

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAYIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE

Email

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February 13, 2013

Charlie Hales, Mayor
City Council
City Hall
1220 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Mayor Hales and Commissioners,

I am pleased to support the adoption of a resolution that would accept the UN's Environment Programme invitation to host World Environment Day. Over more than forty years I've observed progress on the city's environmental programs. What used to be a sewer bureau is now a watershed health bureau. A bureau that once planned to fill Oaks Bottom now has a City Nature program. The planning bureau is now also a sustainability bureau. Recently, as you celebrated state and federal approval of the "big pipe" you also recognized that the work is far from done. You observed that we must rely even more heavily on green infrastructure in the future, not less.

Thirty-five years ago I was told there was no place for nature in the city. Today, Portland is committed to ensure every citizen, regardless of their socio-economic status, has access to nature where they live, work and play. As important as the city's programs have been it's equally important to recognize the individuals who are responsible for those successes. Over the past two decades I've seen an amazing transformation in the professionalism and environmental expertise in the city's bureaus. Portland has some of the finest ecologists and natural resource managers in the nation. They should be celebrated as well.

Finally, jurisdictional lines are inconsequential to the environment. You deserve kudos for thinking beyond the city's boundaries and engaging at the regional level, both in the growth management arena and in expanding the region's system of parks, trails, and natural areas. Your staff, working with colleagues in The Intertwine Alliance, helped produce a *Regional Conservation Strategy and Biodiversity Guide*. For the first time ever we have the tools to prioritize acquisition, restoration, and management of natural resources across the 3,000 square-mile region, from the street scape to large regionally significant natural areas. We now have strategies for responding to Climate Change; we now know more about green infrastructure and the economic value that nature's services provide us. To be certain, we have daunting challenges ahead, but there are times to hit the pause button and celebrate our successes. World Environment Day is an opportunity to do that and we are pleased to be involved in that effort.

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