

## **Character of the Area**

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### **4. Please describe the “character of the area” of where you live, and what do you like about it?**

I live with my life partner on 23 acres of mostly forest, next to Oxbow Regional Park, adjacent to and overlooking the Sandy River. We moved to the area 4 years ago, looking to escape our former suburban working life. We looked all over the Pacific Northwest, at cities, suburbs, farming communities and forest land and picked this area because it was special. The day we first looked at what would become our new home, deer came into the yard and bald eagles soared by us over the Sandy River. It was magical.

Since moving here, I’ve walked the streets with our small Jack Russell terrier, let him run off leash in our yard, hiked down to the river and let him explore and play on the beaches. I’ve enjoyed walking in the woods, and we’ve created some biking/hiking trails back there with our neighbors. I look for wildlife, especially enjoying the fawns when they frolic in our yard. At night, I look up at the stars, above our 100’ cedar and old growth Douglas fir trees. I’ve picked blackberries along the roadside, biked over to Burns Farm, ridden motorcycles on the back roads, past Dodge Park and Bull Run, to Marmot and Brightwood. We enjoy being able to get to the Gorge without hitting any main roads. All of this and more is the life we chose.

We felt how special the area was even before we bought the house, having camped at Oxbow 3 years before we decided to move here. We weren’t wrong. Driving home from Portland or even just Troutdale, when we turn onto Division Drive from Troutdale Road, the land goes from forest to nurseries and I breathe deeply, inhaling the smells, loving the light over the farmlands at what we call the magical hour. Often, I run into tractors on the road pulling loads of potted plants, but I never worry because I know their trips are short, just from one driveway to another, never holding me up for long. I breathe deeper, pausing, thinking about my mom who used to buy plants from nurseries like these for her garden in the woods outside of Boston where I grew up. I smile.

### **5. How would the proposed water filtration facility be inconsistent with what you described in #4?**

Even the possibility of disturbing the area with the noise and pollution of trucks, toxic chemicals, digging up the roads we ride on to put in huge pipes, not to mention ongoing maintenance of the facility and traffic, is stressful to me. I worry mostly about the traffic, irregular slowdowns from lane closures, following diesel trucks for miles, but also about the wildlife, road accidents, neighbors and friends being upset, feeling unrooted by the changes. I understood that the area we chose was outside of the urban growth boundary and that made it feel “safe” from the possibility of new houses or businesses being built. I did not expect that there would be a change in land use that would put our peaceful lifestyle in jeopardy.



Fawn, 3 days old, between two cedar trees – taken 6/10/23