



Subject: Resolution 22-32, Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan	
Meeting Date: December 20, 2022 Report Date: December 9, 2022	Staff Member: Megan Big John, Parks Manager Department: Parks & Recreation
Action Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Council Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Agenda	Advisory Board/Commission Recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Denial <input type="checkbox"/> None Forwarded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable Comments:
Staff Recommendation: To adopt Resolution 22-32 the Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan	
Recommended Language for Motion: Move to adopt Resolution 22-32.	
Project / Issue Relates To: City Council 2022 Goal; Invest in Lake Oswego's high-quality parks, natural areas, and recreational services.	
Issue before Council (Highlight Policy Question): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Goals/Priorities <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted Master Plan(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	

BACKGROUND

Lake Oswego's Parks and Recreation Department (LOPR) manages over 460 acres of natural land to maintain and enhance the city's natural character and beauty. As stated in its mission, *LOPR provides excellence in building community, enriching lives, and caring for our urban and natural environment*. Protecting and conserving our natural area parks is an important aspect of this mission due to their role in providing important habitat for plants and animals, watershed and stormwater management, and spaces for the community to connect with nature.

Since 2011 LOPR has been removing invasive plant species and replanting with native species, implementing two city programs: the Invasive Removal Program and the Habitat Enhancement Program. Together these programs annually fund \$320,000 of this restoration work on city-owned land and provide grant funding to our local watershed councils for removing and replanting on private land. Since 2011, 370+ acres of the city's natural areas have been included in the restoration process.

DISCUSSION

Plan Purpose and Benefits

The Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan (Plan) focuses on improved ecological resiliency for 27 of the City's natural areas and provides a framework for the management of other City-owned natural lands. This Plan seeks to achieve an overarching management goal for Lake Oswego's natural areas:

Enhance and restore Lake Oswego's natural areas to provide safe and healthy¹ ecosystems.

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a framework for consistent management of natural area parks managed by the City of Lake Oswego:

Enhance and restore Lake Oswego's natural areas to provide safe and healthy ecosystems that can support a wide diversity of native plants and animals and adapt to change amidst the increase of recreation, encroachment by invasive species, climate changes, changes to natural water flows, and threats posed by wildfire and climate change.

The Plan is focused on developing habitat- and area-specific management objectives and strategies that are tailored to the existing habitat conditions observed within the City's various natural areas.

Anticipated benefits of the Plan include:

- Providing the City with a framework for planning and prioritizing restoration activities;
- Providing a framework that can be applied to other smaller or future natural area sites;
- Ensuring transparency in how natural areas are managed;
- Providing background information to help support land use approvals for necessary enhancement activities, particularly within areas identified by the City's Sensitive Lands Atlas (LOC Article 50.05.010); and
- Streamlining project development for habitat enhancement grant applications.

¹ For the purposes of this plan, "healthy" natural area ecosystems are defined as natural areas that can support a wide diversity of native plants and animals and can adapt to change to maintain functionality amidst increased recreation, encroachment by invasive species, changes to natural water flows, and threats posed by wildfire and climate change.

Past Management and Actions

The Plan summarizes the management of the City's natural areas to date by LOPR, through restoration contractors that enhance park properties. To date, LOPR has focused on the treatment and removal of English Ivy (*Hedera helix*, *H. hibernica*) and other prioritized invasive species, and the installation of native plants in disturbed habitat areas.

The Plan also summarizes the City's involvement with local volunteer groups and watershed councils, which are instrumental to the continued care of the City's natural areas.

Plan Methodology

The Plan was developed by mapping and classifying seven general habitat types commonly observed:

General Habitat Types Within City's Natural Areas

- mixed-conifer deciduous forest
- Oregon white oak woodland
- upland grassland
- deciduous forest,
- conifer forest,
- wetland
- shrubland

Habitats were classified based on a unique condition ranking system for purposes of managing lands based on their ecological status (degraded, moderate, or good quality).

The Plan lists eight Management Objectives to support the overarching management goals:

Objective 1. Enhance Natural Area Health and Resilience by Supporting Natural Ecological Processes

Objective 2. Noxious Weed Control

Objective 3. Minimize Habitat Fragmentation

Objective 4. Improve Climate Resilience Objective 5. Reduce Wildlife Hazards

Objective 6. Enhance Hydrologic Function and Resource Protection Districts

Objective 7. Selective Tree Removal to Improve Safe and Healthy Ecosystems

Objective 8. Adaptively Manage Ongoing Public Engagement Opportunities that Benefit Habitat Protection and Enhancement

These objectives were developed based on habitat conditions and observed factors that constrain healthy ecosystems (e.g., invasive species, dispersed, informal trails, and increased drought stress from increasing summer temperatures). Success criteria were developed for each objective to provide a means of determining whether objectives are achieved and to inform an adaptive management approach.

This Plan includes management prescriptions, or strategies, that can be applied to help achieve these eight objectives. The prescriptions have been grouped into three categories:

- General (apply to all parks and habitat types),

- Habitat-specific (apply to specific habitat types across all parks based on existing condition), and
- Park-specific (apply to individual parks).

Plan Recommendations

The Plan is intended to be a living document that is periodically updated. To that end, it concludes with recommendations for adaptive management, a systematic approach for improving natural resource management based on periodic monitoring and a review of trends to inform ongoing management approaches. Data review and resulting plan updates are recommended every 6 years (every three biennial planning cycles).

Regulatory Compliance

The Plan complies with the City Charter (Chapter X's Sections 42 Definition and 43 Limitations of Development) and, when applicable, the Sensitive Lands section of the Community Development Code (LOC 50.05.010).

Community-Involvement in Creation of Plan

The process for creating the Plan has included the following community and stakeholder members of the following organizations through various meetings: Plan Consultant AECOM; Parks, Recreation & Natural Resource Advisory Board members; Oswego Watershed Council; Tryon Watershed Council; Mosaic Ecology; Ash Creek Forest Management; Clackamas Soil & Water Conservation District; Stewardship Friends Groups; and staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

Adoption of the Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan has no direct fiscal impact. The plan will direct and prioritize department work in Lake Oswego's Natural Areas that is already funded on an annual basis.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends City Council approve Resolution 22-23, Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan.

ATTACHMENT

1. Resolution 22-32 with Exhibit A, Lake Oswego Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan

RESOLUTION 22-32

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE OSWEGO ADOPTING THE NATURAL AREAS HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN.

WHEREAS, the residents of the City of Lake Oswego value the natural environment and habitat;

WHEREAS, the City owns and manages 460 acres of natural areas;

WHEREAS, the City prioritized the management and maintenance of the City-owned natural areas in 2011;

WHEREAS, City staff recognizes the need for a comprehensive Natural Area Habitat Management Plan;

WHEREAS, the City developed a Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan in conjunction with public, local stakeholders, and recognized professionals; and

WHEREAS, the plan provides a framework for long-term care to support the health and resiliency of our natural areas by setting management objectives and strategies, with evaluation of the Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan every six years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Lake Oswego that:

Section 1. The Council adopts the City of Lake Oswego Natural Areas Habitat Management Plan, which is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.

Section 2. Effective Date. This Resolution is effective upon adoption.

Considered and enacted at the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Lake Oswego on the 20TH day of December, 2022.

AYES:

NOES:

EXCUSED:

ABSTAIN:

Joseph M. Buck, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kari Linder, City Recorder

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Evan Boone, City Attorney Pro Tem