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MEDIA RELEASE

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Water Bureau Returns to 100 Percent Bull Run Water

On March 15, the Portland Water Bureau will return to the Bull Run Watershed as its drinking water source. The decision to re-activate Bull Run was made after conferring with the bureau's regulators at the Oregon Health Authority and in consultation with our public health partners at Multnomah County.

On Feb. 13, the Portland Water Bureau activated water from the Columbia South Shore Well Field in response to recent low detections of *Cryptosporidium* in the Bull Run. Using the high-quality secondary source allowed for the bureau to conduct further monitoring and investigation, and work with health officials to monitor community health data. Based on data collected and investigations conducted, the bureau continues to believe the health risk to the public from Bull Run water is low.

"Our top priority is to protect public health," said Water Bureau Administrator Mike Stuhr. "The evidence and data collected, along with input from our partners with the Multnomah County Health Department and regulators at the Oregon Health Authority, indicates the risk remains low."

The Multnomah County Health Department routinely monitors for illness caused by *Cryptosporidium*. To assure adequate reporting Multnomah County health officials issued a provider alert to local clinicians on Feb. 1, 2017, to inform them of the Water Bureau's findings so that suspected cases would be tested. Even with this additional awareness, public health officials report there have actually been fewer than expected cases of *Cryptosporidium* illness reported so far in 2017.

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination in any City program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or disability. To help ensure equal access to City programs, services and activities, the City will provide reasonable translation and interpretation services, and will reasonably modify policies/procedures and provide auxiliary aids/services/alternative formats to persons with disabilities. Please notify us in advance of scheduled events if accommodations or translations are needed. To make requests, file complaints, or for additional information, please contact Water Bureau Public Information at 503-823-7404, use City TTY 503-823-6868, or use Oregon Relay Service: 711 or visit the City's [Civil Rights Title VI & ADA Title II website](#).

“Our ongoing surveillance for *Cryptosporidium* illness has not detected any unexpected increase,” said Multnomah County and Tri-County Health Officer Dr. Paul Lewis. “At this time the general public does not need to take any additional precautions. As always, we recommend that people with severely compromised immune systems discuss their individual health needs with their physicians.”

The most recent detection for *Cryptosporidium* was from a sample collected March 8, 2017, that had one oocyst. While it is likely that low-level detections of *Cryptosporidium* from the Bull Run will continue, current evidence from public health data, monitoring results, and watershed investigations, as well as extensive consultation with public health officials, have provided confidence in the Portland Water Bureau’s decision to resume delivering Bull Run water.

The bureau will continue to sample the Bull Run for *Cryptosporidium* and gather information about these detections. The public and the media are encouraged to view all sampling results posted to the City’s website at www.portlandoregon.gov/water/cryptoresults. The media will also be notified of any further low-level detections on a weekly basis, if they occur. The bureau will also notify the media and public immediately should further testing results indicate a risk to public health.

The Portland Water Bureau informs the media and sensitive users when there is a change in water source or significant operational changes. It may take up to two weeks, depending on location, for Bull Run water to make its way through the distribution system to homes and businesses.

Customers with questions are encouraged to call the Water Line at 503-823-7525.