



“It’s a promise that these special places are for everyone.”



What’s inside

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

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

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

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



Share your nature and win!



Clockwise from top:

Winner: Jane Hopwood

I spotted this juvenile barn swallow at Beaverton Creek Wetlands as it tried to persuade any adult that came close to feed it. Eventually, its parent arrived and the feeding began.

Finalist: Lauren and Eli Pierce

I love mushrooms, and I especially love taking pictures of them. I found this stump near the Sandy River and knew that this picturesque cluster of coprinellus micaceus was the perfect specimen. The sun was in the perfect spot, the flowers were flowering and the mushrooms were fruiting.

Finalist: Patricia Kolberg

I went to Smith and Bybee Wetlands today for the first time and it was a tremendous experience. The water was very high, so we were able to paddle in through the trees and see a lot of wildlife. This was only one of the many raptors we saw while out today. I must say, he was, by far, the biggest. I will definitely be going back to this gem of a wetland, so close to a major city.

Submit your photo

Win an annual parking pass, a full-day picnic shelter reservation at Graham Oaks or Scouters Mountain nature parks, or a choice between a tennis court session or 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 greater Portland – 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 October 15 to: ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov

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.



Get involved

CLASSES AND EVENTS

FRI. OCT. 27

SUN. NOV. 5, 12

Mushroom hikes

Discover the fascinating and weird world of mushrooms! Join local mushroom guide Leah Bendlin on woodland hikes at Oxbow Regional Park, Chehalem Ridge and Newell Creek Canyon nature parks. Learn about the ecological roles of fungi, their forms and how they eat and reproduce. Enjoy hands-on exercises and learn how to identify mushrooms. Field guides will be provided. Morning and afternoon hikes are available at each park.

Oct. 27: Oxbow Regional Park
Morning mushroom discovery hike
9:30 to 11:45 a.m.
Afternoon mushroom discovery hike
12:30 to 2:45 p.m.
\$6/person, fee waiver available
Parking is \$5 car/\$7 bus

Nov. 5: Newell Creek Canyon Nature Park
Morning mushroom discovery hike
9:30 to 11:45 a.m.
Afternoon mushroom discovery hike
12:30 to 2:45 p.m.
\$6/person, fee waiver available

Parks and nature news

Register for events at oregonmetro.gov/guidedactivities
503-220-2782



Nov. 12: Chehalem Ridge Nature Park
Morning mushroom discovery hike
9:30 to 11:45 a.m.
Afternoon mushroom discovery hike
12:30 to 2:45 p.m.
\$6/person, fee waiver available

For all mushroom hikes:
All ages
Registration required.
Difficulty: easy

SAT. OCT. 14

Fire-building at Oxbow Regional Park

In this hands-on class, learn how to build fires safely with both modern tools and classic techniques. We will go over basics like using magnesium fire starters, bundling kindling, as well as the safety precautions you'll want to take. We will provide all materials needed.

Oxbow Regional Park
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
\$6/person, fee waiver available
Parking is \$5 car/\$7 bus
All ages
Registration required
Difficulty: moderate

THURS. NOV. 2

Community tending day at Multnomah Park Cemetery

Join us at Multnomah Park Cemetery to care for the resting places of the people buried at this greenspace along Portland’s 82nd Avenue. You’ll also have the opportunity to learn and share about headstone symbols and what they represent through a brief tour of the site. Participants can clear around and clean headstones of their choice, connecting with and honoring those resting in the graves and building community with other volunteers. Metro provides all supplies, gloves and tools, along with snacks, tea and coffee.

Multnomah Park Cemetery
10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Free
Registration required
All ages
Difficulty: easy

SAT. NOV. 4

Chehalem Ridge community stewardship day

Join us at Chehalem Ridge Nature Park for a community planting event to strengthen the park’s forest habitat. Participants will learn to plant understory native plants such as sedges, woodland strawberry, sword fern and salal. All ages and experiences are welcome. Participants can join a group hike to a nearby viewpoint towards the end of the event. The plantings are easy, but the trail is moderate in distance and grade. Tools, gloves and refreshments are provided.

Chehalem Ridge Nature Park
10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Free
Registration required
All ages
Difficulty: moderate

SUN. NOV. 5

Stewardship day at Newell Creek Canyon Nature Park

Join us at Newell Creek Canyon Nature Park for a community planting event. Participants will plant native plants such as Oregon grape and kinnikinic along the edge of the parking lot and spread wildflower seeds in lawn areas to support native pollinators. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided. Participants can join a group hike. The plantings are easy and accessible, but the hike and trail is moderate to difficult, in distance and grade.

Newell Creek Canyon Nature Park
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Free
All ages
Registration required
Difficulty: easy

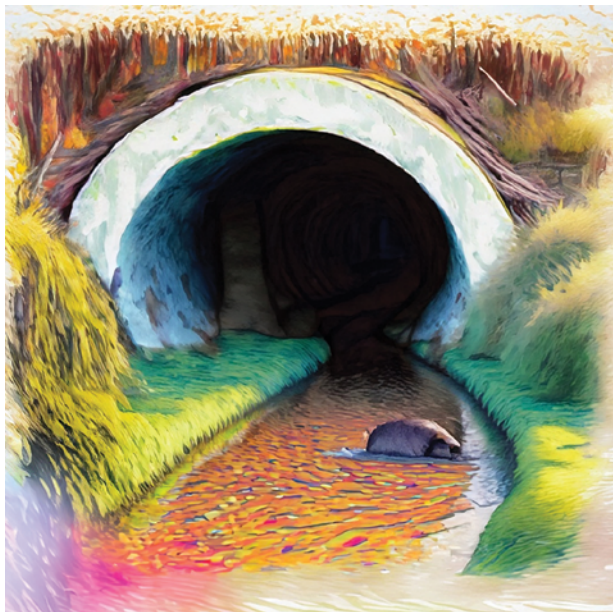


SAT. NOV. 18

Fall hike at Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area

Join a Metro naturalist on a guided hike through the wetlands. Take this time to reflect, listen to the birdsongs, watch for beaver activity and connect with nature, all while experiencing the crisp fall air.

Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
\$6/person, fee waiver available
All ages
Registration required
Difficulty: easy



You can help pick the region’s next parks and nature projects

Join your neighbors and community members in choosing the next park, garden, wetland restoration, pollinator habitat or other type of parks and nature project that will be created in your big backyard.

In August, community members in Metro Council District 4 voted for their favorite projects out of a list of 44 in Metro’s Nature in Neighborhoods community choice grants program. A slate of 27 are in the final round of voting.

In the final vote, everyone 11 years old and older across greater Portland can vote for the parks and nature projects that will receive grants. A total of up to \$2 million is available.

This is the community choice grants’ pilot round, and grants are for projects in Metro Council District 4, which includes all of the urban areas of Washington County north of Highway 8 along with areas west of Cornelius Road (see the map on the right).

Community members didn’t just vote for the projects. Ideas were created by community members earlier this spring. Community members then helped develop the ideas into projects that could receive funding from Metro’s 2019 parks and nature bond measure.

Several design expositions will be held so you can see the updated designs and vote in person. You can also vote by scanning the QR code on the opposite page.

The grant winners will be announced before the end of the year.

Community choice grants finalists

- 1. Native plant gardens in Hillsboro parks**
Rood Bridge Park in Hillsboro

This project creates native plant gardens at Rood Bridge Park, providing opportunities to learn about wildlife, habitat and protection of the environment.
- 2. Refurbishing Shute Park**
Shute Park in Hillsboro

This project would add new amenities to the park, including nature play elements and native plant gardens.
- 3. Nature play in Evergreen Park**
Evergreen Park in Hillsboro

This project would add nature play elements to Evergreen Park in Hillsboro. Element would includes log play, tactile play and climbing structures.
- 4. Restoring nature in Hillsboro**
Rood Bridge Park in Hillsboro

This project would protect and restore wildlife habitat in the park by extending corridors of natural vegetation into turfgrass areas.
- 5. Updating the playground at Shadywood Park**
Shadywood Park in Hillsboro

To improve the playground at Shadywood Park in Hillsboro, this project would add nature play elements and native plantings.
- 6. Adult play structures at Dairy Creek Park**
Dairy Creek Park in Hillsboro

This proposal would enhance recreational and play opportunities for adults.

- 7. Learning and discovery garden at W.L. Henry Elementary School**
W.L. Henry Elementary School in Hillsboro

This project would expand and add amenities to a community garden space with plants and pollinator habitat at the school, opening it to more families and community members.
- 8. Improve Reedville Creek culvert for beaver, lamprey and fish passage**
Reedville Creek at SE 51st Avenue in Hillsboro

The project would improve Reedville Creek’s wildlife passage under SE 51st Avenue. The creek is home to cutthroat trout and winter steelhead and possibly Pacific lamprey spawning.
- 9. Covered outdoor play at Evergreen Park**
Evergreen Park in Hillsboro

A covered play space at Evergreen Park would expand the time of year play areas can be used, both in rainy and hot seasons.
- 10. Serenity Park**
Location to be determined in Hillsboro

This proposal would create space within a natural area for public art elements, accessible pathways, flowering plant gardens, and a platform for yoga and tai chi.
- 11. Asian produce garden**
Upcoming West Neighborhood Park in North Bethany

This garden would provide space for culturally specific gardening practices in North Belamy, home to many Asian Americans. Native plants and pollinator habitat could be included.

- 12. Gleaning gardens for all**
Future THPRD park at SW Pointer Road in Beaverton

This project would expand the gleaning gardens planned for a new park in Beaverton, with an emphasis on interpretive signs to make them more open and accessible to community members.
- 13. Adult play structures at park on Heckman Lane**
Upcoming THPRD park in North Bethany

This project would add adult-sized play equipment, such as bouldering walls, to a new park coming to Heckman Lane and 159th Avenue.
- 14. Pollinator habitat at Center Street Park**
Center Street Park in Beaverton

This project would restore native meadow plants like milkweed to increase habitat and resources for pollinators while highlighting stories of migration.
- 15. Community agriculture under utility lines**
John Marty Park in Beaverton

By renovating and expanding garden plots in John Marty Park, this project would increase access for community gardens in underused areas of powerline corridors.
- 16. Connecting people and habitat in Aloha**
Recuerdo Park in Aloha

This project would build community gardens and natural areas, with the aim of making natural spaces more inclusive and increasing health and welfare in diverse neighborhoods.
- 17. To make it all good again at PCC Rock Creek**
Portland Community College Rock Creek in North Bethany

This project would restore a 100-acre natural area at Portland Community College Rock Creek using traditional ecological knowledge led by Indigenous community members.

- 18. Pollinator pathway on Rock Creek Powerline Trail**
Rock Creek Powerline Corridor in Beaverton

This project would create pollinator and bird-friendly habitat and provide interpretive information along the Rock Creek Trail.
- 19. Re-Indigenizing the Forest Grove Loop Trail**
Forest Grove Loop Trail in Forest Grove

This project would center the Atfalati people through culturally specific design elements in public art and interpretative signs and restore Oregon white oak habitat.
- 20. To make it all good again at Tualatin Hills Nature Park**
Tualatin Hills Nature Park in Beaverton

This project would restore habitat with Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge, improve trail accessibility, and add interpretative elements.
- 21. Wetland restoration at Kyle Park**
Kyle Recreation Area on B Street in Forest Grove

This project would provide wetland restoration along Gales Creek at Kyle Recreation Area in Forest Grove to provide enhanced habitat for viewing birds and other native species.
- 22. Keeping it rustic in Cornelius**
Steamboat City Park in Cornelius

This project would improve river access for simple, rustic activities like picnicking and fishing at Steamboat City Park.
- 23. Pocket forests in Cornelius**
Parks and neighborhoods in Cornelius

This project creates native plant gardens at Rood Bridge Park, providing opportunities to learn about wildlife, habitat and protection of the environment.

- 24. Covered outdoor play at Bard Park**
Bard Park in Forest Grove

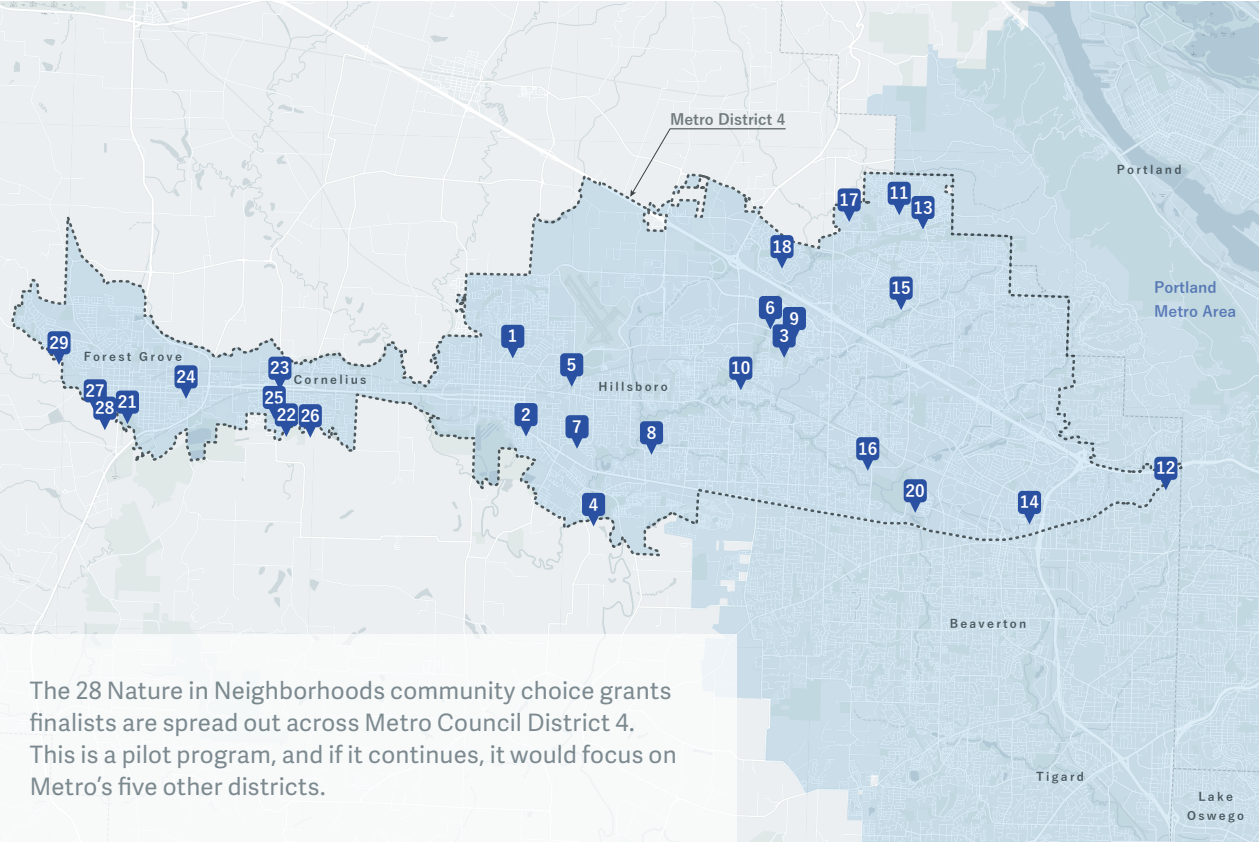
Building a covered shelter over the playground at Bard Park would provide year-round play. The shelter could include a green or living roof and other native planting elements.
- 25. Grow better community in Cornelius**
East Baseline Street and 12th Avenue in Cornelius

By converting space adjacent to the Centro Mercado, this project would create a new community garden for community members to grow and harvest their own food.
- 26. Wetland restoration at King’s Bend**
King’s Bend Natural Area in Cornelius

By restoring wetlands in the floodplains of the upper Tualatin River, this project would enhance habitat for birds and other native species.
- 27. Pollinator pathway on the Forest Grove Loop**
Upcoming southwest portion of Forest Grove Loop Trail in Forest Grove

This project would add pollinator and bird-friendly habitat plantings along with interpretive information on the southwest portion of the trail.
- 28. Re-Indigenizing Reuter Farms Park**
Forest Grove Loop Trail in Forest Grove

This project would center the Atfalati people through the addition of culturally specific design elements and gathering spaces within an existing Oregon white oak grove.



The 28 Nature in Neighborhoods community choice grants finalists are spread out across Metro Council District 4. This is a pilot program, and if it continues, it would focus on Metro’s five other districts.

Vote now for your favorite projects!

Everyone 11 years old and older in greater Portland can vote for their favorite Nature in Neighborhoods community choice projects.

Greater Portland includes all the urban and suburban areas in Oregon around Portland.

Learn more and cast your ballot

Scan the QR code to discover more about the projects and vote for your favorites.





More than just a badge

By Tabitha Miles-Kingrey

Metro’s park rangers now wear a new badge. The design is inspired by nature and Metro’s commitment to making parks and nature welcoming for everyone, particularly the region’s Black and Brown communities.

“It’s just a badge,” is what I kept telling myself. Over and over, I’d say it during my first years as the operations supervisor at Oxbow Regional Park. “It’s not as important as other diversity, equity and inclusion work that needs to get done.”

When I started in May of 2019, I was beyond excited to take on this new role in such a beautiful park with an incredibly passionate team of park rangers. But from my first day on the job I just couldn’t shake the unease circling in my mind after I met the park rangers and saw they were wearing a seven-point-star badge. It wasn’t until a few weeks later that I learned park supervisors and managers are also deputized and wear the park badge on occasion – typically on busy weekends or during emergencies. The thought of wearing the badge made me uncomfortable, but I still wasn’t sure if anything would change if I mentioned my concerns.

Being from south Louisiana and a history major, I knew all too well what a star badge can represent. While today you will find a star badge on various law enforcement personnel, in North America one of its original purposes was to deputize slave catchers and legalize posses who raided Indigenous communities. These original forms of American “law” enforcement became the basis for some of the

first police units, and the badge was part of that inheritance.

The star carries that history, weighing it with a great deal of negative meaning. Setting aside this history – which I don’t think you really can – the star badge signifies the wearer is an officer of the law. That was a mismatch for our rangers.

Looking at the work and the role of a park ranger, law enforcement is not their main job. The bulk of a park ranger’s time is spent on stewardship, ensuring facilities, accessible places and environmental efforts are sustained for the public. Next would be customer service and education. Lastly would be enforcement of park rules.

Naturally this order varies from park to park and between different park systems, but this is what I observed were the goals of Metro park rangers. Therefore, it seemed out of place to see a badge that led with enforcement. And it was out of step with the work Metro was doing to create safe and welcoming places for all. As a Black woman whose family had been in the South for at least four generations and as a descendant of enslaved Africans, I felt unsafe because of the badge so I couldn’t feel welcomed.

But, I kept saying, “It’s just a badge.”



At top: The author, Tabitha Miles-Kingrey, led the effort to redesign the badge worn by Metro’s park rangers. **Above:** Miles-Kingrey holds the old seven-star badge and Metro’s new ranger badge.

During my first year in the job, I observed, listened and learned. I observed how park rangers at Metro did their jobs; listened to work happening across the department related to diversity, equity and inclusion; and I learned more about the Parks and Nature department’s past, present and potential future in regard to our work and racial equity.

The more I understood, the more I felt the current badge had no place in the work we did at Metro, and especially not in park operations. It didn’t support the racial equity goals we hoped to achieve.

In May of 2020, many of us found ourselves grieving over the death of Breonna Taylor. Then the nation and soon after the world erupted in grief and anger at the senseless murder of George Floyd Jr. and the clear abuse of power by the Minneapolis Police Department. I was a year into my job,

struggling with my own anger and frustration, and I concluded that even if a step toward change seemed small it was both necessary and essential to take that step.

While watching the news and trying to understand the events that led up to George Floyd Jr.’s murder, I watched a local news station read a message of condemnation on behalf of several local law enforcement agencies in response to the Minneapolis Police Department’s actions. Illustrating this statement of condemnation, badges from several local agencies came up on the screen. Most were five- or seven-point stars. It was hard, maybe impossible, to reconcile the statements with the racist origins of those symbols.

When our badges were so similar, how could patrons come to a Metro park and see park rangers as anything other than law enforcement? How could our rangers create a safe and welcoming experience for Black and Brown park visitors?

In June of 2020, I started looking into what it would take to either change the current badge to one that is more inclusive or to get rid of it entirely. A few weeks later, I sent an email to my supervisors. I cited historical information surrounding star-shaped badges and their problematic history. I also collected images of local law enforcement agencies badges and park agencies badges to show the need for change.

Along with revealing the problems of our badges, I wanted to show that we had a wonderful opportunity to create something more inclusive, something that celebrated the parks and patrons we serve.

I waited anxiously for a reply. Fortunately, I had a busy summer day at Oxbow to keep me distracted. When I checked my email at the end of the day, I was delighted to see an overwhelming amount of support to put a project plan together. Moreover, my supervisor gave me a call and stressed that my leading this project was optional, highlighting the fact that Black, Indigenous and people of color shouldn’t have to carry the burden of undoing racism and systematic oppression. I chose to lead the project, with my supervisor’s support to help when needed.

Unfortunately, this all happened in June of 2020, and, like many, I had no idea what was in

store for us as life continued to shift around a global pandemic.

Oxbow Regional Park never closed during the pandemic. Our park staff had the dedication and desire to continue providing safe and welcoming spaces when the public needed somewhere to go and simply be: be safe out of the house when we were all in lock down; be outdoors in the sun; and be doing something normal when so much felt unpredictable. With many of the Columbia Gorge’s parks closed, Oxbow became an even more important destination, while we made do with a staff reduced by half due to pandemic cuts.

Whenever I found free time, I worked on the badge project. It became a tether for me, something to focus on and keep pushing forward. I was joined by a team of smart and passionate colleagues who carved time from their work to join me. To ensure a diverse group of voices had input of this project I gathered three stakeholder groups. The first was the Equity Advisory Committee, a group of community members who advise on Parks and Nature department projects. Three internal staff members who work directly with communities of color: Isabel LaCourse, our Indigenous community liaison; Tara Miller, our community partnerships program manager; and Ruby Joy White, then our equity and racial justice program manager.

Lastly, most importantly, the park rangers. For this project to be a success it was crucial the park rangers were onboard. They had to wear the new badge or no badge at all. They were going to be affected just as much as patrons could be by this change, though in a very different way.

Individually and in groups, many of my teammates were already reflecting on their work, thinking more deeply on how they enforced park rules, looking to be more mindful and trauma-informed in their approach. Out at Oxbow we were having almost weekly conversations around park rules, when to enforce them, how to enforce them, and ensuring we were all engaging with patrons as equitably as we could – all in a desire to foster safe and welcoming spaces. It was a rich ground to bring the discussion about our badge.

A regular concern among the rangers was that by losing the badge or changing it, they would lose their ability to enforce important

safety rules. Without a badge, would the public even listen to them? This was understandable. Through the conversations, however, a consensus grew that a badge – a piece of metal – shouldn’t be the first tool used to engage with people, even if rules were being broken.

During the remainder of 2020 and throughout 2021, I held several formal meetings with stakeholders and numerous informal, often one-on-one conversations, to talk about possibilities. All of these conversations were necessary. They helped me and the park rangers see what was possible when we work to include everyone in the conversation. They were also painful at times. Everyone is at a different place in their understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and liberation work and what positive change can look like. It can be uncomfortable to embrace change when it affects something you feel supports you personally or professionally.

Through the wonderful conversations with stakeholders, it was clear most wanted to keep a badge in place but wanted to see it redesigned. First and foremost was a desire to encapsulate nature on the badge. Being able to have nature represented is one of the main things that helps distinguish a park ranger badge from law enforcement. It also a point of connection between a ranger and a park visitor. Nature and a passion for the outdoors is the common ground between park patron and park ranger.

Fortunately, Metro’s parks are gorgeous! Inspiration was everywhere. Rangers, Metro staff and community members made suggestions on what to feature, and the design slowly took shape.

At the end of last year, more than 18 months after starting the project, I shared the final design. It was incredible to see people look at a badge differently. Some, including myself, were taken aback. There was certainly a sense of pride, particularly from those who would have the chance to wear it every day. For others, seeing the final design was the moment they understood what all the fuss was about and why the project was important.

With this project completed I hope that future Black, Brown and Indigenous patrons, park rangers, supervisors and managers will be able to look at this badge and see a symbol that was created for them. It’s not just a badge; it’s a promise that these special places are for everyone.

Anatomy of a ranger badge

Metro rangers, park staff and communities members wanted the new ranger badge to represent what makes nature parks special. They only had a couple square inches to say it all.

Mount Hood

Whether it’s hidden by the forest or can be seen from a park, like at Scouters Mountain Nature Park and Broughton Beach, Mount Hood overlooks all of greater Portland.

Trail

Rangers work right at the point where people and nature meet, most often on a trail.

Bench

Spending time in nature is as much about stillness and contemplation as activity and exploration.



Douglas fir

The iconic tree of the region, Douglas fir are abundant at nearly every Metro park.

Red cedar

Always accompanying Douglas fir, western red cedar tower as tall.

Roosevelt elk

Elk might be the most magnificent animals seen at Metro’s nature parks, and their presence is proof of large stretches of conserved habitat.

Chinook salmon

The iconic fish of greater Portland’s rivers. Much of Metro’s parks and nature work aims to strengthen Chinook habitat.

River

The Sandy River, which flows down from Mount Hood and runs through Oxbow Regional Park, inspired the badge’s river.

Restoration and recreation on the Clackamas



From top: A helicopter carrying a tree flies overhead at Barton Natural Area along the Clackamas River. Metro is working to restore aquatic wildlife habitat in the area that was damaged by mining years ago. This helicopter is placing large logs, practically full trees, along the banks of a channel on the north side of the Clackamas. These logs will create habitat for fish in the river.

Barton Natural Area was acquired by Metro in 1999. It previously served as a rock quarry in the 1970s and 80s. Rock was mined from the riverbed, which seriously damaged critical habitat for salmon and steelhead, who spawn and rear in the channels of the Clackamas River. This also damaged habitat for lamprey, turtles and pond-breeding amphibians in the natural area. Metro crews are restoring the channel, by removing sediment that limits water flow and adding the logs to create a suitable environment for salmon and steelhead.

The helicopter was in full view of people floating the Clackamas River as it flew from the staging area to the small channel. Metro employees were stationed at Barton Park to explain to folks floating the river what was happening and to ask them to stay away from the channel. The helicopter pilots made sure to not fly overhead of river-goers.

The helicopter is able to carefully and precisely place the logs in the channel. Not only does using the helicopter reduce impacts that would be caused by using vehicles to get the logs to the river, it's also faster. The helicopter was able to move more than 100 logs in just one day.



Field guide

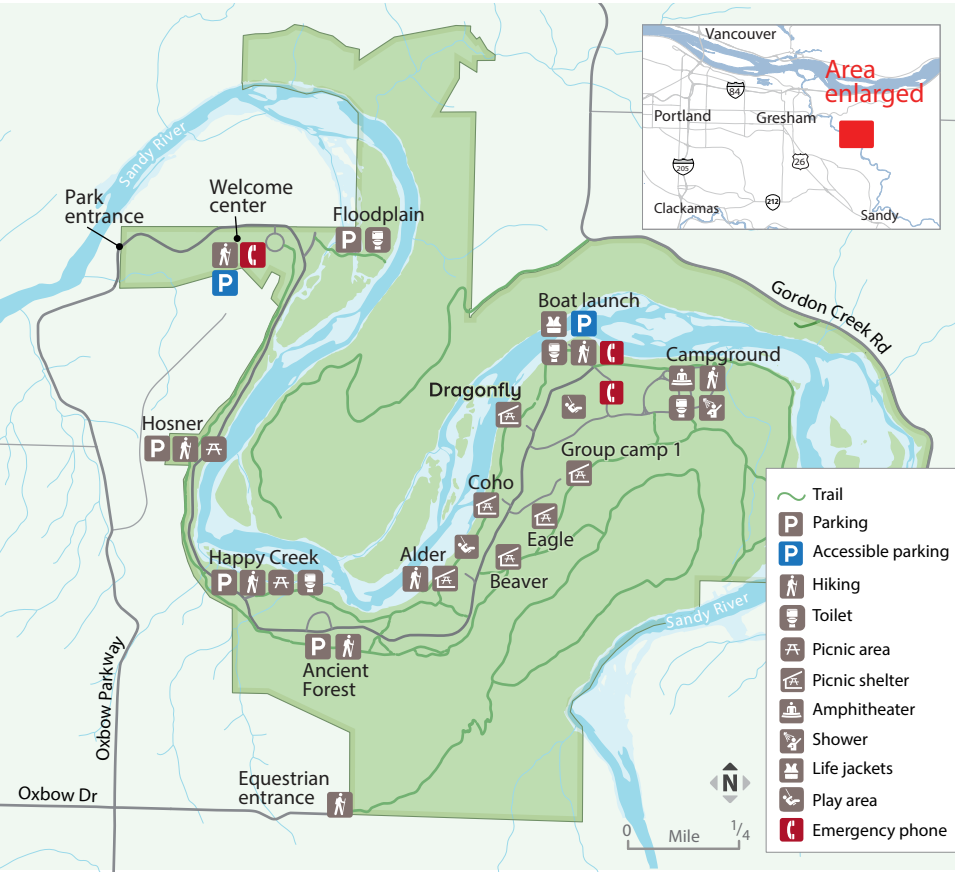
OXBOW REGIONAL PARK

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 steep ridges, 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.

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.

The Ancient Forest towers above the river, but even it changes. In 2009, a microburst – an incredibly powerful punch of water and wind – 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. Change also comes by human hands. Voter-approved parks and natural areas investments allow for the restoration of vital river habitat, giving threatened salmon and



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.

oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

steelhead fingerlings a place to hide and feed on their way to the ocean.

Wildlife thrives in the park, and people can spot 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 fishing to family gatherings, river stone-stacking to sunbathing, there are uncountable ways to be outdoorsy at Oxbow.

Be on the lookout!



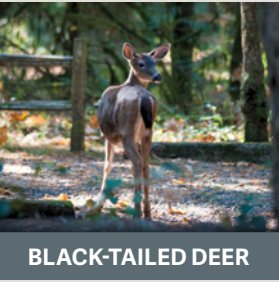
PYGMY OWL



MAIDENHAIR FERN



FAIRY SLIPPER ORCHID



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. 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. Bald eagles look for fish to catch. Ferns unfurl. Rufous hummingbirds flit from bloom to bloom, and hikers join the Swainson's thrush in a springtime banquet of salmonberries. Seek the wildflowers of the forest floor, like wild ginger, Menzies' larkspur, starflower and fairy slipper orchid.

SUMMER: Reserve a campsite and spend an evening or more in the woods. 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.

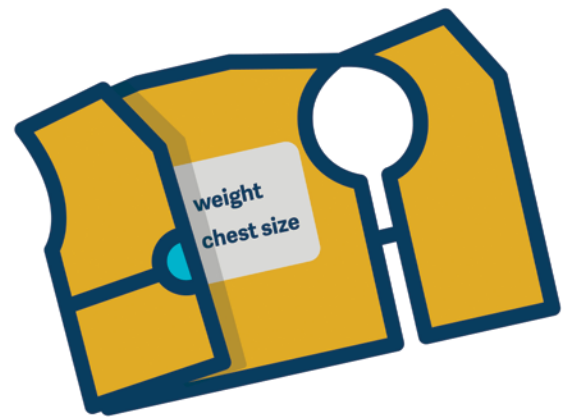
Zip. Click. Pull.



Wearing a life jacket is the best thing you can do to stay safe in water. The jacket has to fit to do its job. Here's how to find the right jacket for the right fit.

1 Size

Life jackets are made for people of different sizes and weights. Check the label for the jacket's weight range and chest size.



2 The kids

Life jackets for children include a leg strap. Life jackets for infants also have a collar.



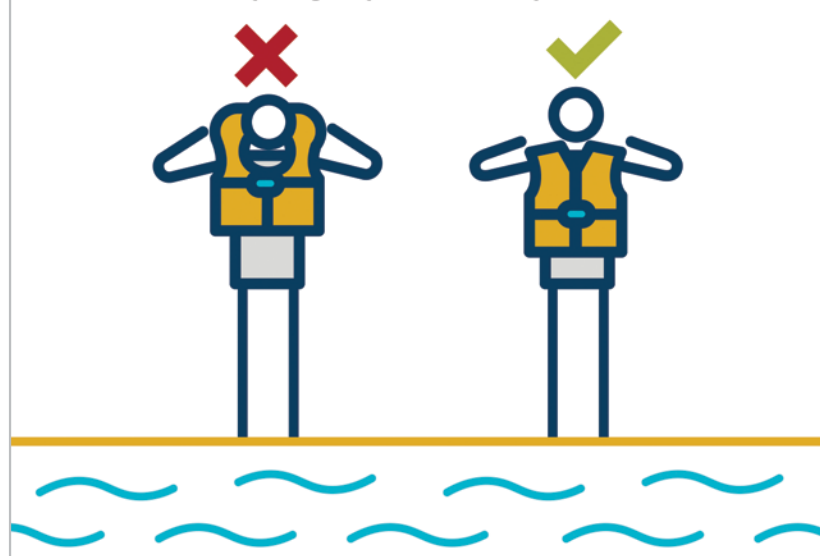
3 Zip, click, pull

Make sure all zippers and clips are fastened. Pull straps tight.



4 Shoulder test

Pull the jacket up at your shoulders. If it slides up to your ears, it's too big. If it stays tight, you are ready for the water!



Questions?

Contact Metro staff at 503-797-1545. For updates on Metro parks visit oregonmetro.gov/watersafety



Don't be scared!

IT'S EASY TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE HALLOWEEN

Story by Kathryn Gerber

It's spooky season! Images of pumpkins, haunted houses, and ghouls and goblins arriving for their favorite sweet treats are on our minds.

Preparing for the season adds up. The National Retail Federation estimated that Americans spent \$10.6 billion on Halloween festivities last year, at \$100.45 per person. A lot of spending goes to costumes and decorations that are used once before going in the trash.

Is this sea of plastics and disposable items causing a fright? Leave the scares to the ghosts, and plan ahead to reduce impacts to the environment and your wallet.

Create a costume

What costumes can you put together from what's already in your closet? Reuse costumes from previous years, or trade costumes with family and friends. Thrift stores are a great resource for your next wizard, pirate or superhero creation.

Don't forget online resources like Buy Nothing groups and the Facebook marketplace. Cheap packaged costumes from party stores are often low quality and contain a lot of plastic, and cannot be recycled in our area.

Be a packaging know-it-all

Say no to excess packaging when possible, and brush up on what can and cannot be recycled. Throwing a party? Instead of buying treats from the store in bulky plastic packaging, try out that cute recipe you've had on your Pinterest board since 2014.

When it comes to trick-or-treating, all candy bar and fun-sized packaging goes in the garbage bin. Elaborate and thick packaging creates a lot of waste, so choose options with minimal or thin packaging, as they often use less resources.

Don't get tricked by trick-or-treat bags

Do your dressed-up little ones need a collection bag for their treasure haul? Wicker baskets,



buckets and reusable shopping bags all make great trick-or-treating tools. Get crafty and have kids decorate an old pillowcase in the theme of their costume. Want a more traditional plastic pumpkin carrying case? Do a bit of treasure hunting to find one at a secondhand store instead of buying new.

Pumpkins – the plastic-free decoration

The most iconic Halloween decoration is also a natural and compostable option! Carving pumpkins is a great way to decorate with natural items, and it's a memorable holiday activity. Buy them from a local farm to further reduce impacts from transportation.

Once the jack-o-lantern grins start to get droopy, they can go in the yard debris bin, so embrace their seasonal orange color and don't paint them. Gourds, corn husks, straw bales, pinecones and dried fallen leaves also make lovely decorations.

There are great reuse craft ideas as well – turn some of your plastic bag stash into ghosts

with a little tape and construction paper or create tombstones with the cardboard in your recycling bin.

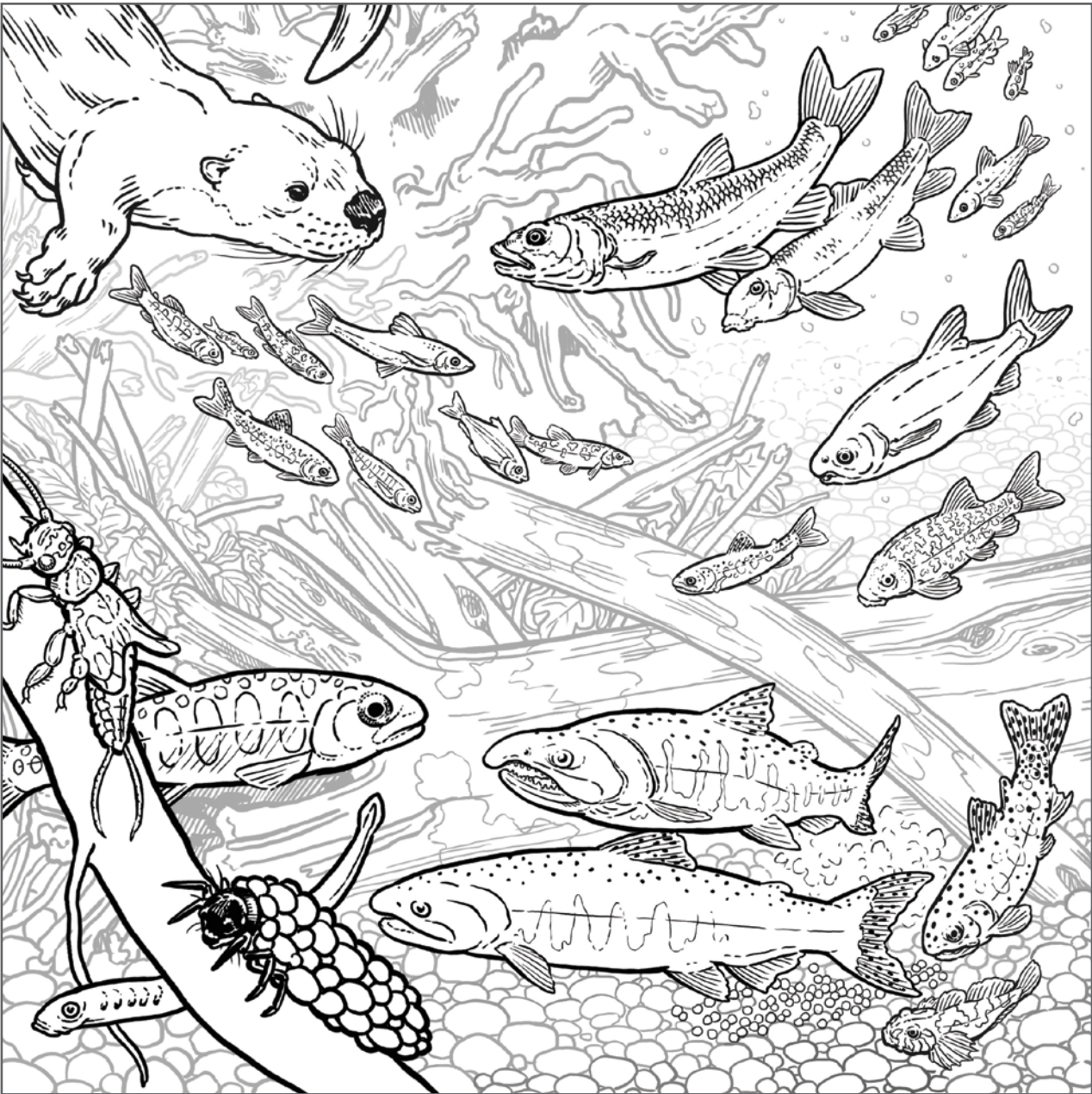
It's easy to roast pumpkin seeds!

Separate out the seeds and preheat your oven to 300°. Rinse the seeds with cold water and shake them off. Next, oil a baking sheet, place the seeds in a single layer, and roast for 30 minutes. Take them out, toss evenly with olive oil, salt and your favorite spices to taste. Roast again until golden, about 20 minutes.

Have fun with your seasoning! Standard pantry spices are great, but you can also use grated parmesan with garlic; cinnamon and brown sugar; powdered ranch dressing; lime juice and taco seasoning; or turn up the heat with some cayenne pepper.

For more information, Ask Metro at 503-234-3000 or oregonmetro.gov/askmetro

Color and discover!



Under the Sandy River

Up on the land, fall is for foraging and preparing winter sleeping quarters, but under the Sandy River fall is for spawning new life. Fall-run Chinook salmon dig redds (fishy nests) in the pebbles and lay and fertilize their one-and-only set of young. Around them, especially in the safety of rootful logjams, craggy sculpin, flash-fast dace, lanky lampreys and other fish look for food, and look out for becoming food.

Follow OregonMetro on Instagram and Facebook or visit oregonmetro.gov/parks

