

# A Regional Plan to Protect Open Spaces, Water Quality, and Fish and Wildlife Habitat

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**Abstract.**—In 1978, voters in the Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties approved the creation of the first elected regional government, Metro to oversee land use planning and manage the urban growth boundary, and be consistent with state land use goals. Metro has authority under the charter and state law to require cities and counties to amend their comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances by requiring compliance with Metro's adopted functional plans that deal with among other issues such as water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Metro the directly elected government, has used various regulatory and non regulatory strategies to protect green spaces. They have included acquisition, easements and overlay zones. In 1992, Metro council approved the **Green Spaces Master Plan** that details the vision, goals and organizational framework of a regional system of natural areas, open space, trails and greenways for people and wildlife. In 1995, Metro voters approved a bond measure that resulted in \$135.6 million dollars to buy green spaces. Currently, Metro owns over 4,800 acres of green spaces that will be protected in eternity to protect habitat for fish and wildlife. In 1997, Metro Council approved the Title 3, **Streams and Floodplain Protection Plan**. All streams and wetlands inside Metro's jurisdictional boundary will be protected with a buffer ranging from 50 to 200 feet. The width of the buffer is dependent upon the size of area drained. In addition, Metro requires that development in the floodplain use balanced cut and fill for all development activities in the floodplain. The 24 cities and 3 counties have until Dec 1999 to comply with Metro's Stream and Floodplain Protection Plan.

Currently, Metro is in the process of inventorying parks, green spaces, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian corridors and wildlife corridors, in public or private ownership, through satellite and aerial photographs. Metro is also developing additional regulations and incentives to protect fish and wildlife habitat identified through the inventory in order to satisfy the state land use and the Green spaces Master Plan goals. Through this process, Metro hopes to fulfill the vision of the **Green Spaces Master Plan** and successfully accomplish state land use goals to build a regional system of natural areas, open spaces, parks, trails and wildlife corridors for wildlife, fish, and people.