

Protecting Mt. Hood National Forest

Learn how to shape the forest's future at a free, public event for Portlanders

BY EMILY GREEN
STAFF WRITER

If you live in Portland, chances are you've taken a short road trip east to enjoy the splendor of Mt. Hood National Forest.

This federally managed chunk of Northwest Oregon is where Portlanders get their main source of drinking water. It's also where they hit the slopes in the winter, and where they go for wine tasting, hiking, swimming, fishing, camping and other outdoor activities.

But how much do most Portlanders know about how these lands are managed?

At a time when a presidential administration with little regard for the environment threatens the health of our nation's federal forests, an environmental watchdog group that keeps its eye earnestly focused on Mt. Hood National Forest wants the public to get involved.

That group is Bark, a Portland-based nonprofit dedicated exclusively to the protection of Mt. Hood National Forest since 1993.

On Saturday, April 15, it's hosting a free public event, "The People's Forest Forum," from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Sunnyside Community House in Southeast Portland.

The forum will consist of presentations, keynote speakers and break-out sessions that organizers hope participants will help to generate.

Bark hopes Portlanders will leave the forum with a better understanding of how Mt. Hood National Forest is managed, how climate change is affecting the ecosystem, and how they can play a role in shaping the

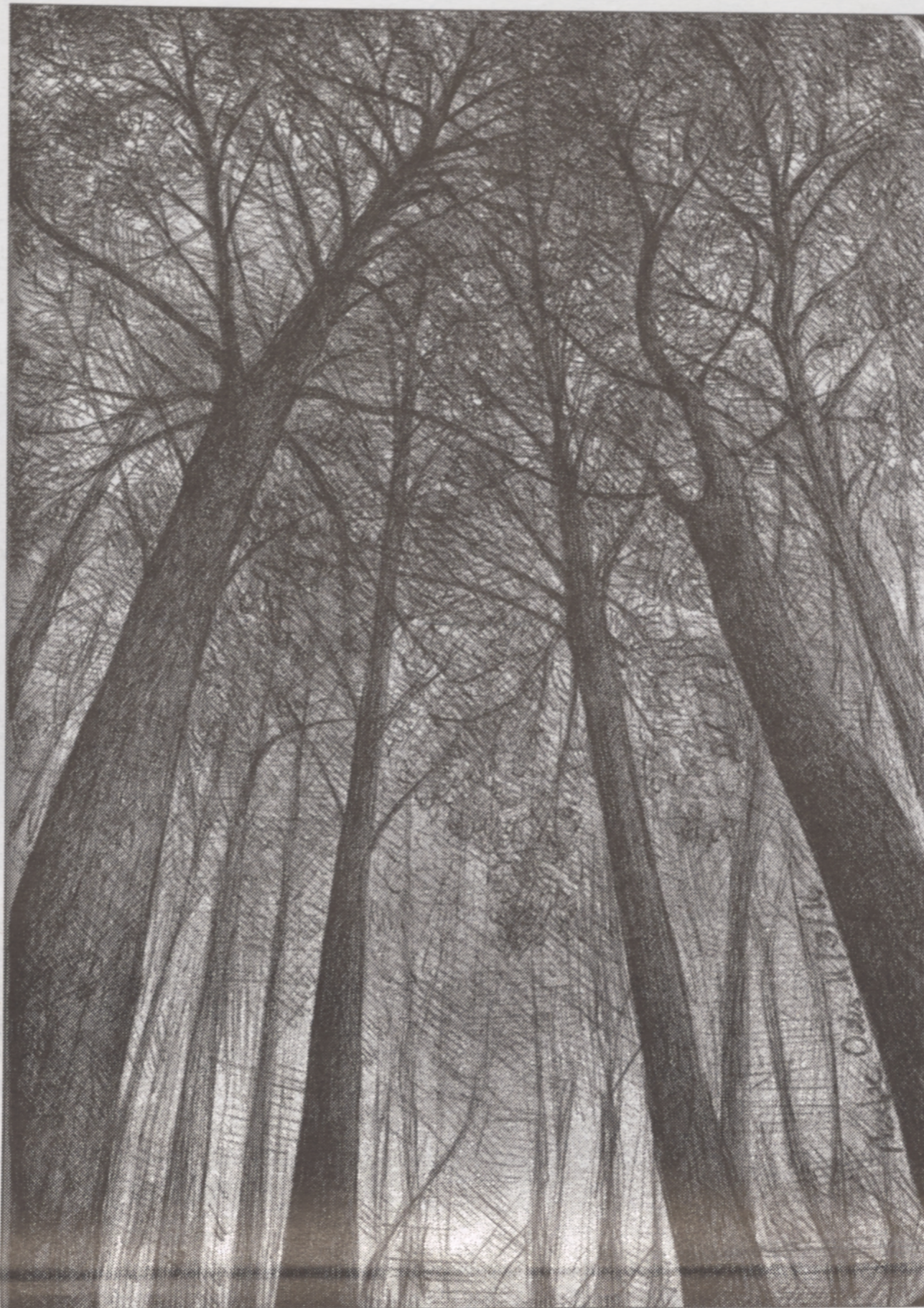


ILLUSTRATION BY PHOEBE OAKS

future of this popular outdoor recreation area.

"Bark believes the most important management priorities should be for clean water and recreation," said Bark Community Organizer Courtney Rae. "As the climate changes, those things are going to become more and more challenging to manage for."

The forest plan guiding how the U.S. Forest Service manages Mt. Hood National Forest was written in 1990. Back then, Rae said, clean water and recreation "weren't the priorities at all."

IF YOU GO

The People's Forest Forum for the Future of Mt. Hood National Forest
Saturday, April 15
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunnyside Community House
3520 SE Yamhill St.
Portland, OR 97214

This event is free and open to the public, with childcare and snacks provided.

made to the plan in the meantime to account for climate change, and make it more appropriate for current ecological conditions and social priorities in the region.

Keynote speakers at the April 15 event will include:

- Dr. John Talberth, Founder and President at Center for Sustainable Economy, on climate change impacts on forest and potential benefits forests can lend to fighting climate change
- Maya Jarrad, Community Organizer at 350PDX, on regional climate change, its impacts on water and fossil fuel infrastructure in the Pacific Northwest
- Adam Baylor, Stewardship and Advocacy Manager at Mazamas, on what the recreation community can do to develop its political strength in protecting the Mt. Hood National Forest


Break-out sessions will include: how plants and animals are adapting to climate change in the Mt. Hood National Forest, the forest's carbon storing cycle, clean water, fire prevention, conservation and social justice, the recreation economy and more.

PDX Toy Library will provide onsite childcare, and snacks including cheese, crackers and veggie platters, along with beverages will be provided by Bark. Participants are asked to bring their own lunch. To RSVP, go to eventbrite.com. Registration is not required to attend, but requested. For more information, visit: bark-out.org.


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