



Metro's parks and natural areas levy

Making a difference in Washington County

Across greater Portland, Metro's parks and natural areas levy protects clean water, restores fish and wildlife habitat and connects people with nature close to home.

Voters first approved the levy in 2013 and then renewed it through June 2023. It raises approximately \$16 million a year and supports restoration and maintenance, park operations, public access improvements, nature education and volunteer programs, and community grants and sponsorships.

Since 2013, the levy has made a significant difference across Metro's 17,000 acres of parks, natural areas and trails – and a number of community nature projects and programs.

Chehalem Ridge Nature Park

(pictured above)

This new 1,250-acre nature park is scheduled to open in late 2021, providing visitors with 10 miles of new trails to hike, bike and ride horses and four all-abilities trails. Levy money supported the community planning process for the park, including a partnership with Centro Cultural de Washington County to engage the county's growing Latinx community.

For more information on voter investments, visit oregonmetro.gov/nature

Follow **oregonmetro**     



Restoration and maintenance

Maroon Ponds

A few miles south of Forest Grove, an emergent wetland with sedges, rushes and fallen logs now allow water from nearby springs and creeks to flow into a large pond where turtles gather near the Tualatin River. In partnership with Clean Water Services, Metro removed a manmade dam, tires, car batteries and asphalt to bring back wetlands and riparian forests and improve water quality and habitat.

Diversifying restoration workforce

With the latest round of restoration contracts, Metro worked to make the bureaucratic process of government contracts more accessible to diverse business owners from diverse communities, including people of color, women, veterans and emerging small businesses. The latest process included interviews with potential contractors so people could talk more freely rather than relying on the traditional request-for-proposals process that emphasizes writing skills. The effort supports economic equity for people who plant native trees and shrubs, remove invasive weeds, and help improve water quality and restore habitat.

Park operations

More than 1.7 million visitors enjoy Metro's developed parks each year for walking, hiking, canoeing, camping, bird watching, and fishing, in addition to family and community events. The levy allows Metro to operate, maintain, and upgrade Metro sites so that they are safe, welcoming and inclusive, including at places like Killin Wetlands and the future Chehalem Ridge Nature Park.



Public access improvements

Killin Wetlands Nature Park

Killin Wetlands is a 25-acre nature park that is located west of Banks. Formerly a dairy farm, this park offers visitors the opportunity to explore the nature trails, view rolling hills, enjoy a picnic from the scenic lookout deck and delight in searching for beavers, river otters, wetland birds and elk. The area is rich with rare plants including Geyer willows.

East Council Creek

East Council Creek Natural Area sits along Northwest Hobbs Road in Cornelius and protects portions of Council Creek and provides habitat for fish and wildlife. Working with community members, Metro has created plans for potential public access to the 33-acre natural area with possible amenities including picnic facilities, interpretive signage, nature trail, and places to play.



Orenco Woods Nature Park

Orenco Woods, a 42-acre park that was once home to the Oregon Nursery Company, sits nestled along Northwest Cornelius Pass Road. The park was created in partnership with the City of Hillsboro and includes a number of trails, viewpoints, picnic tables and play areas. Restoration work at the park has included building log jams in the Rock Creek floodplain to provide fish habitat and planting native trees, shrubs and flowers to provide wildlife habitat.

Nature education and volunteer programs

Metro offers school field trips, drop-in nature activities and volunteer opportunities, with a focus on serving people of color, low-income communities, people with disabilities and other historically marginalized groups. Programming in recent years has included bilingual programs with Centro Cultural to co-develop training programs for their staff and community members to lead nature tours and with Adelante Mujeres to support their Beyond Trauma adult education program through dance and nature walks at Orenco Woods and Cooper Mountain nature parks.

In addition, the ongoing restoration work at Chehalem Ridge in partnership with a wide range of organizations including Adelante Mujeres, Forest Grove High School, Latino Network, Centro Cultural, Forest Grove Community School, Youth Works and Rotary Forest Grove underscores the importance of this site across Washington County.

Community grants and partnerships

Nature experiences and workforce training

In partnership with Adelante Mujeres and the Beaverton School District, a \$90,000 grant to Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District provided after-school nature programming for Latinx audiences and expanded a multiyear, workforce development program focusing on Latinx students.

Accessible trail maps

Access Recreation received two grants totaling \$75,000 to create online trail maps, descriptions, photos and videos so people of all abilities know whether a regional trail will meet their abilities and expectations before they arrive at the trail. A number of Washington County destinations are featured, including Jackson Bottom Wetlands, Tualatin Hills Nature Park, Lowami Hart Woods and Metro's Cooper Mountain Nature Park.