your Styrofoam, but if you live in North Portland, that may not pencil out environmentally. Another option: See if your neighborhood mail store will take (clean) packaging peanuts off your hands.

8. Batteries

Manufacturers no longer use mercury to make most household batteries. But button batteries – used in watches, cameras, calculators and toys – are the exception. There are other potentially hazardous chemicals in all batteries, though, and they can cause fires in your trash bins. Take them to a hazardous waste facility or collection event.

Recycling questions?
Ask Metro.

Metro
Arts and events
Garbage and recycling
Land and transportation
Parks and nature
Oregon Zoo

503-234-3000
oregonmetro.gov



Regional roundup

OREGON WALKWAYS EVENT PROMOTES SAFE WALKING IN ROSEWOOD



Story and photography by Arashi Young

The sky was a brilliant blue as the sun shined on Parklane Park in East Portland. Children waited to jump in an inflatable bounce house while their parents walked along the grass, sampling savory dishes.

Despite the July heat wave, it was an ideal day to block off the streets and celebrate the diverse Rosewood community on the border between Portland and Gresham.

On July 14, the nonprofit Oregon Walks held its third annual Oregon Walkways event. The open-streets fair aims to create a safe walking environment, often in neighborhoods with few sidewalks or bike lanes.

The event helps people feel safe to be active in their neighborhoods, said Jenny Glass, executive director of the Rosewood Initiative, a nonprofit community-building organization which partnered with Oregon Walks.

“It’s just an opportunity for communities to take over the streets and not have them be car-centric for a day, but have them be people- and neighborhood-centric,” Glass said.

Metro sponsored Oregon Walks as part of the Regional Travel Options program. The RTO program supports projects and organizations



that make it easier to walk, bike, rideshare and take public transit.

The Rosewood neighborhood has often been overlooked by decision-makers. The Oregon Walkways event shows the area’s growing visibility due to efforts by community members who have long advocated for improvements.

In February, Oregon Walks and the Rosewood Initiative successfully pushed for an emergency speed reduction on Southeast Stark Street from 35 mph to 30 mph. In the last two years, seven people have died from collisions on Stark.

Kem Marks, director of transportation equity at the Rosewood Initiative, said planners designed the roads in east Portland for cars, without considering safety for people walking and biking. Road-centric streets make it difficult to fulfill Vision Zero goals to have zero deaths and life-changing injuries from traffic collisions by 2035. Despite the campaign’s education efforts, Marks believes Vision Zero is not possible on the streets in Rosewood.

“People are still going to drive fast because this is how these roads are made,” Marks said.

Marks said community members want slower speeds, more crosswalks and a road redesign

Clockwise from top: Rosewood neighbors stroll Parklane Park during Rosewood Walkways, an Oregon Walks open-streets event that promotes safe walking. Metro staff show destinations on the community map for the Rosewood neighborhood. Hadi Mohammed loves his Rosewood neighborhood, especially the diverse community that lives in the area.

that protects the people who share the roads with cars.

Another recent win for the neighborhood is the new TriMet bus line 74 along 162nd Avenue. Before the bus route launched in March, there were no north-south buses running between 122nd and 181st avenues, a three-mile stretch in the heart of east Portland.

The new service runs every 30 minutes, five days a week from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., but Glass hopes for more frequent service that extends into weekends and evenings. She said this would benefit people who work in the Columbia Corridor industries, the warehousing and freight jobs that have early, late and weekend shifts.

Grants available to support travel options

Do you have a project to create safe and vibrant communities by expanding travel options? Apply for a grant from the Regional Travel Options program. Applications for the 2019-21 grants cycle will be accepted January through March 2019. Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/grants

2018 Regional housing measure 26-199

This November, voters in greater Portland will consider a \$652.8 million general obligation bond to provide funds for affordable housing through an average increase of \$5 per month in property taxes to homeowners. **If approved, the bond could create affordable housing for about 7,500 people across the region.**

Voters will also consider an amendment to the state Constitution that would allow public entities to use general obligation bond proceeds for affordable housing to be owned by non-governmental entities. **If both measures pass, the funds raised by the Metro bond could create housing for up to 12,000 people.**

Learn more at oregonmetro.gov/housing

Area rents have outpaced incomes

Average monthly Social Security income \$1,300

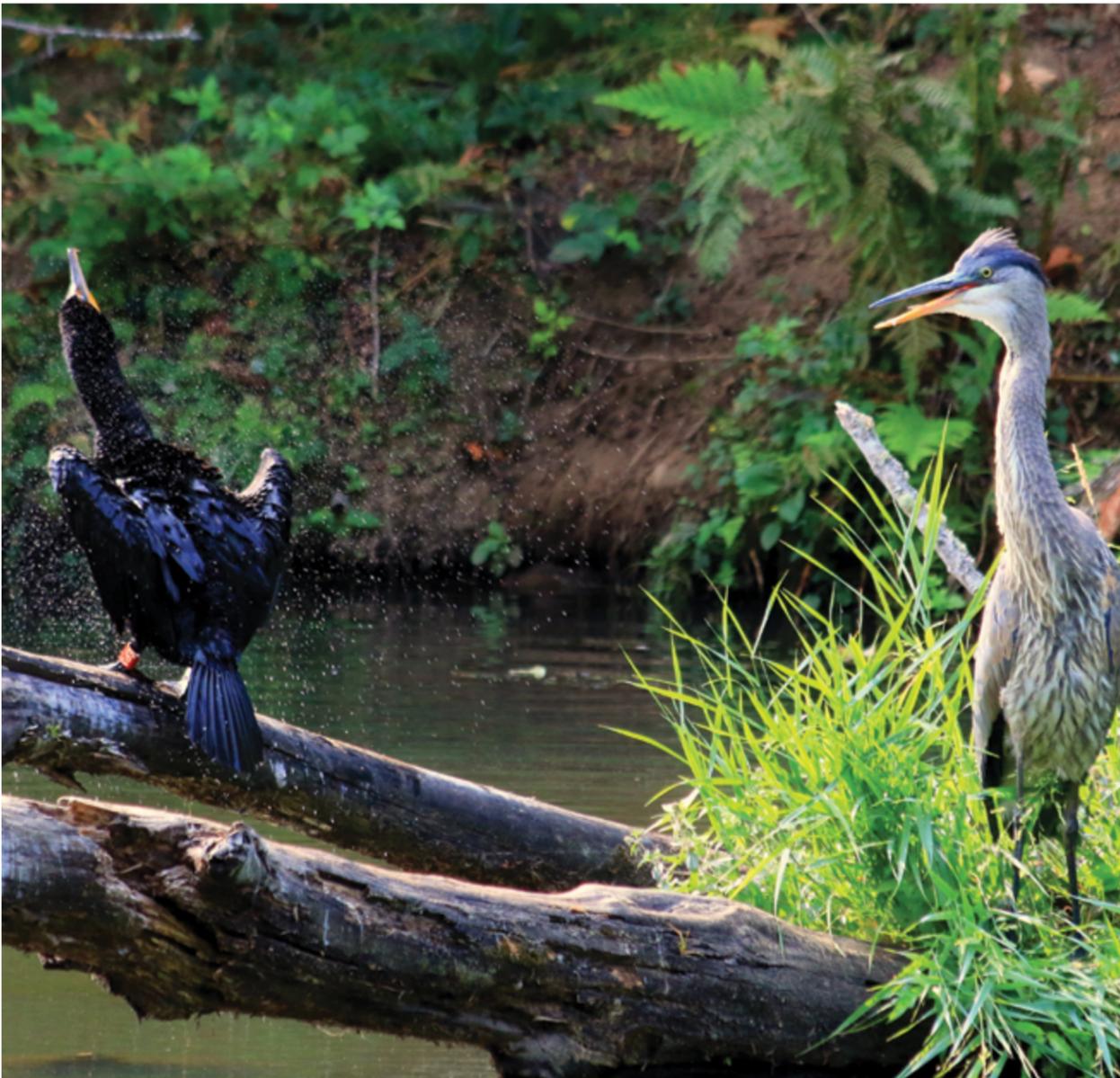
Monthly minimum wage \$1,950

Monthly income needed to afford a 1-bedroom home \$3,772

Don't forget to vote!
Nov. 6, 2018



Share your nature and win!



Patricia Kolberg, Troutdale

I “discovered” the Kelly Creek Pond at Mt. Hood Community College again about a month ago. This morning I sat out for almost 3 hours to get just the right shot of a cormorant and a blue heron together, fishing the pond. In this photo, the cormorant had just come out of the pond and was shaking off the water, getting ready to sit and dry.

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 50-word description of your experience. 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