

Parsons, Susan

From: jthompson47@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2017 8:14 AM
To: Parsons, Susan
Subject: Testimony on January 17th

Dear Susan,

I would like to offer testimony to City Council on January 17th demonstrating how implementation of the Forest Park Management Plan is working to create true urban wilderness.

Sincerely,
John J Thompson

Sent from Xfinity Connect Mobile App

Presentation for City Commissioners, January 17, 2018

Good morning! My name is John Thompson, and I am a retired physician, as well as a lifelong naturalist. I come bearing good news this morning, hopefully a welcome contrast to many of the other issues before you. The Forest Park Natural Resources Management plan is working, and characteristics of a mature forest and wilderness are beginning to return, in some instances having been absent for the last 100 years.

Slide 1: While it may look like fancy lettuce, this slide shows a rare lichen, *Lobaria pulmonaria*. It is rare here in the NW, and endangered in much of Europe. In a survey done in the 1970's, this lichen was noted to be absent from the park, having disappeared when the park was logged earlier in the last century. It is associated with mature and old growth forests, and is a marker for pristine air quality. As our trees have gotten more mature, they have been able to filter the air of particulate matter allowing this lichen to return. I have been looking for it for many years in Forest Park, and was thrilled when I found it in 2016. It is the opposite of the "canary in a coal mine", and signals the return of high quality air to the park.

Slide 2: Those of you who like mushrooms will recognize these chanterelles (*Cantharellus formosus*). The mushrooms you see are merely the reproductive structures of a fungus. Mushrooms perform several tasks in the forest. Many function to break down woody debris or leaves, returning them to the soil. Others like chanterelles are mycorrhizal. Fine white filaments of the fungus wrap around the roots of trees, shrubs, and other forest plants creating what has been termed the "wood wide web". The interconnections allow plants within the network to trade water, sugars, and nutrients and to sequester toxins. These relationships characterize maturing and old growth forests, and are an indicator of returning soil health. I've been hunting these for years in Forest Park, and was overjoyed when I found several patches in 2013.

Slide 3: My final slide is of a rare "phantom orchid", *Cephalanthera austini*, so called because it contains no chlorophyll and is entirely dependent on a specific mycorrhiza for its sustenance that is associated with older forests. It is on the watch list for endangered plants in British Columbia, and is quite rare here. It symbolizes the third major characteristic of old growth and wilderness: interdependent relationships. While comprised of many individuals, the forest itself is a living entity, just as you are composed of many individual cells and yet are something larger. I found this orchid in the summer of 2014 along the Wildwood trail near Newberry Road.

Thanks to the Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan and the vision of you and your predecessors, the park is returning to a mature state and true wilderness. Because of its connection to the Coast Range, it is the only park in the city where this could occur. As Portland's population grows, demands for recreational space of all types will put ever increasing pressure on the park for development. Please continue to recognize the unique nature of the park, and support the wisdom of the Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan in all of its requirements. We, too, are part of that

interdependent web, and our health and well being depend on it just as the “phantom orchid” does.

I invite any or all of you to join me for a walk so I can show you these things first hand.
Thanks for listening.







Works Cited

1. *Lobaria Pulmonaria*. Photograph. Thompson, John. 2016
2. *Chanterelles*. Digital Image. Miriadna.com. 14 September 2014,
<<http://miriadna.com/photo.php?id=3570>>
3. *Cephalanthera austiniae* - *Phantom Orchid*. Digital Image. Wikipedia, Gowlland, Tod. 1 July 2007,
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cephalanthera_austiniae#/media/File:Phantom_Orchid_Gowlland-Tod2.jpg>

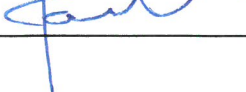
Request of John J Thompson to address Council regarding how
implementation of the Forest Park Management Plan is working to
create true urban wilderness (Communication)

JAN 17 2018

PLACED ON FILE

Filed JAN 09 2018

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		