

2018 Natural Resource Committee's Report to the Oregon City Commission**Wetland Overlays**

In our 2017 report to the City Commission, the Natural Resource Committee (NRC) pointed out that our wetland natural resource overlays haven't been updated since 1999, when the Local Wetland Inventory was made part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The NRC noted that the Oregon Department of State Lands had made a new wetland delineation in Canemah. City Code Chapter 17.49 provides that such newly discovered wetlands are not regulated by the City if they are wholly outside of the established Natural Resources Overlay District (NROD). The Planning Department has sought grant opportunities to review and to update our NROD overlays but has not yet been successful. The NRC still desires code changes that would permit the establishment of a temporary wetland-area overlay when a new delineation is made or a previous overlay was found to be in error. A permanent overlay could be established later when resources are available to determine its appropriate boundaries.

Heritage Tree designation

The NRC still wishes to determine if funds can be identified to off-set the expensive arborist costs a land owner must incur for an arborist to determine whether a tree qualifies for the designation, not only in terms of the age of the tree, but also whether the tree is disease free and is not a potential safety threat to property, infrastructure, or people. The NRC still requests in the upcoming budget cycle that the City Commission consider funding a part-time arborist position to assist in this effort as well as to deal with other tree issues on City property and public rights-of-way.

To offset the cost of a part-time arborist, consideration should also be given to revise our code so as to not require such a detailed arborist study because the owner of the property owner having a diseased or unsafe heritage tree is permitted to remove the heritage tree under the current code.

Stream Naming

In last year's report it was mentioned that the City was installing stream-crossing signs provided by the Greater Oregon City Watershed Council. Most streams in Oregon City are not named and NRC wishes to work with the Watershed Council to set up a procedure by which these streams can be named. We suggest that this procedure include public participation, perhaps through neighborhood associations, with the selection of names going through a process similar to the naming of parks.

Geological Designation of Water Board Park as a Geologically Significant Area

Professor Burns, Portland State University Professor Emeritus and former Director of the PSU's Department of Geology, has recommended contacting the state geologist responsible for the states geological survey (DOGAMI) and to the Ice Age Flood Institute's Portland section to seek such a designation, and we are requesting from the City Commission the right to do so with the goal of having such a designation considered by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and considered and proposed by the City Commission.

Clearing of Trees prior to Annexation

We understand that the Planning Commission will be recommending developing code amendments dealing with tree removal prior to annexation and development proposals. The NRC supports such a recommendation.

NRC received the Following Updates throughout the Year:

McLoughlin-Canemah Trail plans

Community Development Department Relocation

Filbert Run Park grant requests from the State

Equitable housing code amendments

PGE arborist presentation

Recycling presentation Clackamas County

Audubon Society of Portland & Columbia Land River Trust Backyard Habitat Certification Program

Meyers Road Extension Tree Removal

The NRC recommends having tree removal from a White Oak grove be mitigated with white oak plantings

Friends of Trees plantings

The City has been supporting this effort since 2015. The December 1st plantings (approximately 130) this year far exceeded number of plantings in previous three years of this program (less than 100 -trees/year)

Other Actions and Recommendations

NRC requested and received presentation by applicants for NROD application for a private dock easement at 1st Avenue between Jerome and Miller Streets in Canemah. The application is now before Planning Commission.

NRC requested presentation on Cove Project which is tentatively scheduled for the next meeting.

An NRC code amendment request is currently before the Planning Commission. The amendment recommends (not requires) applicants for developments involving NROD overlays make presentations to NRC.