

Mill Ponds plan unveiled to the public

Project is the start of city's natural history park

By Katherine Lacaze
Seaside Signal

Acquiring more property for parking may be improbable at this point, but extending a walking trail, removing invasive species and building some bird blinds at the developing Mill Ponds Park is as easy as holding a few community work days, according to the city's Estuary Technical Committee.

The committee recently presented and received public feedback on its draft plan for the park at a public forum.

The Mill Ponds project is a component of a larger scheme to create a citywide park system, called the Necanicum Estuary Natural History Park Project. The ultimate concept is to make Seaside "a city within a park," said Jeremy Goldsmith, the city's AmeriCorps intern and planning assistant and a member of the Estuary Technical Committee.

Starting with the Mill Ponds, the city will work on the Necanicum Estuary

Natural History Park project systematically in phases, he said.

To comply with the community's desire to keep the park's development minimal, the plan is to make it a natural history park that is "a learning environment as much as a place to go," said committee member Justin Cutler.

A draft plan for the park that breaks its development into four phases was created by the Estuary Technical Committee, which is overseeing the project. It is composed of representatives from local organizations such as the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, North Coast Land Conservancy, National Park Service, Necanicum Watershed Council, Seaside Visitors Bureau and the Seaside School District.

"This is Seaside's chance to say, 'this is what we want to do to reclaim this property,'" said committee member Scott Tucker, the superintendent of the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park.



KATHERINE LACAZE PHOTO

Katie Voelke, the executive director of the North Coast Land Conservancy, far right, helps young participants discover natural treasures during a family fun activity put on by the conservancy last summer. The city's Estuary Technical Committee recently unveiled a draft plan to develop the park at a public forum.

The first phase, as proposed, includes completing and cleaning up the trail that circles the largest pond, removing some invasive species and building a handful of bird blinds at a few prime locations. A small shoulder and grassy area just south of the city's recycling center would become temporary parking. The phase also includes an emphasis on creating a designated blackberry-picking

area, an activity that is valued by the community according to feedback received so far.

Because of its simple components, the phase could be completed quickly and easily with small donations and a community effort, Cutler said.

The second phase involves improving the road leading into the park and creating a parking space and gateway further south, which

would increase the park's handicap-accessibility. The city's infrastructure, including the Prom and the recently completed dock at Broadway Park, has given Seaside the potential to become "a Mecca for older adults" or people with physical disabilities to visit, live and thrive, Cutler said. With an improved road and parking area, the Mill Ponds Park could become a part of that.

Birders' concerns

Some people raised concerns about whether having traffic further down into the area would be conducive for bird watching.

Parking needs to be available somewhere, Cutler responded. He asked people to submit their suggestions for places they believe would be appropriate for parking.

In the proposed third phase, the park would get a pit toilet, picnic tables, an observation tower, a shelter, a nature-based play area and a historical interpretation center. The committee sees the park as being a place for school children and families to visit.

"If we don't help the next generation learn the importance of birding, the importance of play, the importance of the natural environment, we're going to lose it," Cutler said.

The fourth phase — which Cutler said is "a hope and a prayer, honestly" — includes the possible acquisition of property adjacent to the Mill Ponds that could be used for parking. To acquire the property, Cutler said, the city would need willing sellers and funds.

So far, no funding is available for the park project. Creating a plan is a prerequisite to receiving funds, Cutler said. "This is step one in a very long process," he added.

"We want to have a plan to help coordinate that effort (to receive funds) and make sure we're going in the same direction," Cutler said.

The technical committee will meet to discuss the public comments received and compile the information for the Seaside Parks Advisory Committee. The public can provide comments on the project by emailing jgoldsmith@cityofseaside.us.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Deadline for Community Calendar is noon Wednesday two weeks before our publish date. Items can be emailed to nmccarthy@seasidesignal.com, faxed to 503-738-9285 or mailed to P.O. Box 848, Seaside, OR 97138. Events are in Seaside unless otherwise noted.

Friday, March 20 Chamber Breakfast

8:30 a.m., Twisted Fish Steakhouse, 311 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-6391, www.seasidechamber.com, open to the public. Different speakers are featured each Friday. A no-host breakfast and beverage service is available.

Low Impact Walking

9:30 a.m. This low-impact walking group meets every Friday at different locations. Sponsored by the Seaside Branch of American Association of University Women. For details, call 503-738-7751.

"Murder on the Nile"

7:30 p.m., Coaster Theatre, 108 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach, 503-436-1242, www.coastertheatre.com, \$15 to \$20. Directed by Jenni Tronier, Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Nile," is a murder mystery about a newlywed couple on a steamship. Also performed March 21, 22 (3 p.m.), 26, 27 and 28 and April 3. See the website for a full schedule.

Karaoke

9 p.m., American Legion Post 99, 1315 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-5111, www.seasidepost99.org, no cover, 21 and older. All are welcome — including kids to go on stage for some live karaoke singing. Saturday, March 21

Trail Run/Walk

9 a.m., Fort Clatsop Visitor Center, 92343 Fort Clatsop Road, Astoria, 503-861-2471, \$10, all ages. This is the first of a 5k and 10k trail run series to bid adieu to winter. Event starts at 10 a.m.

Whale Watching Week

10 a.m., Ecola State Park, Cannon Beach; Neah-kahnie Mountain Historic Marker, Turnout on U.S. Highway 101, 541-765-3304, www.oregonstateparks.org. Volunteers help visitors spot migrating gray whales. Whale Watch Weeks runs to March 28.

Internet Browsing Class

11 a.m., Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-6742, www.seasidelibrary.org. This is an introduction to Internet browsing class for computer novices to learn how to maneuver through the Internet. Seating is limited; early signup is recommended.

Teen Theatre Auditions

Noon, Astor Street Opry Company, 129 W. Bond St.,

Astoria, 503-338-9813, www.astorstretoprycompany.com, teens 13 to 18. Ten roles will be cast for Astor Street Opry Company's May teen production of "Sleeping Beauty." No experience necessary.

Pitches & Proposals

1 p.m., Beach Books, 616 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-3500, holly@macgregorliterary.com, \$55. Literary agent and author Holly Lorincz will teach a two-hour writer's workshop for those who are ready to have agents and publishers read their scripts.

Sunday, March 22 Author George Wright

1 p.m., Beach Books, 616 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-3500, www.beachbooks37.com, free. George Byron Write will discuss his newest novel "In the Wake of our Misdeed." Q&A and book signing to follow.

NAMI Meeting

2 p.m., Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway, Seaside, www.nami.org. The National Alliance on Mental Illness welcomes anyone who has a friend or family member that suffers from a mental illness. NAMI membership is not required to attend. For information, call Myra Kero at 503-738-6165.

Astoria Music Festival

3 p.m., Liberty Theater, 1203 Commercial St., Astoria, 503-325-5922, www.liberty-theater.org, \$15. "From Finland With Love: Songs of My Great Grandfather" by Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, featuring pianist Ruusamari Teppo and cellist Jussi Makkonen.

Monday, March 23 Spring Break Theatre

10 a.m., Coaster Theatre, 108 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach, 503-436-0609, www.coastertheatre.com, \$115 per camper. This one-week camp will focus on three aspects of theater arts: acting, singing and dancing using the musical fantasy, "Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory." Scholarships are available.

Tuesday, March 24 TOPS Meeting

8 a.m. weigh-in, North Coast Family Fellowship Church, 2245 N. Wahanna Road, Seaside, 503-861-

2904. TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meets every Tuesday and focuses on making lifestyle changes that provide lasting weight loss and better health.

Learn to Play Bridge

9:30 a.m., Port of Astoria Office Building, Room 209, 10 Pier 1, Astoria, 503-738-0782, \$5. This is a beginner/brush up bridge course where all levels are welcome. The first class is free and past students are admitted for free. Walk-ins are welcome. Fun and friends guaranteed. The class runs to March 31.

Knit, Needle, Crochet

10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside, 503-738-3311, www.sunsetempire.com, free. All levels and interests in knitting, crocheting and needlework are welcome to join the Knit, Needle & Crochet Group every Tuesday.

Biz Kid Workshop

6 p.m., 4-H Club House, on Walluski Loop across from Clatsop County Fairgrounds, Astoria, 503-325-1010. Discussion will cover displaying, branding and customer service. 4-H will also conduct parent training.

Wednesday, March 25 Sou'Wester Garden Club

10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside, 503-524-5309, free. This month's program of the Sou'Wester Garden Club will be "All About Bees" presented by Tom Trusewicz. A meet and greet with refreshments will begin at 9:45 a.m. The public is welcome, and membership is open. Dues are \$15 annually.

Thursday, March 26 Ham Radio Breakfast

8 a.m., Finn's Fish House, 227 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-9692. Ham radio operators meet every Thursday. Venues change on the first Thursday of the month; call for information.

SDDA Breakfast

8:30 a.m., Pig 'N' Pancake, 323 Broadway, Seaside, 503-717-1914, www.seasidedowntown.com. Features guest speakers each week. A no-host breakfast and beverage service is available.

Notary Public Seminar

9 a.m., Clatsop Community College Seaside

Campus, 1455 N. Roosevelt Drive, Seaside, 503-986-2200, www.notsem.sos.state.or.us, free. The secretary of state is offering a notary seminar. The presentation will cover rules, regulations and requirements for an Oregon Notarial Certificate. The seminar is open to the public. Registration required.

Kiwanis Club Meeting

Noon, Pig 'N' Pancake, 323 Broadway, Seaside, open to the public. Features announcements and guest speakers each week. For information, visit the club's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Kiwanis-Club-of-Seaside-Ore.

Pinochle Course

1 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. The Knochlers pinochle group offers a free refresher and beginning course in pinochle on the fourth Thursday of the month and is open to anyone 55 and older.

Movie Matinee

2 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside, 503-738-3311, www.sunsetempire.com, free. Enjoy an afternoon of movies and popcorn every Thursday at the community center.

Talk Back Thursday

7:30 p.m., "Murder on the Nile," Coaster Theatre, 108 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach, 503-436-1242, www.coastertheatre.com, \$15 to \$20.

Friday, March 27 Chamber Breakfast

8:30 a.m., Twisted Fish Steakhouse, 311 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-6391, www.seasidechamber.com.

Bruce Smith & Friends

7 p.m., American Legion Post 99, 1315 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-5111, www.seasidepost99.org, no cover. Bruce Smith and the Boda Boyz play Texas guitar slinging rock-n-roll and Texas blues.

Saturday, March 28 "Murder on the Nile"

7:30 p.m., Coaster Theatre, 108 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach, 503-436-1242, www.coastertheatre.com, \$15 to \$20.

Monday, March 30 Knochlers Pinochle Group

1 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside, all ages, \$1 per session per person. Knochlers host regular play in the card game of pinochle every Monday. Prizes awarded.

Tuesday, March 31 TOPS Meeting

8 a.m. weigh-in, North Coast Family Fellowship Church, 2245 N. Wahanna Road, Seaside, 503-861-2904.

Learn to Play Bridge

9:30 a.m., Port of Astoria Office Building, Room 209, 10 Pier 1, Astoria, 503-738-0782, \$5.

Wednesday, April 1 Angora Hiking Club

1 p.m., meet at Basin Street Parking Lot, 334 W. Marine Drive at 6th St., Astoria, 503-738-7911, www.angorahikingclub.org. Trung Nguyen will lead an easy Seaside Prom/Mill Ponds hike. Call to confirm location.

4-H After School

2:30 p.m., Seaside High School, 1901 N. Holladay Drive, Seaside, 503-325-8573, free, grades 6 to 8. Youth can learn about nutrition and compete in an Iron Chef cook-off. Classes are every Wednesday to April 22 in the Culinary Arts Room. Transportation will be provided. Space is limited to 15 students. Registration is recommended.

Thursday, April 2 Ham Radio Breakfast

8 a.m., call for location, Seaside, 503-738-9692. Ham radio operators meet every Thursday.

Kiwanis Club Meeting

Noon, Pig 'N' Pancake, 323 Broadway, Seaside, www.facebook.com/pages/Kiwanis-Club-of-Seaside-Ore.

Friday, April 3 NW Music Tour

7 p.m., American Legion Post 99, 1315 Broadway, Seaside, 503-738-5111, no cover, 21 and older. The Great Northwest Music Tour features The Silent Comedy, a group mixing Americana, folk and rock-n-roll.

Early Childhood Health & Education Clinic For Clatsop County Kids

SIGN UP TODAY!
FREE For all 3-5 year olds, regardless of income

<p>April 14, 2015 The Astoria Armory 1636 Exchange St., Astoria</p>	<p>April 22, 2015 Seaside Convention Center 415 First Avenue, Seaside</p>
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Early screening is an important step to successful learning.

Your child will receive the following exams and screenings:

~ Physical ~ Hearing ~ School Readiness ~ Speech
~ Nutrition ~ Vision ~ Dental ~ Immunization

Call your local elementary school or Head Start center for an appointment by April 7 for the Astoria clinic or April 15 for the Seaside clinic.

Limited transportation help is available upon request. se habla espanol.

Sponsors are NW Early Learning Council, NW Educational Service District and Clatsop Kinder Ready. Major health & education groups of Clatsop County are partnering to make this clinic possible.

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CONTACT A LOCAL AGENT TODAY. WE EXIST TO ASSIST.

<p>Jeremy Ryan Mills, Agent 815 S Holladay Drive Seaside, OR 97138 503-738-6100 www.jmillsinsurance.com</p>	<p>Rick Berezay, Agent 653 West Marine Drive Astoria, OR 97103 503-325-5920 www.rickberezay.com</p>	<p>Marcia Harper Ins Agcy Inc Marcy Harper, Agent 936 E Harbor Drive Warrenton, OR 97146 503-861-3276 Marcyharper.com</p>
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