

working for clean rivers

CLARIFIER

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A NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Message From The Director



The Oregonian publishes stories occasionally about what the paper calls the city's "broken promises" to neighborhoods east of SE 82nd Avenue. I thought it would be useful to recognize that Environmental Services has a long history of investment and action in those neighborhoods. Here are just a few examples.

Environmental Services began construction on the Mid County Sewer Project in 1987 and by 1998 had provided sewer service to 54,000 properties that previously had only cesspools. Some Mid County residents initially resented being forced to abandon septic systems and pay to connect to the new sewer system. But the area gained modern sewer infrastructure that protects valuable groundwater resources and the nearby Columbia Slough, and increased property values.

In 1997, Environmental Services constructed the Brookside Wetland, our first major flood mitigation project along Johnson Creek. Brookside created flood storage to lessen flood impacts on local streets, homes and businesses and provides public access to Johnson Creek.

In 2008, we completed the 30-acre Schweitzer Restoration Project that restored part of Johnson Creek and added 74 acre feet of flood storage to protect downstream properties from flood damage. The project added native vegetation, large wood and boulders that provide food sources and shelter for wildlife and fish, including endangered steelhead and salmon. The plantings also filter stormwater and help reduce erosion to improve water quality.

In summer 2012, we finished work on the 63-acre Foster Floodplain Natural Area, which significantly reduces flooding and property damage in the Lents neighborhood. The project also improves Johnson Creek water quality and enhances habitat for threatened salmon and other fish and wildlife.

And about 35% of Portland's 1,400 green streets are at work managing stormwater runoff east of SE 82nd. Environmental Services hasn't forgotten these neighborhoods. We've worked for years in east Portland to protect watershed health while enhancing habitat and improving neighborhoods.

Dean Maus



St. Johns Brownfield Update

A former brownfield in the heart of St. Johns is on its way to becoming a mixed-used development that will feature micro-retail space, office space and housing. The former gas station site on N Lombard has been vacant for nearly 40 years. The Portland Development Commission (PDC) purchased the property in 1976. Thirty years later, the Portland Brownfield Program managed a project that removed seven underground petroleum storage tanks and replaced contaminated soil with clean fill to finally clear the way for redevelopment.

After the cleanup, the PDC deeded the property to Environmental Services and the bureau began working with the community on a site redevelopment plan. That plan is moving closer to reality. Last week the Portland City Council heard a report on the proposal and will vote this week on an ordinance to approve a development agreement with the group the community selected to redevelop the site.

The Brownfield Program helps assess and clean up contaminated properties with a focus on neighborhood brownfields in commercial corridors like the St. Johns property. Revitalizing these sites protects watershed health, returns property to the tax base, improves neighborhood livability, reduces human health risks, and addresses environmental justice concerns.



Ecoroof on the greenhouse of the CBWTP. The ecoroof was installed in 2012 and dazzled with color in 2013.



Year of the Ecoroof

Portland ecoroof projects hit a record high in 2013 with completion of 41 new ecoroofs last year. That works out to 135,000 square feet of soil and vegetation added to Portland rooftops in 2013, which surpasses the previous records of 120,000 square feet in 2008 and 116,000 square feet in 2012.

The Ecoroof Incentive, which began in 2008 and ended in spring 2013, helped fund many of the 2013 projects. Property owners have installed over 560 extensive and intensive greenroofs in Portland, totaling more than 38 acres, since the late 1990s. The city's ecoroof Floor Area Ratio Bonus, the Stormwater Management Manual, the City Green Building Policy and the Ecoroof Incentive all helped build the momentum that led to a record-breaking 2013.



PHOTO BY BRUCE MACGREGOR

Environmental Services East Lents Floodplain Restoration Project is today called the Foster Floodplain Natural Area.



Foster Floodplain Project Recognition

The consulting firm Otak has won a Grand Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) for Otak's work on the Environmental Services East Lents Floodplain Restoration Project. The ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards program recognizes engineering firms for projects that demonstrate a high degree of innovation, achievement, and value. ACEC Oregon announced the winners at its January awards dinner.

Today, the East Lents project site is the Foster Floodplain Natural Area just off of SE Foster Road. Environmental Services started working on the project in 2010 by removing residential structures the city acquired through the Johnson Creek Willing Seller Program. Today, the natural area helps protect the neighborhood from flood damage, protects Johnson Creek water quality, improves fish and wildlife habitat and provides public access.



Urban Salmon Study

City of Portland staff contributed to a new book that focuses on how urban areas affect salmon in the Pacific Northwest. The Environmental Services Science, Fish and Wildlife team and staff from Office of Healthy Working Rivers and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability all contributed to the effort.

Dozens of scientists contributed to the book *"Wild Salmonids in the Urbanizing Pacific Northwest"* edited by Kathleen Maas-Hebner and Robert Hughes of Oregon State University's Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, and senior editor Alan Yeakley of Portland State University.

The book contains research about the negative impacts of urbanization on salmon habitat and how urban areas can protect habitat. Part of the focus is on how Portland protects water quality and habitat with ecoroofs, green streets and rain gardens.

You can read more about the book on the Columbia Basin Bulletin at www.cbbulletin.com/429381.aspx and you can view a PDF version on the Watershed Services intranet at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/31323.



Visiting the CBWTP

The recent opening of the new Columbia Building brings some changes in policies for visitor access to the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Columbia Building is at the newly-designed front entrance to the CBWTP and the location of the reception desk and security checkpoint.

A new electronic card access security system controls the relocated main entrance gate to the treatment plant. Only people assigned to work at the plant, and delivery and maintenance vehicles, are allowed to drive through the gate. All plant visitors now park in the Visitor Parking area along the main access roadway directly south of the Columbia Building. Visitors then check in through the Columbia Building main (south) entrance.



The Columbia Building is at the front entrance to the plant and the location of the reception desk and security checkpoint.

Employees can use Outlook to reserve two Columbia Building conference rooms for city business. Hours of use are during the building's normal business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If you want to use the rooms outside of those hours, please call 3-2400 to make advance arrangements.

The Bachelor Butte room on the west end of the building has a large fixed table with space for about 24 and total capacity about double that when necessary. The Mt. Mazama Room on the east end can seat about 80 without tables or about 40 at tables. Built in A/V equipment will be available soon in both rooms but is not available at this time. The Mt. Mazama Room will also be available for community rental starting this spring.

You can read the Wastewater Group's revised Onsite Policy and Procedure at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/479391.



New Publications

Recent publications from the Communications Division include:

- The winter 2013-14 bill insert "What We Flush Matters"
- A fact sheet about the Fanno Outfall Repair Project that begins this summer
- And the latest newsletter from the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant

You can see these and other Communications Division publications on the BES intranet at www.portlandonline.com/bes/publications.



★ **New Stars**



The Environmental Services Recognition Committee circulates Shining Star Awards throughout the bureau. Employees give them to co-workers to recognize outstanding achievement and notable performance on the job. Recipients display the Shining Star on their desk for two months, then pass it on.

The Shining Star acknowledges achievements and good work that might otherwise go unnoticed in a bureau as large as BES. When it's time to pass on your Shining Star, consider employees in all groups, as well as your own work team or group.

Here is a list of new Shining Stars.

Pat Darby	Shining Star # 1	to Tonia Mathieu
Anita Strong	Shining Star # 2	to Emily Grey
Lisa Howard	Shining Star # 3	to Eldora Tran
Rick Sundre	Shining Star # 4	to Michael Johnson
Paul Ketcham	Shining Star # 5	to Linda Sheffler
Lisa Howard	Shining Star # 6	to Victoria Rodriguez
Beth Hiscott	Shining Star # 7	to MacKenzie Zirk, Rona Klueh and Nick Jenness
Terry Tice	Shining Star # 8	to Jim Wood

Read more about this awards program at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/stars.

Safety and Health

Environmental Services employees enjoyed the safest year on record in 2013. The bureau had only seven recordable injuries last year. The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) defines a recordable injury as one that requires medical treatment beyond first aid.

In 2013, the bureau surpassed the previous record low of 12 recordable injuries in 2002. The ten-year average for BES workplace recordable injuries is currently at 19.

Among bureau work groups, the Wastewater Group had an exceptional year with just three recordable injuries, surpassing the previous Wastewater record of five. And that came during an extremely busy period at the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment when multiple construction projects were going on simultaneously.

It wasn't long ago that Environmental Services routinely reported 20 to 30 recordable injuries every year. These much lower numbers show that the bureau's safety programs and our commitment to a safe workplace are paying off.

Meet your PEERS

PEER Resource volunteers are available to all Environmental Services employees to listen and offer support about problems in the workplace. PEER volunteers take special training in listening and communication skills, legal, labor, and employee assistance issues. They are available at the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Water Pollution Control Laboratory, the Portland Building, Pioneer Tower and the Guilds Lake office. Alice Coker is the PEER Resource Program coordinator. Contact Alice for more information at 3-7914 or alice.coker@portlandoregon.gov.

The PEER Program recently recruited new volunteers and some current volunteers renewed their commitment. In the next few Clarifiers, we'll get to know your PEER volunteers.



Kristen Thomas

Kristen has worked as a Laboratory Analyst in the Water Pollution Control Lab since 2008. Before coming to the city, she worked as an analyst at a private lab and also as a research assistant in Panama studying the red-eyed tree frog. In her free time, she enjoys baking, reading and playing with her two dogs. You can reach Kristen by email or at 3-9593.



Brandon Wilson

Brandon works as an engineer on the 11th floor of the Portland Building. He joined the city in March 2005. Before that he lived and worked in the Bay Area for six years dealing with and learning more of a wide diversity of world cultures. Brandon joined the PEER program to strengthen his interpersonal communication skills and for the opportunity to use those skills to potentially assist others. You can reach Brandon at 3-7786.



Heidi Berg

Heidi became a PEER in 2013. She has worked for the city since January 2011, initially for the Office of Healthy Working Rivers and now with the Stormwater System group on the 10th floor of the Portland Building. Outside of work, Heidi enjoys running, hiking, gardening, and keeping track of two very active boys. She enjoys being a resource for her co-workers. You can reach Heidi at 3-5467.

Wellness Tip

If you resolved to cut down, or eliminate, your caffeine intake this year, here are some ideas that might help.

- Commit to three consecutive caffeine-free days. A long weekend would be a great time to give this a try. But expect to be more tired, possibly irritable and to experience headaches, especially after the first 24 hours without caffeine.
- To counter these negative side effects, try taking walks, gardening or some other favorite light, soothing activity.
- Avoid activities that may aggravate headaches such as watching too much television or reading in low light.
- Another approach is to gradually reduce your caffeine intake by substituting green tea or decaffeinated coffee.

Learn more about your coworkers on the BES intranet at TEAM BES.

Read about your teammates and review past profiles on the BES intranet at www.portlandonline.com/bes/teambes.



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY OF PORTLAND
working for clean rivers



Our Mission

Environmental Services serves the Portland community by protecting public health, water quality and the environment.

We provide sewage and stormwater collection and treatment services to accommodate Portland's current and future needs.

We protect the quality of surface and ground waters and conduct activities that plan and promote healthy ecosystems in our watersheds.

Our Vision

To be recognized as a trusted service provider and innovative environmental leader through a demonstrated commitment to clean rivers, healthy watersheds and our community.

Environmental Services: www.portlandoregon.gov/bes
Nick Fish, Commissioner Dean Marriott, Director

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