

**WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING AGENDA**

**Wednesday, March 23, 2016  
5:15 to 6:45 PM  
Madison Avenue Meeting Room**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Estimated Time</b>
Introductions		5
Additions/Modifications to the Agenda		5
Approval of the Feb. 24, 2016 meeting minutes. Attached.	Action	5
Community Comments		5
City Council Report	Information	5
New Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City water infrastructure: Tom Hubbard</li><li>• Final 2015/16 Harvest Report: Mark Miller</li></ul>	Information Information	30 15
Old Business		
Staff reports: Tom Hubbard, Mark Miller	Information	10
Board Member Reports/Requests <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance and Habitat Subcommittee Reports</li></ul>	Information	10
Adjourn		

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Jessica McDonald, Chair  
David Hibbs, Vice-Chair  
Charlie Bruce  
Richard Heggen  
Steve Rogers  
Jacque Schreck  
Sheryl Stuart

Joel Hirsch, City Council Liaison

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 27, 2016, 5:15pm, Madison Avenue Meeting Room**  
<http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/index.aspx?page=219>

**WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES  
February 24, 2016  
DRAFT**

**Present**

Jessica McDonald, Chair  
David Hibbs, Vice-Chair  
Sheryl Stuart  
Jacque Schreck  
Richard Heggen  
Joel Hirsch, City Council Liaison

**Staff**

Jennifer Ward, Public Works  
Tom Hubbard, Public Works  
Mark Miller, Trout Mountain Forestry

**Visitors**

Jim Fairchild, Audubon Society  
Matt Fehrenbacher, Trout Mountain Forestry

**Excused**

Charlie Bruce  
Steve Rogers

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
I. Call Meeting to Order/Introductions	X		
II. Review of Agenda	N/A		
III. Review of January 27, 2016 Minutes			Approved
IV. Community Comments	X		
V. City Council Report			
VI. New Business			
• Carbon Credits	X		
• Brainstorm Stops for Annual Tour	X		
• March Meeting Date			
• Seneca/Georgia Pacific Tour	X		Set for March 23
VII. Old Business			
• None	N/A		
VIII. Staff Reports	X		
IX. Board Member Requests and Reports	X		
X. Adjourn	6:50 p.m.		

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

**I. Call Meeting to Order/Introductions**

Chair McDonald called the meeting to order and those present introduced themselves.

**II. Review of Agenda**

No changes were suggested.

**III. Review of Minutes**

**Board Member Schreck moved to approve the January minutes; Board Member Heggen seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.**

**IV. Community Comments**

Visitor Jim Fairchild stated that Corvallis should get water from the watershed, rather than the Willamette River, in the case of a large earthquake that knocks out infrastructure. He noted that there is a fault line that runs along the same line as the pipeline from the watershed to Corvallis, which could be a problem. Mr. Fairchild stated that he has always felt the water from the watershed is what the public should be drinking, since it is cleaner than what comes from the Willamette. Chair McDonald recommended including this in an upcoming discussion on overall infrastructure in the watershed.

**V. City Council Report**

None.

**VI. New Business**

Carbon Credits

Matt Fehrenbacher, from Trout Mountain Forestry, presented information on carbon sequestration and credits. He noted that there are protocols used to frame carbon sequestration projects. Offsets have to be real (actually occurring), measurable, permanent, additional, independently audited, transparent, and conservative, minimizing leakage and maximizing environmental co-benefits. Mr. Fehrenbacher stated that there are a number of protocols for use in accounting carbon and that California was one of the first to do so. These protocols provide a framework for any program and are highly detailed. He noted that hurdles to these projects include cost and high risk.

Brainstorm Stops for Annual Tour

Board Member Bruce sent a note through Chair McDonald to suggest including a stop at the water treatment plant and information on the US Forest Service lands. Board Member Hibbs suggested stopping at the recent harvest area and at one from a few years ago to show the progression of a managed forest. He also suggested stopping at the laminated root rot site. Board Member Stuart noted that the Lamprey and Marbled Murrette stops were popular on previous tours and that having a stop to discuss another species would be good. Ms. Ward stated that she was thinking about having someone talk about the USGS Barred Owl and Northern Spotted Owl study that the Corvallis Forest is a control site for.

March Meeting Date

The regular March meeting date is in the middle of Spring Break. The Board decided to hold the meeting on the regular date.

Seneca/Georgia Pacific Tour

Ms. Ward asked if Board members were interested in touring a lumber mill where logs harvested from the Corvallis Forest have been sent. The Board was not interested in a tour.

**VII. Old Business**

None.

### **VIII. Staff Reports**

Ms. Ward reported that she attended the Forest Health Conference at Oregon State University. She stated that the first day was all about the things that can go bad in the forest, such as fire, bark beetle infestation, defoliation, damage from vertebrates, root rot, mistletoe and invasive species. The second day was about what can be done about them. She noted that one of the take-aways of the conference is that the problems are all exacerbated by rising temperatures and drier conditions. She stated that the Corvallis Forest is in good shape, but that it may become more vulnerable as the climate changes.

Mr. Miller reported that the harvest was completed on February 16. There were 143 truckloads. Final log payments from the mills will arrive in the next week or so. The last things to be done are road maintenance and re-planting in some root rot areas.

### **IX. Board Member Requests and Reports**

#### Finance and Habitat Subcommittee Reports

Board Member Hibbs stated that the habitat subcommittee has identified four potential kinds of conditions where they may be able to do something, but mostly they have identified the current state of affairs in order to make plans moving forward. He prepared a summary report of the subcommittee's efforts to date (attached).

Board Member Schreck reported that the finance subcommittee has not met.

#### Harvest Tour

Board Member Schreck stated that she was impressed with the care the harvesters were taking with the environment and with the talent of the workers. Those who attended the tour shared photos.

Board Member Schreck reported that she was appointed to the City of Corvallis Vision 2040 Steering Committee and invited the rest of the Board to attend the upcoming workshops.

### **X. Adjourn**

**The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, March, 23, 2016 5:15 p.m., Madison Avenue Meeting Room**

The goal of this sub-committee is to identify and explore opportunities to improve management for species or habitats that may be mentioned in the Corvallis Forest Stewardship Plan but could benefit from more attention. In the end, we may have recommendations for management activities for these species or habitats. We have identified 4 types or areas to explore. Below is a report on our activities and thoughts so far.

The sub-committee is composed of Dave Hibbs and Charlie Bruce. Our field visits and conversations have also included Jennifer Ward, Mark Miller and occasional others.

### Grasslands

The Forest map identifies 3 grasslands. The one on Old Peak Road is already receiving attention. The one around the water processing station is lawn. There is a large one (2-3 ac?) near the Rock Creek entrance that we have focused on. At this point, there seems to be no particular management plan other than the sense that it should be mowed but Peacock larkspur flowering and fire season limit the ability to mow. The field is flat with moderately poor drainage. One corner has a treed (maple, oak, apple, cascara, hawthorn with snowberry and low Oregon grape) rise with shallow soil over basalt. Larkspur is apparently doing better on the rise than in the flat. There is a large population of poison larkspur across the road along Rock Creek and some hybrids show up in the field.

We visited the site with Matt Schultz, an IAE restoration ecologist, to better understand possibilities. He questioned whether the area was large enough for viable prairie or larkspur management. As a prairie, it would be small and isolated. The problems with peacock larkspur are poison larkspur interbreeding and small population size limiting genetic viability. We need to learn more about population genetics and viable population size.

We mentioned the option of turning it over to Benton County as peacock larkspur falls within its Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan. Their interest and ability is unknown. We also recognized that any option that created a large, long-term maintenance commitment was not viable. The Corvallis Forest does have a responsibility to at least try to maintain the larkspur on the rise, as outline in the Conservation Strategy for Peacock Larkspur adopted by the Board in 2014.

Then we stepped out of the box, looked around at the surrounding landscape of fields and fence rows, and wondered if something like a native oak woodland with a shrubby understory would be a good bird habitat contribution to the area.

Next steps with this habitat type are to learn more about population ecology/genetics (population size needs), dig some holes on the flat field to better understand drainage limitations, and develop some management options for discussion.

### Early successional habitat

In the landscape context, a habitat feature in short supply is good quality early successional habitat. The Corvallis Forest is bracketed between old growth reserves and intensively managed, short-rotation plantations. Management of the Corvallis Forest could help with this lack through active management of gap and patch cuts when they are made to promote higher quality and longer lasting early successional habitat.

In part because no herbicides have been used in preparing sites for planting, the plant community found in patch cuts is diverse and vigorous. There is always a conflict between growth of this diverse community and the survival and growth of any planted conifer trees. So far, survival of planted trees has been excellent and growth not too compromised. Trout Mountain Forestry has begun a program of cutting competing shrubs around planted trees at plantation age 5 or 6 to keep planted trees from being over topped.

The longevity of these diverse plant communities could be extended by 1) planting fewer conifers, 2) cutting some planted conifers by age 5 or 6, and 3) letting some planted conifers be overtopped by shrubs. If we had a target density at, say, age 15 for planted conifers, one could then adjust early management activities to assure this number while minimizing compromises to the early successional community.

Brenda McComb, a wildlife ecologist, suggests that the size of our early successional patches is too small and the patches too isolated to attract early successional wildlife. However, they are of great benefit to many forest species, providing both abundant food and cover. In ecological jargon, they are adding the structural diversity that ecologists like to promote for wildlife.

The next step with this habitat type would be to formulate some management options for discussion.

#### Older mixed conifer/hardwood stands

Drive-bys seem to indicate that some older stands contain a significant amount of older shade-intolerant, dry-site hardwoods. Madrone is the visually most obvious. Historically, these stands were likely much more open but recent conifer regeneration (after fire control) is threatening the survival of the hardwoods. Questions we had are 1) is this description real and accurate and 2) where and how much of this vegetation type is there? We suspect that the inventory plots could answer these questions and that Mark likely has a good idea too.

We visited one site just above the thinning done last year. This was a mid-slope ridge or bench that had a few (2-5/acre) large Douglas-fir, no old stumps, some younger Douglas-fir that has been coming in since fire suppression, and a fun mix of oak, hazel, dogwood and madrone. One future for this small spot would remove all of the conifers except the oldest and create an open

mixed hardwood/softwood savanna. In this location, conifer removal would generate income (trees are large enough to sell), not cost money.

The next steps are to sit down with the topo map system for the Forest to identify and then visit more sites that may be ecologically similar to the one described above. Ridges and bench lips are expected to be a little drier than average and so to have supported this kind of open community in the past. Once we have a sense of the scale and diversity of the habitat type, we can consider management options.

#### Riparian areas

The Forest map shows a long, broad area of Rock Creek as riparian with a vague description of mixed conifers and hardwoods, some past harvesting and an unknown amount of tree and/or shrub cover. The vegetation along smaller streams is not delineated separately from the adjacent upland forest, probably because the stream channels are incised and the forest near the stream does not differ much from that further away. The questions we had were 1) what really is the condition of riparian areas along these larger and smaller streams and 2) is it meeting our expectations for habitat type and quality? The inventory system probably cannot answer these questions. Some ankle-twisting exploration is probably needed.

We wandered up Rock Creek main stem, stopping here and there to look at log emplacements, recent conifer plantings (doing well), and the general vegetation condition of the near-stream area. We limited our explore (A.A. Milne) to the reach of Rock Creek with some flood plain. Where the bank was high, conifers tended to be abundant. Lower, flatter terraces were occupied by broad-leaved trees and shrubs with an occasional intermixed conifer on these terraces. Conifer stumps were rare (i.e., limited conifer history). This description would fit a lot of Coast Range streams of this size.

The management discussion focused on the roles that conifers (future in-stream structure) and broad leaves (food web) play in riparian ecology. The need for both is clear. The trick is sorting out how much of each is a good balance. There is not much research to help with the choice. One approach would be to use topography to define the vegetation communities: conifers where banks rise enough to keep tree roots out of water and broad-leaves where they don't. Two reasonable people would not always agree on which category any particular site fell into.

Most of the alder along Rock Creek is approximately the same age. We guessed 50-60 years. In another 40-50 years, it all will begin to senesce and so need to be replaced in a short time frame. One current management option is to begin to replace some of it now (when the adjacent stand is being treated) to begin the process of creating a diversity of alder age classes.

The next step with this habitat type is to develop management options for discussion.