

# Balch Creek Partners Declaration of Cooperation

WEST MULTNOMAH



SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Forest Park  
Conservancy



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
CITY OF PORTLAND

working for clean rivers



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Three Rivers  
LAND CONSERVANCY



When People Get Together,  
Things Get Done

***Mission:** The Balch Creek Partners is a cooperative interagency task force that strives to coordinate conservation efforts to protect and enhance the natural resources of the Balch Creek Watershed.*

## **Vision:**

The Balch Creek Partners (BCP) envision a healthy watershed that is protected and enhanced in a sustainable way that benefits its people, plants and animals. Balch Creek begins in the Tualatin Hills near NW Skyline Boulevard and NW Thompson Road and curves south through a deep canyon and then flows east along NW Cornell Road to NW Thurman Street. At Lower Macleay Park, the creek flows into a culvert. The Balch Creek Watershed provides unique natural resources to the City of Portland including 5,026 acre Forest Park and the Audubon Society Sanctuary, which house an abundance of wildlife (more than 112 bird and 62 mammal species). Balch Creek summer flows are low, but sufficient to support an isolated population of cutthroat trout.

The upper portions of the watershed, which contribute to the wildlife habitat available, are mostly in large plots of private land. Much of this land is steep and forested with only small pockets of residential development. The Balch Creek is facing several problems associated with urban stream

systems including invasive species infestations, erosion and habitat loss. It is vital that the BCP find ways to protect and enhance the many natural resources of this watershed.

By forming the BCP, a partnership of community volunteers groups, concerned individuals, governmental agencies, and private entities has been solidified. We propose to:

- Increase volunteer efforts to remove invasive plants, plant native plants and restore water quality health throughout the watershed.
- Increase funding for restoration projects throughout the watershed.
- Increase conservation easement participation and knowledge throughout the watershed's private residents.
- Educate and empower watershed land managers to maintain their properties' natural resources (protecting and planting native plants, remove invasive species, maintaining properly functioning septic systems, and decreasing erosion/sedimentation).
- Support and coordinate survey and monitoring efforts throughout the watershed.
- Increase coordination of interested community volunteers groups, concerned individuals, governmental agencies, and private entities.
- Evaluate the partnership effectiveness through annual reporting of on-the-ground impacts.
- Coordinate strategic restoration projects inline with past Balch Creek Watershed plan goals and objectives (Balch Creek Watershed Implementation Plan, Bureau of Environmental Services, City of Portland, 1996 & Balch Creek Watershed Protection Plan, Bureau of Planning, 1990):
  - Protect stream corridor/water quality and provide flood damage protection.
  - Preserve forest viability
  - Encourage low-impact development
  - Protect native cutthroat trout
  - Educate and involve public
  - Provide recreation opportunities
  - Incorporate community values
  - Determine effectiveness of project implementation

## **Balch Creek Partners 5 Year Goals:**

*\*All items described below are pending organizational funding/capacity.*

- Hold at least 1 educational event per year, 5 total, for Balch Creek residents to encourage sustainable stewardship of the natural resources on private land.
- Provide and engage volunteers in the Watershed.

- Provide at least 3 site visits per year to new landowners to help them develop conservation plans and/or provide technical assistance.
- Complete at least 1 conservation plan with an interested landowner per year.
- Complete at least 1 backyard habitat certification with an interested landowner per year.
- Enroll 2 landowners into conservation easements.
- Increase funds for on-the-ground restoration for 3 restoration projects.
- Clear 10 acres of invasive species and restore with native plantings.
- Clear 1800 acres of invasive species in Forest Park; a portion of which is in the Balch Creek Watershed.
- Collect water quality monitoring data and report on an annual basis.

### **Balch Creek Partners Participants:**

- Audubon Society of Portland
- City of Portland
  - Bureau of Environmental Services
  - Portland Parks and Recreation City Nature
- Forest Park Conservancy
- SOLV
- Three Rivers Land Conservancy
- West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District

### **Commitment to the Balch Creek Partners:**

These commitments represent a public statement of intent to participate in the BCP, to strive to identify opportunities and solutions whenever possible, to contribute assistance and support within resource limits, and to collaborate with other participants in promoting the success of the project.

#### **Audubon Society of Portland:**

- Demonstration site for active restoration, including invasives removal, native plantings, erosion control efforts, and sustainable stormwater practices (rain garden, stormwater planter, rain barrels).
- Event host for Balch Creek Partner and neighborhood events, including workshops.
- Backyard Habitat Certification Program for interested homeowners in the watershed. Program offers some guidance for small restoration projects.
- Hands on learning through numerous volunteer efforts.

- Information resource on living with wildlife, all things birds, etc.

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Signature, Audubon Society of Portland Representative

### **Bureau of Environmental Services, City of Portland:**

Please note some of the following are funding-dependent. Others, such as the monitoring program may change in the coming years as our city wide monitoring strategy is refined.

In support of the Balch Creek Partners (BCP) Objectives, the Bureau of Environmental Services will:

- Remove high priority invasive species in accordance with the City of Portland Invasives Species Strategy
- Provide outreach on managing garlic mustard, knotweed and other high priority invasive species
- Continue ambient water quality monitoring with emphasis on metals and bacteria
- Continue programs to reduce water quality impacts on Balch Creek and the Willamette River
- Update the subwatershed characterization of the Balch Creek subwatershed
- Provide general educational resources on native vegetation, invasives removal and watershed friendly landscaping techniques
- Provide funding opportunities for stormwater management and watershed enhancement through BES' Ecoroof Incentive Program & the Community Watershed Stewardship Program
- Provide technical assistance, as feasible, and in coordination with BCP to landowners
- Provide staff representation to BCP meetings and other advisory groups
- Coordinate with BCP to provide education and stewardship opportunities to landowners

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Signature, Bureau of Environmental Services Representative

### **Portland Parks and Recreation City Nature, City of Portland:**

Portions of the Balch Creek Watershed lie within natural areas owned by the City of Portland and managed by Portland Parks and Recreation (PPR) City Nature, most notably Forest Park. As such, PPR City Nature will continue to manage Forest Park in accordance with the 1995 Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan. Resources will be allocated as they become available. All proposed activities within Forest Park must be vetted through the PPR City Nature West Natural Resources Ecologist. PPR City Nature also commits to providing stewardship and volunteer opportunities to the public in the watershed through the No Ivy League and other efforts.

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Signature, Portland Parks and Recreation City Nature, City of Portland Representative

### **Forest Park Conservancy:**

In support of the Balch Creek Partner's Objectives, the Forest Park Conservancy will commit to:

- Commit the work of FPC's Stewardship Director and Trails & Restoration Manager toward restoration efforts in the Balch Creek watershed portion of Forest Park
- Continue to support and develop restoration efforts with Portland Parks & Recreation and the Bureau of Environmental Services
- Recruit volunteers and support supervision of their work, at monthly work parties and events such as the Forest Park Day of Stewardship
- Educate and engage more community members in the effort
- Work with Portland Parks & Recreation to monitor restoration work recently completed in Upper and Lower Macleay Park
- Distribute information about the Balch Creek Partnership to our distribution lists (to try to enlist additional participation in onetime and ongoing efforts).
- Speak about the program at Neighborhood Association meetings and other possible interest groups.
- Report homeless camps to PPR

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Signature, Forest Park Conservancy Representative

### **SOLV:**

SOLV's Team Up for Watershed Health program is committed to mobilizing volunteers to work on ecologically important sites in the Balch Creek watershed. Team Up commits to sites for 8 years; 3 years of active restoration, and 5 years of maintenance and monitoring.

- Working with partners SOLV will work with private landowners to rehabilitate and enhance riparian, wetland and upland areas.
- SOLV will work with partners to plan for the restoration of the Balch Creek Watershed
- SOLV will assist the Balch Creek Partners through other SOLV programs such as SOLV-IT.
- SOLV will work with Three River Land Conservancy and West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District to identify restoration sites appropriate for the Team Up program.

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Signature, SOLV Representative

### **Three Rivers Land Conservancy:**

The Conservation Strategies Plan (2006) established the Balch Creek Watershed as a Three Rivers Land Conservancy Focus Area. As such, Three Rivers Land Conservancy will:

- Collaborate with other partners to conduct general landowner workshops, as and when appropriate, about conservation easements;
- Consult with qualifying landowners pursuing easements;

- Collaborate in helping to identify and secure funds for easement and land purchases and management; and hold land and conservation easement on properties that meet TRLC's criteria.
- Collaborate with partnering organizations on Balch Creek Watershed planning, fundraising and outreach as time allows.

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Signature, Three Rivers Land Conservancy Representative

### **West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District:**

In support of the Balch Creek Partner's Objectives, the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District will commit to:

- coordinate and house BCP quarterly meetings, take minutes, and track BCP restoration work and produce annual reports;
- provide technical assistance where needed, to landowners interested in developing projects and management plans on their property;
- offer outreach and education support;
- support volunteer efforts;
- help identify sources of funding for projects, assist landowners/participants with OWEB small grants as appropriate; and provide additional technical assistance to landowners where needed.
- entertain grant applications from the BCP and property owners within the Balch Creek Watershed region.
- from 2008 – 2010 WMSWCD has provided \$7,780 of funding to support the Balch Creek Restoration Demonstration program through the Financial Incentives for Sustainable Habitats (FISH) Grant Program.

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Signature, West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Representative