

Opinion

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Help Shape Solutions to Our Environment

The City of Portland has released for public discussion a package of proposed voluntary actions and draft regulations to protect and restore city streams. The goal of the Healthy Portland Streams project is to improve water quality, reduce erosion, help manage floods, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

Over 75 percent of Portland's streams have been buried or contained in pipes. Neighborhood creeks and streams have been severely damaged, filled and polluted, their trees have been removed, and their banks eroded. Now growth and development threaten our remaining neighborhood streams and the land around them.

"Healthy rivers and streams are good for all of us and they provide habitat for fish and wildlife, too," says Planning Director Gil Kelley.

"I encourage all Portlanders to take part in discussing these challenges and crafting solutions to protect our natural environment."

As part of the City's comprehensive River Renaissance, this proposal includes changes to the current environmental overlay boundaries, voluntary actions and incentives, fine-tuned regulations, and expanded environmental overlay zones. Working more than two years with a citizen advisory committee, independent scientists, and with the public through several workshops, the Planning Bureau has developed a draft proposal for public discussion.

Citizens can participate in this discussion through a series of five community open houses designed to give local residents the opportunity to meet directly with staff and learn more about how

the proposal affects their property and their neighborhood's natural resources. Also available to the public is an Internet site featuring interactive maps, on-line

comment forms, and all project documents.

For more info, contact Barbara Hart, City of Portland, bureau of planning at 503-823-5839.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Pray for Our Soldiers

Somewhere in Afghanistan is a young, tired soldier clinging to a cold, wet rock, trying to get some sleep.

His back is more than likely up against his buddy's back so they can "watch" both ways while they catnap. That's the way Special Forces soldiers sleep in the field. Even though they can hear the distant thunder of allied aircraft, there's no real assurance it could save them if necessary. And yet, they are comforted by it.

Overhead somewhere else in the region are Air Force and Navy pilots and crew, flying their missions, their bombs and rockets being guided in by the Special Forces soldier's laser pointers on the ground, hoping like hell they hit their targets and miss civilians.

On the ships the flight crews eagerly await their aircraft's return. The "kids" in the CIC area plot any known air or sea movements. The cooks run a 24-hour kitchen making sure the sailors and marines are well fed.

While somewhere in Pakistan and somewhere else in Uzbekistan, soldiers and marines

there are once again grumbling "oh joy, rice again" as a main part of their meal. They wonder if the supply folks back home will ever get the food they know and love to them.

And of course back home, the supply folks are wondering where in the blazes the forward troops have moved to again, so that they can indeed get them their food and much needed supplies shipped out as quickly as possible on the next freighter heading that way.

And so the Coasties watch and guard those freighters as they go by, making sure their critical passages in and out of ports are safe and quick.

Each soldier, sailor, airman and marine share a common oath: supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States. And each share a common goal - not war, but peace.

And it is on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month that I ask all of us to take a moment of silence and utter a prayer for our service men and women, utter a prayer for peace.

Dorian J. Coughias, veteran

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