



River View Natural Area Management Plan – Open House #1 Comment Form Summary

Overview

The first open house for the River View Natural Area Management Plan was held on Tuesday, November 12, 2013 from 5:30-7:30pm at PDX Church at 125 SW Miles St. Outreach included: a postcard mailing to 650 nearby residents, SWNI newsletter article, emails to interested parties. BikePortland.org and Northwest Trails Alliance posted online articles and announcements.

The goals of the Open House were to introduce the public to the project and the site and to receive preliminary input and information from the community about opportunities and challenges regarding the site. The event featured five stations:

- General Project Information
- Wildlife/Habitat/Corridors
- Water and Wetlands/Stormwater
- Trails and Access
- Site Map Work Center

The stations included opportunities for one-on-one and small group discussions in order to collect suggestions and knowledge regarding the site.

The Open House was attended by approximately 120 community members. A paper comment form was provided at the Open House and a similar version was posted online for two weeks after the Open House. There were 72 paper forms submitted at the Open House, and another 96 comments were submitted either by mail or web after the event for a total of 168 comments.

The four main questions asked on the comment form were open-ended questions, so this report is an interpretation of the general themes expressed. There were three main themes that emerged that should be addressed in the Management Plan: 1) shared use of trails and potential conflicts; 2) parking and access to site; and 3) protection of natural resources.

It should be noted that this report reflects the opinions of those who chose to participate. It is not generalizable to the broader community. This information, in addition to information provided by the Project Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, staff, stakeholders and others, will be used to inform the development of the final Management Plan.

Summary of Stations Comments

The stations related to trails captured the most attention. Many participants commented about access and connections to nearby areas including the Sellwood Bridge area, River View Cemetery, Lewis and Clark College, and Highway 43. Others mentioned a desire for more extensive linkages to other trails and natural areas including Tryon Creek State Park. A number of participants commented on the lack of parking and the potential for cars to impact nearby neighbors.

Discussions about trail opportunities brought a wide variety of comments regarding trail style, slope, difficulty level, and safety. Some participants suggested looking at other jurisdictions for examples of trail building and layouts. The desire for users and stakeholders to be collaborators in this project was a frequently repeated theme. Bike users noted the need for greater amenities throughout the system, especially facilities appropriate for younger users.

Many participants also expressed a desire for more passive recreation tied into habitat protection and ensuring minimal impact to the park's most sensitive areas. Others environmental concerns expressed included: potential erosion, negative impacts to streams and wetland areas, and disruption of habitat due to hiking and biking.

Regarding management, suggestions included: seasonal management (use limitations or closures during wet seasons), safety in trail design, attention to maintenance, and the need to manage interactions between various user groups.

What opportunities do you see for the site?

The most frequent answers mentioned:

- Mountain-biking – 74%
- Hiking/walking – 40%
- Wildlife habitat/ecosystem protection – 31%
- Stewardship/education/partnerships with Lewis & Clark, River View Cemetery, and others – 13%
- Watershed protection/fish habitat/culvert replacement – 11%
- Birding – 10%

Other responses: Connection to other parks, forest protection, horse riding, improved trails and safety, low impacts on neighbors and site, overlooks and viewing platforms, parking improvements, picnic site, and skate park or playground. One commenter noted that “bald eagles, Pileated Woodpeckers, and many species of owls and raptors not noted on your inventory are all regularly seen here.” Regarding mountain biking, multiple responses mentioned the benefit of having a location close-in that doesn't require driving a car to access, Duthie Hill in Issaquah as a model, having multi-skill level trails, trails that “flow” and having separated biking/hiking trails to reduce conflicts.

What constraints or challenges do you see for the site?

The most frequent answers mentioned:

- Balancing shared uses / preventing user conflicts – 27%
- Traffic and parking – 27%
- Steep slopes – 24%
- Erosion and drainage – 23%
- Wildlife habitat protection/connectivity & restoration of site – 17%
- Access to site – 14%
- Impact of humans on site and neighbors, overuse – 13%
- Safety, trash/camps/parties, fires – 11%
- Streams/watershed protection – 11%

Other responses: Anti-mountain biker sentiments, mountain bikers behavior, environmental issues and zoning, historic uses and damage, invasive plants/establishing natives, maintenance costs, signage, small hydropower from streams to light trails, small size of site, sustainable trail design, wetland delineation credit to sell to company/entity.

Regarding traffic and parking, many responses mentioned issues on SW Palatine Hill Rd. Some park visitors may be parking illegally. When park visitors park on both sides of SW Brugger Rd, it can block access to school buses, mail delivery, fire hydrants, and emergency vehicles. Regarding access, responses specified that access from Highway 43/Macadam is difficult (especially for cyclists or pedestrians). Responses also noted that most of the neighborhood surrounding the site is lacking sidewalks and bike lanes.

What did you learn at the Open House (or from the Open House materials posted online)?

The most frequent answers question mentioned:

- Cyclists have enthusiasm – 14%
- Slope, soils, grade issues, topography, and trail conditions – 13%
- About site's wildlife, habitat, flora/fauna – 10%
- Planning effort and timeline – 9%
- A lot, good or general info, maps – 9%
- Didn't attend Open House – 8%
- Number and location of streams and wetlands – 7%

Other responses: Access or parking may be difficult; city has new natural area, conflicting ideas, easement, and history of site, invasive plants, and long way to go.

Any other comments?

The most frequent answers to this open-ended question mentioned:

- Expressed support for mountain biking – 32%
- NWTA and other mountain biking groups will help – 9%
- Protect the site (habitat, watersheds) – 7%
- Traffic, parking, access issues – 6%
- Consider separated trails to reduce conflicts – 6%
- Site is asset to the neighborhood, drew me to live here – 6%
- Site can be accessed without having to drive – 5%
- No mountain biking – 4%
- Use science, acquisition rationale, and easement to guide development – 4%
- Safety – 4%

Other responses: Don't let us love it to death, don't make site only for mountain biking, improve connections to the Willamette River, opportunity to partner with Lewis & Clark, Sandy Ridge trails, restoration work so far is great

How did you hear about this event?

- Northwest Trails Alliance – 28%
- Bike Portland – 19%
- Collins View Neighborhood Association – 10%
- PP&R email – 8%
- Friend/neighbor/co-worker- 7%
- PP&R postcard – 5%
- PP&R website – 3%
- Other: IMBA, MTBR, OBRA, Oregon Birding, Oregonian, PP&R/City, SWNI.

How often do you visit the River View Natural Area?

- Monthly or less – 48%
- Weekly – 26%
- Haven't been yet 14%
- Daily – 8%
- No answer – 4%

How do you access the River View Natural Area? (Multiple answers were allowed)

- By bike – 54%
- On foot – 37%
- By car – 10%
- Haven't been yet – 14%

I am age:

- 15 & under – 2%
- 16-24 – 0%
- 25-34 – 17%
- 35-44 – 42%
- 45-59 – 24%
- 60-79 – 11%
- 80 & older – 0%
- No answer – 4%

I am:

- Male – 75%
- Female – 20%
- Other/No answer – 5%

How many children do you have living with you under the age of 18, and what are their ages?

- No children – 45%
- Age 2 & under – 12 children
- Age 3-5 – 17 children
- Age 6-9 – 27 children
- Age 10-13 – 17 children
- Age 14 & up – 14 children

Regarding residence, I:

- Own – 77.4%
- Rent – 17.3%
- No answer – 5.4%

Zip Code:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| • 97219 – 36% | • 97214 – 4% |
| • 97202 – 11% | • 97239 – 4% |
| • 97217 – 5% | • Other / no answer – 40% |