



## Portland seeks public views on new Marquam Nature Park trails

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James Mayer/The Oregonian

Consultant Steve Roelof (left) and neighbor Jim Thayer examine maps of proposed trails in Marquam Nature Park

Marquam Nature Park is a wild area of forest, streams and steep slopes that occupies 178 acres between Oregon Health & Science University and Southwest Terwilliger Boulevard.

One official trail crosses the park, and the city wants to add several more with \$740,000 from a Metro open spaces bond measure.

A public process in 2007 identified new trails, and a consultant analyzed eight of them for adherence to city trail guidelines and estimated the cost to build them. The total comes to \$971,500.

"We can't afford to build them all," said Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, public involvement coordinator for the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation.

The city held a public meeting on the options Wednesday, May 25 at Hoyt Arboretum.

The proposed trails are considered Type A, "high-challenge hiking trails," according to the city's guidelines. The guidelines call for trails to meet the needs of residents, have a low environmental impact, be maintainable and provide pedestrian connections.

"We actually want people to be able to get from one place to another," Kennedy-Wong said.

The proposed trails total more than 10,000 linear feet and involve 90 stream crossings, including five high bridges. Many follow existing logging roads or "demand" paths that people have created in the park.

The trails do a variety of things. Some create loops within the park. Some improve access to the park from the university, or from adjacent neighborhoods and roads such as Southwest Fairmount Boulevard. One proposal reroutes a section of the existing trail away from residences.

The consultant's **report** details each trail alignment, its impact and costs.

Steve Roelof from Portland-based Vigil-Agrimis consultants said the entire park is in an environmental zone, requiring permits to build trails.

To comment and indicate your preferences, visit the **Parks Bureau** website. The deadline is June 8.

Kennedy-Wong stressed that the cost estimates are preliminary and could change once the trails are actually designed. She urged folks to list their priorities rather than trying to fit their ideas into the budget.

The city hopes to complete the design this summer, obtain the permits by winter and begin construction in summer of 2012.

--**James Mayer**

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