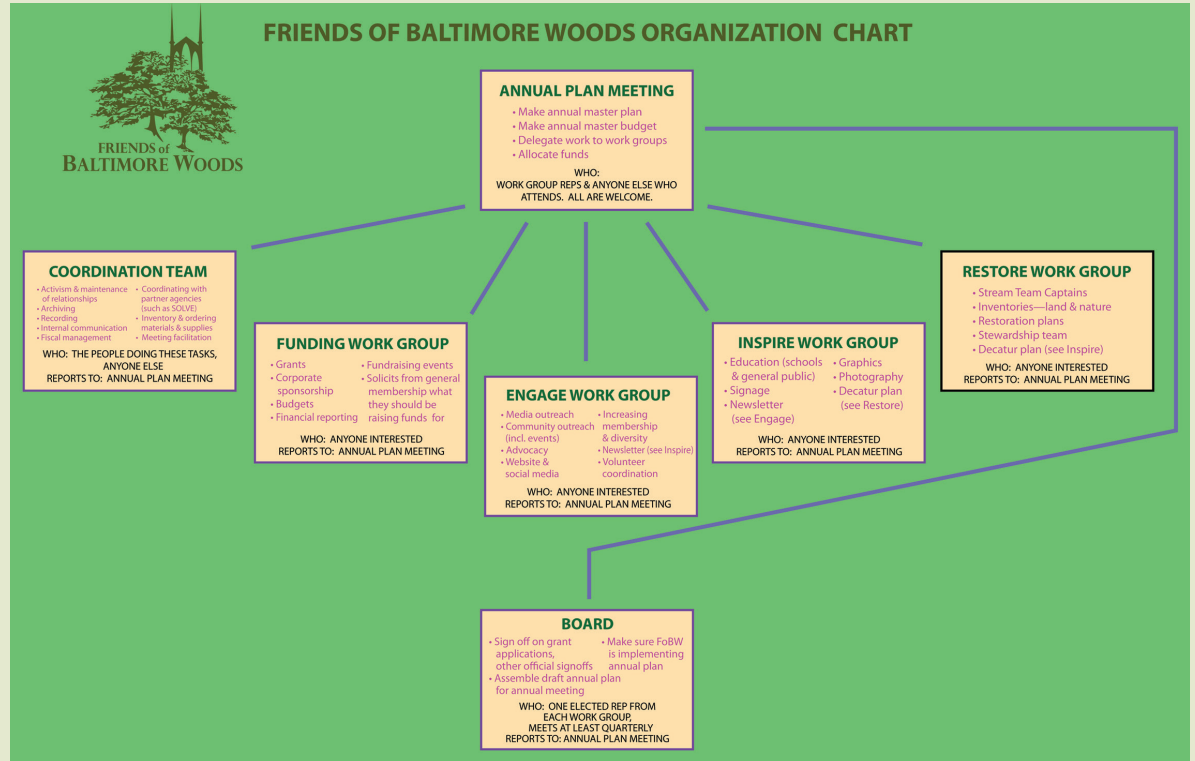


THE BALTIMORE WOODS-WORKER

Welcome to the fall 2015 edition of the Friends of Baltimore Woods e-newsletter. It's time again to share news of our ongoing work to bring a native oak woodland to the riverbank in St. Johns. We invite your feedback and participation.

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Upcoming Events:

September 15, Tuesday, 6:30-8

Join us for a casual gathering to view our brand-new organizational chart and explore the wide range of volunteer opportunities FoBW offers. Meet at the BES Water Pollution Control Lab, 6543 N Burlington Ave, Portland, 97203.

September 20, Sunday, 1 to 3:30

EMSWCD Native Plant Workshop at the BES Water Pollution Control Lab.

More events on pg 8

FoBW Reorganizes for the Future

By Sylvia Allen

As most of you know, the Friends of Baltimore Woods (FoBW) won a Metro capacity building grant over a year ago. Since then, we have been working to build an organizational structure that will take FoBW into the future, beyond the activist lifetimes of our own small group of passionate, dedicated friends.

At a series of meetings, both on our own and with our governmental and community partners, we developed ideas about what kind of organization will be needed, to carry our mission into the next generation and the one after that. Among other conclusions, most of the attendees agreed on the need to preserve our non-hierarchical, spontaneous nature and at the same time make it much easier for new people to come in, understand our structure, and get involved in the work. There was a consensus that we need to recruit many more members, and that the membership needs to

be diverse in age and ethnicity. We agreed that we need to raise money to support everything we want to do, such as hiring paid staff to keep the organization running.

A group was formed to take all of these ideas and produce a draft organizational chart, which we can try out over the next year and tweak as needed. The chart is now ready for its test drive! It is based on the work group concept—there are work groups for restoration work, education, outreach, funding, and organizational administration. There is also a board, but it does not direct or govern FoBW.

All of these entities report to FoBW as a whole, as represented by an annual meeting of the membership. At the annual meeting, the members make a plan for FoBW's activities for the next year and delegate assignments to the various work groups. The members also approve an annual budget and allocate money to the work groups.

The new organizational structure focuses on functionality—on the work that needs to be

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FoBW Gets Grant from EMSWCD

Here's some good news! We received a \$1,500 SPACE grant from EMSWCD to purchase promotional and educational materials for Friends of Baltimore Woods, including much-needed updates to our posters and easel. It will also cover costs for additional copies of our brochures and newsletters to share at events and when tabling.

Thanks to Barbara Quinn, Betsy Valle, and Howard Harrington for putting it together.

And we thank Eric from The Intertwine for letting us know about it so the Grant Team could swing into action.

done—not on job titles. It is as non-hierarchical as we could make it, and is decentralized, so that people who are working on a project can do their work without having to run back to the whole membership for approval at every point. The work groups make it possible for people who are interested in a specific aspect of the work to immerse themselves in whatever that is without needing to focus on other aspects of FoBW. The structure assigns each necessary activity to a specific group of people who are, in turn, answerable to the entire organization.

Over the next year, we will do our best to work according to this new structure, and when we find glitches, we will change the plan as needed. The new chart will be posted at every FoBW meeting so that new people coming into the group can look at it and identify immediately which FoBW efforts are most interesting to them, and who they need to speak to about it.

This month's general FoBW meeting, on September 15 (see events calendar), will be devoted to volunteer recruitment and the new organizational chart. We hope everyone interested in Baltimore Woods will attend to see if there is an aspect of the work that is of interest. Enthusiastic work group members will give short presentations on each work group, and will be available to answer questions and help draw in new volunteers. Come to the September meeting and help us carry Baltimore Woods into the future!

FoBW Hosts Free EMSWCD Workshop

Perfect for all levels of do-it-yourselfers, the free EMSWCD workshops highlight landscaping with native plants, water conservation, creative stormwater solutions, and chemical-free gardening techniques that are good for people, water, and wildlife.

Friends of Baltimore Woods is hosting the **Native Plant Workshop on September 20**

(see events calendar on pg 8). In this class, you'll find out about the many benefits of gardening with native plants. You'll walk away with loads of information that will help you decide which native plants will work well in your yard. We will introduce you to common native plant communities in Portland, show examples of species that do well in similar growing conditions, share successful planting tips that will help them thrive, and more! A native plant slideshow will highlight characteristics and desired growing conditions of many local favorite native groundcovers, shrubs, and trees.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about native plants.

Fire in Baltimore Woods

By Mary Bushman

By the time this article comes out in the fall newsletter I hope that we have all breathed a sigh of relief and fall rains have begun to rehydrate the trees and shrubs in the woods. Over the summer, it has been obvious that we all feel a little more tension when it's hot and dry outside and our beautiful woods are crispy and literally tinder dry. I'm hoping that the information provided here will help answer some questions that come up each year when July rolls around.

Baltimore Woods has a history with fire. I am familiar with only the most recent events. Thankfully, these events provided an opportunity to

learn about how we can take care of the land and be safe in our homes.

In September 2012, Portland Fire, Portland Parks, and the Bureau of Environmental Services conducted a controlled burn in Baltimore Woods Meadow. Portland has used controlled burns in various locations across the city, including Oaks Bottom, Powell Butte, Elk Rock Island, and Baltimore Woods. The controlled burn activity



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*Thank
you!*

August 1 SOLVE Work Party

We cleared a lot of weeds to set free the native plants we planted two and three years ago. Most are doing well. Snowberry, Oregon Grape, Oregon white oak, and more. Ten people showed up to help on a summer morning, and we were able to work in the shade until noon. It was a good day in the Woods!

helps to reduce hazardous wildfire fuels such as non-native blackberry and Scot's broom, helps re-establish native vegetation to benefit wildlife, and provides a training opportunity for City firefighters. These fires are

intentionally set, controlled, and extinguished by the Portland Fire Department. The decision to conduct a controlled burn is months in the making and includes detailed planning involving the fire department and natural resource specialists.

The burn in 2012 went off very well. The firefighters were able to practice their wildland firefighting skills. The burn removed latent fire fuels and woody materials that had built up over years and were not conducive to the establishment of the oak and prairie habitats that are the desired condition. While the city does not have current plans to conduct a controlled burn in Baltimore Woods, it is a tool in the future tool box that may be deployed again.

In July of this year there was a small smoldering fire in a log on the Decatur Street stretch of Baltimore Woods, in a location where folks like to sit and enjoy the shade. Fortunately, it was reported in time for the Fire Department to extinguish it before it spread. Thanks go to the person(s) who reported it in time. That represents one of the great benefits that walkers in this corridor will provide to the community. The more folks use the proposed trail, the safer the corridor will become, as more eyes help us clean up garbage and report problems.

As managers of the Baltimore Woods publicly owned property, BES and Portland Parks take fire safety seriously. Since acquisition of the Baltimore Woods properties, BES and Parks have worked with contract crews, SOLVE,

and FoBW to improve the natural resources on the properties. Those efforts dovetail nicely with fire prevention actions. The removal of non-native plants such as ivy,

clematis, holly, and especially blackberry are key steps to reducing fire risk. With the bulk of those materials removed, work continues that is consistent with acceptable practices for reducing fire hazards:

- **Planting plants that are low volatility** (oak trees, Oregon grape, red flowering currant, native willows)
- **Mowing fire breaks** where there are private properties adjacent to the natural areas
- **Education for the local community** such as this article

In the Pacific Northwest, fires have historically been a natural part of the changing landscape. For homeowners who live directly adjacent to natural areas it is recommended that they take special precautions to protect their lives, homes, and property. One way to do this is to create a defensible space around your home by modifying, reducing, or clearing potential wildfire fuel materials or vegetation, to create a barrier that will slow the spread of wildfire toward your home.

Portland Fire and Rescue provides other tips and tools you need to help protect your family and your home from fire threats at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds/article/156583>.

Planning Your Garden? Go Native!

By Jennifer Dimsho, City of St Helens

As summer draws to a close, the days grow shorter, and the sure signs of fall remind us all that the time for planting is soon. Whether you are looking for a low-maintenance way to spruce up your front yard, are new to gardening, or would like to attract local wildlife, here are five reasons to consider planting native plants in your front or back yard.

- **Natives plants are resistant to local pests.** No chemical fertilizers or pesticides are needed for natives to thrive. Overuse and inappropriate use of pesticides often kill beneficial insects and other wildlife. By eliminating or minimizing the use of pesticides and fertilizers, we can avoid these chemical pollutants running off into streams, lake, and bays. This improves the quality of the water and the aquatic life in it.



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Sat., October 17
SBWC Fall
Native Plant
Sale

behind Scappoose
High School
See events calendar
on pg 8

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- **Local wildlife recognizes the flowering and fruiting cycles of native plants.** Pollinators are attracted to and often dependent on native plant species. In addition to pollinators, many native plants are exclusive food sources for local wildlife.

- **Native plants have adapted to local soils and weather patterns.** Once established, natives can survive three months of little to no water during the summer. Less watering means lower utility bills.
- **Native plants require less maintenance.** Native plants are accustomed to local weather patterns, so they require less watering. In addition, with full groundcover, no weeding is required.
- **Native plants are beautiful!** By planting native species, you can easily maintain a beautiful yard that also provides a food source and habitat for local wildlife.

Convinced? Interested? Perfect timing! The Scappoose Bay Watershed Council (SBWC) is hosting their Fall Native Plant Sale on Saturday, October 17.

The SBWC Native Plant Center has one of the region's largest selections of native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, ferns, and sedges. Plants are propagated by volunteers for the SBWC's habitat restoration projects, given to landowners to enhance their properties, and sold during their native plant sale to support the program. They are always looking for interested volunteers to join work parties every Thursday from 9:00am to noon. Volunteers are encouraged to help in all aspects of the nursery and there is something for everyone's interest. For more information, call Amber at (503) 397-7904, or email amber@scappoosebay-wc.org to sign up for the volunteer email list.

Golden Hour Work Parties Continue Through September

By Caroline Skinner

This year, FoBW started holding weekly work parties on Monday, May 4. Running for just one hour on Monday evenings, the work parties have accomplished restoration and maintenance goals in both sections of Baltimore Woods Meadow throughout the summer. The primary goal has been to identify significant native plants and mark them, then clear free space around them and mulch heavily. Mulch helps retain moisture and suppress weeds. Some of the plants we're marking are goldenrod, lupine, checkermallow, and native shrubs and trees such as ocean spray, vine maple, thimbleberry, Oregon grape, white oak, and cascara. The invasive plants we've been removing include thistle, peas, blackberry, and English ivy.



Golden Hour weeders

Toby Query, ecologist from Metro, and Marisa Dorais, Willamette River Stewardship Coordinator for Portland Parks and Recreation, joined our first meeting to discuss a plan for the meadow area and help us get oriented. We hope you'll **join us for our last month of Monday evening work parties in September** (see events calendar on pg 8). It's a great chance to enjoy the beauty of the river as twilight approaches, and to socialize while helping improve the ecosystem.

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Notes from a Backyard Habitat

By Caroline Skinner

We've been short on rain since June. My yard has a large, old pine tree, probably not native, that provides nice shade for the hottest part of the day. Having some shade has been especially nice this year. The sun has been unrelenting, and the clouds just a tease. My birdbath, a ceramic bowl placed on an alder stump, seems to be a very popular place for all sorts of birds and insects to drink and bathe.

tucked in some claytonia, or candyflower, plus starry Solomon's seal and false lily of the valley. I hope they spread. Having a natural garden is very enjoyable. It's fun to watch plants grow and see birds visit my yard.

The garden has a layer of wood chips for mulch to retain moisture and reduce weeds. Rain has been scarce since early June, without much in the forecast. It has been a long, dry summer. I feel good making one small corner more comfortable for wildlife. To learn more about how you can support wildlife in your own yard, check out the Backyard Habitat program at www.backyardhabitats.org. **Happy native plant gardening!**

Bald Eagles Come Back to St. Johns

By Barbara Quinn

Last summer was the first time I regularly noticed the two large-winged raptors gliding high against the deep blue skies over St. Johns. The glint of white on the head, the expansive wing-spread, and the effortless glide in ever-widening circles froze me in awe and recognition. A pair of bald eagles shares our skies and can often be observed high over the Willamette River corridor. Not so long ago, bald eagles were rarely seen here.

It has been an amazing comeback story. In 1963, only 417 nesting pairs of bald eagles survived in the entire lower 48 states. Since the use of DDT was banned in the US in 1972, the thinning of the birds' eggshells has slowly reversed. In addition, since 1973, the eagle's protected status provided a springboard for



Providing fresh water and native plants for wildlife this summer has been very satisfying. When I first moved here a few years ago, some of my favorite birds included brush jays and exuberant flickers. I still love them, but I have also come to love the tiny birds that come in flocks. Barb Quinn

tells me they are called bushtits. They are so tiny that they make the ever-present English sparrows seem large and clumsy.

I often hear the sound of chickadees, and I've seen hummingbirds visiting the tiny, pink flowers on my snowberry bushes. A pair of doves nest in a nearby large tree. At times, they warily fly in to visit the water. Nearby, a dead cherry tree makes a good perch for their take-offs and landings. I've been tempted to remove it, but the branches make such good perches that I am just leaving the old tree as a useful part of the landscape. My cat watches it all from her indoor spot by a window.

The spirea is blooming with fuzzy, pink spires. I have native western red columbine. Monkey flower and Oregon sunshine make a sunny, yellow corner of the garden. In deeper shade, under the red twig dogwood, and between the spirea and yellow flowering currant, I have



From below, the bald eagle's white head and tail may be invisible against a pale sky

***Nature is
not a place
to visit;
it is home.***

*~ Gary Snyder,
American poet*

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recovery (www.nwf.org). In 1991, the ban on lead ammunition lessened lead poisoning of raptors caused by ingestion of downed water birds. Though their population has increased dramatically, the bald eagle continues to be protected under the Endangered Species Act, the Bald Eagle Protection Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Bald eagles have a wingspan of about 7 feet and females weigh around 12 or 13 pounds compared to the male's nine pounds. They mate for life. Together the pair finds a nesting site, most often a coniferous tree, and produce offspring each year, usually laying two or three eggs. They use sticks and twigs to construct a platform nest that may reach 10 feet across and weigh half a ton. Some pairs return to the same nest every year. Bald eagles can live 15 to 25 years.

These large raptors are found only in North America, and most commonly live near rivers, lakes, and marshes where they can find fish, their staple food. The bird's exceptionally keen eyesight allows them to spot prey up to a mile away. They can fly up to 30 mph and dive at speeds up to 100 mph, a skill used to swoop down on prey, which they seize in knife-like talons and carry off. They will also feed on waterfowl, turtles, rabbits, snakes, other small animals, and carrion. Bald Eagles require a good food base, perching areas, and nesting sites. In winter, the birds congregate near open water in tall trees where they can easily spot prey and find night roosts. Because eagles are at the top of the food chain, they are an indicator of the health of an ecosystem.

Around North Portland, in summer and winter they can most often be seen on Sauvie Island, at the Columbia Slough, and near the Willamette River. One was recently spotted hunting over the newly mowed Baltimore Woods Meadow. It is among the many advantages of living in North Portland that we are close enough to nature to share our space with this unique bird of prey.



Eastbank Esplanade to the Columbia River

npGreenway Hires Coordinator, Increases Capacity

The campaign to complete the North Portland Greenway Trail took an important step forward in June. npGreenway, the organization working toward that goal, has hired a coordinator, Shamus Lynsky, to lead the effort to build a citizens movement for a dedicated trail to connect North Portland neighborhoods.

npGreenway board member Joe Adamski says, "This step grows our capacity to complete the trail, providing access to jobs, nature, and recreation. The coordinator will grow our leadership and volunteer base, as well as organize hands-on experiences that connect residents to the trail and strengthen our advocacy efforts with public officials. We will be visible across Portland starting with the June 21 Sunday Parkways event."

Lynsky's professional experience includes serving as political director of the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association and executive director of the Oregon Consumers League. As a St. Johns resident, he has been a leader with the St. Johns Neighborhood Association and on neighborhood projects, and served for seven years on the City of Portland's Bicycle Advisory Committee.

In 2014 npGreenway secured a \$50,000 Metro grant to build its capacity to achieve trail



The North Portland Greenway Trail runs through Baltimore Woods and Baltimore Woods Meadow

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FoBW fall general meetings:

September 15,
October 20,
November 17,
3rd Tuesdays
at 6:30pm
BES Water Lab at
6543 N. Burlington

ALL ARE WELCOME!

completion. The first phase of the project involved hiring a consultant, Bill Weismann of Grassroots NW, to assess current conditions and craft an action plan for moving forward.

As both a recreational and transportation trail, the North Portland Greenway will translate the vision of the original 40 Mile Loop and the 2030 Bicycle Master Plan into a signature trail to bring safe off-street connection through much of the North Portland Peninsula.

Design Guidelines for Eight Great Trails

By Steven McClure

Metro's Quarterly Trails Forum convened July 22, 2015 at the Regional Center. Among the usual collection of updates and reports from the area, one item that stood out was a list of Metro Target Area plans and regional corridors and trail priorities.

On the list of voter-approved bond measures for acquisition of natural areas and trail corridors was a Great Eight collection of projects: Tonquin Trail, Westside Trail, Fanno Creek Trail, Willamette River Greenway Trail, Springwater Corridor/Sellwood Gap, Columbia Slough Trail, Gresham/Fairview Trail, and Cazadero Trail. Baltimore Woods would fall under the banner of the North Portland Greenway Trail.



An interesting list of trail design guidelines was also posted:

- Lighting
- Context sensitive design
- Best practices
- Comprehensive signage
- Access
- On-street connections
- Integration with on-street
- Mixed-use/conflicts
- Street crossings
- Designing for wildlife

This would seem to be a useful list to review in our development of Baltimore Woods. A trail design guidelines manual will soon be available.

Friends of Overlook Bluff Setbacks and Hope

By Ruth Oclander

The first half of 2015 has brought significant setbacks and yet some hope to the Bluff's efforts to protect a 150-year-old Oregon white oak and the savanna upon which it rests.

After years of patient support, the savanna's owner informed Friends of Overlook Bluff (FoOB) that he intended to sell the property. Our board made a direct appeal to Parks' Commissioner Fritz to allocate System Development Charge money to match the remaining \$425,000 needed to fulfill a Metro Nature in the Neighborhood grant for acquisition of the savanna.

Our efforts had already brought in nearly \$425,000 from Metro, East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, Port of Portland, the Wyss Foundation, the Overlook Neighborhood Association, a community campaign, and in-kind donations. (The value of the near-acre had been appraised at \$825,000.) FoOB was cautiously optimistic given Parks' recent use of SDC funds to acquire the Open Meadow School land in St. Johns. However, Parks' final answer was to decline funding. Board members also testified at the mayor's budget hearing, again with disappointing results.

With recent news of a pending sale of the property, we are again optimistic that our efforts to protect the heritage tree are having a lasting effect. A representative working with both the owner and developers has engaged FoOB with a way to conserve a park of smaller proportions around the oak tree. The proposal will lessen new construction on the savanna, minimize damage to the oak tree's root system, and allow for public space that spans the drip line (which is considerable) and extends the depth of the field.

FoOB's focus now is to influence a positive outcome that balances the needs of the owner, the



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Fall 2015

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developer, the community, and most importantly, the oak habitat along the bluff. Working with the varied groups reminds us of the interdependence of forces both seen and unseen in our environment. It is a slow process, like that of a 150-year-old tree and its ecosystem, in which inspiration, steadiness, and adaptability are needed to raise awareness of the quietly disappearing resources on Earth.

Quarterly Event Information

September 15, Tuesday, 6:30-8 – Special FoBW volunteer meeting. Want to have fun? Do meaningful volunteer work? Join an amazing and welcoming group of volunteers? Join us for a casual gathering to meet current FoBW volunteers, view our brand-new organizational chart, and explore the wide range of volunteer opportunities FoBW offers. Meet at the BES Water Pollution Control Lab, 6543 N Burlington Ave, Portland, 97203.

September 20, Sunday, 1 to 3:30 – EMSWCD Native Plant Workshop at the BES Water Pollution Control Lab, 6543 N

Every Monday evening thru September, 6:30-7:30 – Golden Hour work parties. Meet at N. Baltimore & Decatur & look for FoBW signs. Meet old and new friends and help our native plants thrive by weeding and watering. Tools are provided on site. Please dress for the weather, wear sturdy shoes, and bring a water bottle and gloves. Check our Facebook page for updates; as the weeks go on we may change to a different starting location or a different time.

October 10, Saturday, 9-noon – Parke Diem Volunteer Work Party.

Help Portland Parks & Recreation and FoBW for 2 mornings of work (October 10 & 24) to remove English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, and other invasive weeds to prepare the site for new native plants. For both events, meet at N. Decatur St & N. Alta Ave, under the St. Johns Bridge. Tools, gloves, and snacks provided. Please dress for the weather, wear close-toed shoes, bring a water bottle, and be ready to get dirty. This is a family-friendly event and all ages are welcome, but children must be supervised by an adult. For Parke Diem, sign up directly at <http://www.parklandia.org/parkediem>.

October 17, Saturday, 9-1 – Scappoose Bay Watershed Council (SBWC) Fall Native Plant Sale. 33589 SE High School Way in Scappoose, off Hwy 30 in the greenhouse behind Scappoose High School.

October 24, Saturday, 9-noon – No Ivy Day returns to Baltimore Woods. See description under October 10.

November 7, Saturday, 1-4 – Volunteer work party at Nob Hill Nature Park (NHNP) in St Helens. Help maintain an oak woodland. Bring water and snacks. Meet at the wastewater treatment plant, 451 Plymouth Street in St Helens. Pre-registration is requested by Friday, November 6 by calling SBWC at 503-397-7904, or by e-mail to info@scappoosebay-wc.org.



Work party in Baltimore Woods Meadow

Burlington Ave, Portland, 97203. Perfect for all levels of do-it-yourselfers, the workshop highlights landscaping with native plants. See article on pg 2.

Many thanks to volunteer Tami Bosworth, who did the design and layout for this issue.