

Connecting Green: Integrating the Built and Natural Environments in the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Region

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This presentation will illustrate efforts to create a livable and ecologically sustainable Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region through the enhanced protection and restoration of a vibrant urban green infrastructure. On-the-ground examples will describe how local and regional government and nonprofits are collaborating throughout the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region to ensure equitable access to nature, parks, trails, and greenspaces, and to protect and restore the region's watersheds and biodiversity while simultaneously creating a compact urban form to curb urban sprawl. The presentation will trace more than 30 years of evolving public policies, regional growth management, public education, and nonprofit advocacy, all of which have focused on urban watershed and natural resource protection in the local and regional land use planning context. The positive influence of multi-objective river, stream, floodplain and stormwater management strategies in the City of Portland will be highlighted. Regional growth management strategies, including current efforts to identify urban and rural reserves for future urban expansion and rural landscape protection by Metro---the only directly elected regional government in the country---is being used to promote a landscape plan for wetland and stream corridor protection, both inside and outside the Portland region's urban growth boundary. *The Intertwine*, a bi-state effort to create "the world's greatest system of parks, trails, and natural areas" was recently launched by Metro, local park providers and watershed managers, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to build political support for and to fund a regional biodiversity plan for the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region.

Mike Houck

Mike Houck received his B.S. in Zoology from Iowa State University in 1969 and an MST in Biology from Portland State University in 1972. He has been Executive Director of the *Urban Greenspaces Institute* since founding the Institute in 1999 (www.urbangreenspaces.org). The Institute's motto, In Livable Cities is the Preservation of the Wild, speaks to the Institute's philosophy that it is only by creating livable and loveable cities, with abundant parks and trails and easy access to nature, that the rural landscape and more pristine environments will be conserved. Mike is also an adjunct instructor in the Geography Department at Portland State University, which houses the Institute. He has worked on local, regional, and national urban park and greenspace issues since 1980, when he founded the Urban Naturalist Program at the Audubon Society of Portland (www.audubonportland.org). He co-founded the Coalition for a Livable Future (www.clfuture.org) in 1994 to better integrate social and environmental issues into the region's growth management planning process. Mike serves on the Portland-Multnomah County Sustainable Development Commission and on the board of directors of the Coalition for a Livable Future. He is co-editor of the book, *Wild in the City, a Guide to Portland's Natural Areas* and a map and trail guide, *Wild on the Willamette, Exploring the Lower Willamette River*. Mike was selected for a Loeb Fellowship to Harvard's Graduate School of Design in 2003 and was named an Honorary ASLA by the National American Society of Landscape Architect in 2007.