CITY OF GRESHAM

GABBERT BUTTE NATURE PARK

Gresham parks and trails

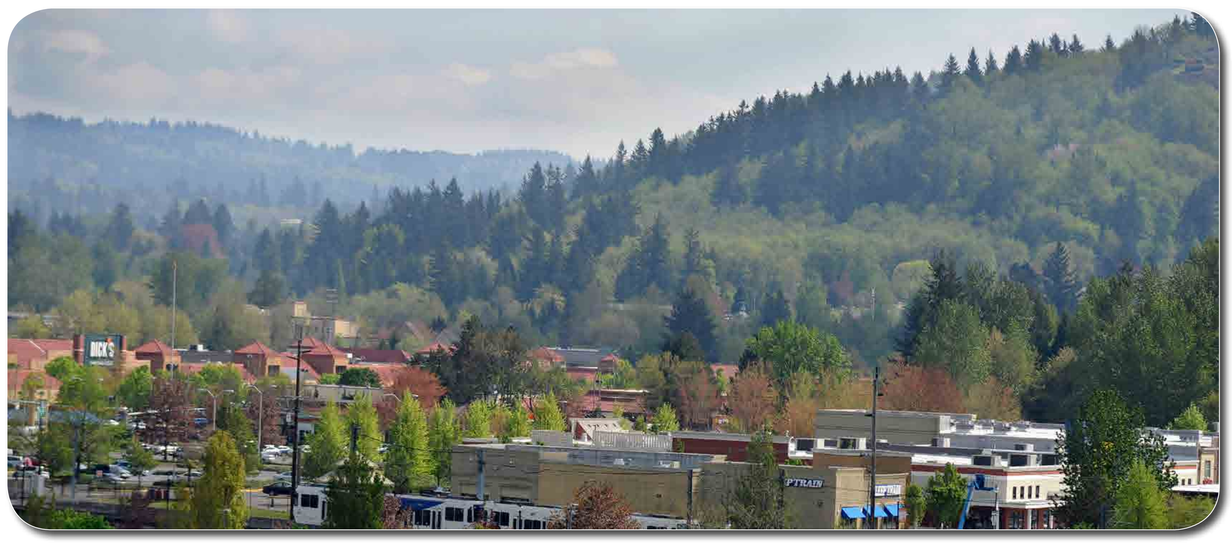
The second-largest city in the Portland metropolitan area, Gresham is home to just over 108,000 residents and diverse natural features, including wetlands, riparian areas, forested uplands and buttes.

Over the last 150 years, Gresham's landscape has changed from a quiet berry-farming community to a busy city with a wide variety of neighborhoods. Today, one of the most noticeable vestiges of the forestry and agricultural economy that remain are the upland open space buttes.

Open space preservation

Gresham has a long history of public support for protecting its diverse natural features. The earliest Gabbert Butte preservation and park planning dates back to the 1990 City of Gresham Open Space Bond Measure, where Gresham voters approved $10.3 million in general-obligation bonds to purchase park sites, wetlands, buttes, greenways and creek corridors for preservation.

Significantly, Gresham's was the first open-space bond measure approved by any community in the Portland metropolitan area.



Restoration

Throughout the city, restoration work is helping to improve water quality, minimize erosion and property loss, reduce flood damage and boost diversity of plant and animal life.

Restoration projects in natural areas help return the ecosystem to a healthy, functioning condition.

In the East Buttes, the city has focused restoration efforts on removing invasives and planting native plants. Restoration of City owned land near Butler Road included planting 5,000 forbs, rushes, shrubs, and trees.

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Project overview

Project Goals

Protect habitat and water quality and provide meaningful and safe experiences of nature.

Encourage participation in planning from people from diverse cultural backgrounds, ages and levels of ability.

Develop a plan to guide future public access to the site that includes welcoming entry, improved trails and opportunities to experience nature.

Opportunities to weigh in

Open houses, and on-line surveys at three milestones

1. Summer 2017: Learn about the site and the project, and share your ideas, or provide feedback on line
2. Fall 2017: Weigh in on site plan alternatives
3. Winter 2017: Provide feedback about preferred site plan

Spring 2018: Review master plan document online

Project Schedule

Kick-Off / Start Up

Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Site Plan Alternatives

Preferred Site Plan

Master Plan Report

Summer 2017

Open House 1
Project overview, goals existing conditions and opportunities

Fall 2017

Open House 2
Site Plan Alternatives

Winter 2017

Open House 3
Preferred Site Plan

Spring 2018

Online Review
Final Master Plan Document
Gresham City Council Approval
Metro Council Approval

Metro

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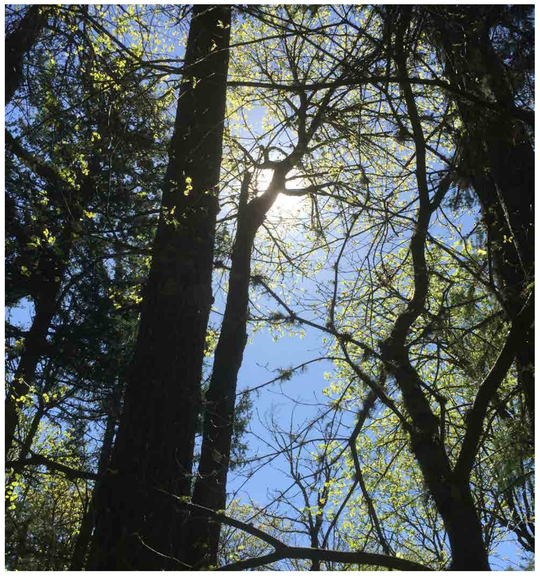
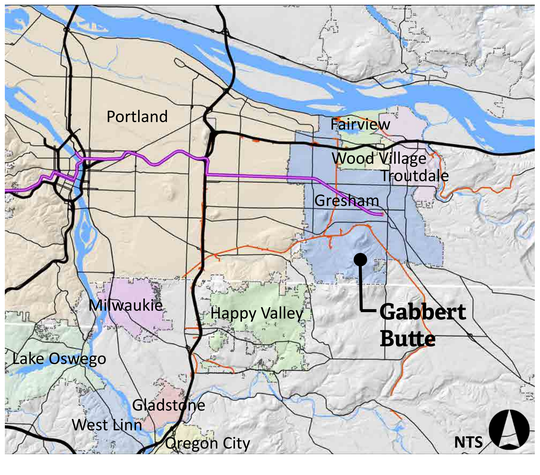
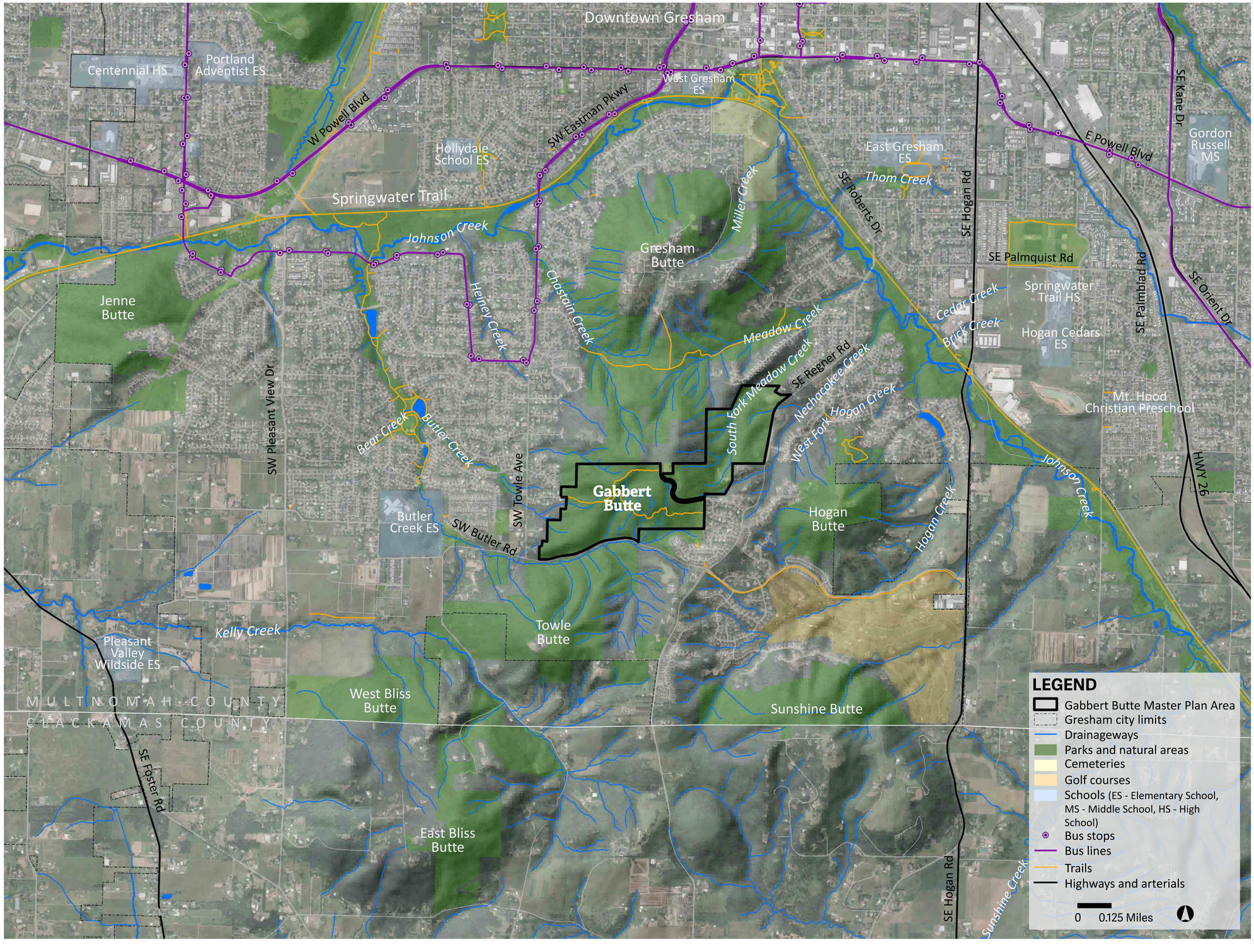
GABBERT BUTTE NATURE PARK

In the neighborhood



VICINITY INSET MAP





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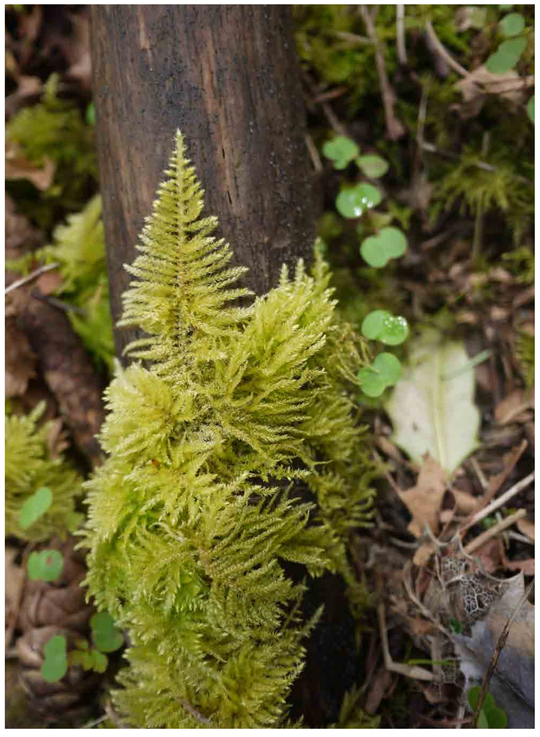
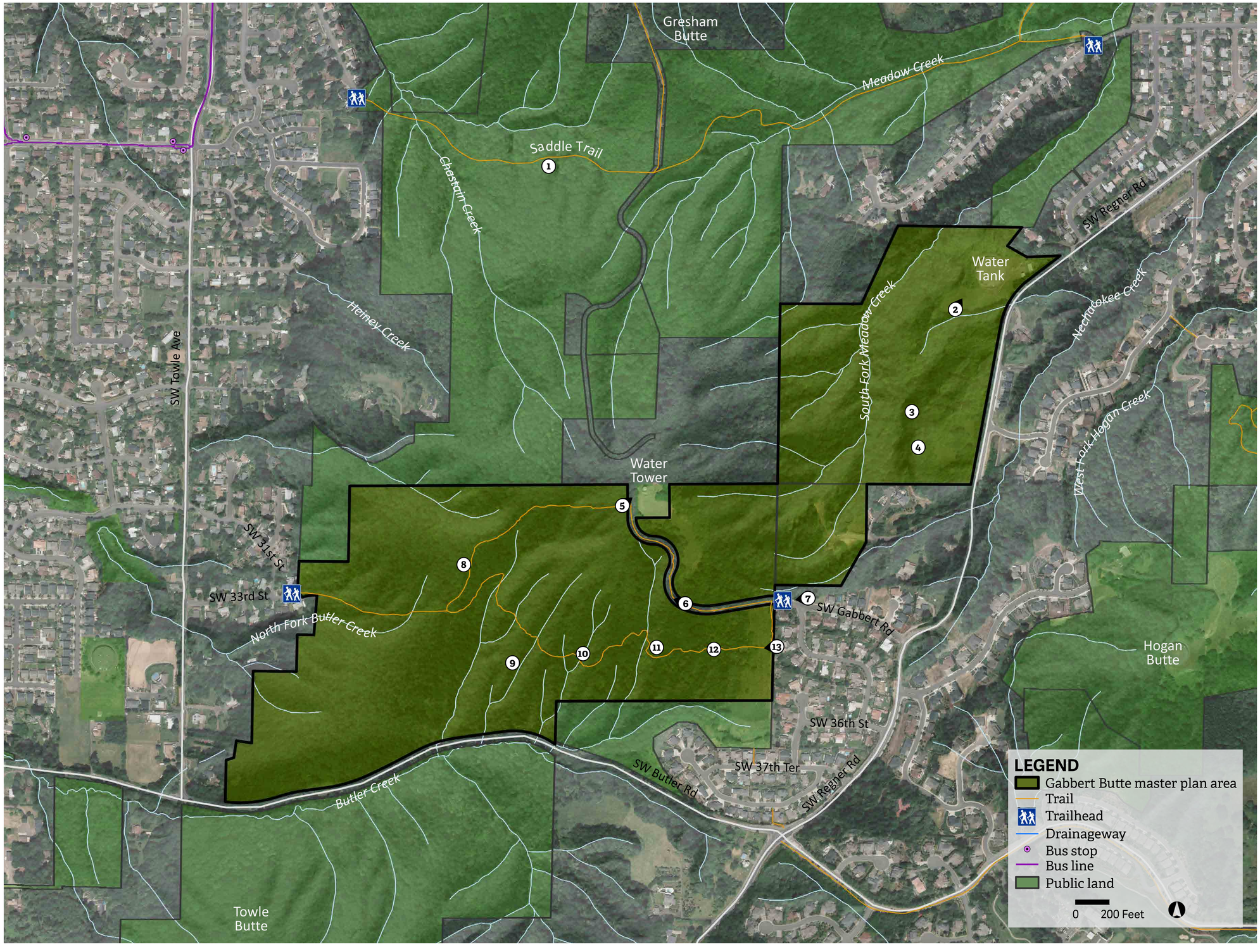
GABBERT BUTTE NATURE PARK

The landscape today





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GABBERT BUTTE NATURE PARK

Visitor experience


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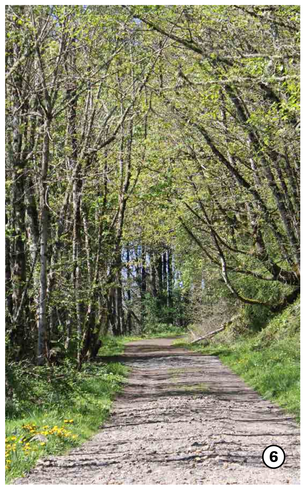
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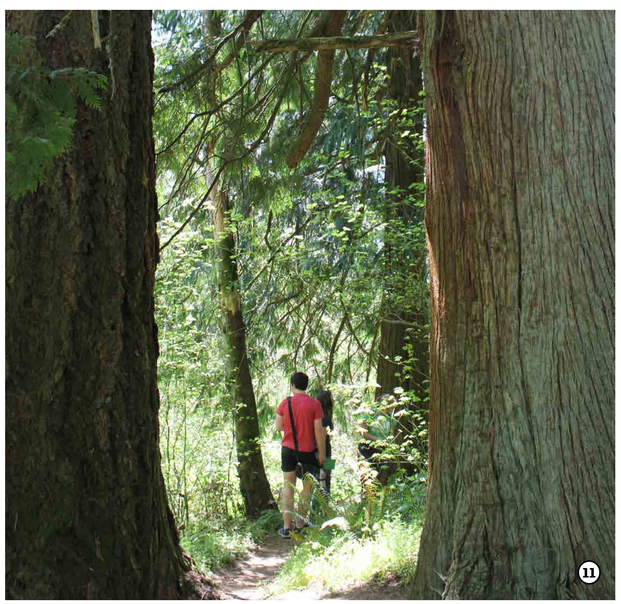
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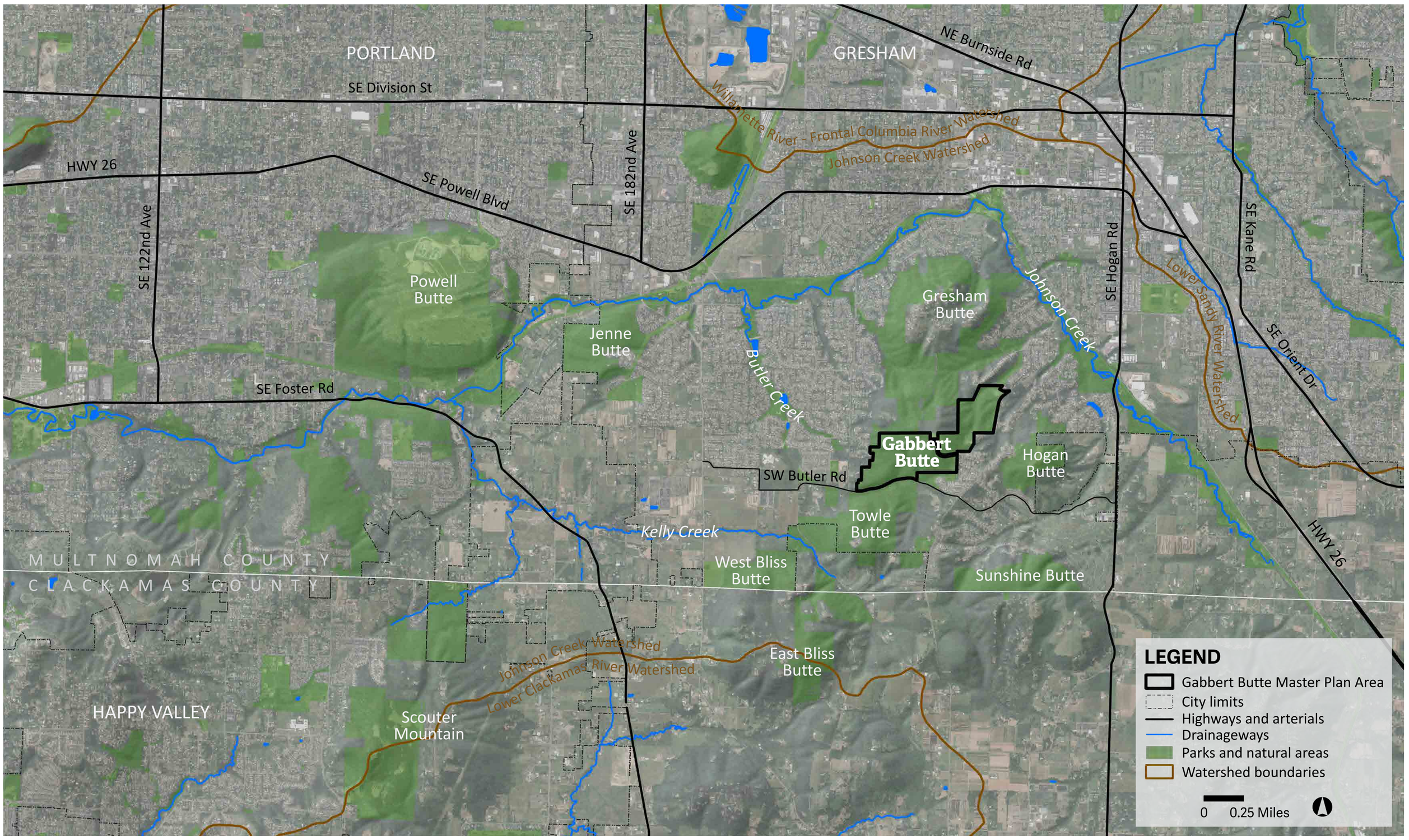
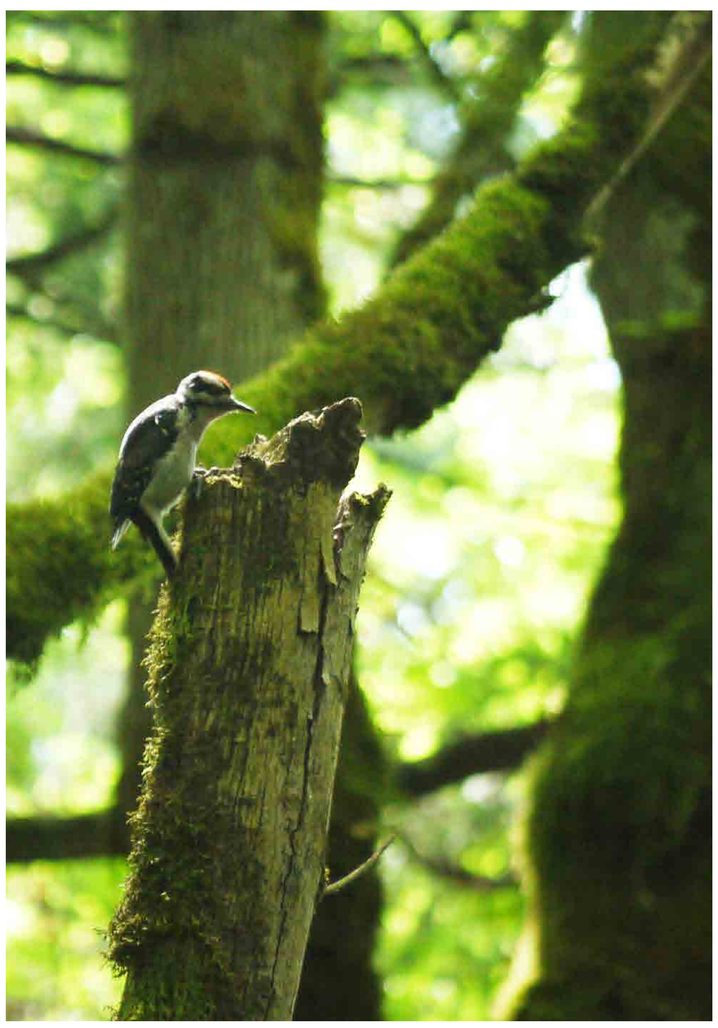
Habitat



Migrating birds and resident wildlife

Like islands in the sea, the East Buttes are important for migrating birds, who need places to stop, eat and rest along their journey. For wildlife that lives here, the East Buttes provide a home, places to hunt and forage, and connections to streams, rivers and larger habitat areas.



Connecting habitats

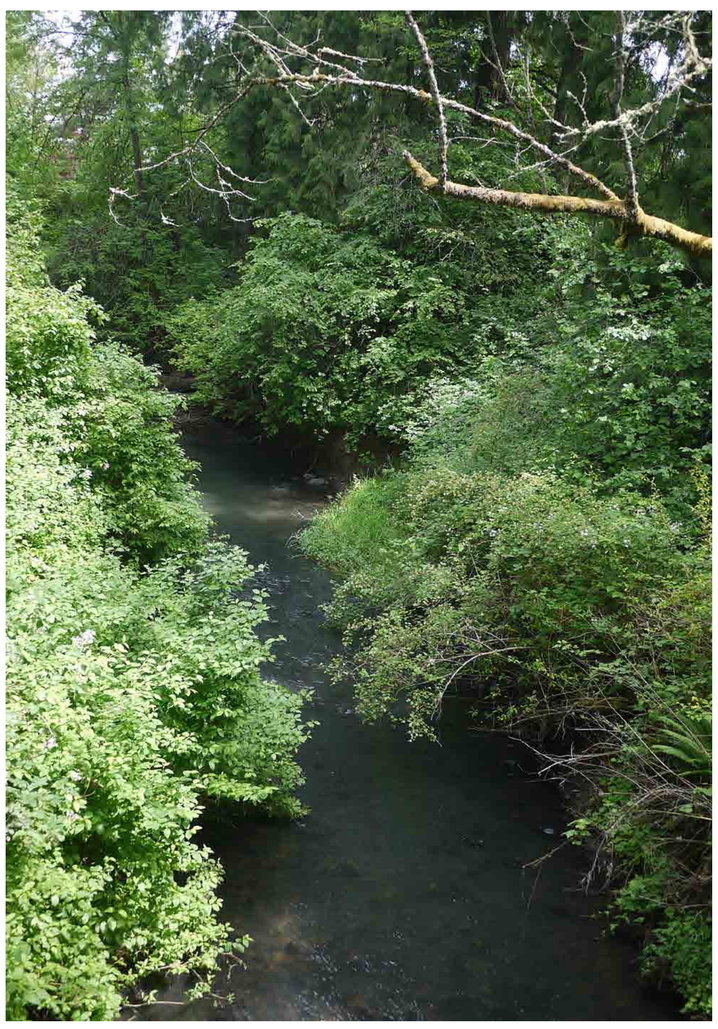
The East Buttes natural areas help connect the watersheds of the Clackamas River and Johnson Creek. This is important for long-term health and diversity of species facing habitat loss and climate change.

Upland forest

A mix of conifers and deciduous trees covers the East Buttes. Upland forests like this are common in the Pacific Northwest, but in urban areas forests have been fragmented and removed by the growth of cities. The lands protected in the East Buttes preserve core areas of upland forest within a developing area.

Water quality

The East Buttes natural areas protect the headwaters of Butler, Meadow and Kelley creeks and many other tributaries that flow into Johnson Creek. Upper Kelley Creek's diversity of crustaceans, worms and aquatic insects shows the benefits of keeping water cool and clean upstream.



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GABBERT BUTTE NATURE PARK

East Buttes wildlife

Forest restoration on Metro's West Bliss Butte

West Bliss Butte pollinator habitat

This former hay field is planted with wildflowers, native shrubs and widely spaced trees. The wildflowers and shrubs provide food for wildlife from polinators to deer, while the Douglas-fir trees grow with dense, broad branches typical of old-growth forests.

photo: Phil Nosler

This Savannah sparrow is an example of a migrating songbird who can take advantage of East Buttes habitat during migration and nesting seasons.

City of Gresham restoration work in the East Buttes

The city has completed numerous habitat surveys in the East Buttes and on Gabbert Butte including: upland, riparian and wetland vegetation, birds, terrestrial and aquatic amphibians, and snakes.

Over the past 15 years, and with help from volunteers, the City has completed restoration of approximately 20 acres on Gabbert Butte. A nearby effort includes a large area of holly removal from a former holly farm on Gresham Butte.

Ivy removal at Butler Creek

Volunteer restoration event

Oregon Slender Salamander

Years of work by City staff has documented Oregon Slender Salamanders in the East Buttes including on Gabbert Butte. Prior to their discovery here, they had not been found west of the Cascades. The Oregon Conservation Strategy considers Oregon Slender Salamander a sensitive species. They like moist places inside large decaying logs or under slabs of bark that have fallen off of snags. Oregon Slender Salamanders are lungless and breathe through their skin!

Flying Squirrels

photo: Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

photo: Caters news agency

Have you seen nesting boxes on some of the trees at Gabbert Butte? The nesting boxes were installed to support northern flying squirrels. The flying squirrel doesn't actually fly, it glides from tree to tree. These animals typically nest in large holes in trees and eat fungi and lichens, as well as seeds, nuts, insects, bird eggs and nestlings and conifer cones. Flying squirrels are seldom seen because they are nocturnal.

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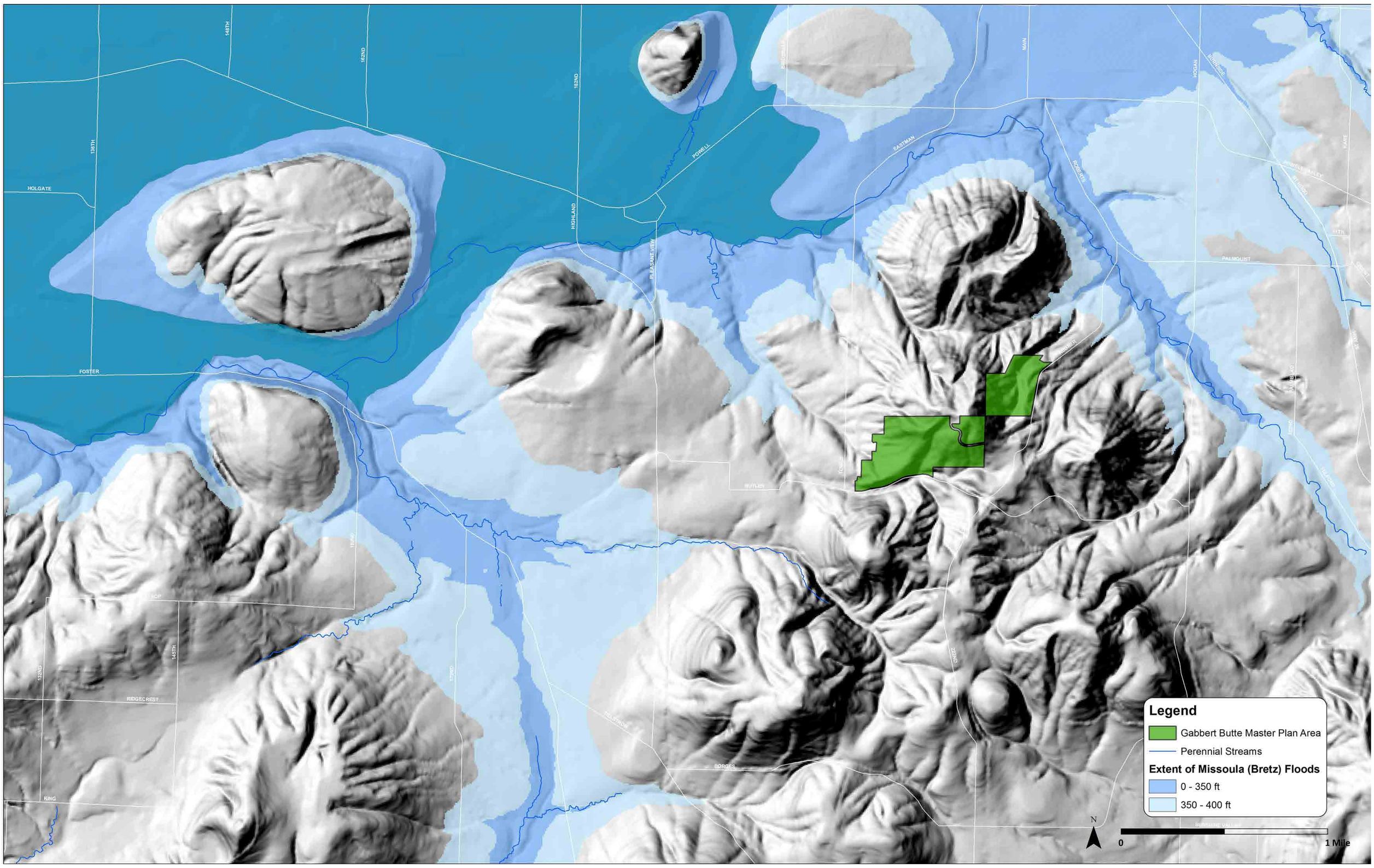
GABBERT BUTTE NATURE PARK

Volcanoes and floods



Lava domes

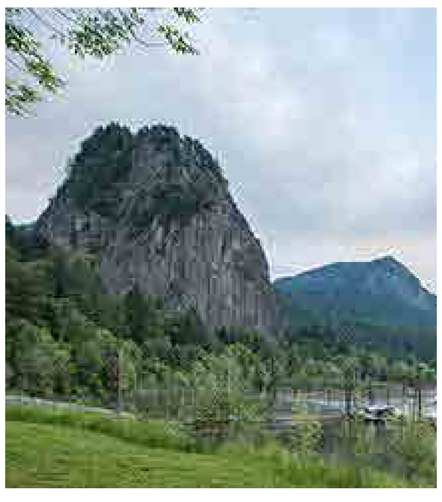
Gabbert Butte is part of the Boring Volcanic Field, which contains more than 80 small volcanic vents and lava flows. These eruptions were caused by the Juan de Fuca Plate sliding under the North American Plate. Each lava dome erupted just once, and thick, slow-moving magma created buttes that we see today.

The first eruptions began about 2.5 million years ago, and between 1.3 and 1 million years ago, the active field was widespread. The existing lava domes are now extinct, but some believe that the boring lava field is not. Don't worry, the likelihood of an eruption is very low!

Floods

About 15,000 years ago, the lands surrounding the buttes were flooded repeatedly, when ice dams gave way and emptied glacial Lake Missoula. The Missoula (or Bretz) Floods covered the valley floor with hundreds of feet of water. Rich farmland resulted from soils washed into the valley by the floods.

Towle Butte



The youngest volcano, Beacon Rock, erupted about 57,000 years ago, and then the Missoula Floods scoured away the cinder cone, leaving just its central plug.

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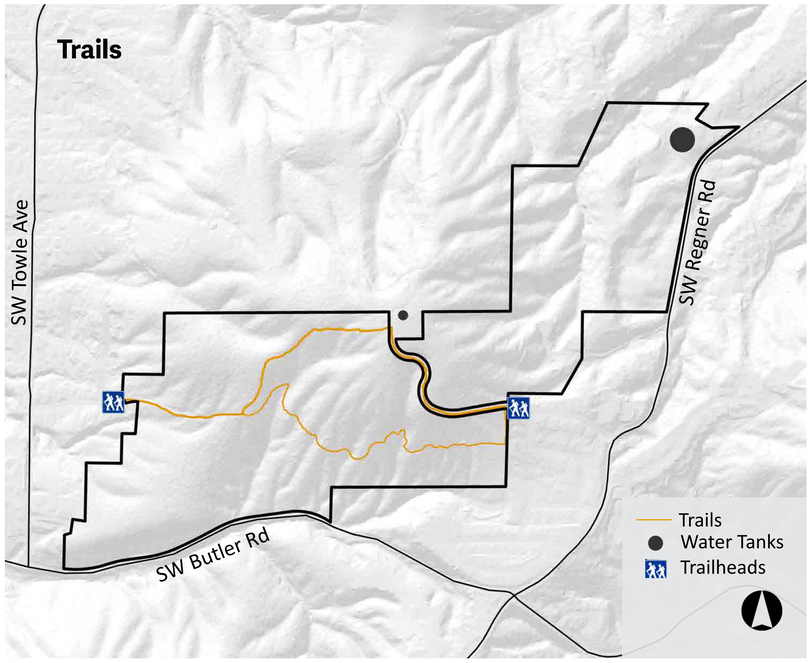
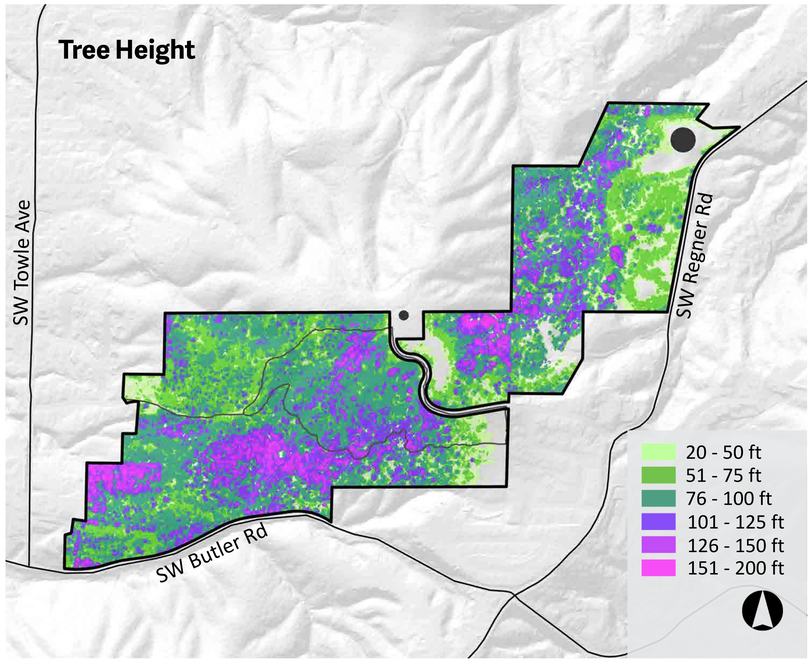
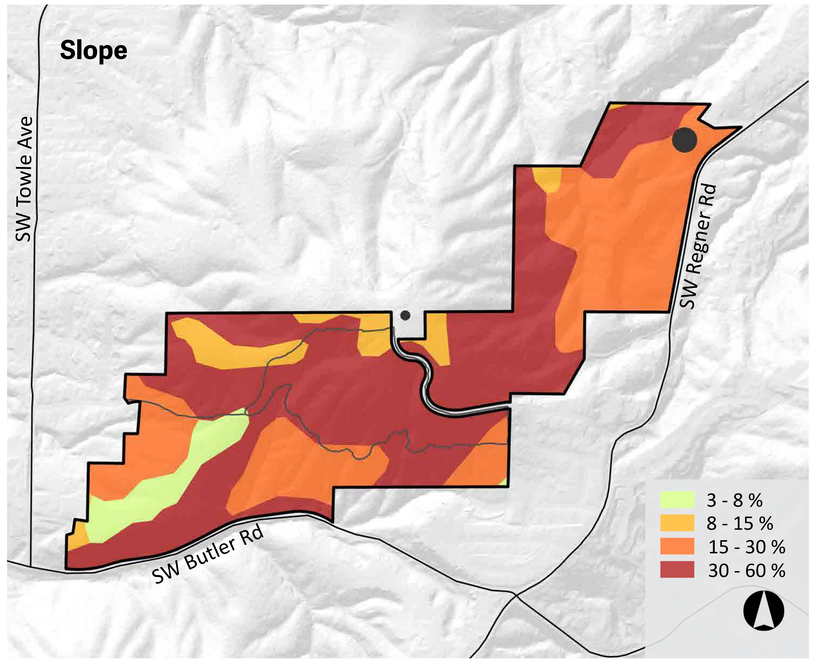
Site analysis



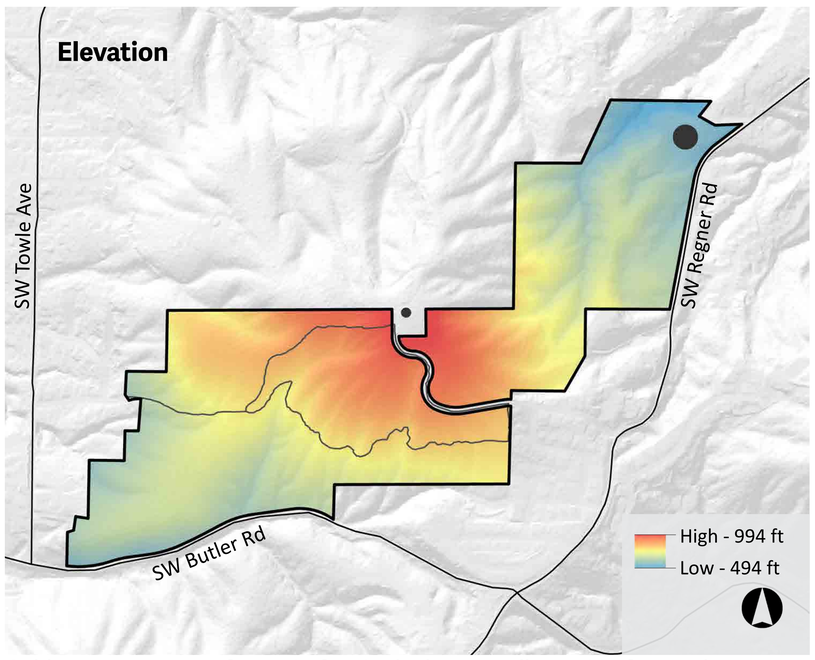
Today, there are about 1.5 miles of trails on Gabbert Butte, which can be accessed via neighborhood trailsheads.



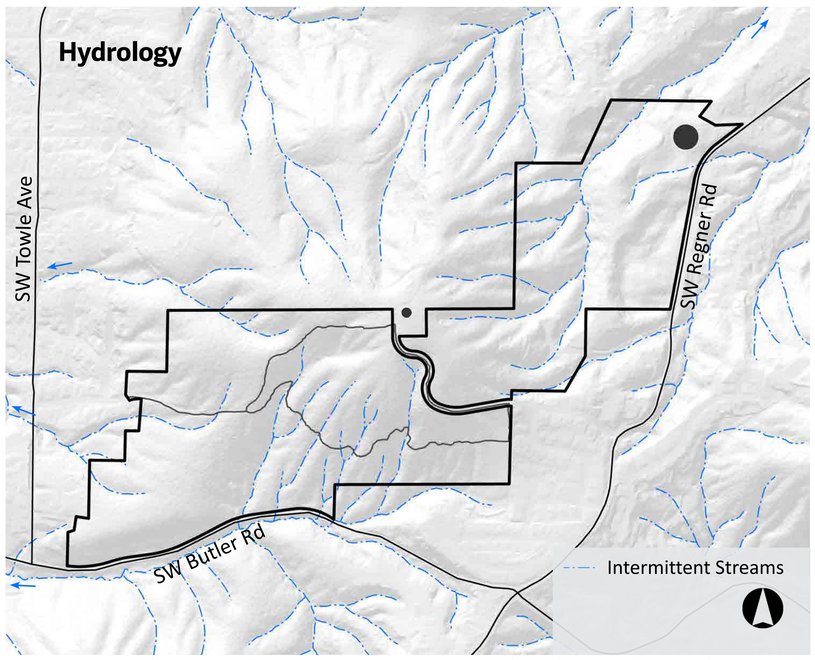
Gabbert Butte's upland forests make for an ideal Northwest forest experience, although views of the surrounding hills are hard to come by.



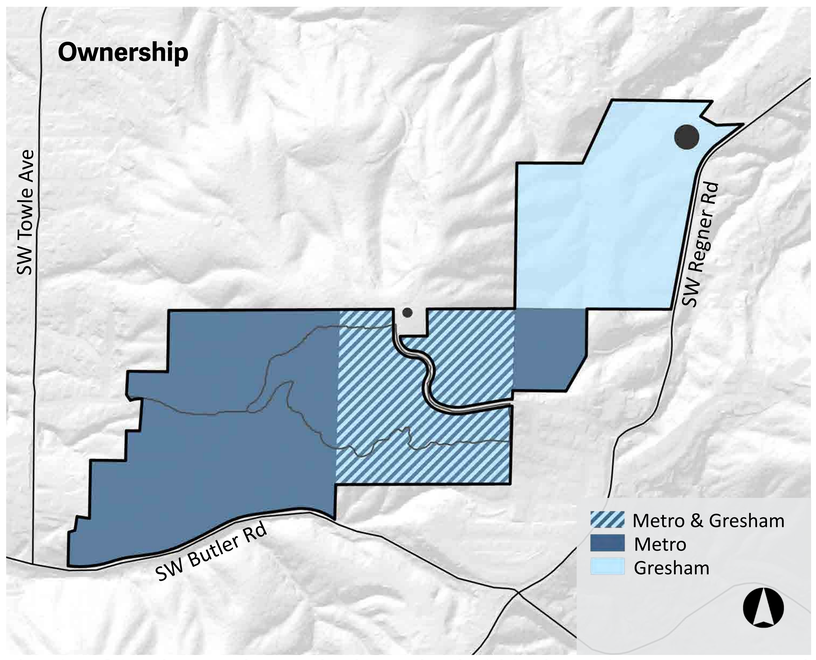
Gabbert Butte's steep slopes make it more challenging to choose locations for parking and other facilities.



Gabbert Butte ranges from 494 feet in the lowest valley to 994 feet at the top, creating 500 feet of elevation change.



Many seasonal streams flow across the site toward Butler Creek, Meadow Creek and Johnson Creek. Protected forests along the streams keep this water cool and clean for salmon and other wildlife downstream.



The city of Gresham and Metro both own land within the project area. Metro and Gresham take care of this land on behalf of the public.