

## COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

# Willamette Cove hotspot removal begins transformation

By Barbara Quinn  
The Review



Hotspot removal on the 27-acre Willamette Cove site has been mostly completed pending tests, with the removal of 2,500 cubic yards of contaminated soil hauled by trucks to a solid waste facility. The removal led by Port of Portland in partnership with Metro and DEQ, focused on removing dioxins, heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in five concentrated areas. 21 native trees were preserved during the action and 20 non-native trees were removed and will be replaced with new plantings. Contaminants in the river sediments at the site will be cleaned up through the superfund under the guidance of the EPA.

The Willamette Cove has approximately 3000 feet of riverfront and until the 1950's was bustling with industry including a barrel manufacturer, lumber mill, plywood mill, ship repair facilities, and dry dock. By the 60's the few businesses left abandoned the site leaving it vacant. Foundation concrete and other remnants from the site's industrial past remain at many locations. Working railroad tracks border the northern and eastern boundaries of the property. These past uses left contamination including heavy metals, diesel fuel, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and dioxins in soil and groundwater on most of the property. The Oregon Health Authority has determined that these chemicals present an unacceptable risk to humans and the environment.

Testing of the site will now determine the extent of remaining pollution. Three of the hotspots are complete and tests are pending on the other two spots. Residents are advised to not enter the site for recreational or other purposes given the presence of soil and river contamination that still exist on the site in addition to the hotspots.

This action will hasten the transformation of Willamette Cove into

a section of the north Portland Willamette Greenway Trail, offering stunning views of the river, the Willamette Bluff and Forest Park. It's location between the river and the Bluff, make it ideally secluded from urban sights and sounds. It is hoped that the beach at the Cove may one day serve as natural rest and feeding area for river animals such as salmon and their small fry.

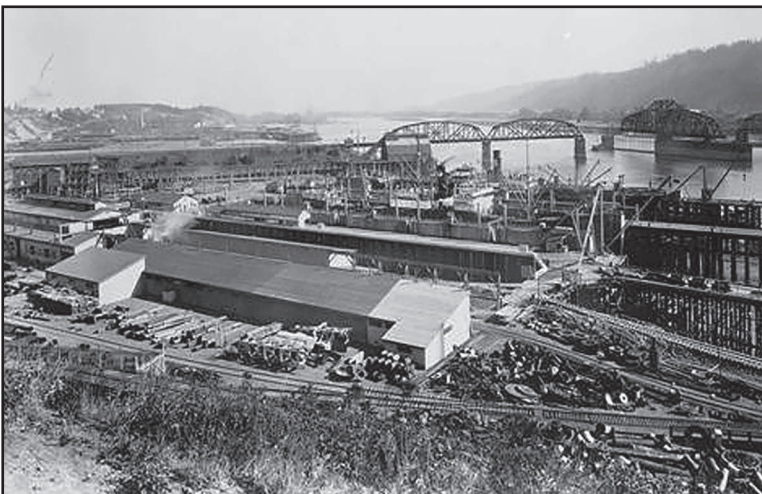
The Cove also represents an im-

portant part of St. Johns history as a site of the industrial boom that started in the early 1900s and resulted in the invention of plywood among other manufacturing accomplishments.

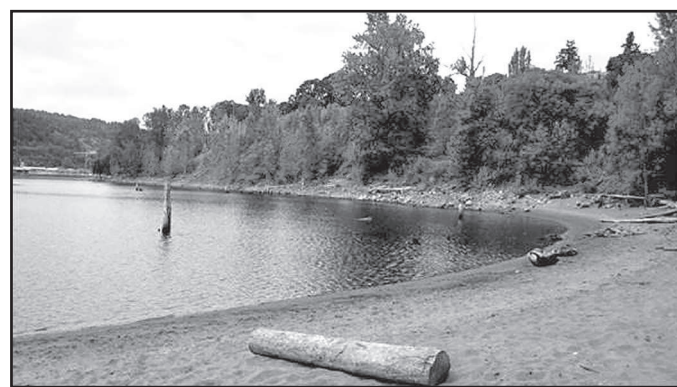
All residents, especially north Portlanders will benefit by the cleanup of Willamette Cove and its future transformation into a community asset offering views and a natural setting with an accessible trail connecting most north Portland neighborhoods.



Left: Overhead shot of the area.



Right: Industrial Heyday. Industry at the Cove in 1930s or 40s." Photo courtesy of Port of Portland



Above: Willamette Cove today" photo courtesy of Oregon Health Authority

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### From the EDITOR

Gayla Patton

MERRY CHRISTMAS READERS. This is such a special time of year when we take time to think about, and give to others. Relish in that and be thankful for living where we live, here in the beautiful Northwest, and appreciate what we have - no matter how much or little that may be. My wish is for everyone to have the best holiday ever.

The St. Johns Bridge Picture contest has turned out to be a huge success. Many, many people have called and voted for their favorite photo and also left messages that they really enjoyed seeing all the beautiful pictures taken and displayed this year. I'm seriously thinking about having

**Letters To The Editor**  
Continued on Page 6

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