



# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** April 30, 2007  
**To:** Eugene Planning Commission  
**From:** Jason Dedrick, 682-5451  
Associate Planner  
**Subject:** South Ridgeline Habitat Study Public Meeting Exit Survey Comments

At a series of 7 public meetings held throughout March and April 2007, the City of Eugene Planning Division received comments about the South Ridgeline Habitat Study from 87 individuals. Formal comments collected as part of the facilitated discussion and comment process are summarized separately in brief report by Sue Dicile. Other comments were submitted via an exit survey provided to all attendees which asked the question “What advice would you give the City as it moves toward balancing conservation and development in your area?” Responses covered a wide range of topics, but there were some major themes. The table at right contains a listing of how these comments were categorized. A full listing of the comments received is attached below after a brief summary of the comments.

Thirty-eight of the 81 comments were more general in nature and many of these focused on the process used to study habitat, gather input or conserve habitat in the SRHS. These comments focused on process rather than outcome. Other comments addressed a range of related general topics.

Thirty-six of the 81 comments expressed a desire to see more conservation of natural features in the study area. Many of these expressed general support for more conservation, without mention of any primary objective or motivation for the conservation. Other comments on conservation specifically mentioned wildlife or wildlife habitat as an important reason for additional conservation.

Other comments expressed support for conserving land along the ridgeline for the ridgeline trail system or expressed support for conservation of a specific property or parcel (i.e., Green property).

### Categorization of Comments

<b>Comments on SRHS Process</b>	
Support for substantial public involvement	8
Support for a specific process recommendation	5
Support for valuing citizens’ opinions above others	4
Statements on how Statewide planning goals apply	3
Support for using a balanced approach	3
Support for researching other cities’ approaches	2
Support for using incentive measures	2
Other comments	11
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>38</i>
<b>Comments Supporting Conservation</b>	
General support for increase conservation	13
Support of conservation of wildlife habitat	13
Support for conservation of a specific property	5
Support for conservation of land for the ridgeline trail system	5
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>36</i>
<b>Other Comments</b>	
Increase density/Smaller houses	4
No additional conservation	2
Increase UGB/developable land	1
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>7</i>

## Full Text of All Comments Received

### What advice would you give to the City as it moves toward balancing conservation and development in your area?

- It has been nearly 15 years, multiple "studies", conflicting information and rules. The city does not have the resources to preserve, protect and maintain the parks we currently own. With the loss of Secure Rural Schools funding, the closing of public parks, shrinking Sherriff Dept, "shopping" for additional upland wildlife habitat in the city is like going to the mall with a big wish list - and an empty purse.
- On behalf of 70 property owners in the Hendricks Hill Homeowners Association, we strongly urge habitat preservation of the 120 acre parcel comprising the ridgeline from Moon Mountain Park to Spring Blvd. This parcel serves as the southern boundary for our development at risk of development. It also serves as the top of our watershed. (See enclosed resolution).
- Try to give tax incentives for people to manage their land. Buy as much of the ridgeline as possible to complete the large, uninterrupted land block
- Make sure your baseline habitat studies and inventories are broad enough and detailed enough. If only a small fraction of private undeveloped sites were seen, can you trust the analysis of weighting factors etc, such as area or animal and plant species distribution within the study area (especially if most of the good inventories are in existing parks)? Make sure undeveloped lands adjacent to those studied are factored into both the protection and conservation equation (fund an even broader, more long term inventory and study.
- Be fair.
- Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you got till it's gone.
- Preserve McDougal property. Not good for building. Critical piece in connecting our valley to natural areas.
- Consider ways to increase densities in valley area.
- Good Luck.
- Use a measured approach. Do not attempt to strongarm the Neighborhood Association's. Consult and persuade.
- Find out how we can conserve habitat around the Ridgeline Trail and where trail will go. If conservation easements are given, there should be public access to most of them.
- The Home Builders Association and Chamber of Commerce are bullies. It is impossible to do thoughtful and creative development at reasonable cost.

- This city (and particularly this area) is a jewel and hopefully will be appreciated and protected as it is.
- Emphasize conservation. De-emphasize and restrict development.
- Show what other areas in country have solved growth problems.
- I believe we should conserve habitat areas while we have the chance for biodiversity, corridors, recreation and livability.
- Listen to citizens more than to paid lobbyists.
- Just what's already been said here.
- Citizen worries about views and neighborhood character are important. Humans are animals too and their habitat should not be degraded either. Don't let people focus too much on large wildlife when many less visible and familiar species are important.
- Don't listen too much to big developers or corporations. Think more of the people affected by big ideas, etc.
- Focus on bang for buck. High value areas.
- Once land has buildings on it, conservation is no longer possible. Consequently, the City should always try to have maximum conservation of valuable habitat areas.
- Be sure to emphasize conservation of our heritage and that makes life/living in the south valley unique and desirable.
- Long term - education and outreach. Short term - use the regulatory measures as a last resort in order to increase the conservation area land base.
- Very good presentation/facilitation. Very glad to hear planners suggest that regulation (of species) cannot save oak/prairie habitats because their survival depends on maintenance. However, I think it is misleading and potentially harmful to these habitats to confuse "conserve" with "protect" when Goal 5 narrowly defines "protect" as "limit or prohibit" "conflicting uses" through "regulation." As noted above, from my past experience with Goal 5 (in 2001) I find efforts to "protect" oak savanna to inadvertently destroy it by making its maintenance self-defeating. I think it is misleading (and similarly hazardous to oak savanna) to describe habitat mitigation banking as "incentive." It is in fact regulatory and differs from outright regulation only by providing a means for regulated parties to trade the burden. To the degree it is based on regulation of oak or prairie-associated species, I think it inadvertently risks exacerbating their loss.

- Please consider the interests of future generations, all of whom will be affected by current decisions. Any and all land preserved now will be appreciated in perpetuity. Land "developed" in the interest of short-sighted economic concerns will never again be available for its environmental or recreational values. If we save what little relatively unaltered land remains today, future generations will thank us for our foresight.
- Keep involving people. Thanks for this opportunity. I wish there would have been more people.
- Revisit the Oregon "law." I would like less traffic and quality of life through nature to be valued. Please develop mindset of "nature" as our infrastructure rather than development.
- Don't worry so much about 20 years from now. 20 years will take care of itself.
- Not really concerned with your presentation but I am very concerned with preserving the neighborhood and nature. I do have beautiful oaks. In addition, please conserve the whole ridge open space/park area. Isn't the Fender blue butterfly around there? If everyone around me developed their lots then I would at least want to retain that option. Please do not widen the Old Dillard Road. Keep as large of a "green belt" with "green belt type" shading as possible. (envision a river and tributaries). In other words, widen the greenbelt, hop over it maybe. Conserve. Conserve. Conserve. I bought my home for its "country" feel and although I'm a newcomer to Eugene (2004), with .55 acres, but I know many of my neighbors are greatly concerned about further development on Old Dillard. In addition, many of our homes were built very near to the road. The traffic is already too fast and we do NOT want the road widened. If possible, our neighborhood would love to see Dillard Road closed again where it turns toward Spring St. around the new crowded condos and newer homes. I take care not to poison my part of the watershed and I love the deer and even the raccoons that could hurt my kitty and dog. I'll be planting native flowers, and I've been slowly planting other native bushes. My neighbors mostly feel the same. Protect our watershed. Is there some other alternate route down from the mansions? Address: 2022 S. Shasta Loop.
- Conserving the S. Ridgeline has been in process for 20 years with no results. It is not going to get easier. Act now as difficult as it may be, to preserve as much as possible of what's left.
- Cookie cutter approaches are unsatisfying.
- Create incentives for builders to build smaller homes. How does a 4,000 sq ft house aid in density improvements.
- Is there any way to get around the obligation by law that we need to accommodate all growth? (to meet projected demand)

- Appeal to peoples self interest in terms of clean air, water, quality of life to be preserved. As I'm a newcomer to Eugene, I am deeply impressed by the abundance of natural resources parks and livable neighborhoods. The Register Guard is a great resource for information, should be utilized to teach the importance of conservation. Positive messages rather than scare tactics are effective. Important to get this message to voters, youth groups, etc.
- Employ the Doctrine of Nature's Trust as promulgated by Mary Christina Wood, U of O Law Professor and Distinguished Faculty Fellow. Visit her website at <http://www.law.uoregon.edu/faculty/mwood>. Links to her speeches and publications on the Doctrine of Nature's Trust are contained on that page.
- I live above Beverley site. Seems people come from all over town to hike and bike the trails. I hope the whole city could help protect this site - soon!
- Reduce development. If you need to have even more destruction of habitat, increase downtown development with nice condos so people can live and work in their neighborhoods, less traffic, pollution, etc. In so doing you won't need to destroy the land outside of our city and wildlife can then not have their homes (habitat) destroyed. Take a look at areas, neighborhoods in Portland. They did it right. Take the Max, visit with your neighbors at the local coffee house and so on.
- Conserve as much open space as possible. Limit development when possible. Develop conservation easement programs. Increase minimum lot size in our area which is several miles from the city core. At the UGB there should be maximum green belt areas protecting forest and remaining natural areas.
- Buy the most sensitive, highly ecological sites outright by buying from willing sellers, by eminent domain (give fair market price). Also purchase connecting.
- The scales are heavily tipped for development and the playing field needs to be leveled. There also needs to be non-bias experts to review development applications such as biologist, geologist, hydrologist. Better clustering of houses need to be strictly enforced. Stop clearcutting lots before houses are constructed. Only allow native vegetation.
- Add streams to SRHS, add riparian habitat to SRHS, add restoration of degraded habitat to "conservation" definition.
- Conservation is the most important issue today. We must protect wildlife and their habitat. We need trees not houses. Let's work together to save what we have left.
- Education is really important in achieving any goals. Help straighten out M37 so the developers can't take advantage of it.
- Do more checking on what builders are doing.

- Conserve important areas like headwaters of the Amazon.
- Conserve streams and rehabilitate streams.
- Enforce the building code. Stand up to out of town developers, listen to rural people more. Locals are the ones who care about the town.
- Headwaters are most important.
- Certain areas should not be developed. Once habitat is lost it is gone. No getting it back.
- What is really trying to be achieved? It is a given: landholders who have developed property will want liberty and non-landholders will want someone (probably not them) to provide as much "conserved" land as possible. Resolution?
- The more conservation the better.
- Look at specific areas rather than generalize. Speaking for myself, I find it more than a little ironic that I now risk being penalized for the preservation and maintenance of a nature area (now under habitat study) for some 45 years (my deceased parents preceded me). Neither they nor I wanted/want to develop the land, however I do wish to maintain control of the property: I want to be able to decide if diseased trees need to be cut; if Douglas firs need to be removed to preserve oak trees (as I have done in the past based on the on-site review of a forester consultant, despite a citizen complaint that I was illegally logging, which I wasn't as city officials subsequently confirmed etc, without having to go through extensive bureaucratic procedures to do so. Also, I do not wish that the past/current preferences of my parents and me be passed on to my heirs, especially since this area from what I gather from the map, constitutes a rather isolated island in the habitat study. The area is downhill facing northwest, so I doubt that it is more than of fauna value, if that, given the increasing traffic on S Agate St. Regarding permission to study my area of the habitat, I did not grant it. Reason: since it was to be done "yes" or "no" by mail, I was not aware, nor able to discuss the pros and cons of granting such a permit. I might be amenable to a joint visit, myself and the evaluator, if I know in advance what the results might entail.
- Ensure all industrial, commercial and residential studies are done. Need to integrate need for human uses in areas. Contiguous public areas should be enhanced.
- Provide more developable land outside UGB.
- Actually, our state land use system promotes a very different balance - urban areas are for development and areas outside the UGB are for conservation of natural resources and wildlife habitat.
- Don't try and focus on trade-offs. At the end of the day, these are moral/value issues. These decisions need to be made without "false trade-offs" being the reason.

## Other Comments

- Thanks for asking us for input. Let's keep south Eugene special.
- I think you are not taking into account enough value of tools like living trusts and tax reduction. Place some emphasis on site-based fine tuned inventory that provides better information regarding habitat conservation that can be achieved through such measures as cluster development. This would help deal with pockets within larger private parcels slated for development. If you reduce the supply of land in Eugene, you increase transportation and housing impacts on Springfield, Veneta, Coburg, Cottage Grove, Creswell, etc. Not necessarily good urban development unless there are more incentives for nodal development and vibrant local commerce and industry in Eugene. Also, consider ways to incentivize the location of low cost housing in the south hills.
- Please coordinate with LCOG's efforts to plan the Ridgeline Trail System.
- Pie charts too boring!
- Support park expansion in lower income areas. Preserve these areas for ecosystem preservation. With global warming and other major global ecological losses at unprecedented rate, we must preserve the little we have within our boundary. Focus on low income affordable downtown. Use common sense. Development in these areas is impractical and still in "higher" income areas. The future is now. Need to deal with growth issues. Use up this land either in conservation or development.
- I find it impossible to put a dollar value on plants and/or animals. Conservation of habitat is very important to me. My grandchildren need to know wildlands.
- Good presentations! Hope this was a genuine request for input and not window dressing!
- If rules are made the City for habitat conservation (ie riparian setbacks), owner should not have to move their already built houses.
- Thanks for working so hard for us.
- Thank you city staff for your service.
- At some point it would be good to see all comments from these meetings posted to your website.
- I would hope we should be able to develop and conserve. Check with other cities with similar problem and follow their example.

- Contact Brook Miller in the Architecture school at the U of O. He's very interested in development/ecology issues and projects and has designed studio work in this regard. He's doing some work defining an upcoming competition for Portland Metro that balances ecological and development concerns. He could help create either regulations or instruction, advice incentives.
- Have you considered limiting the size of private homes in order to conserve energy and natural resources? People shouldn't be allowed to be such selfish hogs no matter how much money they have.
- Thank you!
- My one concern is how this study could or can integrate with the Ridgeline Area Vision Plan. I realize that this was not addressing recreation opportunities. Access to the SRHS via trails could allow utilization and deepen the appreciation of our habitat inventory. This could influence our society to hold the value of wilderness to a higher level.
- Well run meeting. Thanks for working with the public.
- Thank you for inviting input. PS please see my comment tonight on a separate sheet suggesting Eugene has an opportunity to help these ecosystems for free by openly laying down the sword of regulation and committing to try to work with other tools.
- All residents of the area benefit directly or indirectly from the undeveloped areas that remain. Unfortunately, they are not well organized and are thus poorly represented or ignored in discussions, as opposed to the few residents who have economic reasons for resisting preservation.
- I think the law that states that residential land must match the amount of land Oregon conserves is an outdated law, one that was made not recognizing what the environmental impact would be to all life forms. This law needs to be seriously revisited.
- Save the Beverly property and make it a park. Find a way to get that land - so many people use it. Don't expand old Dillard either.
- I do not have confidence in City Planning staff at this time due to lack of responsiveness in the Green Valley Glen PUD application process.
- Condemn and purchase the Green Valley Glen property using the latest bond measure.

- Trees of unique value/habitat should be considered as habitat indicators. Thanks for sharing at committee.
- Only received SEN mailing two days ago. More time might have brought more people. Excellent writing by Kevin Matthews. Article in RG about importance of Amazon as source of drinking water was educational. More articles about wetlands, air quality, recreational value, anything which relates to quality of life will help conservation effort.
- Use land use laws as a framework for discretion in protecting natural resources and not as a framework for indiscretion in legalizing the destruction of natural resources. Don't permit away the scarce resources left in Eugene just because you can.
- Conserve and preserve habitat in so doing you will preserve humankind and a worthy quality of life.
- Thank you for your work on this important project. Please listen to public input.
- Some natural sites are not on the inventory. EWEB land between 43rd and 40th south of Hilyard St. and land east of Spencer Butte Middle School and Edgewood Elementary.
- Thanks for putting this meeting together.
- Thanks for getting neighborhood input.
- Tax churches and hospitals.
- Use more easily distinguished colors on your habitat maps.
- Preserve all the natural habitat you possibly can.
- Thanks for coffee and cookies.
- Why exceed Goal 5 requirements. Money spent has better uses.