



Quarterly Newsletter

May 2017

Save the Date

Willamette Falls Riverwalk Design Community Event

Join us to celebrate the design for a new riverwalk alongside Willamette Falls in Oregon City! You'll be one of the first to see this exciting plan to bring people up close to North America's second most powerful waterfall.

1 to 5 p.m.

Saturday, June 3

OMSI

1945 SE Water Ave.

Portland, OR 97214

Free event parking and admission to event area.
Families are welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

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Partners Create Model for Authentic Tribal Engagement

The Willamette Falls Legacy Project established a Tribal Advisory Board to create an innovative, evolving and genuine relationship with local tribes, with the intention of establishing a model for successful tribal engagement in future public projects.

A key element to WFLP’s core value of Historic and Cultural Interpretation is to recognize and honor Native Americans’ enduring presence at Willamette Falls in the past, present and future. The project is working to build healthy relationships with local tribes to ensure tribal involvement, input and guidance on the project.



Lamprey harvest at Willamette Falls. Photo courtesy of Dave Herasimtschuk, freshwatersillustrated.org.

10,000 YEARS OF CONNECTION

Native American tribes settled along the Willamette Falls to fish the salmon, steelhead and lamprey found there in abundance, creating an economic hub by establishing trading relationships with tribes from the coast to the plains.

Several tribes have lived along sections of the Willamette River since time immemorial, without negative impact on the river. Indigenous land

management practices, including building weirs and traps to catch salmon and steelhead, using the waterway for transportation, and gathering local foods and medicines, ensured long-term viability and health of the river and local habitat.

When European Americans first followed the established Native American trading paths west to the falls (later known as the Oregon Trail), they found a thriving economy, abundant resources and inter-tribal relationships based on generations of commerce.

The relatively stable ecological relationships that the tribes nourished for thousands of years began to change with the influx of settlers during the 1840s and 1850s. The Native American population at Willamette Falls was decimated by exposure to new diseases brought by pioneers along the Oregon Trail, and the majority of the remaining tribal communities were forcibly resettled to reservations far from the site. The introduction of cattle, hogs and sheep as well as the expansion of wheat, lumber and wool production contributed to dramatic changes to the Willamette River and Willamette Falls.

HEALING AND HOLISTIC ENGAGEMENT

“After nearly two centuries of broken treaties, fractured relationships and superficial inclusion on projects that were too far along in the process for tribal communities to have any meaningful input,” says Judy BlueHorse-Skelton, Tribal Advisory Board facilitator, “tribes have been understandably wary of collaborating with government agencies. There’s a long history of broken relationships, promises and a lack of trust.”

“Often,” BlueHorse-Skelton says, “tribes are asked for project input once plans have already been all but finalized—with news arriving in the mail with a rapidly approaching deadline for input on a project they’ve never heard of before.”



Judy BlueHorse-Skelton, Tribal Advisory Board



Amy Croover, Metro Policy Coordinator and a leader in organizing the Tribal Advisory Board

WFLP and its partners have committed to changing this dynamic by supporting the formation of a Tribal Advisory Board to provide ongoing input on the project.

The tribes include the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

“The Willamette Falls Legacy Project Partners are seeking to create a model for successful engagement with Native American tribes,” says BlueHorse-Skelton, “I’m hopeful this can be used as a standard in future public projects that seek tribal input and collaboration.”

The Board was created to intentionally engage tribes at project junctures and to ensure their influence over the project’s direction and outcome. Meeting every two months, or traveling to meet with tribes, the Board creates a space for each tribe to share what Willamette Falls has meant to them in the

past, in the present and to vocalize visions for the future of the Falls. Through this, the project has prioritized river access, gathering spaces and holistic, accurate representation of tribes at the finished site.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The Willamette Falls Legacy Project is proud to partner with local tribes to ensure the continuity of their relationship with the site and for generations to come.

“A primary role of Metro as a regional government is to convene its partners, and Metro as a partner in the Willamette Falls Legacy Project has embodied that spirit in new and innovative ways—particularly on the tribal aspect,” says Amy Croover, Metro Policy Coordinator and a leader in organizing the Tribal Advisory Board.

“These are particularly dynamic times to build on relationships we have, strengthen them, and look towards the future—to finding new ways state and local governments can partner with tribes” says Ms. Croover.

Historic and Cultural Interpretation at Willamette Falls

Many of our community stakeholders have asked how history and culture will be incorporated into the planned riverwalk, which is being designed to create public access to Willamette Falls for the first time in more than 150 years. As one of our four core values, historic and cultural interpretation has been at the heart of project planning from the beginning and will be incorporated into each phase of riverwalk development.



A focus group meeting on the project's interpretive plan was held on February 22 at the Oregon City Public Library.

STRONG ACADEMIC BASE

The first step with an interpretive framework is to ensure that the site's history is based on a holistic view of the site and is rooted in primary and secondary resources. This work is currently finishing up through the creation of the Willamette Falls Legacy Project's cultural landscape report, led by Laurie Mathews, Director of Preservation Planning and Design at MIG.

A cultural landscape report is a place-based research and planning document that ties information from documents, photographs, illustrations and oral histories to a particular place - and from those sources, focuses on how a place has developed and changed over time. It helps us

understand the people and forces that have shaped a place. It also provides glimpses into the character of a place at different moments in time, which is a combination of the natural environment, built environment, and people that manage and live in that environment. The draft cultural landscape report will be ready for review in late spring.

APPROACH: HOW WILL WE TELL THE STORIES?

Among the riverwalk project team's goals are to broaden and deepen its own understanding of the site's complex history to share with the community, and to tell that complex history to future riverwalk users in interesting and innovative ways.

As part of its efforts to reach these goals, the riverwalk project team has chosen three key interpretive design approaches: narration, immersion and re-introduction.

Using the narration approach, interpretive content is narrated to visitors, usually through language, whether it is spoken by a docent or guide, or conveyed through text, documented on signage, maps or pamphlets.



How can we explain rich and varied histories, without encumbering the site? An object like the site's Sulphite Sphere might be well served using this approach to interpretation.

Using the immersion approach, site elements are allowed to speak for themselves, without narration. With thoughtful design of spatial volume, direction of paths, and manipulation of stimuli, visitor's senses provide a bodily understanding of scale, temperature, sound, texture, light and shadow.



Building Suspension Bridge Across Break In Dam 1944

How can we engage the past without saying a word?
An immersive approach might take inspiration from historic imagery such as the bridge builders, creating moments on site that produce evocative environmental stimuli.

Visitors observe and experience the environment, forming their own meaning in concert with the site.

Using the re-introduction approach, lost memories and forgotten histories are reintroduced with careful placement of meaningful objects or materials. An object may be placed back into space in its original form to provide an experience not accessible in the present. Materials may also be reinterpreted to convey complex social topics that have been forgotten or ignored.

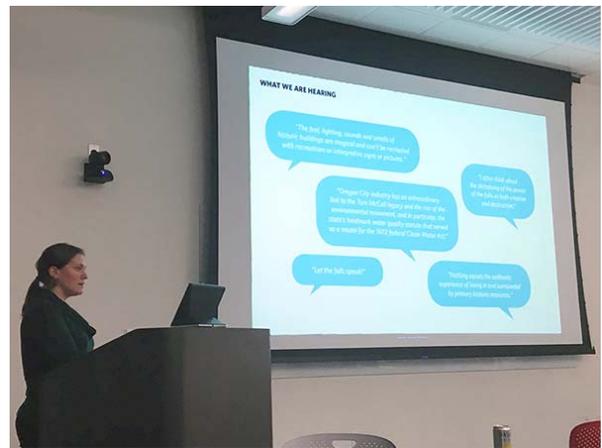


What lost memories might we reintroduce to the site?
Large scale material processing, such as wood, wool, and electricity, make good candidates for this approach since their presence is no longer felt on site.

THEMES: WHAT STORIES WILL WE SHARE?

In addition to identifying these key approaches to use in site interpretation, the riverwalk design team also focused on findings from the Willamette Falls Legacy Project’s draft cultural landscape report, which identifies and prioritizes stories of past and current uses of the site that can be told through interpretive elements of the riverwalk.

Using the information contained in the draft cultural landscape report and other site research, the team identified five historic and cultural



Riverwalk project manager Alex Gilbertson presents findings to focus group participants at the Oregon City Library on February 22.

themes: natural history, significance to Native Americans, European immigration, colonization & governance, industry & innovation, and present & future Oregon City.

This work will continue to evolve as project phases are realized.

If you are interested in getting involved or receiving more information about the ongoing interpretive planning process, please contact Oregon City Senior Planner Christina Robertson-Gardiner at crobertson@orc.org.

Riverwalk Transportation & Parking Planning Underway

The Willamette Falls Legacy Project is working on a transportation plan to go along with riverwalk design and construction. The goal is to ensure that people are able to conveniently visit the new public space, while minimizing any inconvenience to nearby commercial and residential areas. The project team plans to incorporate best practices and take concrete steps to identify opportunities and solutions with community input and support.

To achieve the best results, all of the “tools in the toolbox” will be considered. The project team hopes to hear from neighbors who have intimate knowledge of downtown Oregon City as well as harness the creativity of those in the region who are experts in various forms of transportation such as walking, biking and transit.

Programs that will be considered include: increased signage and transit access, shuttles, expanded permit parking areas, usage of nearby commercial parking during non-business hours and the construction of structured parking.

Planning will not stop at phase one. With help from the community, the Willamette Falls Legacy Project



Main Street 1927-Model T owners may not be a primary stakeholder this time around.

will also consider the larger picture of public and private redevelopment of the entire 22-acre site, which is a process that will unfold over many years. Our project team plans to identify improvements that can be successfully phased in as redevelopment occurs over time.

For more information, please visit our [Riverwalk Parking, Access and Transportation Plan](#) page, which includes dates and times of the upcoming series of community meetings. All are welcome. For specific questions, you may contact Oregon City Senior Planner Christina Robertson-Gardiner at crobertson@orc.org.

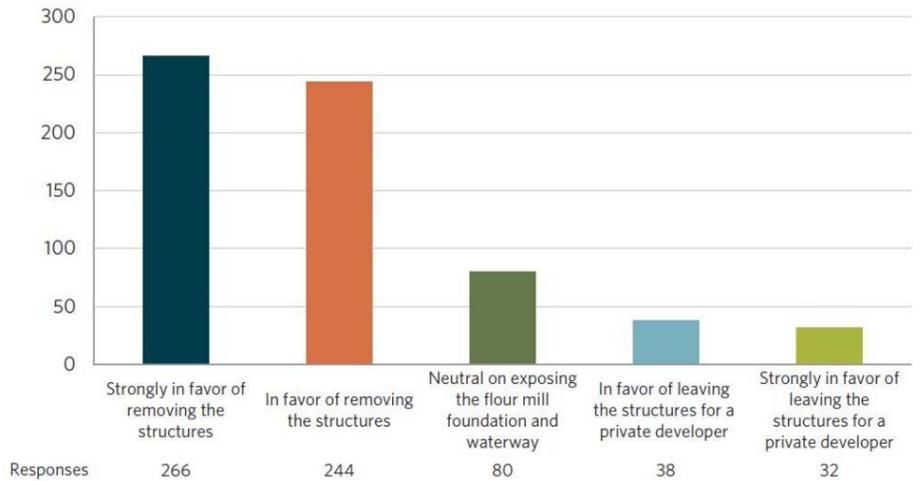


Riverwalk Design Survey Results

Thank you to all who took the time to watch the video updates on riverwalk design and participate in our last community survey before the Willamette Falls riverwalk design is unveiled in June! Almost 700 people responded to the survey.

The survey questions encompassed several categories of community interest, including the Flour Mill, access to nature and bank fishing.

Should the paper mill structures be removed to expose the 1862 Flour Mill foundation and waterway?

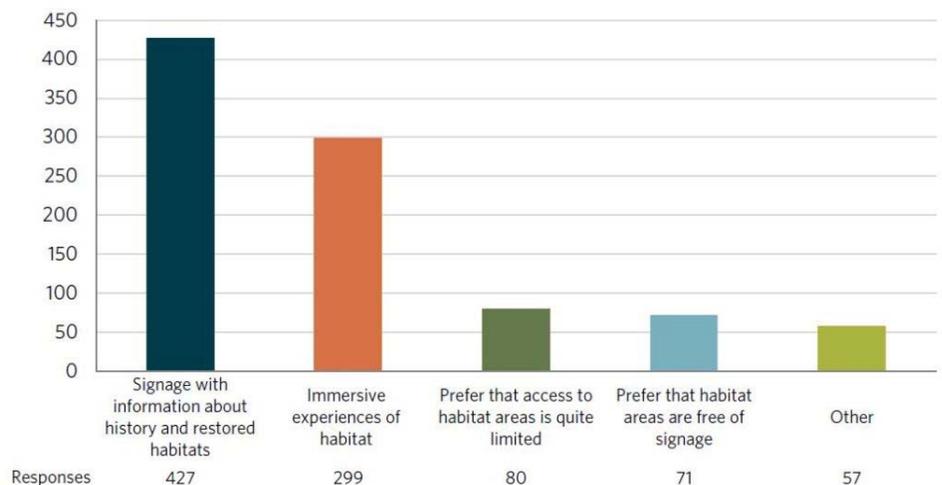


The Flour Mill

The riverwalk design process includes decisions about which structures and stories will be highlighted. Survey participants were asked whether they preferred that the paper mill structures be removed to expose the 1862 Flour Mill foundation and waterway to create open space, or if the structures should be left in place for the site's private developer to redevelop.

Of the 660 responses, 77% were either strongly in favor or in favor of removing the paper mill structures. In the write-in comments section, a small but passionate group of people advocated for the preservation of the structures.

What type of experience is preferred on pathways through habitat areas?

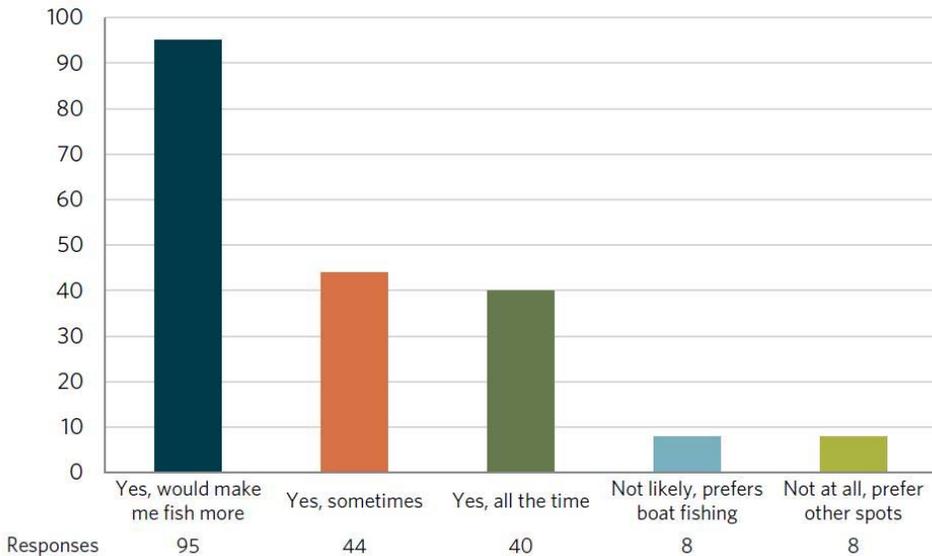


Access to Nature

Access to natural areas along the riverwalk is an important priority in the riverwalk design, which will include pathways providing access through (but not upon) sensitive habitat areas. Survey participants were asked what type of experience they would like to have while on these pathways.

Of the 934 responses from 661 people (who had an opportunity to provide up to two preferences), the top choices were: signage with information about history and restored habitats (46%), and immersive experiences of habitat (32%). In the write-in comments section, the key theme that emerged was a desire for less activity and fewer structures within the natural areas, allowing the focus to be on the habitat itself.

Would you utilize access to the shoreline along the riverwalk for bank fishing if it were available?

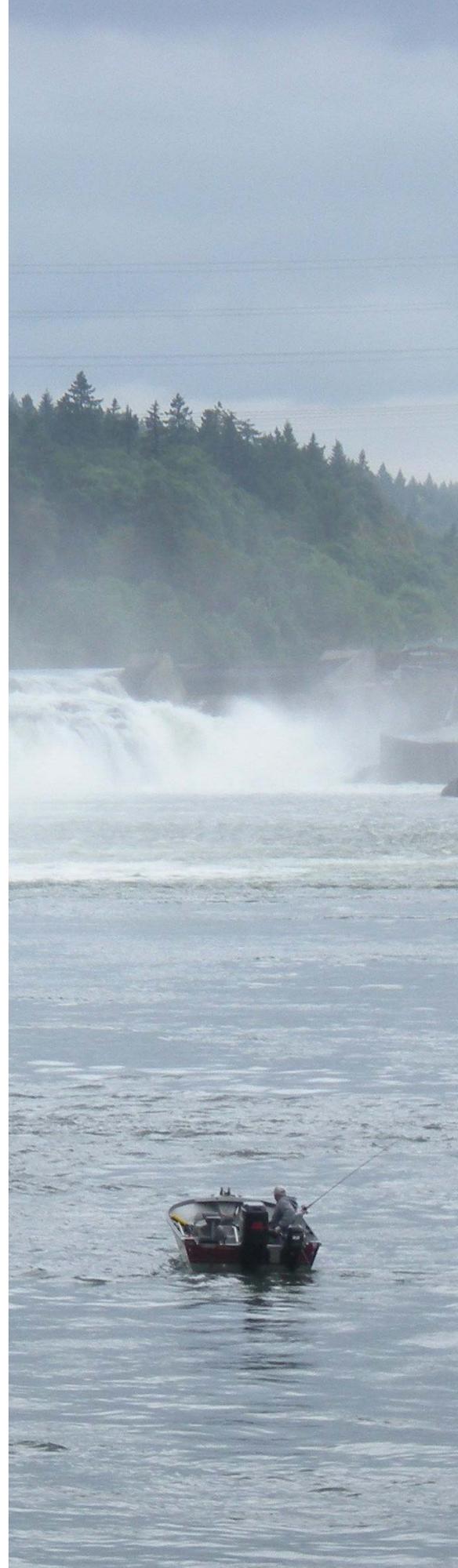


Fishing Near Willamette Falls

Of the 207 survey respondents who said they were interested in fishing, the majority said they would utilize access to the shoreline along the riverwalk for bank fishing if it were available.

Dozens of people provided comments on what makes for an ideal fishing spot. Key themes that emerged include: secluded areas away from human activity, seasonal restrictions and various ways to provide for access and safety.

[Read the full summary of survey results.](#)



End of an Era through a Pioneer's Eyes: *Profile of Janet Malloch, former Technical Director at Blue Heron Paper Company*

Willamette Falls has been used for industry since 1829, when John McLoughlin, founder of Oregon City, built a sawmill at the site. Paper mills came in the 1860s, using the hydro-power from the falls to run the machinery. The mills stayed on site until the Blue Heron mill closed in 2011.

Janet Malloch, the paper mill's first woman technician and shift supervisor, worked at Blue Heron Paper Company from 1977 until its closing in 2011. Throughout those 36 years, she paved the way for women to work in mills, moving up the ranks from technician to process chemist to shift supervisor—and finally—to board member.

Janet went to college for a degree in general science and was actively looking for a non-traditional job where she could make a difference politically. Knowing that paper mills were the big industry in the northwest, she quickly honed in on working in one. Janet went on several local public tours, and by the third had decided: this is where she wanted to have a career.

Her tour guide directed her to the employment office to see what positions were available. While nothing was open at the time, her tour guide ran after her and hinted that they were looking for a technician. Janet described the situation as: "By 1977 the mill had hired some women, but none in management. It was hard to hire women in production—you had to lift 50 pounds for the entry level jobs and push a ton roll on a dolly."

After two years of working at the mill, Janet realized that her college background in science, in combination with on-the-job experience, gave her a good start in her career. But to go further, she needed to increase her chemistry knowledge. She went back to school and after getting her chemistry degree in 1980, she came back to the mill with a new career path as a process chemist.



Janet Malloch, the mill's first woman technician and shift supervisor, worked at Blue Heron Paper Company from 1977 until its closing in 2011



The Mill in 1979 as Janet Malloch would have seen it. She started working there in 1977.



The main entrance to the mill in 1979. Janet would have seen something very similar when she arrived for her tour of the facility in 1977.



Here you can see a pile of wood chips in 1979 on their way to being cooked and ground into pulp at the paper mill.

JANET'S ROLE AS A LEADER AT THE MILL CONTINUED TO EXPAND:

- In 1983 Janet became a shift supervisor—the first woman in that position at the mill.
- Later, after Smurfit bought the mill, she returned to the technical department and quality control.
- In 1985 Janet was again promoted to Technical Director.
- She also represented the company on the Oregon City Main Street Association and served on the board of directors.

Janet recognized that in many ways, the mill “mirrors the story of environmental care.” She was at the mill in the 1970’s when it was upgraded for the Clean Water Act. Once the new requirements were set up, the mill made changes to become more energy efficient and established safer waste disposal.

The beauty of the falls was always a draw to working at the mill. Janet’s office was on the top floor looking out over the falls. She said, “I could see the 1996 flood where there was a foot drop where the falls normally are. All that volume was filled with water. It was full of wildlife. The herons were always around. We would see the eagles (once even attacking a heron), fish, seals eating the

fish—you could see quite a bit from above the falls.”

Janet’s leadership and passion for the mill didn’t end with the mill’s bankruptcy. In the last two weeks that the mill ran, she saved the site’s historical documentation. She had permission from the bank to take all the photos, as well as most of the historical books to donate them to Oregon City. “That’s going to be my retirement activity—to have a closer look at the archives at the Museum of the Oregon Territory!”

WHAT DID BLUE HERON DO?

Originally wood was ground into pulp to make newsprint. Later the wood chips were cooked in a sulfite solution to make a stronger paper sheet. Starting in the 1970’s, the paper mill took the paper tri-county residents put out curbside and turned it into high-brightness newsprint, standard paper bags and fast food restaurant napkins. The mill was one of the first in the nation to transition from newsprint to high-quality recycled magazine paper. The company travelled to Germany and Japan to incorporate a cutting-edge flotation process that resulted in a higher-grade paper. After the 2008 economic downturn and the simultaneous increase in digital communication, making a profit became harder and the mill filed for bankruptcy in 2011.

