Balancing & Preventing native habitat loss on the Lane Community College Campus

Alternatives to Increasing Paved/Gravel Parking Lots

15 July 2009

Prepared by

Gail Baker, Pat Boleyn Biology Instructors & Margaret Robertson, Engineering graphics & Drafting design instructor
All information collated and synthesized from e-mails and professional expertise of the LCC staff.
Input from Science Division, Landscape Group and Sustainability Committee.

Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*, ERICACEAE**)**

native evergreen flowering tree of dry mixed forest habitat on the LCC hillside slated for removal

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Option 1: Preferred. No loss of habitat along the southern length of Parking Lot L. Re-evaluate all options and alternative for parking needs. Designate and establish this area as the LCC Oak Habitat Ecological Preserve.

At this date shrubs and understory plants have been removed but the soil layer is still intact and not heavily compacted or damaged. We would like this option to be considered for the following reasons:

- Preservation of a rare native habitat, oak savanna
- Preservation of a unique educational resource, used by classes for over 30 years.
- Supporting the LCC's institutional commitment to the Core Value of Sustainability

  Demonstrating leadership in forward thinking and long term planning to reduce carbon emissions

  Being a model for students and the campus community by implementing sustainable practices.

Option 2: Fragmented Preservation. Reduced loss of habitat as currently identified with consideration of reducing impact on the fragmented preserved areas where parking areas will be built. The results will be that small areas of the hillside forest habitat will be persevered but the majority of the hillside will be lost forever. All the extensive populations of native lilies, including Camas, fawn lily, cat's ear and death camas will disappear. The areas that will be preserved are the forested knoll on the north east side that will provide a buffer for the Nature Trail entrance and to the west an area of fairly dense forest that is currently between an open draw and the most westerly open meadow and camas swale. The rocky outcrop and Camas habitats will disappear. A small group of oaks, maple and fir will be left standing at the western most end. It will change the character of the ecosystem and the campus in many ways.

To adequately preserve the fragments the following must be done. Retain three currently marked fragments. Minimize tree-cutting outside the fragments where possible. Do not cut oaks.

Development with Care. Promoting ecological health of preserved fragments.

Inventory of habitat types and species associated with each.

Tree Protection Plan: root zone protection of trees on margins of preserved fragments. Protection from terracing, either soil removal or addition and from compaction from construction and subsequent parking.

Design & layout Process must move forward with professional consultants for design and layout of parking and habitat preservation (Landscape Architect, botanists & biologists, ecologists).

Environmental Planning with public review will serve as a model for the campus & broader Eugene community-- Plant & Wildlife Surveys

Report Evaluation before construction. Critiques Report from campus community especially those in Science, Landscape Group & Sustainability Committee

Reduce future habitat loss. Start a long range planning process for transportation needs of the campus community that does not include loss of habitat and is in alignment with sustainability core values and commitment to American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment

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Contents:

Option 1: Designate and establish this area as the LCC Oak Habitat Ecological Preserve.

Full details of why this ecosystem should be preserved

Habitat Photos of the LCC Hillside Oak Habitat

The Plant Community of the LCC Nature Trail & Oak Hillside Habitat
Prepared by: Jules Filipski 2002 Instructor: Gail Baker Independent Study Project

Lane's Mission & Core Values relevant to this project: Sustainability emphasis

Comments from LCC staff and community.

Designate and establish this area as the LCC Oak Habitat Ecological Preserve.
Option 1: No loss of habitat along the southern length of Parking Lot L. At this date shrubs and understory plants have been removed but the soil layer is still intact and not heavily compacted or damaged. The advantage is that invasive plants such as Scott's Broom and Himalayan Blackberry have been removed opening up opportunity for the existing native herbaceous perennials and woody shrubs to extend their growth. However the invasives will also return and the disturbed soil is an opening for colonization of exotic plants.

Concerns from LCC employees that have surfaced about this Project:

1) Process Values: Recognizing the value of long term environmental planning, consulting with campus community, including students, stakeholders and use expertise with in the institution. At LCC those individuals with the greatest knowledge and expertise about habitats would be Grounds, Landscape architects, Sustainability Committee and biologists in the Science Division.

2) Ecological & Biological Values: We have a functioning Oak woodland and Savanna habitat! Millions are spent each year on Oak habitat restoration. Here we have an opportunity to PRESERVE this habitat. Less than 1% of indigenous oak savannah habitat remains in the Willamette Valley.
http://conservationforestry.org/Programs/programs_OakSavannah.cfm

Response of Songbirds to Restoration of an Oregon White Oak Habitat
http://fresc.usgs.gov/research/StudyDetail.asp?Study_ID=561

Less than 2 percent of Oregon's native white oak savannas remains, according to the Nature Conservancy, which calls the Willamette Valley a "crisis Ecoregions" and "critically endangered." Oak savannas are also home to Oregon's state bird, the western meadowlark, as well as northern pygmy owls and western bluebirds.
Oak savannas were once supported by frequent fires through the valley set by the native peoples who encouraged the oak habitats and prairies that provided acorns and camas to be harvested for food. But with the intrusion of European settlers that drove out the native peoples, these savannas gave way to agricultural fields, and, these days, intense development.
http://www.eugeneweekly.com/2008/07/03/news2.html

Friends of Buford Park Project: Ninety-eight percent of native oak prairie and savanna habitats have disappeared from the Willamette Valley and may disappear altogether if no action is taken.
According to a scientific assessment by The Nature Conservancy, "The Willamette Valley's native oak and prairie habitats are among the most endangered in North America, harboring 189 species at risk of extinction, some of which occur nowhere else on Earth. Less than two percent of these original habitats survive, and what remains is subject to intense development pressures."
http://www.bufordpark.org/prairies

3) Educational Values: This area is QUICKLY accessed from campus, a 3 to 5 min. WALK from classroom to field site. I am not aware of many (if any) Community Colleges or 4–year Colleges/Universities in our state that have this kind of resource! Please refer to several recent articles in the LCC Torch about the "landscape gems" that our campus has access to(April 30, April 9, 2009 http://www.lanecc.edu/mediaarts/torch/issues.html). This has allowed biology courses (and writing, art, photography courses) to use the habitat on a weekly basis. Students don't have to drive cars to a field site! I can't stress how much this has been a magnet for students at LCC. The area to be paved is also adjacent to the well established Eldon Schaffer Nature Trail that leads into the upper forest and outdoor class room area. The entrance needs to be buffered from pavement.

4) Sustainability Values: Lane Community College is committed in written statements to be progressive and forwarding thinking and acting to reduce vehicle transport and carbon emissions.

Consider participating in the following
Measuring the Real Cost of Parking and Alternative Transportation
http://www.academicimpressions.com/web_conferences/0709-transportation-investments.php?q=3246v274891yT

Articles from the journal *Planning for Higher Education* by one of the leaders in the field of sustainable transportation planning.

- Will Toor. 2003. The Road Less Traveled: Sustainable Transportation for Campuses. *Planning for Higher Education.* 31(3): 131–41.

- Dave Kaplan and Thomas Clapper . 2007. Traffic Congestion on a University Campus: A Consideration of Unconventional Remedies to Nontraditional Transportation Patterns. *Planning for Higher Education.* 36(1): 28–39.

Also, if you Google the term "Transportation Demand Management," or TDM, you will find a many more resources, as you will if you search under the plain old terms "transportation" and "sustainability," .

Examples from other Colleges
http://www.lanecc.edu/sustainability/conferences/Riley.pdf

Preservation of this habitat at least three fold.

1) BioDiversity “HOT SPOT” for Lane Co*: This area is a critical habitat for native wildlife in the Russell Creek watershed area. It has two components that are measures of biodiversity: specie richness (high number of native species) and abundance of those species. Scoring high on the biodiversity index makes it a biodiversity hot spot and gives it a high conservation value. This is an area known by community organizations such as the Native Plant Society of Oregon, the local chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and the Audubon Society for species diversity. It is the northern most limit of the California Black Oak. Therefore an important ecological distribution margin. See highlights about why this area is considered a BioDivesrity Hot Spot below*.

2) This area is QUICKLY accessed from campus. I am not aware of many (if any) Community Colleges or 4 –year Colleges/Universities in our state that have this kind of resource! Please refer to several recent articles in the LCC Torch about the “landscape gems” that our campus has access to. This has allowed biology courses (and writing, art, photography courses) to use the habitat on a weekly basis. Students don’t have to drive cars to a field site! I can’t stress how much this has been a drawing point and magnet for students at LCC. The area to be paved is also adjacent to the well established Eldon Schaffer Nature Trail that leads into the upper forest and outdoor class room area. The entrance needs to be buffered from pavement.

3) Sustainability. The more you remove native vegetation the more you affect the surrounding microclimates. Urbanization and pavement alters temperatures and water flow that then have to be addressed by expensive technological fixes. Removing this habitat does not demonstrate one of LCC core Values: SUSTAIABILITY

We are truly sorry that paradise has to be paved for a parking lot.

These are just a FEW of the highlights . Occasional is defined as a plant that is found typically in only 6 to 33 % of suitable habitat, **Frequent** means plants that occur in 34- 66% of suitable habitat (Simpson et all 2002. Vascular Plants of lane County Oregon).

California black oak, *Quercus kelloggii*, occasional in Lane Co & reaches northern extension of its range. Tallamy (2009) ranks Oaks (*Quercus*) as having the highest ability to support Lepidoptera (butterfly & moths) species of all wood plants. Supporting about 534 Lepidoptera. Black Oak should be preserved as this is its northern most limit.

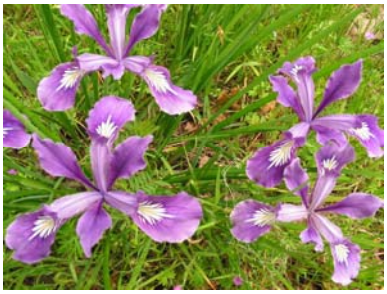
Pale Baby Blue Eyes, *Nemphila menziesii atomaria* ---the variety is RARE outside the Willamette Valley and I have only seen it on 3 hillsides surrounding parking LOT L at LCC and at Mt Pisgah Arboretum!
Several species of ***Saxifraga*** on the rock area
Spring gold, *Lomatium utriculatum*, a very close relative of the federally & state listed rare *L. brashawii*, with only a dozen populations in Lane Co.
Numerous bulbs plants: Lilies, cat's ear, death camas, regular camas,
Oregon Iris*, Iris tenax* (large population) & blue eyes grass (another infrequent species of iris)
Comandra**,** an important hemiparasitic plant that is only an occasional species in Lane Co
Wild rose, *Rosa nutkana* shrubs can resprout and are very important cover species in the hillside area.

Ecologically important Shrubs in the understory are osoberry and serviceberry.
Black Oak should be preserved as this is its northern most limit.

The camas swale area is habitat to a very large and robust population of Camas and later in the season ***Delphinium menziesii*****!** Also the pale baby blue eyes & blue eyed grass. Of significance in this area is a small population of ***Cynoglossum grande*** Hounds tongue, only an occasional in Lane County so not very frequent and a stunning plant that we are lucky to have in our natural area!!!
The new parking lots plant will remove an extensive population of Oregon Fawn Lilies.

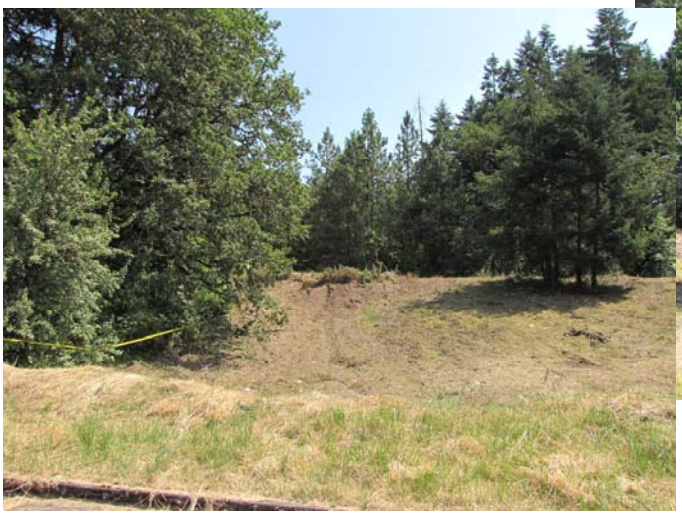
I might mention that when the service road was graveled 9 years ago or so the vernal wetland that is covered was home to another LISTED rare plant in Oregon, *Cicendia quadrangularis*! The loss of that habitat and plant was very disturbing. This gravel road was constructed without knowledge of or consultation with any Science faculty.

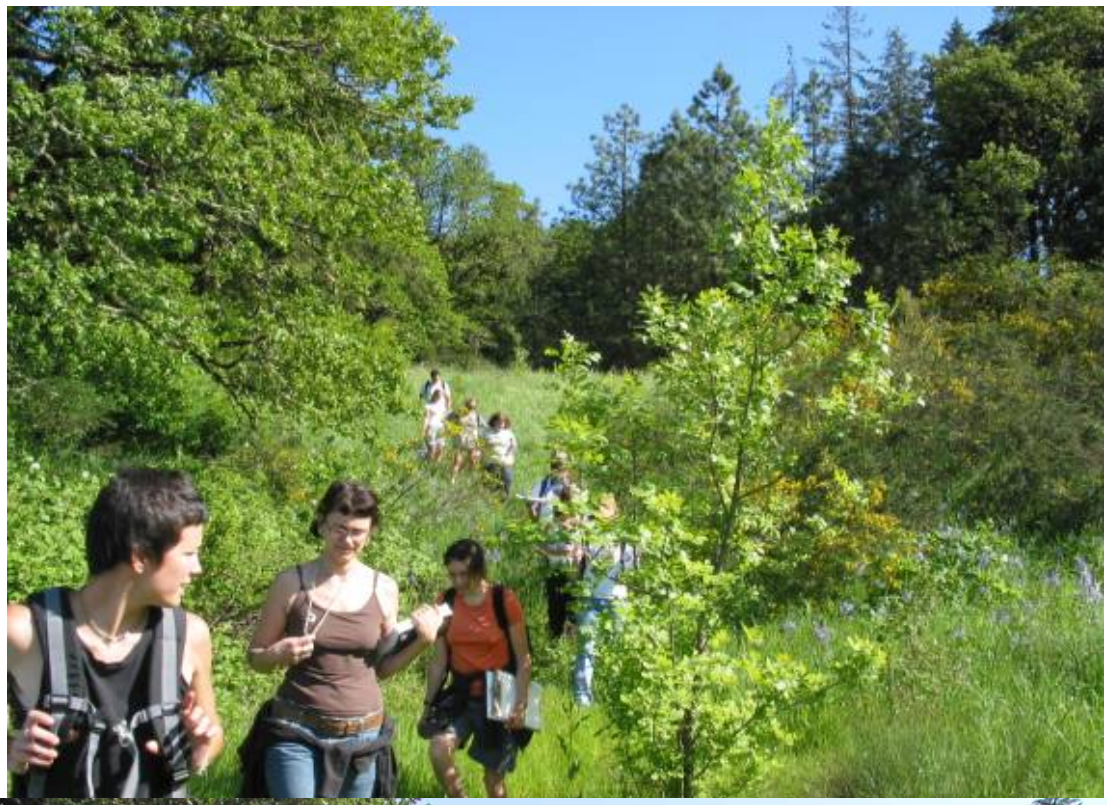
Plant species found in the LCC hillside Oak Habitat. These photos display some of the different wildflower species that bloom on the hillside along the southern edge of Parking Lot L.



Clockwise: Hounds tongue, a wild forget-me-not; Cat's ear lily; Pale Baby Blue eyes, rare outside Lane Co; Oregon Fawn Lily; and Oregon Iris, a culturally significant plant to the indigenous people of this areas. Another culturally significant plant population that will be lost is Camas (not shown here)

Photos of the LCC hillside area taken on 7/9/09 just after shrub and understory removal for survey purposes.





Students in hillside and camas swale area (top) slated for over flow parking lot (bottom)

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCIENCE DIVISION

Prepared by: Jules Filipski 2002 **Instructor: Gail Baker**

Independent Study Project

The Plant Community of the LCC Nature Trail & Oak Hillside Habitat

Plant Community and Associations[1]

Biome: Northwestern Coniferous Forest
Ecoregion: Willamette Valley
Habitat & Vegetation: Mixed conifer-deciduous forest with mid canopy shrubs and herbaceous ground cover
Plant Associations: *Pseudotsuga menziesii. Quercus garryana*

Elevational Range: average 500 ft. Latitude 44°, Longitude 123°
Southern Willamette Valley foothills

Mean annual precipitation: 104 cm (40.9 in.)
5.3 cm (2.09 in.) between June and August

Growing season: Year round with greatest growth period from February to June.

Mean summer maximum temp: 27.9°C

Mean winter minimum temp: 0.1° C

Other attributes: soil type- clay, loam
Aspect 320° 15% slope gradient
Disturbance ecology- fire regime (natural & set) every 80-200 years, logging
Northernmost limit for *Quercus kelloggii*

Dominant/Indicator species:

Family	Genus/species
Aceraceae	*Acer macrophyllum*
Anacardiaceae	*Toxicodendron diversiloba*
Berberidaceae	*Berberis aquifolium*
Caprifoliaceae	*Symphiocarpus albus*
Dryopteraceae	*Polystichum munitum*
Fagaceae	*Quercus garryana*
Pinaceae	*Pseudotsuga menziesii, Pinus ponderosa*
Rosaceae	*Rubus armeniacus, Rubus ursinus, Oemleria cerasiformis*

For more complete species list please consult the **LCC Nature Trail Plant List Brochure**.

Sources:

1.) USDA Forest Service, "Field Guide to the Forested Plant Associations of the Westside Central Cascades of Northwest Oregon"
2.) USDA Forest Service, "Natural Vegetation of Oregon and Washington"
3.) Raven, Evert, & Eichorn, 1999. "Biology of Plants "6th ed. Freeman/Worth Publishers. 944p.

[1] Nature Trail Plant Communities.doc 2009

LCC Vision
Transforming lives through learning

LCC Mission
For more than forty years, Lane has been "transforming lives through learning." Lane's mission is to be a learning-centered community college that provides affordable, quality, lifelong educational opportunities that include: professional technical and lower division college transfer programs; employee skill upgrading, business development and career enhancement; foundational academic, language and life skills development; lifelong personal development and enrichment; and cultural and community services

All of the following have been copied from Lane CC's web site on 7/14/09

Lane's Sustainability Core Value

- Integrate practices that support and improve the health of systems that sustain life.
- Provide an interdisciplinary learning environment that builds understanding of sustainable ecological, social, and economic systems, concern for environmental justice, and the competence to act on such knowledge.
- Equip and encourage all students and staff to participate actively in building a socially diverse, just, and sustainable society, while cultivating connections to local, regional, and global communities.

http://www.lanecc.edu/sustainability/

SUSTAINABILITY Transportation
Student daily commuting is the biggest single contributor to Lane's greenhouse gas emissions. Lane is a commuter campus and biking and walking opportunities are very limited. In order to curb carbon emissions from commuting, Lane offers "free" bus passes to all credit students on main campus through a mandatory student fee.
Climate Commitment
Lane has a strong commitment to becoming carbon neutral and to helping to educate the next generation of leaders about the importance of reducing greenhouse gases. Lane is a signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). As a signatory, Lane is committed to become carbon neutral. In addition to this commitment, Lane is a member of the ACUPCC Leadership Circle whose members have agreed to help lead the initiative, promote it, and recruit colleagues to join. Lane's President is also a member of the ACUPCC Steering Committee.

As required by the Commitment, Lane has recently conducted a comprehensive green house gas emission inventory and is currently working on a plan to become carbon neutral.

http://www.lanecc.edu/sustainability/susprog.html

COMMENTS and SUGGETIONS FROM LCC COMMUNITY 7/13/09

Thank you. What a terrible loss of wild life and a terrible contradiction to our sustainability mission!
Could a parking facility be built that houses several levels? Is there any across the road space that can be utilized with a walking path (maybe covered) and/or bridge that connects back to campus? Any useable space on existing lawns on campus -- if its temporary?
When I lived in Spokane, we had a parking area under a highway where you could park. Buses left frequently for campus from this lot.
Doesn't make sense to cause permanent damage. And it also doesn't make sense that significant parking is lost to construction workers given this situation.
I wish I had a solution. I'm against damaging the natural area -- you may include my statement if it helps. Gayle Smith

I wonder why it is, that every time humans have a "problem" the natural environment pays the price? How much forest can we blacktop, and still call ourselves "green"? Let's see - a **permanent** solution to a "temporary" problem? How about a **temporary** solution - like increased bus service or reduced (or free) bus passes during construction? If we are going to implement a permanent solution, how about new bike paths or lanes that make getting to LCC from Eugene and Springfield safer and easier?
I cannot be there on Wednesday, as I am working, but I am not happy about it. Please pass on my rant, if the appropriate opportunity comes along.
Thank you for caring!
Andreas Rossberg

I have a suggestion that will save a lot of parking spaces. Allow the faculty and staff to purchase bus passes for the same price as the students pay, about $29 per term. This is a solution that will decrease the parking demand quite a bit, and the administration can show its commitment to the environment and to sustainability and to faculty and staff at a time when everyone has had to make consessions.

This will not cost LCC money, as the fee covers the cost that LCC pays LTD, plus more for administrative costs to LCC.
I believe that if faculty and staff had the option to get a bus pass, many would take it. Do you think many students would ride the bus if they did not have a pass provided? I think we would definitely see an increase if faculty and staff had an easy and convenient way to obtain a pass, similar to the effect we have seen with the student LTD pass.

I certainly think having a way to get faculty and staff on the buses is much more desirable than tearing up the landscape that we science teachers depend upon. We have so much parking already. U of O has a bus pass program for its staff and faculty because they don't have an option to build a bunch more parking lots. If we concentrate our mindset that we value our natural resources and teaching opportunities here at LCC, I believe we would think long and hard about paving more, or even graveling more. It will take decades to return to the landscape we have now, if it ever does. We are just encouraging more cars.
Harriet Behm Chemistry

I would like to see the EMX add a line from the Springfield station to LCC.
Tana Stuart (541) 463-5446

I can't imagine Lot L extending up the hill, but I guess that's the plan. Shouldn't we initiate a parking pass ($) for LCC, with proceeds going toward (insert positive cause here)... with the express intent to encourage car pooling/transit/biking, etc.? Facilitating the automobile is bunk if we have any true aspirations of Sustainability...? I figure I'd bounce this off you for your thoughts...
I'm glad to hear the survey is req'd, and that there is a process here. It would really be nice if someone could make the decision to disincentivize parking, incentivize alternative methods of getting here, and talk about it. It would be a powerful statement from an institution that has made a big deal of 'sustainability'. It would also result in howls of protest. I would whine when I paid my parking pass for the term. But it would be a helluva step forward, in my humble opinion. Heh, heh.

Thanks for raising my awareness of this project.
Erik Westerholm NW Energy Educ. Inst./LCC Renewable Energy JATC

Thanks Shelley,

I am sure you are right about lack of info. However, it's important that the administrators become educated on these kinds of things so that we can trust they are thinking about sustainable ecosystems throughout the planning process. Maybe we need have a workshop that administrators can attend to learn about ecological design and planning?

>>> Shelley Gaudia 07/11/09 6:16 AM >>>
I was very sorry to hear about the potential habitat loss. The emails from Gail and Jerry provided fascinating ecological information, as well as demonstrating what it might mean for our institution to walk the talk of being committed to lifelong learning and sustainability. Their knowledge and concern are indicative of the value they place on wholistic thinking and teaching their students about biology in context. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to get involved in mitigating the impact of this unintentional destruction. I feel certain that the decision makers were simply not aware of these critical issues. Now they are. Problem solved?
Shelley Gaudia Science Division Lane Community College
email: gaudias@lanecc.edu

Hi All, The environmental science courses, especially ENVS 181, also use the area and plants being discussed. It would be a shame to lose these habitats to parking.
Claudia Owen Earth and Environmental Sciences Science Division

It was good to see you at Farmer's Market last Saturday but I was dismayed at the news of the impending destruction of the natural area of south campus to provide temporary parking. During my tenure in the Science Department this very diverse area was used each spring and summer in the Botany Classes I taught. My students could walk out the door of room 109 and be in a wonderful study area in just a few minutes. Not only is it diverse in flora but also in bird life. For two springs I had blind students use the area to study the diversity of birds in the area. With simple reflecting recorders they made a collection of bird calls which they could use to remember the birds they had heard.. One of them told me that while she and her family were having lunch at Silver Creek Falls one of the party remarked there was a bird in the tree overhead and she identified it. My student said she was in error because she was certain it was an altogether different bird. Upon checking it turned out my blind student was correct. A paved over area on south campus will provide no opportunity to observe and study the diverse bird fauna. Some other solution to the parking problem must be found to avoid the loss of this irreplaceable resource. Freeman Rowe, retired LCC Science Faculty

hi Gail and Margaret (cc to Dave Willis),

Just read your email exchange regarding south slope construction. Did I miss earlier broadcast emails about this issue? I was surprised to return to campus today after being gone for the Oregon Country Fair and seeing the clearing. Thought it was just Scotch Broom clearing and some landscaping!!

I'd like to hear or read more details about what is planned.

Glad to hear both of you have chimed in on this important issue. If I can lend a hand in any way about this please let me know. I was involved years ago with fighting to protect our south side land and worked with Jay Marston in trying to minimize the effects of the McDougle Bros. clear cutting of the hillsides south of LCC's boundary and keeping them from buying (trading) from the college the 100 acre Marston forest!! The board almost traded away that donated acreage.
I've read the several email threads about the new, "temporary" parking that Facilities is moving forward on. Yes, the spaces are needed, but...

After all the years of issues generating controversy and discussion about "transparency", sustainability, etc. how can something like a "temporary" compacted gravel, terraced parking area be thought of as temporary and not be seen as a permanent alteration of the somewhat native habitat???? Also, I can't fathom how facilities just went forward with this without a broader discussion, apparently assuming that the ET's directive to do something to find 500 stalls was an open ended directive to do anything.

Amazing!!! Robert Thompson, Math

Hello, Margaret, Went up to LCC this morning...quiet campus except for the construction. And was actually pretty pleased with the "brush removal" south of the south parking lagoons! A little more scuffed-up than I would have liked, but not bad overall. If it just stays like this, I think the site will be ecologically better-off next year than it has been for a decade or two!

I would still vote for a moratorium on parking-lot-building. How much room for cars will be "enough," folks? Look at the U of O's approach: make it really difficult to find parking and encourage/force people to find alternatives (and they have!). Woo-hoo, LCC...??!! Whitey Lueck, Landscape Consultant, horticulturalist and ecologist.

Greetings to all, Since I am in Europe for the next few weeks, I cannot attend meetings nor write very much from a very slow Internet connection. I just want to state my support for all the issues raised by the faculty to preserve this area. My special interest is not only the plant species which my students study in my Field Biology classes, but also in the bird species studied in my Birds of Oregon classes. I have been taking my students to this part of campus since 1993, and we have documented at least 30 different species nesting and/or feeding in that habitat (species lists available upon my return). This area has become even more important as a learning resource since the sewage lagoons have been severely disturbed and have reduced the number of individuals and species of birds in that habitat significantly. The point raised about easy field trip access is true for my classes as well; driving to off-campus sites cuts into valuable class time and deprives students of important learning opportunities. This area also holds a special place for me as a buffer to the rest of the South forest, since I was the one who proposed and developed the Schafer Nature trail through that forest back in 1993.

I may have missed something by being away, but I don't understand the argument about the short timeline that Dennis raises: wasn't the need for additional parking identified a while ago, and couldn't these plans have been made public in the Spring when faculty and staff were present and able to respond in a more meaningful and timely manner?

Thanks to all who have spent extensive valuable time in working on these issues, especially Gail Baker who seems to have led the communication and analysis effort. I will be back on August 6 and would be glad to participate in further analysis and planning. Have a great rest of summer,

Joe Russin Lane Community College Science Division

It may well be that, sad as it is, we must destroy more natural habitat to accommodate the increasing number of cars coming onto our campus.
What really bothers me, though, is that the work on this project BEGAN before any of us who are directly impacted had any idea this was even being considered. This makes a mockery of the notion of shared governance, as well as our supposed core value of sustainability.
--Bert Pooth Lane Community College Science Division

Parking is a major headache at LCC. The south bound i-5 exit for LCC is sometimes so backed up that cars are waiting in the highway -- extremely dangerous. That is probably a lawsuit waiting to happen.

The real solution for LCC, in my opinion, is not a larger parking lot but a bike lane along Franklin which would connect the river bank trail system with LCC without having to get over the top of 30th (a huge climb). Currently, biking along Franklin is scary to say the least. Cars and trucks are moving at 40mph and play bumper tag with bikes trying to stay on the meager road shoulder. But ODOT owns the land between the road and the river. Why not build a safe bike lane or even a bike path along franklin to get to LCC? Several articles have been written about this over the years in the LCC torch student newspaper and ODOT has it on their transplan.

The 2006 LCC Transplan says this about bicycle access--
"Bicycle access to the main campus is inconvenient for those commuting over the 30th Avenue hill and southbound bicycle commuters from Eugene/Springfield via Glenwood and McVay Highway face hazards due to a narrow roadway with no shoulders, a poorly maintained road surface, and debris that contributes to hazards and tire punctures. Northbound cyclists face similar hazards in the Goshen, Hwy. 99 area. Street sweeping does not occur often enough to make biking safe. Secure, well lit, and covered bicycle parking is limited on main campus."

Why not put the money into the bike path *NOW* and pay LTD to transfer students from other parking areas in town with an express shuttle? That would be a wiser solution than adding parking to an already huge parking lot.

The 2006 LCC Transplan says this is the short-term (0-5 years) plan--
"Form an ongoing relationship with federal, state, county, and city agencies that will promote improvements to bicycle commuting routes to the main campus. These efforts should focus on improving roadway shoulders, designing dedicated bike routes to campus which connect with existing routes along the Willamette River and from the south of campus, and develop an alternative, less challenging bicycle route to campus from Eugene."

Ok already. Three years have passed. Let's get it done-- build the bike path along Franklin.

Sincerely, David McClurg Former LCC Botany major and Officer in the Native Plant Society of Oregon

http://www.lanecc.edu/facilities/transportation/documents/LRTPGFinal%20Report.pdf

I strongly agree with Gail Baker on the issues involved with cutting the forest for more parking lots. I also would like to point out several issues with your project:
First, we were not made aware of the decision to cut the ecosystems right outside of our classrooms in the science department. Many of us bring our students there for field trips on a daily basis all year long. We would appreciate being part of the planning process in the future.
What are your plans with the trees that you cut down? Have you addressed the permitting issues with the harvest of trees? How will you address these? Also, even if you are not required to complete an environmental planning process, I strongly recommend it as a biologist, conservationist and educator. These forests are foraging habitat for the federally endangered Northern Spotted Owl and year round habitat for many other native birds.
Also, as Gail pointed out, you are choosing to disturb an ecosystem that has many special species of interest. Oak habitat and oak savanah is a precious habitat in the Willamette Valley and is one that many agencies are working to restore and maintain. I teach my students about this in Forest Ecology and have done so for ten years. I have also tagged trees for long term study of lichens and air quality and these are now being cut down without any regard for the loss to the student's learning experiences.

Sustainability is an issue as well. Building more parking areas encourages more driving to the campus. I think we should be encouraging more sustainable practices, as we do on many parts of the campus.
I think that your planning process needs to involve the public, including the students that attend Lane. Your work will impact the quality of their education and of their experience on the multiple field trips we take to demonstrate many of the complex interactions taking place in this forest ecosystem.
I think we need to serve as a better example to our community on this project, by completing an environmental assessment with a public review, before paving over an established, beautiful, native ecosystem.
Thank you for considering my comments and concerns.
Pat Boleyn Science Instructor

I would like to add to this very important discussion two comments concerning the biology of the area in question, and suggest a possible solution.

First, while trees are certainly a concern, especially mature trees, as Margaret indicates, possibly of greater concern are the perennial herbaceous plants, of and related to the lily family and others as well, that more fully represent the biological value of the area in question. The clearing that has been done to date is not really very different from the treatment this area most probably received at the hands of this area's Kalapuyan Native peoples through the use of frequent fires. These perennial plants are well established in the disputed area and probably have not been greatly harmed. Some of them may even be enhanced by this clearing. This would also apply to many of the shrub species, many of them important historically in terms of ethnobotany and now as well in terms of wildlife habitat and food and in terms of biodiversity. However, as I'm sure we all understand, they will not survive compacted gravel.

Second, in terms of habitat (looking beyond individual trees), the existence of corridors is crucial. Many of these perennial plant species reproduce and spread slowly only to contiguous areas. Many animal species require corridors to provide them food and other needs in today's fragmented habitats. I think that trying to leave corridors of habitat in a new parking area, though it would be theoretically nice, would probably be unworkable in practice. I would find this area very useful in my classes to illustrate the impacts of this kind of treatment and in the study of ecological succession. Barring compacted gravel and vehicles, I will probably take my Ethnobotany students on our first field trip into this area.

My suggested solution I think has already been considered. I look at the field in the north-east corner of the campus, north or north-east of the baseball area, and I suspect that in the fall it could be managed to be dry enough for over-flow parking. I find it difficult to justify altering so drastically the area south of parking lot L for the sake of a couple of weeks every fall, while the field in the north east area seems to be only slightly utilized all year. Only small effort would be required to gain access to it from its north east corner. If irrigation is stopped, say, at the beginning of August, it should be dry enough that vehicles could use it without damaging any existing irrigation or drain materials. And in terms of habitat value, well, robins and geese like it.

Thanks to everybody for our measured concern.
Jerry Hall

HI, Dennis. Thanks for checking in with us. I'm copying my reply also to Pat Boleyn and Margaret Robertson, faculty members who are also participants in the recent round of emails and conversations. Also, CCing Susie Cousar as the chair of the Sustainability and Learning Committee.

Your summary below is accurate. I spoke further with Todd Smith this morning as he was taping off the tree groves we identified for protection. He also add a small grove at the west end that has oak trees and is likely to be too narrow to support much parking. He said the surveying would start today and the engineer hired by Lane would address the environmental and regulatory issues. My understanding is that this work will identify how much parking will be feasible in the identified space. The engineer's report may be ready next week, according to Todd. I asked that we be kept in the loop on this.

The remaining concerns have been raised by Margaret Robertson, Pat Boleyn and Gail Baker. (see attached emails, including Dave's replies) These are (1) following the design guidelines adopted by College Council in May, 2009; (2) ensuring that we are in compliance with any and all environmental impact regulations that apply to the forested areas; and (3) exhausting all other alternate areas that could be developed without loss of the forest habitat. Speaking to these concerns, none of us are quite sure how the forest lands are zoned and what regulations will apply. Margaret has detailed some best practices in terms of doing construction work near trees that we wish to preserve. Regarding alternate space, Dave and Todd described the areas considered so far and some of the other spaces that will be opened to parking in the Fall. It's unclear to me if all alternatives have been explored.

We would appreciate, as Gail requested, seeing a map of the campus plan for additional parking and being assured that using the forest area is truly the last resort after all other options have been carefully examined. The loss of forest areas on campus is both a loss of instructional opportunities and a loss to the ecological functions it serves. We understand the need to balance those values with access for students, and will continue to work collaboratively with FMP on the parking project. We appreciate your follow-up and the responsiveness of Dave and Todd to the concerns we raised yesterday.
Respectfully, Sarah

Sarah L. Ulerick, Ph.D. Interim Division Dean, Science 541-463-5447 ulericks@lanecc.edu

Dennis Carr 7/9/2009 8:41 AM >>>
Greetings Sarah, Gail and Barbara,

I am writing to follow-up on the questions and concerns that were raised regarding the necessary plans being implemented by Lane's FMP department personnel to expand parking lot capacity on the southern undeveloped perimeter of parking lot L. My understanding is that Science Division representatives met with FMP Director Dave Willis and other Lane management representatives on Wednesday, July 8, to outline an acceptable plan to preserve some natural areas along the southern perimeter of parking lot L in the current natural condition to serve as outdoor Science laboratories. It is also my understanding that the discussions on July 8, resulted in agreement that other portions of the same area on the south perimeter of parking lot L will be developed for additional parking lot capacity for this coming fall term.

Please respond to this communication if there are remaining questions or concerns about the plans for expanded parking lot capacity on the south perimeter of parking lot L. Parking lot expansion during this summer (2009) on the 30th Avenue Lane campus has been identified as a priority by President Mary Spilde and the Lane Executive Team in order to provide additional parking capacity to accommodate the enrollment growth that is anticipated this coming fall term. Thank you for your understanding and please respond if there are additional or remaining questions and concerns. Thank you.
Dennis Carr, M.S.I.R. PHR/SPHR Chief Human Resource Officer

HI, Dave. I want to reiterate Gail's thanks to you for your time this morning. Pat Boleyn, a forest ecology and biology teacher and long time forest service employee, subsequently raised some questions regarding whether the College needs an EIS done for this type of activity. If the lands are designated as forest in Lane County, there may be restrictions regarding how/when the land can be repurposed. I'm sure you are aware of these types of issues.

I did a quick web search for pertinent information and came to this site, Oregon Dept. of Forestry, http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/lawsrules.shtml#Forest_Laws

and this specific statute on Planning Forest Operations,

http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_600/OAR_629/629_605.html

I raise this issue just to be sure that the planned actions do not create unwanted legal hassles for the college. I don't know if our lands are considered public lands or private, and in either case, whether we are free to do as we please with sensitive forest lands.

Pat Boleyn may give you a call to discuss this question. Again, thank you for your willingness to work with the instructional needs and purposes of the Science Division in this matter.

Sarah L. Ulerick, Ph.D. Interim Division Dean, Science 541-463-5447 ulericks@lanecc.edu

Dear Dave,

Thank you so much for your answers and for your offer of time. And thanks for offering to walk the site again. We have some in-house experts in forest ecology and plant growth, and it is great that you walked the site with them--I probably couldn't add anything to that.

PAVING:
It is a great relief that impervious paving is not planned. This makes a huge difference in terms of water quality.

TREE PROTECTION PLAN:
I strongly urge you to have someone develop a written tree protection plan before beginning construction. This is a document that 1) shows on a plan where construction vehicles can and cannot drive, and where construction materials can and cannot be stored, and 2) gives some written details. It makes all the difference in the survival of plants and trees!

Without a written tree protection plan--backed up by construction fencing around protected areas--it is all too tempting (because it's easier) to store materials under tree canopies and to drive across critical root zones. The damage caused by compaction in the root zones may not show up for years, at which point the trees go into decline and it is too late. (Not to mention the initial destruction of the herbaceous plants Gail talked about.)

A tree protection plan could go a long way toward minimizing damage.

Pat, Gail, and Frank could help you identify the critical root zones which could then be 1) indicated on the plan and 2) marked off in the field. For trees, the ideal protection zone is five feet beyond the drip line, but you can also calculate it. (Root zone radius, in feet, is 1 to 1.5 times trunk diameter at breast height, in inches) You can then provide additional details in the specs.

I'm attaching a couple of resources from the International Society of Arboriculture: an information sheet and some sample specification language.

Thank you again for being so conscientious about this project. Please let me know if I can help.
Margaret Robertson, ASLA, Lane Community College 541-463-3143 robertsonm@lanecc.edu

LCC's new Design Guidelines (attached), approved by College Council May 28, include a section titled OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE with the following subsection titled CONSERVATION:
Conservation
The College should offset the negative impact of construction such that there is no net loss of current ecological functions on the College's property.
Building and construction sites should be designed and located so that the ecological function of streams and wetlands in the Russel Creek watershed is preserved.
Spaces should be provided to support the study of natural environments and their associated ecosystems.

Now that this is official College policy, we agreed we would monitor and review its application. So I feel obligated to ask several questions:

QUESTIONS:
1) Will there be net loss of ecological function on College property? (And if there will, what process was used to justify overriding that design principle?)

2) Will the ecological function of the Russel Creek watershed be preserved? (And if not, what process was used to justify overriding that design principle?)

3) How near to the Russel Creek channel is the construction? I did a little reconnaissance up there a couple weeks ago and was troubled to see construction debris dumped near the stream. Will this project get as close as the debris piles are?

4) Does anyone have a site plan they can send out showing size and location of the project? --Would help answer some of these questions.

5) Do you know whether consultants were hired as part of the design work--landscape architects, biologists, hydrologists, etc.? In a sensitive setting like this, I would assume they were. (Engineers are great as specialists in structures, grading, paving, and piping, but they need other consultants to be able to address biology/hydrology/ecology issues.)

6) How near to mature trees is construction planned? Has a tree protection plan been written?

COMMENTS:
7) LCC, Arlie Co., Native Plant Society, Audubon, and others are part of a City task force which is developing a master plan for a 200-acre park/Ridgeline Trail connector south of campus, where we are looking carefully at the very same types of habitat Gail refers to, and considering ways to make connections between Lane, Arlie property, and the Ridgeline corridor. (We were not aware that a paving project was going on.)
re: being the northern limit of California Black Oak: City staff reports that there have been sitings of Acorn Woodpeckers in these trees, which is noteworthy.

8) The Board has authorized paying a UO planning studio to develop a perimeter master plan fall and winter terms--in partnership with any Lane staff who are interested in participating in charrette activities--and a key part of the plan will of course be the south campus boundary which abuts Arlie property. It would be REALLY good if we could wait until all the data are in and some plans are examined before we pave over that section. Any chance of postponing this project?

Please advise. Thank you for your time. Margaret Robertson, ASLA 541-463-3143 robertsonm@lanecc.edu

July 15, 2009 **Comments with regard to sudden and unannounced denudation of natural areas at the south edge of the Lane Community College Campus in east Eugene.**

From: Rhoda M. Love, PhD, teacher of Ecology, Botany, Biology, and Forest Ecosystems in the Lane Community College Science Department between 1965 and 1995.

I visited the Lane Community College Campus today and photographed the extensive destruction of native southern Willamette Valley plant and animal habitat at the south boundary of the campus -- I am appalled at what I saw. Habitat destruction on this scale demands public notice, careful scientific consideration, lengthy discussion, and most certainly an **Environmental Impact Statement**, including input from ecological experts.

I know this area very well as do many of my LCC Science Department colleagues presently on staff as well as retired. The field botanists, biologists, and ecologists in our Department recognize this area as one of the most ecologically diverse and species-rich locations for biological study in the region. My colleague Gail Baker will have provided you with a list of rare plants known from the area. In addition, one needs to be aware of the total richness of the ecosystem that includes: mosses and liverworts, algae and fungi, lichens, animals -- mammals, amphibians, insects and birds. It is especially important for birds; in our spring forays to the area we frequently encountered active nests in some of the locations now denuded.

Turning such an area into a vast expanse of paving is unthinkable. It is not too late to abandon plans for leveling and cementing this ecologically important area. Since only clearing has so far occurred and some trees and shrubs are still intact, and the soil with its dormant seeds and bulbs has not been yet been subjected to extreme disturbance, some of the damage might still be undone. Leave the area untouched at once to heal and repair itself during the fall rains. Use ingenuity to find other solutions for cars.

Lane Community College has one of the finest Science Departments in our area and is proud to be located in an region of high natural biodiversity that can be used in numerous instructional ways. Abandon the present reckless plan for putting the automobile ahead of our natural world and ahead of opportunities for high-quality outdoor studies for LCC's students. Dr. Rhoda M. Love Eugene, Oregon

Nathaniel Sperry <nathaniel@sperrytreecare.com> 7/14/2009 10:28 PM >>>

I have received a letter via email listserve suggesting that very important biodiversity habitat on the LCC campus is slated for destruction in order to construct a temporary parking lot? Now, I don't often get in the middle of planning efforts, but **if this scenario is indeed true**, I would like to express my strong disappointment in the planning processes and sincere request that alternative plans be entertained.

You are an educational institution with rare resources present on campus for instruction- Why are you throwing these away? Surely there is plenty of space at LCC that does not have biodiversity that can be destroyed for a temporary lot?

Nathaniel Sperry 605 Howard Ave.Eugene OR 97404 541-461-1737 541-461-0091 Fax

nathaniel@sperrytreecare.com www.sperrytreecare.com

Dear Mary, 7/20/09

I have just returned from vacation and was very distressed to hear about the potential loss of native plant habitat at LCC to "solve" a temporary parking problem. This is a very short-sighted solution. There area number of unusual plant species at this location, and it has served as a resource for generations of students. Habitat loss is irretrievable, and the loss to biology students at LCC would be irreplaceable. Please consider an alternate plan, such as increasing bus service.

Regards, Bitty Roy
Professor (of plant ecology and evolution) in the Biology Department, University of Oregon
Alen,

This project was canceled for the present time, adding to the deficit of student parking this fall. We are pursuing other alternatives, none of which are bond projects.

Best Regards,***David L. Willis***Director of Facilities Management & Planning

>>> Alen Bahret <bahreta@lanecc.edu> 7/20/2009 8:38 AM >>>

David, This is certainly a project with a lot of energy and it should be if we accept our mission of sustainability. I can only hope that we, as a college, accept the responsibility and the challenge to do everything possible to minimize environmental impact. If there is a need to remove trees to make this or any other project possible, then we should accept a similar or expanded policy that LTD and ODOT have both adopted. LTD has a minimum one for

one tree replacement agreement for the Gateway EMX expansion project and ODOT has a one removed for two tree planted policy for the I-5 / Willamette River Bridge replacement project.

What is the LCC policy going into this or any other project that effects land and trees?

AB in IT

On Jul 20, 2009, at 6:25 AM, David Willis wrote:
Alen,This is a student transportation fee and an FMP project, not a bond project.

David L. Willis

Alen Bahret <bahreta@lanecc.edu> 7/9/2009 9:56 AM >>>
David,Is this a Bond Project or a Deferred Maintenance Project? If it is a Bond Project, it should come to the Bond Leadership team at the next scheduled meeting on July 23rd. AB in IT