



**PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Tuesday, November 24, 2015 – 5:30 PM**  
**Lakewood City Hall – ROOM 1E**  
**6000 Main Street SW**  
**Lakewood, WA 98499**

**MEMBERS**

**Jason Gerwen, Chair**  
**Vito Iacobazzi, Vice Chair**  
**Sylvia Allen**  
**J. Alan Billingsley**  
**Susan Dellinger**  
**Heinz Haskins**  
**Anessa McClendon**  
**Jack Bowen – Youth Council**

**Don Anderson, Council**  
**Liaison**

**STAFF**

**Mary Dodsworth, Director**  
**Cameron Fairfield, Office**  
**Assistant**

**Persons requesting special accommodations contact Cameron at 253-589-2489 as soon as possible in advance of this meeting so that an attempt to meet a special accommodation need can be made.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ATTENDANCE/ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL of October 27, 2015 MINUTES**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Prairie Restoration at Fort Steilacoom Park**  
**Susan Waters, Center for Natural Lands Management**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

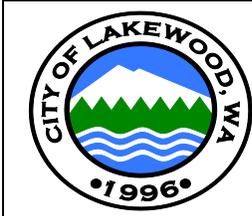
**Capital Project Updates**  
**Waughop Lake Trail - public mtg – Dec 10, 6:00 p.m.**  
**Springbrook Park – draft plan review**

**DIRECTORS REPORT**

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

**NEXT PRAB MEETING – January 26, 2016**  
**No meeting in December!**

**ADJOURN**



**LAKWOOD PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, October 27, 2015 – 5:30 PM  
LAKEWOOD CITY HALL ROOM 1E  
6000 MAIN ST SW  
LAKEWOOD, WA 98499**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Jason Gerwen, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

**ATTENDANCE**

**PRAB Members Present:** Jason Gerwen, Vito Iacobazzi, Sylvia Allen, Alan Billingsley, Susan Dellinger, Heinz Haskins & Anessa McClendon.

**Guest:** Sally Martinez, Recreation Coordinator

**Staff Present:** Mary Dodsworth, Director; Cameron Fairfield, Office Assistant

**Council Liaison:** Don Anderson

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Alan Billingsley moved and Sylvia Allen seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2015 meeting as presented. MPU.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Bob Saul asked if the parks department would post closures to the RC airplane area on the city website. Bob Saul then noted the great Eagle Scout project at the dog park. The agility course is being used all the time. Bob's final comment was regarding safety issues with a park near railroad tracks and recommended we include the Public Safety Advisory Board in future conversations regarding parks, pedestrians and transportation projects/issues.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Gathering Spaces Update: Mary shared a PowerPoint presentation updating the board on the gathering spaces project. Council has approved a closed type structure and location at Fort Steilacoom Park. We are currently at work on a business plan, funding plan, development plan, etc. Since this project has been called many things, the board was asked to think about potential names for the structure or project area.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Farmers Market Update: Sally Martinez gave a PowerPoint presentation recapping this year's Farmers Market. Sally discussed the success and improvement in attendance for the 2015 market. Next year is the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the City of Lakewood's Farmers Market and this theme will be used for future planning.

Capital Projects Update: Mary Dodsworth gave a PowerPoint presentation to update the advisory board on the City park capital projects. The projects include; Springbrook Park expansion, Waughop Lake trail, Fort Steilacoom Park sport field improvements, and the gateway signs. Mayor Don Anderson shared the cities success with the 2015 legislative session capital projects, (roads, freeways, parks, etc).

**DIRECTORS REPORT:** Mary's director's report gave a brief summary on the LEGO contest, Chambers Creek trail, barn removal, Fort Steilacoom Park land transfer, City's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, and community outreach efforts.

**BOARD COMMENTS:** None

**NEXT MEETING:** The next PRAB business meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm at Lakewood City Hall.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Sylvia Allen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm. Alan Billingsley seconded the motion. MPU

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Jason Gerwen, Chairman

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Cameron Fairfield, Office Asst.



Site Proposal: September 21, 2015

Prepared by Susan M. Waters, Rare Species Ecologist

### Project Description

The Center for Natural Lands Management, a nonprofit organization engaged in preservation and restoration of Washington's South Puget Sound prairie-oak ecosystems, proposes to partner with Fort Steilacoom Park and Pierce College to restore 20 acres of prairie-oak habitat on Pierce College and Fort Steilacoom Park lands. This project will benefit students and park users by enhancing the site to support beautiful, diverse native species with tremendous aesthetic and historic value. Restoration will follow a sequence of tested techniques (detailed below) to achieve a landscape dominated by native flowers and grasses interspersed with *Quercus garryana*, the only oak species native to Washington. The result will resemble the landscape as it looked when Fort Steilacoom was built.

Restoration of prairie-oak lands carries a powerful conservation impact. In addition to their aesthetic value, Pacific Northwest prairies and oak woodlands are conservation priority habitats across the South Sound region. Historically wide-ranging, they are now among the rarest habitats in the United States. Restoring these habitats supports a range of our local, native species that cannot persist in other landscapes.

### Project Objectives

The objectives of this proposal are to:

1. *Restore native Garry oak/prairie savannah habitat* that historically covered the Fort Steilacoom landscape; benefit current and future populations of rare animal and plant species; control pest weeds on site (blackberry, Scotch broom, invasive grasses).
2. *Heighten enjoyment of Ft. Steilacoom Park* by students and park visitors, by augmenting the natural beauty of the setting and increasing awareness of prairie ecosystems.
3. *Support ecological restoration already initiated by Pierce College students and professors*; reinforce this work and hasten its progress.



Restoration creates habitat for pollinators and other wildlife.

## Benefits of the project

The benefits of this proposal include:

1. *Restoration of a heritage landscape* will complement the rich human history of Fort Steilacoom by showcasing its natural history—a snapshot of the historical setting of the Fort. Specifically, creating 20 acres of prairie-oak savannah in Lakewood will provide habitat for rare native species that make up our historic natural heritage in this region. At the same time, prairie restoration will support goals of the Waughop Lake Trails Project, by eliminating nearby sources of invasive plant seed (e.g. blackberry, Scotch broom, invasive grasses) that could otherwise rapidly recolonize areas to be cleared for trail.
2. *Education and outreach opportunities* will deepen the already significant engagement of Lakewood citizens with an important natural area. Watching the changes as rich, diverse prairie slowly develops from a degraded field is an experience ripe with opportunities for ecological education. Park users and students will have the chance to track the arrival of long-absent species, an exciting process that generates additional enthusiasm for visiting the park.
3. *Creation of a prairie will act as a natural laboratory*, providing opportunities for Pierce College students to initiate (1) a long-term dataset documenting plant community changes in response to various restoration actions, and (2) experiments reinforcing key concepts in ecology and biology, such as succession, competition, plant-soil interactions, and impacts of invasion on diversity.



### Scope

We propose to begin restoration on approximately 20 acres of prairie-oak habitat, stretching up the hill from the northwest corner of Lake Waughop to include the area currently under restoration by Pierce College (northeast of Rainier Building), as far east as the easternmost water tower. The area includes a hilltop with young locust, and stretches west to encompass the large broom-infested slope north of the campus. We exclude the broom field directly west of the parking lot from restoration, because it is slated to become a future building site for Pierce College. However, broom could be mowed on this spot when mowing occurs elsewhere.



Monitoring creates educational opportunities in ecology, botany, and natural resource management.

## Management and monitoring

Prairie habitat requires maintenance. Especially in the early stages of conversion to native prairie, the site will quickly become degraded by invasive species or pass through succession to Douglas-fir forest if left unmanaged. CNLM currently has funding to support partnering in management for up to 1.5 years; we anticipate securing further funding beyond that point. Over time, management needs are greatly reduced as prairie becomes established.

Monitoring of the restoration will follow protocols used elsewhere in the South Sound Prairies. Specifically, CNLM uses the Prairie Habitat Assessment Methodology (PHAM) recently proposed by Thurston County and currently being reviewed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. This methodology will provide a standardized estimate of the prairie conservation of the site, as it progresses from degraded grassland to high-quality native grassland. PHAM can also evaluate the quality of the site for rare species habitat.

## Prairie Restoration Strategies

CNLM employs a well-tested sequence of restoration actions that vary from site to site depending on initial site characteristics and degree of invasion. At Fort Steilacoom, we propose the following.

1. Remove Scotch broom from densely invaded areas by mowing and/or brush cutting.
  - a. Purpose: Remove dominant invasive shrub that shades out prairie vegetation.
  - b. Typical result: Mowing broom leads to the release of invasive grasses, which will become the next target.
2. Control tall oatgrass and other invasive grasses using grass-specific herbicides.
  - a. Purpose: Reduce impact of tall oatgrass, which alters soil and vegetation characteristics in ways detrimental to native prairie species.
  - b. Typical result: Decreased dominance of invasive grasses, which harm the native bunchgrasses.
3. (When possible) Perform controlled burn.
  - a. Purpose: Remove layer of duff and thatch left by invasive grasses that covers ground; reduce encroachment on oaks by young fir.
  - b. Typical result: Much improved access to soil for native seed that is planted, and therefore significantly better germination and survival of native plants added to the site. Native prairie species evolved in the presence of periodic fires, and burning strongly improves the probability of native plant community success.
4. Seed in native fescue (bunchgrass) and native forbs (non-grass flowering plants).
  - a. Purpose: Fescue is the native bunchgrass that forms the backbone for high quality prairie. Once fescue is established and invasive species have been removed or reduced to a manageable level, forb seeding can then be conducted.



CNLM produces seed of native prairie plant species.

Throughout the process of establishing fescue and forbs, invasive species are continually removed, using the strategies described above, along with smaller-scale work when appropriate (e.g. spot-spraying individual tall oatgrass clumps).

### Outreach

The process of restoring native prairie-oak habitat will provide rich opportunities for public outreach and collaboration among the partners. For example, information about native prairies, about new birds, plants, or insects that arrive as restoration progresses, or about the reasons for restoration actions themselves could be subjects for new interpretive signage as part of the existing Discovery Trail Program. Signage could be jointly developed by Pierce College students, CNLM, and Lakewood Parks and Recreation. Many additional outreach possibilities also exist, such as creation of an iNaturalist online photo-sharing “project” for park users and students to document wildlife sightings.

### Summary

The Fort Steilacoom Park/Pierce College site provides a wonderful setting for achievable prairie-oak restoration, with benefits for all concerned and a high likelihood of success.

Figure 1. Proposed prairie-oak restoration site. Area = approximately 20 acres.





# Center for Natural Lands Management

## Partnering to conserve habitat and species

January 2014

The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) is a nonprofit that protects and sustains native species and their habitats. Our South Puget Sound program restores prairies and conserves rare species.

### South Sound Prairies

South Puget Sound prairies are one of the rarest ecosystems in the United States. Retreating glaciers formed these open grasslands nearly 15,000 years ago. Today, only 10% of the original prairieland remains -- with less than 3% pristine prairie. Most high-quality prairieland is located on Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM).



Photo: Adam Martin

Prairie in bloom on Joint Base Lewis-McChord



Prepping the Colvin Ranch in Tenino for a grazing study

### Connecting lands, missions and people

We work with many partners to restore habitat and conserve species on JBLM, prairie preserves, and private property.

This partnership:

- preserves working agricultural lands
- allows military trainings to continue
- protects rare species

### What is the status of the prairie species under the Endangered Species Act?

In November 2013, two South Sound species were granted federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, and a third is being considered for protection:

- Streaked horned lark (listed as threatened)
- Taylor's checkerspot butterfly (listed as endangered)
- Mazama pocket gopher (proposed as threatened)

### Habitat Enhancement

We collaborate with many partners to remove invasive species, grow and replant prairie plants, and conduct prescribed fires.

#### Control invasive plants

To control invasive vegetation, we mow, spot spray with targeted herbicide, hand-pull weeds, and conduct prescribed fires.

As the habitat improves at prairie preserves, staff and volunteers primarily control Scotch broom by hand-pulling. This reduces costs.



Removing Scotch broom

#### Produce native plants

CNLM manages two seed farms and three nurseries with the Sustainability in Prisons Project. These facilities provide prairie plants for habitat projects throughout the South Sound.

Together, we produce hundreds of pounds of processed seed and thousands of native prairie plants per year.



Shotwell's Nursery

#### Conduct prescribed fires

We conduct over 40 controlled burns per year, covering over 2000 acres of prairie and oak woodland habitat.

We lead trainings, coordinate and partner with fire agencies, and monitor during and after the fires.



Prescribed fire



## Property Protection

CNLM has acquired two properties to help conserve rare species off of Joint Base Lewis-McChord: Violet Prairie-Scatter Creek Preserve and Dan Kelly Ridge. Most properties need extensive habitat restoration before rare species can be reintroduced on them. These properties were protected with funds from the Department of Defense.



Violet Prairie-Scatter Creek Preserve (top)  
Dan Kelly Ridge (bottom)

### Violet Prairie-Scatter Creek Preserve

- 104 acres in Tenino, Thurston County
- Pastureland, oak woodland, riparian habitats
- Protects a population of Mazama pocket gophers
- Adjacent to protected working lands, provides habitat connectivity

### Dan Kelly Ridge

- 152 acres in Clallam County
- Very steep; looks over Elwha River
- Protects a population of Taylor's checkerspot butterflies



Mazama pocket gopher



Taylor's checkerspot butterfly;  
Photo: Rod Gilbert

## Species Reintroduction

The conservation community protects existing species and their habitats and reintroduces new populations of rare species on protected lands. These combined actions increase the overall number of rare species on South Sound prairies.

### Populations of rare species can be increased by:

- rearing a species in a conservation environment (such as a zoo) and then releasing them into the wild (*known as captive rearing*)
- moving a species from one natural location with a high population to another natural location with a low population (*known as translocation*)

These reintroduction efforts have led to new populations for Golden paintbrush, Mazama pocket gopher, and Taylor's checkerspot butterfly.

**Taylor's checkerspot butterfly.** The Oregon Zoo and the Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women (under the Sustainability in Prisons Project at The Evergreen State College) grow butterfly larvae. The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife reintroduces and monitors butterflies on prairies.



Reintroducing a Mazama pocket gopher



Releasing Taylor's checkerspot butterflies



Baby streaked horned larks

### Partners

CNLM partners with private landowners, nonprofits, and government agencies. We welcome the opportunity to partner with additional organizations. Some of our partners include:

- Joint Base Lewis-McChord
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Volunteers
- Thurston County
- Washington Department of Corrections
- The Evergreen State College
- Oregon Zoo
- Wolf Haven International
- Private landowners

### Prairies

People value prairies. For thousands of years, Native Americans harvested plants, hunted and used fire to prevent prairies from becoming forests. Currently, people raise livestock, train soldiers, provide habitat, and enjoy viewing wildflowers and wildlife on South Sound prairies.



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### Center for Natural Lands Management

Much of CNLM's conservation work is funded with Department of Defense grants. If you like our prairie conservation work, please consider donating or volunteering. Thank you for your support.