

Agenda Item Number 12.

***Rivers to Ridges* Regional Parks and Open Space Vision: Accomplishments and Refinements**

Presenter: Jeff Krueger, Senior Landscape Architect

Action Recommended: Information Only

Background:

Lane Council of Governments has taken the lead on coordinating several regional parks and open space visioning efforts over the past decade for the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. In 2001, LCOG was asked by local elected officials from Springfield, Eugene, Lane County, and the Willamalane Park & Recreation District to develop the first ever consolidated park and open space vision for the metropolitan area. At the time, elected officials had noted that the lack of a clear regional vision was negatively impacting our ability to compete for federal and state funding and was preventing efficient coordination between park and open space providers in the area. By 2003, LCOG and its local partners had successfully completed this regional vision, which has become known as *Rivers to Ridges*. The *Rivers to Ridges* vision was subsequently endorsed by numerous interest groups and unanimously by the Springfield and Eugene city councils, Willamalane Board, and the Lane County Board of Commissioners.

With this strong demonstration of support and the commitment of area partners, major components of the *Rivers to Ridges* vision have been successfully implemented over the past decade. In addition, two major efforts have recently been completed to help refine and provide detail to the *Rivers to Ridges* vision for two important open space corridors. The first was the development of the *Ridgeline Area Open Space Vision and Action Plan*, which was completed in 2008 (www.lcog.org/ridgeline). The ridgeline area extends along the twenty mile corridor between Fern Ridge Reservoir and the Buford Recreation Area through the hills to the south of Eugene. The second was the *Willamette River Open Space Vision and Action Plan*, completed in 2010 (www.lcog.org/willamette). This visioning process addressed the Willamette River in and around Eugene and Springfield including portions of its major tributaries - the Willamette Coast Fork, Middle Fork, and McKenzie River. Both vision documents provide extensive detail on topics such as future trail connections, recreational facilities, habitat enhancement and protection, public safety, and visual quality. LCOG worked with a broad group of partners to develop these two visions and coordinated extensive public outreach. Both vision documents were reviewed and endorsed by numerous interest groups and local elected officials as a demonstration of broad public support. These visions will be implemented in the coming years and decades by the *Rivers to Ridges* partners through non-regulatory means and with voluntary participation of property owners.

An overview presentation will cover:

- *Rivers to Ridges* Regional Parks and Open Space Vision (2003)
- Recent on-the-ground accomplishments toward implementing the vision
- *Ridgeline Area Open Space Vision and Action Plan* (2008)
- *Willamette River Open Space Vision and Action Plan* (2010)