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To: Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Fish <nick@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Novick <novick@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Saltzman <dan@portlandoregon.gov>; Commissioner Fritz <amanda@portlandoregon.gov>; Hales, Mayor <mayorcharliehales@portlandoregon.gov>

Subject: Standing up for Tree Tragedy

Hi there Portland reps,

Happy holidays. Sadly, it's not a happy holiday for the 3 coastal redwoods that were cut down at 44th and Hawthorne, recently. I'm sorry I didn't try harder to save them.

Portland is growing quickly, and lucrative real estate is encouraging people to cut down the beautiful trees we have left here in "stumptown." These trees are part of what makes Portland great, keeps us sane, connected, and a beautiful, pleasant city.

I am encouraging you to take action to:

1. Support Audubon Society of Portland's proposed Tree Code Reform.
2. As a temporary stop-gap measure until Title 11 reforms can be developed and adopted:
 - a. Require inch-for-inch mitigation for cutting large, healthy, non-dangerous and non-nuisance trees ≥ 30 " diameter at breast height "dbh" in development and non-development situations until Title 11 preservation standards can be reformed.
 - b. Require posting and a 30-day delay before any tree ≥ 30 " dbh is permitted to be cut.

Why Large Healthy Trees Matter?

A healthy urban forest includes a diversity of species with trees of all different sizes, ages, and a range of tree size and age classes. However, an abundance of research has found that large healthy trees provide a number of environmental functions and values to a much greater degree than smaller trees. Since past urbanization has undervalued trees in our cities, large healthy trees are rare. That makes their preservation and protection all the more critical to human health and environmental quality in cities.

A number of studies have found large healthy trees play a particularly critical role in supporting clean air and water, wildlife, human health and energy conservation. Large healthy trees are particularly important for:

Air Quality - A 2002 study by the USDA found that large, healthy trees greater than >30 inches in diameter remove 70 times more urban air pollution annually than small, healthy trees (<3 inches in diameter) often planted to replace them.

Urban Heat Island - The size, density, and structure of a tree's canopy - which is directly related to tree health, age and size - influence the extent of shading, the ability of trees to lower temperatures, and thus reduce and mitigate the impacts of the urban heat island effect. Recent research found that Portland has one of the worst urban heat island effects in the United States.

Water Quality - The ability of trees to intercept, store, and infiltrate rainfall and reduce urban stormwater runoff is directly related to the size of its canopy and root zones.

Biodiversity - The size, age, and species of trees are critical to supporting urban wildlife and biodiversity. Not surprisingly, larger older trees support a greater diversity of birds.

Energy Conservation - The size and canopy of urban trees is also directly related to their energy conservation benefits.

In a concrete, stressed out society and a city with more traffic daily, people need to ground. We need to put our hands on the earth and get back in our bodies. These trees are charismatic grounding points for people. Indirectly, these trees could impact road rage, gang violence, domestic violence, suicide prevention, as well as a variety of other issues plaguing American culture and society. Access points for people to get back in touch with life, nature and their heart is essential for health and connection. These trees provide ways for people to get back to themselves, and part of why Portland is great. Old trees cannot be replaced in our lifetime. These are some of our most valuable resources.

Attached is a photo of cedars across the street from my house. I was so grateful when the lot sold, and they found a way to keep the trees when they built the house on the right. The trees are amazing and an important part of the neighborhood.

Please protect our environment, health and magic in Portland.

Thank you for representing me.

Sincerely,
Ursula Garbrecht

