



May 14, 2015

Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair
Representative Tobias Read, Co-Chair
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
900 Court Street NE, HR F
Salem, OR 97301

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Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Read:

The Audubon Society of Portland writes to you in full support of state funding for an entrance to Forest Park. This park is unique in Oregon and the nation, with over 5,200 wooded acres, 75 miles of trails, 100 species of birds and 45 mammal species. Nestled in-between Tryon Creek State Park and a forested corridor that extends all the way to the Oregon coast, Forest Park is a critically important ecological resource that cleans our air and water and provides recreational and health benefits for the region.

Despite its size, Forest Park has become increasingly difficult to access. There is no parking lot where a school bus can safely enter, drop off its visitors, and turn around. There is only one-quarter mile of ADA-accessible trail, and limited opportunities for public education and outreach. Forest Park is a treasure for all of Oregon, not just the local community.

To address these access and outreach challenges, the City of Portland has acquired a former industrial brownfield property that will be the site of a nature center, ADA accessible trailhead, and parking lot. The next steps involve site planning, design, engineering and permitting.

We support state funding for these next steps to bring the project to "shovel ready." Once built, this first, true entrance to Forest Park will transform it into a truly regional asset that will make outdoors accessible and enjoyable for growing number of Oregonians. We urge you to allocate funding toward an entrance to Forest Park.

Thank you for your consideration of this valuable opportunity.

Sincerely,

Nick Hardigg
Executive Director
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*Inspiring people to love &
protect nature since 1902.*

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