



You ask, Metro answers Chehalem Ridge Natural Area: Spring 2010

Q: Can I visit Chehalem Ridge Natural Area?

A: Metro continued the previous owners' policy of banning biking, horse riding, hunting and any other unsupervised use. Before making any decisions about long-term public access, Metro's science staff will spend a year getting to know the property. They're currently identifying habitats and restoration needs. A comprehensive inventory will help develop a management plan that protects sensitive habitats and water quality while identifying compatible opportunities for future public access.

Q: If I can't use Chehalem Ridge yet, is there any way to experience the property?

A: Metro is planning a series of guided tours for summer 2010, with specialized hikes to satisfy different interests and abilities. Registration information will be available this spring at www.oregonmetro.gov/chehalemridge. The web page also features photos and videos that tell the story of Chehalem Ridge.

Q: What is Metro doing on the property?

A: Metro's Science and Stewardship team is surveying and assessing the property -- identifying habitat types and sensitive areas, controlling weeds, thinning and replanting trees as needed. They are also taking care of typical new property tasks, such as putting up boundary signs, cleaning garbage and getting to know neighbors. On such a large site, these activities will take most of the next year or so.

Q: What are Metro's long-term plans for Chehalem Ridge?

A: Metro always works to balance habitat protection, water quality and access to nature – three primary goals of the 2006 natural areas bond measure, which was approved by voters across the Portland metropolitan region. Public access was specifically identified as one of the Metro Council's goals for the area surrounding Chehalem Ridge, and the property's network of dirt and gravel roads could form the basis for a future trail system. After deciding on the right level of public access, Metro will need to plan visitor amenities and secure funding for ongoing maintenance.

Q: Will Metro talk to my group about Chehalem Ridge?

A: When possible, Metro will send a staff member to speak to community groups. To make a request, contact us at naturalareas@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1545. Please provide lots of advance notice, and explain why your group is interested in Chehalem Ridge.

Q: How can I stay up-to-date on Chehalem Ridge?

A: Join Metro's contact list by submitting your name, e-mail address, phone number and mailing address to naturalareas@oregonmetro.gov or 503-797-1545. Also, stay tuned to the Chehalem Ridge web page, www.oregonmetro.gov/chehalemridge