

**Testimony of Councilor Carlotta Collette  
In Support of Senate Joint Memorial 10  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
March 30, 2015**



Chair Edwards and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying today to urge your support of a national heritage designation for the Willamette Falls Area, which includes parts of Oregon City, West Linn, and Lake Oswego extending up French Prairie to Willamette Mission State Park.

I serve as the elected Metro Councilor for District 2, which covers most of the urbanized portion of Clackamas County, including the boundaries of the proposed Willamette Falls National Heritage Area. With official designation, the state will benefit from increased heritage tourism, economic development, and thoughtful historic preservation. Working in partnership with government, park agencies, private companies, nonprofit organizations, and foundations, heritage areas promote stewardship, build community revitalization projects, leverage significant resources, collaborate across political boundaries, and inspire greater pride in the region's heritage.

Initiated and managed at the local level, heritage areas do not come with rules and regulations and do not have any impact on existing local, state, or federal regulations -- nor do they impact private property rights. Rather, National Heritage Areas present the interconnected stories of nature and human history. They are places with identifiable, nationally significant resources, with stories of broad interest, and public-private support for investment in the community.

The story of the Willamette Falls Heritage Area deserves to be shared. It's an area that was an important gathering place for native peoples and the destination of our country's greatest overland migration. It's a story of the birth of our state and of the innovation and commerce that powered the growth of the Northwest. More than this, it's a story that continues to be written as we work together to restore public access to Willamette Falls through the redevelopment of the former Blue Heron Paper Mill.

By Urging Congress to designate Willamette Falls and surrounding communities as a National Heritage Area, you have an opportunity to take a positive action to benefit the State of Oregon. For these reasons, I urge your support of Senate Joint Memorial 10.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these comments.