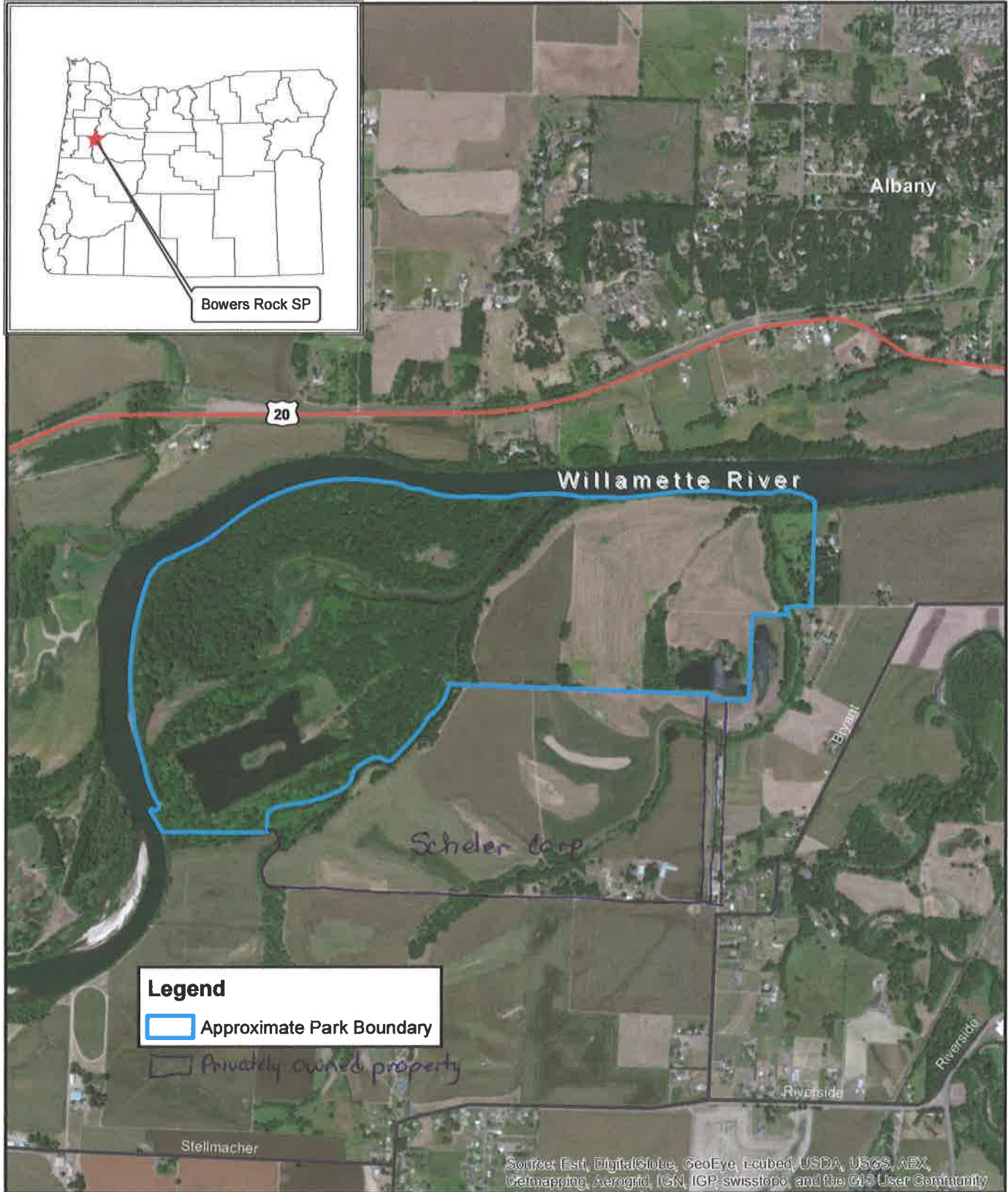


# Bowers Rock State Park

Oregon Parks & Recreation Dept.  
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C  
Salem OR, 97301

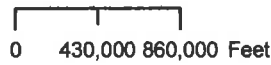


Nature  
HISTORY  
Discovery



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aergrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

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## Senate Legislative Hearing

Ref: HB 2034

This statement is made on behalf of Scheler Corp. and the Scheler Family.

I want to thank the committee for hearing our testimony today (May 13, 2015).

Our family has lived on or been associated with the property adjacent to Bowers Rock State Park (BRSP) for over 61 years. I was a young man when the State of Oregon purchased property along the Willamette River in Linn County as part of the Greenway project.

When property was being purchased for Bowers Rock State Park, much of the property was acquired under the threat of Eminent Domain. While all land was purchased, some purchases were made at the eleventh hour to avoid loss of the property under condemnation. As landowners, it was a very stressful and emotional time. It was our understanding and that of our neighbors that in 1973 the Oregon State Legislature enacted legislation to ensure landowner's property could no longer be threatened by Eminent Domain for state parks.

In 2014, we became aware of the fact an exception had been made to that legislation concerning property adjacent to Bowers Rock State Park. The largest part of that adjacent property is owned by my wife and I where we operate our farming business.

We are here today to ask the legislature to give our family and all other property owners adjacent to Bower Rock State Park the same respect and protection as other citizens were given in Oregon in 1973.

We own and operate property which was first homesteaded in 1899. Since the time the Edholm family homesteaded the property, it has always been an agricultural operation. Today that farm supports our family and contributes approximately \$1 million to the local economy each year.

We have lived as a neighbor next to Bowers Rock State Park since 1978 and for the past 15 years we have leased 114 acres of that ground for farming purposes. We have worked hard to implement farming practices that will enhance and protect the property. Some of the property owned by the parks dept. was originally part of our farm. We have a respect for the purpose of all property in our neighborhood and we all recognize the importance of state parks for citizens of Oregon.

We have been assured the OPRD (Oregon Parks and Recreation Dept.) would never use eminent domain but that is not something we feel we can rely on as there is always change in leadership and direction of the parks dept.

Over the past 40 years, the BRSP property has never had a maintenance plan or funding to implement one. From 1989 until Sept. 2014, there was a development study in place which included OPRD owning our entire farm and the land of several of our neighbors. For twenty five years that plan was in place, and we lived with the possibility our farm could become part of the park system. While that plan was

rescinded in Sept. 2014, that action gives no guarantee for the future of our farm and family legacy, particularly when the State of Oregon holds the power of eminent domain.

We want to ensure our farm will pass on to our children without them worrying whether or not they will be forced to give up their home, business, work and passion. We will always be a watchful and supportive neighbor when possible, but we need to be able to do that threat free.

We are here today, with the help and support of Rep. Olson, to ask you to help protect our rights as citizens of the state of Oregon and to treat us and our neighbors in the same manner as the other citizens in Oregon who have property adjacent to our state parks.

We are happy to answer any questions if you have them. We have attached a map for you identifying the state and private property.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully,

Bill & Karen Scheler  
31197 SE Lone Oak Lane  
Albany, Oregon 97321