



Metro Natural Areas Program

Quarterly Report
January, February & March, 2010

Program highlights

- Metro purchased Chehalem Ridge Natural Area – by far the program’s largest acquisition to date, at 1,143 acres. This working forest will preserve water quality in the Tualatin River Basin, protect wildlife habitat and provide future opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- The Metro auditor’s office followed up on its 2007 analysis of the Natural Areas Program, commending improvements in transparency and accountability. The program responded to the previous audit, the report found, by developing performance measures, expanding the natural area acquisition database and linking property reports to program goals. To read the full report, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/auditor.
- The Metro Council awarded its third round of Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants, totaling \$1.9 million. Five winning projects spanned the Portland metropolitan area.
- The Natural Areas Program Performance Oversight Committee issued its second report, commending Metro for “staying on course” during the economic downturn and improving the program in response to previous suggestions.

Regional acquisitions

Chehalem Ridgetop to Refuge



Metro Council President David Bragdon tours Chehalem Ridge Natural Area the morning after Metro took ownership.

Metro’s Natural Areas Program started 2010 with big news – literally – by protecting 1,143 acres straddling the top of Chehalem Ridge.

The new Chehalem Ridge Natural Area looks out over Tualatin Valley farmland and five Cascade mountain peaks: Rainier, St. Helens, Adams, Hood and Jefferson. Future visitors might spot deer tracks, beaver carvings or an uncommon oak-madrone woodland. They’ll explore the starting point for a network of streams flowing to the

Tualatin River, nestled in a landscape of young Douglas fir trees. With generations of careful management, these trees will mature into an old-growth forest that supports diverse wildlife and clean water.

Protecting Chehalem Ridge was a team effort. The Trust for Public Land negotiated the purchase from Stimson Lumber Co. and immediately sold the property to Metro.

TRANSACTION AT A GLANCE

Purchase date: Jan. 7, 2010

Seller: The Trust for Public Land (Stimson Lumber Co.)

Price: \$6.1 million

Acres: 1,143

An existing gravel and dirt road network could form the basis for a future trail system at Chehalem Ridge, the largest purchase in the history of Metro's two voter-approved natural areas bond measures.

For now, though, Metro's science team will spend a year or so getting to know the property – marking boundaries, meeting neighbors, developing fire management plans and restoration strategies. Natural resource technicians already began thinning dense Douglas fir trees to improve the long-term health of a valuable oak tree. And the natural areas team hosted an open house for 90 neighbors, beginning to build long-term partnerships at Chehalem Ridge.

Johnson Creek and Watershed

TRANSACTION AT A GLANCE

Purchase date: Feb. 12, 2010

Seller: Parson

Price: \$378,000

Acres: 5.6

Metro continued to protect Johnson Creek and the Springwater Corridor trail with the acquisition of 5.6 acres on Southeast Telford Road, just south of Gresham.

The property includes more than 1,000 feet along Johnson and Sunshine creeks, which support Chinook, Coho, steelhead and cutthroat trout. Forests of alder, cottonwood and scattered Douglas fir trees protect and improve water

quality in the creeks. Because this sort of riparian habitat has decreased significantly statewide, it receives special attention in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, a blueprint for protecting native fish and wildlife. Riparian areas in Western Oregon support a wide diversity of animals, including more than 200 bird species.



The 2006 natural areas bond measure has protected a total of 165 acres in the Johnson Creek area, including a two-acre natural area adjacent to the new purchase. Walkers, joggers and bicyclists pass these properties on the Springwater Corridor, which

follows Johnson Creek on its path from Gresham to the Willamette River. With easy access to this regional trail, Metro's new natural area could make a good picnic spot in the future.

Legislation

- Feb. 4, 2010: Resolution No. 10-4121 authorized the chief operating officer to purchase trail and greenway easements in the Fanno Creek Greenway target area, subject to unusual circumstances.
- Feb. 4, 2010: Resolution No. 10-4122 amended the natural areas work plan to authorize the chief operating officer to more efficiently acquire and assign trail easements.
- Feb. 18, 2010: Ordinance No. 10-1234 amended the 2009-2010 budget to add one full-time natural resources technician, who will support stabilization at Chehalem Ridge Natural Area.
- March 18, 2010: Ordinance No. 10-4134 approved the third round of funding for Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants.

Local Share project updates

- The City of Tualatin announced the purchase of 3.5 acres along the Tualatin River Greenway, just west of Jurgens Park. This acquisition includes 235 feet along the river, which is home to an abundance of fish and wildlife, including steelhead and salmon, Western painted turtles and Northern red-legged frogs. The new property will be integrated into Jurgens Park, a popular gathering spot in northwest Tualatin.



Above:
Jurgens Park
addition in
Tualatin

- The City of Beaverton and Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District pooled their local share funds from Metro's bond to buy an 8.5-acre woodland in southwest Beaverton as a natural area and future park. The property, located between the Murray Ridge and Sterling Park subdivisions, will serve a residential area that needs more park land.



Left:
Natural area
in southwest
Beaverton,
acquired just
before the
new year

- The City of Hillsboro made an important 2-acre addition to the Rock Creek Greenway. The site is surrounded on three sides by Metro-owned property, which is managed by the city. This acquisition brings the total size of the protected natural area to 15 acres.
- The City of Durham was reimbursed \$30,000 in local share funds to construct 700 feet of a paved pedestrian and bicycle pathway, from the Fanno Creek Bridge to Durham City Park. The new segment connects an existing paved path to the Fanno Creek Greenway Trail.
- The City of Portland used \$6,500 to acquire one-third acre on the northeast edge of Forest Park. This forested buffer protects interior habitat for wildlife such as cavity nesting birds. This site also helps protect water quality on Miller Creek, which supports cutthroat trout.
- The City of Wilsonville has used small portions of its local share funds for design at Graham Oaks Nature Park and the park gateway planned at CREST environmental learning center.

- The City of Portland used \$113,000 to acquire 4 acres in Southeast Portland along Veteran’s Creek, a tributary of Johnson Creek. This parcel, which had been approved for condominium development, is one of only a few privately owned properties along Veteran’s Creek. The site includes 135 feet of stream frontage, along with a mature riparian and upland forest.
- Metro finished reimbursing the City of Gresham \$500,000 for easements to help develop the Gresham-Fairview Trail. This 5-mile path will connect the Springwater Corridor with the Marine Drive section of the 40-Mile Loop. It’s also one of Metro’s 27 regional target areas.

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program

CAPITAL GRANT AWARDS

Projects selected: Five

Total funding: \$1.9 million

Cumulative grants: \$3.3 million

To learn more:

www.oregonmetro.gov/capitalgrants

The Metro Council awarded the third round of Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants in March, with five projects receiving a total of \$1.9 million.

Capital grants are available to neighborhoods, community and nonprofit groups, schools, cities, counties and public park providers. Recipients must match Metro awards with outside funding or in-kind services worth at least double the amount of the grants.

The latest batch of projects, which span the region, support everything from natural area acquisition to creek restoration to public structures.

Re-Greening Park Avenue park & ride

Recipient: TriMet, Urban Green
Partners: North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District, Oak Lodge Sanitary District, North Clackamas Urban Watershed Council
Grant amount: \$349,305
Total project cost: \$1 million

Finding inspiration in Metro’s Integrating Habitats design competition, this project will create the region’s first sustainable, habitat-friendly light rail station and park-and-ride. When TriMet’s new orange line zips into Oak Grove in 2015, commuters will experience a re-created riparian forest, a natural stormwater treatment system and many other green features at the Park Avenue stop along Southeast McLoughlin Boulevard. Agencies and community groups are collaborating to showcase development that balances design excellence, ecological stewardship and economic enterprise. Project partners hope to restore the Courtney and Kellogg creek basins and promote low-impact development throughout the McLoughlin corridor – showing community members, Trolley Trail users and thousands of MAX riders how to restore ecosystems in a built environment.



Trillium Creek restoration

Recipient: City of West Linn

Partners: Mary S. Young Volunteers, Willamette Riverkeeper, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Harris Stream Service, Robinwood Neighborhood Association

Grant amount: \$55,330

Total project cost: \$179,000



Students, volunteers and other community members will come together to restore a degraded stream system at Mary S. Young State Park, creating a healthy riparian corridor.

Severe bank erosion has compromised the 1,045-foot section of Trillium Creek that will be transformed. The project will restore floodplain connectivity and enhance the rich diversity of native trees, shrubs and other plants along the riparian corridor and adjacent wetlands in this West Linn park.

Baltimore Woods connectivity corridor

Recipient: City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, Three Rivers Land Conservancy

Partners: Portland Parks & Recreation, Friends of Baltimore Woods, Audubon Society of Portland, SOLV, Port of Portland

Grant amount: \$158,000

Total project cost: \$475,000

The Metro grant will help purchase four parcels, totaling one acre, within the Baltimore Woods corridor in North Portland. This acquisition will protect rare native oak trees and enhance the nature experience for bicyclists, walkers and joggers who will someday use this section of the Willamette River Greenway Trail envisioned along the adjacent street. These parcels are part of a larger natural area corridor connecting Cathedral and Pier parks. Active participation from city agencies, land trusts, non-profit organizations and the Friends of Baltimore Woods will involve the community in restoration and long-term stewardship.

Crystal Springs partnership

Recipient: City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

Partners: Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Friends of Crystal Springs, Portland Parks & Recreation, Reed College

Grant amount: \$311,480

Total project cost: \$968,000

Crystal Springs has all the characteristics of an excellent salmon stream: It's entirely spring-fed, which eliminates pollutants from urban runoff. Relatively consistent year-round flow and low temperatures attract some of Portland's most threatened fish species. This project helps realize the stream's potential by removing a culvert that blocks juvenile fish passage and restoring the floodplain and riparian habitat along 350 feet of the creek. Conservation easements or acquisition on three additional properties will allow future floodplain restoration.

Summer Creek natural area acquisition

Recipient: City of Tigard
Partners: The Trust for Public Land, Tualatin Riverkeepers, Tualatin Watershed Council, Fans of Fanno Creek, Washington County, Clean Water Services.
Grant amount: \$1 million
Total project cost: \$5.4 million



Metro will contribute to the acquisition of 43 acres of wetlands and mature forests at the confluences of Summer and Fanno creeks. The property is a high-profile natural area – the best remaining unprotected land in Tigard and, soon, the city’s second largest park. The site has functioned as an outdoor lab for students at Fowler Middle School. With the help of several community partners, this project will expand environmental education programs to students throughout Washington County.

Oversight committee report

March 2010

Staying on course

A report to the community from the Natural Areas Program Performance Oversight Committee

The oversight committee believes that Metro has responded well to the challenges of the economic downturn, enabling the Natural Areas Program to continue to meet its goals.

The past year has been a time of significant economic upheaval for the nation and the Portland metropolitan area. People and programs at every level of the public and private sector have been affected. What impact has the recession had on Metro’s Natural Areas Program?

The Natural Areas Program Performance Oversight Committee directed considerable attention to this question during its second year of work. As an independent citizen committee, we provide third-party oversight of the Natural Areas Program to the Metro Council and citizens. Our charge is to determine how well the program is performing and if it is fulfilling the stated goals of the 2006 bond measure that funds it. We help ensure that Metro’s work is transparent to the public. We also suggest changes that we think would improve program implementation.

Last year, our first annual report focused on the processes, staffing and outcomes of the program’s first full year of operations. Published in October 2008, it also recommended five areas the committee and Metro should direct their attention to in the year ahead.

The independent citizen oversight committee that evaluates Metro’s Natural Areas Program issued its second report in March, lauding the team for “staying on course.”

Business, real estate, finance and nonprofit professionals on the 20-member Natural Areas Program Performance Oversight Committee focused on the changing economic climate during the time period covered by the report, from July 2008 through December 2009. Because desirable natural areas typically aren’t on the market, some owners may be inclined

to wait out the economy, the report said. But, the evaluation concluded, Metro’s “skillful, tenacious” team of real estate negotiators made recession-appropriate deals.

The committee also analyzed Metro’s response to previous citizen and expert recommendations, such as strengthening public and landowner outreach, learning from every potential transaction, developing additional tools to measure success and expanding the outreach and geographic diversity for capital grants. In every case, the report says, Metro has responded by improving.

To read the full report, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/naturalareasoversight.

Communications and outreach

Community outreach and events

- **Jan. 29:** Led tour of Johnson Creek and Springwater Corridor acquisitions for oversight committee members and other community partners. Included Metro Council President David Bragdon.
- **Feb. 5:** Led tour of Deep Creek acquisition for oversight committee members and other community partners. Included Metro Council President David Bragdon.



Metro naturalist Dan Daly leads a sneak preview tour at Canemah Bluff in historic Oregon City.

- **Feb 6:** Co-hosted public sneak preview tour of Collins Sanctuary with the Audubon Society of Portland. Led by Metro Council President David Bragdon, Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder and City of Portland Parks Commissioner Nick Fish.
- **Feb. 12:** Led tour of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area for oversight committee members and other community partners. Included Metro Council President David Bragdon, Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington and Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka.
- **Feb 20:** Hosted public sneak preview tour of Canemah Bluff. Led by Metro Council President David Bragdon and Oregon City Mayor Alice Norris.
- **Late February:** Neighbors within one mile of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area received postcard introducing Metro's program and inviting them to a neighbor open house.
- **March 16:** Approximately 90 neighbors of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area attended an open house at McMenemy's Grand Lodge in Forest Grove. Participants learned about Metro's Natural Areas Program, management of Chehalem Ridge and long-term parks planning. They also met Metro Council President David Bragdon, Sustainability Center director Jim Desmond, program director Kathleen Brennan-Hunter and members of the science, planning and communication teams.
- **March 18:** Hosted a reception for Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants recipients, grant review committee members and oversight committee members, following the Metro Council meeting.
- **March 26-28:** Metro's booth at the annual Better Living Show highlighted programs and activities, including the Natural Areas Program. This sustainable lifestyle show at the Expo Center draws thousands of citizens, engaging them in discussions of Metro's work. Natural areas team members helped staff the booth by working three-hour shifts.

Print publications and online content

- Chehalem Ridge Natural Area featured in spring GreenScene (circulation 28,000).
- Cooper Mountain Nature Park included in spring GreenScene “staycation” promotion.
- Developed three fact sheets for Chehalem Ridge neighbor event and beyond: Chehalem Ridge science facts, Chehalem Ridge management FAQ, parks planning process FAQ.
- Created new web page for Chehalem Ridge: www.oregonmetro.gov/chehalemridge.
- Released eight-page progress report on natural areas bond measure, updating voters on purchases and restoration. Includes feature stories on several natural areas.

Media outreach

- **January:** Assisted Nadaka Nature Park advocates, City of Tualatin and Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District with press releases about Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants and local share projects.
- **Jan. 8:** Issued press release announcing the purchase of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area. Invited key media outlets to tour the property and speak with program leaders, scientists and Metro Council President David Bragdon the morning after the acquisition.
- **Jan. 19:** Metro Council President David Bragdon, Sustainability Center Director Jim Desmond and Natural Areas Program Director Kathleen Brennan-Hunter visited Oregonian editorial writer Mary Kitch to pitch an opinion piece highlighting Chehalem Ridge as a milestone for the Natural Areas Program.
- **Jan. 21:** Trails planner Jane Hart led Tonquin Trail tour for Oregonian correspondent Joe Fitzgibbon.
- **Feb. 12:** Oregonian editorial writer Mary Kitch joined tour of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area to work on a piece about the acquisition.
- **Feb. 12:** Issued press release on Johnson Creek/Springwater Corridor acquisition.
- **Feb. 20:** Clackamas Review reporter attended Canemah Bluff tour for upcoming article.
- **Early March:** Contacted key media outlets about Chehalem Ridge neighbor meet-up on March 16.



Reporters speak with Metro Council President David Bragdon and science and stewardship division manager Jonathan Soll the morning Metro announced the acquisition of Chehalem Ridge.

- **March 18:** Issued press release announcing oversight committee report and Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants; Metro media team pitched individual stories on each of the grant awards.

Media coverage

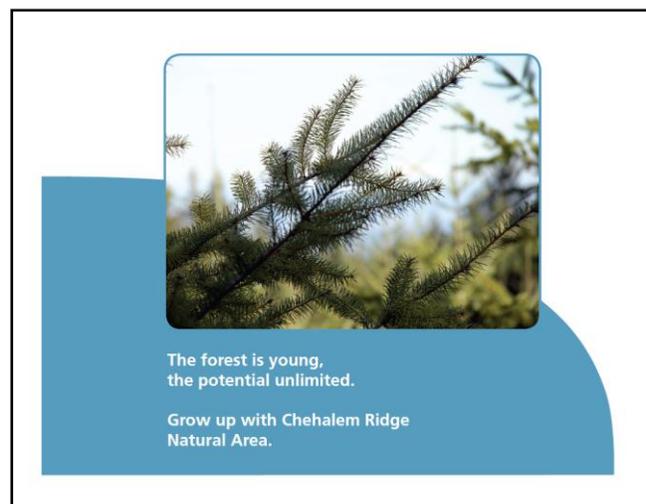
- **Jan. 6:** “Greenway trail could be coming to north Portland,” Portland Observer
- **Jan. 7:** “Land acquisition expands Nadaka Nature Park in Gresham,” OregonLive (Nature in Neighborhoods capital grant project)
- **Jan. 8:** “Metro buys 1,143 acres for \$6.1 million,” Portland Business Journal online
- **Jan. 8:** “Metro Announces \$6 Million Land Purchase,” Oregon Public Broadcasting (listen at <http://news.opb.org/article/metro-announces-6-million-land-purchase/>)
- **Jan. 9:** “Metro buys 1,143-acre Chehalem Ridge property for future park,” The Oregonian, front page
- **Jan. 12:** “Metro's new mountain ridge offers recreation opportunities,” Hillsboro Argus
- **Jan. 12:** “Tualatin uses Metro funds to buy greenway property,” OregonLive (local share addition to Jurgens Park)
- **Jan. 14:** “Metro buys Stimson’s Measure 37 land claim,” Forest Grove News-Times
- **Jan. 21:** “Two new Metro parks offer quick get-on-the-trail outings,” Oregonian Travel section (Cooper Mountain and Mount Talbert)
- **Jan. 21:** “Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation acquires future park land,” OregonLive (Local share purchase in southwest Beaverton)
- **Jan. 22:** “Land purchased for natural area and future park in Beaverton,” Katu.com
- **Jan. 28:** “Standing firm on Chehalem Ridge,” Letters to the Editor, Forest Grove News-Times
- **Feb. 2:** Upcoming Canemah Bluff tour featured at MtHoodTerritory.com
- **Feb. 10:** “Elected officials tour Collins Sanctuary,” video posted on OregonLive (featuring Council President David Bragdon and Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder on Feb. 6 tour)
- **Feb. 11:** “Tonquin Trail will connect Wilsonville, Tualatin and Sherwood for bikers and hikers,” The Oregonian
- **Feb. 12:** “Volunteers will plant trees to beautify I-205 trail through Lents,” OregonLive (Nature in Neighborhoods grant)
- **Feb. 17:** “Trails advocates plan quarterly meetings,” The Columbian
- **Feb. 18:** “Trolley Trail finally is on track,” The Oregonian
- **Feb. 22:** “The ghost of picnics future,” Oregonian editorial (Chehalem Ridge acquisition)
- **Feb. 22:** “Metro buys 5.6 acres along Johnson Creek,” Gresham Outlook
- **Feb. 23:** “Using bond money, Metro buys 5.6 acres in Johnson Creek area of east Multnomah County,” OregonLive (Springwater Corridor acquisition)



- **March 15:** “Climber's dream inspires what could be Clackamas County's newest park,” Oregonian (Madrone Wall, references to Metro acquisitions)
- **March 18:** “Metro's Natural Areas program grants \$158K to Baltimore Woods project in St. Johns,” The Sentinel (capital grants award)
- **March 18:** Metro Natural Areas Program receives a second positive review, gives \$1.9 million in community grants,” Oregon Property Team blog
- **March 20:** “Part 2 of Tryon Creek habitat restoration will begin in June,” The Oregonian
- **March 21:** “Tigard \$1 Million Closer to a New 43 Acre Park,” ThePortlander.com (capital grants award)
- **March 21:** “Metro Grants TriMet Funds for Green Park & Ride MAX Station,” ThePortlander.com (capital grants award)
- **March 21:** “Salmon Set to Return to Urban Portland River,” The Portlander.com (Crystal Springs capital grant award)
- **March 22:** “Southeast Portland’s Crystal Springs Creek Restoration Project Receives \$311k Metro Grant,” Neighborhoodnotes.com (capital grants award)
- **March 22:** “Cathedral Park and St. Johns Neighborhoods to Benefit from \$184k Metro Grant for Baltimore Woods Project,” Neighborhoodnotes.com (capital grants award)
- **March 23:** “First day of spring with the I-205 project,” Growth Rings blog (Friends of Trees grant project)
- **March 24:** “Metro awards natural area bond measure grants,” OregonLive
- **March 25:** “Young park gets \$55K for stream restoration project,” West Linn Tidings (capital grants award)
- **March 25:** “Tigard will buy Fowler park property regardless of bond outcome,” The Oregonian (capital grants award)

Coming up soon

- An April 16 tour and celebration of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area will engage political, business, education and conservation leaders.
- A summer tour series at Chehalem Ridge Natural Area will allow the general public to explore this historic acquisition in Washington County.
- Planning is under way for the Sept. 17-18 grand opening of Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville. A temporary, half-time event planner is expected to join the natural areas staff in April to organize the festivities.
- Planning is under way for a public



Political, business, education and conservation leaders in the western part of the region are invited to a tour and celebration of Chehalem Ridge Natural Area. Metro is co-hosting the event with The Trust for Public Land.

awareness campaign to highlight the natural areas bond measure's success.