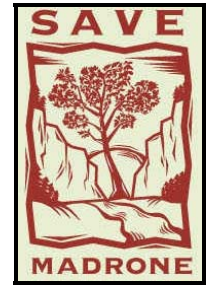


Madrone Wall Preservation Committee
5815 N.E. 31st Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97211
www.savemadrone.org
Contact: Keith K. Daellenbach
Secretary/Treasurer, Director
503/691-4102
kdaellenbach@att.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Provisional Funding for Madrone Wall Park Planning But Implementation Faces Unwarranted Delay

Portland, Oregon – 18 April 2007 -- After six months of deliberation at County Parks, the County's Parks Advisory Board (PAB) yesterday finalized their recommendation to the Commissioners to fund \$40,000 for parks master planning at the Madrone Wall site in the County's next fiscal year budget (FY2007-2008) to commence 1 July. This is a positive and logical next step and, with Commissioner approval this spring, the nine to 12 month planning process is expected to commence 1 July 2007. There is, however, an unwarranted one-year gap between completing the parks master planning and subsequent year allocations necessary to complete the required capital improvements (e.g., establishing on-site parking) for this primitive park needing minimal investment.

In 2005, the Madrone Wall Preservation Committee led an outreach effort which resulted in over 500 citizens and over 30 organizations (see ledger at left), including all local Community Planning Organizations (CPO's), City of Damascus government, Carver-area businesses, and environmental groups, providing direct input to the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners to not irreversibly destroy this amazing civic treasure by selling it to a private rock quarry or trophy housing developer, to preserve it for all time as a public park, and to see it once again opened to public access, recreation, and education. At a study session in January 2006, the Board of County Commissioners, unanimously accepted all PAB recommendations including no sale of the site, priority for parks master planning, and to keep it posted "No Trespassing" until the new park is opened.

Endorsing Preser. & Park:

- > 500 Citizen Letters
- Damascus City Council
- Grant Park CPO (Comm. Plan. Org.)
- Boring CPO
- Rock Creek CPO
- Eagle Creek-Barton CPO
- South Clackamas CPO
- Carver Store
- Carver Hangar
- Carver Curves Café
- Rock Garden Tavern
- Still Meadow Community
- Clackamas River Basin Council
- Damascus for Open Space
- Friends of Barton Pk. & Clack. Riv.
- Friends of Mount Hood
- Cooper Spur Wild and Free Coalition
- Oregon Natural Resources Council
- Oregon League of Conserv. Voters
- Native Plant Society of Oregon
- Sierra Club
- Audubon Society of Portland
- Friends of Forest Park
- Three Rivers Land Conservancy
- American Alpine Club
- Yvon Chouinard, Patagonia
- Keen Footwear
- Fed. of Western Outdoors Clubs
- Oregon Equestrian Trails
- Outward Bound
- Mazamas
- Ptarmigans
- The Access Fund

Grants Received From:

- Mazamas
- The Access Fund
- American Alpine Club-Oregon
- Yvon Chouinard, Patagonia

Awards:

- Montague Cup/Conservation (Mazamas, 2006)
- Sharp End Award (The Access Fund, 2005)

The Madrone Wall Preservation Committee is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) Oregon all-volunteer public charitable organization focused on preserving and re-establishing access to the Madrone Wall of Clackamas County and to act as a parks advocacy organization for a future park at the site of this amazing civic treasure.

We view the gap between funding parks master planning and funding the necessary minimal capital park improvements as unwarranted and an unnecessary momentum-killer because:

- 1.) Overwhelming public support for park creation at the Madrone Wall site deserves the high priority the Commissioners gave it in January 2006; this level of support has not been matched by any other project under consideration by the County.
- 2.) While this amazing civic treasure was enjoyed for decades prior to its closure in 1997, it has now been in the park creation queue for 10 years – longer than all other projects under consideration. It is the only project identified by County parks in which parks master planning is not immediately followed up by expenditures for capital improvements.
- 2.) The Damascus-Boring sub area has zero park acres today even though the County called for 131 acres in 1995 and calls for 259 acres in 2015. This is an easy "win" for the County by creating a park at this intact and pristine site along the Clackamas River bluffs adjacent to a rapidly expanding population base. Considering this park creation effort today is similar to where earlier proponents were at in 1949 when Forest Park was created and in 1969 when Tryon Creek State Park was created.
- 3.) With Damascus a little more than one mile away and exploding in population, to be nearly the size of Beaverton in the coming years, it deserves priority consideration for parks for the enjoyment, recreation, and education of nearby citizens. This park creation effort is ready to go and could be up and operating within two years.
- 4.) No willing seller land acquisition costs are necessary because the County already owns the property (since 1937) and, furthermore, the capital investment necessary to establish the first phase of the park is relatively small (estimated to be \$150 thousand) compared to the substantial \$6.437 million five year County park budget.
- 5.) Additional County park money is now available from what amounts to a generous gift from taxpayers. Last fall, citizens overwhelmingly passed the Metro greenspace ballot measure 26-80. The County immediately received a 43% boost to its \$4.5 million parks budget with a \$1.937 million local share allocation. The vast majority of this \$1.937 million is allocated to be spent on a single monopolizing project that squanders the public's generosity – the Barton Park expansion with a price tag of over \$1.5 million. How is the nearly complete monopoly of this unique taxpayer largess justified when so many other worthwhile projects are being sidelined, delayed, or shelved outright?

6.) This park creation effort is being unfairly compared against massive investments of public taxpayer dollars, like the example of Barton Park expansion, that generate so-called “direct” revenue for the County from a narrow segment of the population that enjoys paying for public camping. Estimates based on the money generation model used by the National Park Service and the Mount Hood National Forest, show that \$140 thousand new dollars will flow into the County each year from both direct and indirect expenditures made by people from all ages and segments of society who visit this site from outside Clackamas County. This money will be spent directly into local businesses of the small towns, like Carver, near the site. This revenue provides additional tax base for the County; it is simply not accurate to conclude that spending money to open this park is a zero sum gain for the County’s bottom line, let alone the struggling business owners nearby.

7.) Last but not least, our non-profit, all-volunteer organization is working to assist the County to raise money and matching grants through federal, State Parks, local, and philanthropic organizations which may help offset County funding. Without even the most minor allocation in FY2008-2009 for capital improvements, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for us to elicit positive responses from potential funding agencies or groups because there is nothing on the table from the County with which to match their grant funds.

Beyond our advocacy for preservation and re-established access, we will evolve into a “Friends of ...” organization, capable of supporting the County to assist with the many necessary activities moving forward such as trail upgrade and maintenance and invasive plant removal. We will help remove illegally dumped rubbish and clean up the defaced rock surfaces so damaged during the County’s 10-year closure. We have committed to providing 1,000 hours of volunteer help in the first year this site becomes a park. This site will be a gem in the County’s park inventory and we are here to help make this a reality. We need your support at this critical juncture. Please contact the Commissioners, possibly for a second time for many of you, to register your support for a timely plan and budget that will open this park without further delay (Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, 2051 Kaen Road, Oregon City, Oregon 97045, bcc@co.clackamas.or.us, 503/655-8581). Without the County following through on its own priority to make this site a park, the park creation effort at the Madrone Wall site runs the real risk of being the victim of County inaction and lack of will.

Please take the time to visit our website with many new updates at www.savemadrone.org. Additionally, please continue to respect the County’s “No Trespassing” wishes until the site is officially opened as a park. Thank you.

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