

meeting notes

project River View Natural Area Management Plan
 date 9/18/2013 time 9 am – 1 pm
 present See below
 subject TAC Meeting #1 – Site Visit

Attendees	
Paul Agrimis, ESA Vigil-Agrimis	Susie Mattke-Robinson, ESA Vigil-Agrimis
Shannah Anderson, BES	Charlie Nappi, PP&R
Mary Bushman, BES	Kendra Petersen-Morgan, PP&R
Rachel Felice, PP&R	Steve Roelof, ESA Vigil-Agrimis
Don Goldberg, TPL	Emily Roth, PP&R
Greg Hawley, PP&R	Nathan Schulsie, PP&R
Zach Jarrett, BLM	Maija Spencer, PP&R
Sage Jensen, Sage Environmental Services	Doug Zenn, Zenn Associates

1. Welcome and Introductions

The sixteen TAC meeting attendees gathered at the entrance of River View Natural Area at the corner of SW Palatine Hill Rd and SW Brugger Rd. Emily Roth, Project Manager from Portland Parks and Recreation welcomed the TAC meeting attendees and all attendees gave brief introductions and roles. Emily noted that Kate Holleran was not able to be present.

2. Project Site Tour:

The meeting attendees spent approximately four hours touring the River View Natural Area site, and discussions were led by staff from the City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (hereafter BES), Portland Parks and Recreation (hereafter PP&R), and The Trust for Public Land (hereafter TPL). The tour gathered at specific features to note key information and discuss current issues in the natural area.

Stop 1 – Hub/Intersection of Trails 4, 7, and 1 at west edge of RVNA, signage discussion

Kendra Petersen-Morgan noted the property boundaries have been marked with carsonite signage along Palatine Hill Road, and welcome signage has been placed at the hub explaining park rules (observed to not be always followed by the public). She explained the 146 acre site had been

previously inundated with invasive clematis and English ivy (over 90% in some areas), and management efforts have been successful at reducing much of the invasive vines.

Stop 2 – Trail 3B, near delineated wetland, delineated wetland discussion

Kendra, Mary Bushman, and Don Goldberg noted one wetland was delineated in this location at the headwaters of Stream 6. This wetland is a critical area for protection, and partnerships are critical to making this happen. The wetland is seasonally inundated and contains rare vegetation including slough sedge, false hellebore, and tall mannagrass. The Waverly basalt below surface soils in the area support perched wetlands.

Lewis and Clark College previously investigated acquisition of 30 acres of this area for expansion. A private consulting firm completed a wetland delineation that confirmed a 1.25 acre wetland on-site. Subsequently, Lewis & Clark did not pursue the site acquisition.

The site is currently located outside the zoning boundary for the Protection zone (hereafter Pzone). Future investigation may be needed to have this area included in the PZone. The area has evidence of vandalism and newly constructed bike jumps. Lewis & Clark students currently use the path near the wetland as an alternate trail to walking along SW Palatine Hill Rd. Emily noted the location near the site boundary and the presence of an existing clear pathway could provide opportunity for an accessible trail with interpretation. The group discussed providing visual access to the large wetland in a sustainable way. Kendra noted the need for protection of the wetland resource. The group noted using a split rail fence to protect the area could prevent human disturbance and degradation of the site, while maintaining visual access for visitors.

Stop 3 – Trail 1, trail grade and ped/bike trail sharing discussion

Greg discussed general trail conditions, stating most trails are fall-line and top-of-ridge trails, which are not preferred (due to erosion and drainage issues). Trails with grade reversals are preferred, and examples of good trails are at Marquam Nature Park (due for completion mid Oct 2013). The desired slopes for trails are a maximum 10% grade. The soils over Waverly Basalt present are typically slippery for wet months of the year. A large section of Trail 1 has been closed with signage posted on split-rail fencing. The trails still appear to be used by members of the public. Trails have been closed off by PP&R due to public safety issues from steep slopes or the potential for detrimental water quality impacts.

Mary would like to see thoughtful consideration for trail Best Management Practices specifically to protect for water quality, streams, and wetlands.

A good trail example at RVNA is a section of Trail 1B. The existing trail network is high density for the size of the site. Paul Agrimis noted possible conflicts when including cyclists and pedestrians on the same path (30 mph bikes versus low mph pedestrians). An example trail system for pedestrians and bicycles is Powell Butte. Zach mentioned the concept of a mother trail for mixed use, with secondary trails specific to use types. The areas could be zoned for user experience. The BLM trails at Alsea Falls in Corvallis may be an example. Kendra noted the need to plan for increased future use at RVNA.

Possible restrictions for seasonal trail use could be considered. Zach noted the BLM's experience that the public responded better to seasonal conditions closures versus strict seasonal dates. Partners like the NW Trails Alliance have been the best method to educate the public.

Stop 4 – Stream 6 Crossing, stream discussion

The group stopped along Stream 6 to discuss stream water quality and note usage issues. The crossing area has a very small waterfall, and a recurring tree fort has been disassembled by PP&R

multiple times. There are likely college student group gatherings here and, Kendra has seen a fire hazard recently burning on site. Mary stated stream surveys have been completed at RVNA in 2009. The four perennial streams (Streams 1, 2, 6, and 7) at RVNA were tested, and they were 5 degrees cooler than Willamette River. The streams were not fish-bearing at the time.

Mary stated that BES recently published a rebuttal to a recent Grey-to-Green funds issue raised in an article in the Oregonian. The Portland Bureau of Environment and Sustainability is in charge of compliance with the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. In the late 1990's, ODFW did a 5 year survey of the Willamette River and found a high concentration of sub-yearling fry. The Willamette River near Powers Marine Park is one of the best locations for salmonid rearing in Portland.

Mary previously discovered Lewis & Clark was discharging swimming pool water by stream 6 headwaters, and that discharge has since been halted.

Stream 1's culvert under Macadam will be replaced as part of the Sellwood Bridge mitigation. Within Powers Marine Park, Streams 2 and 3 will have streambank restoration for resting habitat along the Willamette. The streams through RVNA deposit sediment for shallow water habitat along the Willamette near Powers Marine Park. ODFW determined that Stream 6 was the best location for wildlife crossing/corridor opportunity, and it has the lowest slope gradients. Stream 6 is also unique source of perennial water that is not piped and is available to wildlife (birds, amphibians, mammals) in RVNA. There is a gap in amphibian surveys of the site.

Paul noted that there may have an outdoor classroom opportunity for nearby Lewis & Clark and Riverdale High School. This area may have the greatest opportunity/need for culvert replacement needs to be identified in plan (BES may have a study). The watershed has the lowest percentage of impervious surface in Portland.

Kendra noted her concern for sustainable use of the site at the crossing of stream 6 (rebuilt party camp is an issue). The best safety measure may be to bring more people to the area. A possible suspension bridge could provide habitat protection. The frequency of parks presence with rangers on site is regular, particularly with current monitoring and invasive management work. The group discussed a possible future citizens patrol, similar to Forest Park and Hoyt Arboretum Volunteer Watch. A trail club from Lewis & Clark could be formed as RVNA stewards and an education source for students.

Stop 5 – Trail 3A by Stream 6, culverts and vegetation management discussion

An above-ground abandoned culvert is at the bottom of stream 6 at the east end of the site, by Trail 3B. The outlet on the east side of Highway 43 has a ten to twenty foot drop leading to the Willamette River. A wildlife culvert or bridge could be considered for this area. A culvert replacement plan may be needed, and could be linked to a daylighting effort on Stream 6. BES assessed culverts along Highway 43, and the railroad culverts are in worse condition than the highway culverts.

Mary said a 500-year flood of 1996 inundated sections of Highway 43 with water. The flood mirrored the 100-year floodplain. Stephens Creek confluence north of the Sellwood Bridge was damaged and is currently being improved.

Kendra stated that Trails 6 and 7 are the most popular biking trails.

Kendra described the vegetation management on-site since RVNA's acquisition on July 2011. Vegetation surveys have been completed for the three fall seasons beginning in 2011, and invasive removal crews followed the surveys in the fall. Crews with chain saws performed air gapping

techniques on invasive vines (clematis and English ivy) growing up trees. Foliar spray was also used to remove invasives. The spray contained 4% glyphosate, 2% garlon, and 2% surfactant Competitor. Crews also removed weedy trees (like English holly and English cherry laurel). The treatment in late summer/early fall is most effective. Success rates are anticipated at a 90% reduction in invasives. The team will next re-seed 10 acres with woodland forb mix, in key locations throughout the site. The woodland forb mix is tough to acquire and somewhat expensive. PP&R will reseed 10 acres initially to test best practices and outcomes in phases. They will focus re-seeding along trails and edges to form a vegetated buffer to reduce invasive encroachment. The PP&R team also plans to perform springtime vegetation monitoring in 2014.

Patches of invasive of garlic mustard and Japanese knotweed are present on-site, and spread by deer and humans.

Stop 6 – Trail 7 by party campfire pit, habitat connectivity and human access discussion

Trail 7 had visual evidence of slumping and erosion on a steeply graded section. Mary noted not to route trails from creek to creek.

Wildlife has been documented on site, including coyotes, deer, and birds including Cooper's hawk and pileated woodpecker. A bald eagle nest exists in River View Cemetery. Preserving habitat connectivity is a very important issue for the watershed, and RVNA is a key linking parcel in the Westside Wildlife Corridor.

A major issue for RVNA is human site access. The first priority is to protect the natural resources, and not disrupt the site. Kendra stated the need to plan for increased public use of RVNA. People currently access the site on Palatine Hill Road and through Lewis & Clark. The team needs to investigate parking opportunities in neighborhoods, checking in with PBOT and Lewis & Clark student parking and facilities manager. The current adjacent neighborhood by SW Palatine Hill Road does not have parking signage in place. Lewis & Clark has ticketed student (and non-student) vehicles in the neighborhood, as unwanted student parking is a concern for them. Yet, there is no signage stating no parking in this area.

Additionally, parking lot sharing with Lewis & Clark should be investigated for off-peak summer, evenings, or weekends. The River View Cemetery recently installed seven new parking spaces on its property. The team needs to investigate potential links to the developed parking space area. ODOT does not want parking along Highway 43.

River View Cemetery (adjacent to RVNA) has a variety of cycling users, including cross-country and road bikes. PP&R standards for park bike trails are to build cross-country style trails with grades less than eleven percent. A good example is the Sandy Ridge trail system. The question was raised if there should be consideration for other niche types of riding such as cyclocross or bmx.

Mary reminded the group to solicit input from all types of recreation users of the site. Maija and Emily stated that the selected PAC (Project advisory committee) members are fairly balanced, and the guiding principles of the RVNA will drive the project. The team noted that biking use was a key issue for the site, and that water quality protection and habitat preservation is an equally important issue.

3. Schedule

Emily thanked the group for attending and wrapped the meeting stating the first PAC meeting will be Thursday, September 26th. PP&R will be holding a community event on October 12th. Maija stated PP&R will be holding stakeholder interviews in the upcoming weeks.