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Images available upon request.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PRIME PARCEL OF LAND DONATED TO FOREST PARK CONSERVANCY: Forest Park Conservancy is beneficiary of a portion of Cottrell refuge**

PORTLAND, Ore. — Forest Park Conservancy (FPC) is the beneficiary of three acres of the Cottrell refuge, a small wooded area adjacent to Skyline Blvd., in Portland’s west hills.

The land was donated by the Cottrell family, who have owned it since the 1949. The family also recently gave the adjoining eight acres, plus the family’s custom-built former home, to the University of Oregon’s School of Architecture.

“My father never wanted the property to be parceled and sold off for development; he dreamed of leaving it to future generations,” said Marcy Cottrell Houle, family member and also author of *One City’s Wilderness: Portland’s Forest Park*. “He instilled a love of nature in all of us, and for my sisters and me, it’s wonderful to know it will be well-cared for and protected.”



**Wildlife, include red tailed hawks, can often be seen on the Cottrell property**

The Cottrell refuge is a possible connection point to Forest Park via the Hoyt Arboretum and a rare opportunity to obtain a parcel of naturally wooded acreage close to downtown. While the Portland Parks & Recreation manages all of Forest Park’s nearly 5,200 acres, Forest Park Conservancy works in close partnership with the city and has taken on the ownership and management of small parcels of land near the Park. That includes 38 acres of old growth forest approximately three miles north of Forest Park and now three acres of the Cottrell Refugee to the south.

“Whenever there’s an opportunity to protect sensitive areas from development for the benefit of Forest Park, strategic land ownership is something we definitely look at,” said Renee Myers, executive director of Forest Park Conservancy. “We are so grateful to the Cottrell family for their vision to help protect this special place.”

The Cottrell acquisition also fits with FPC’s Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative (GFPCI) and the larger vision to improve habitat connectivity beyond Forest Park’s boundaries, from the Willamette River to the coast range. For years, given the proximity to the Park and to defend against invasive weedy plants from encroaching into the Park via sensitive boundary areas, FPC has been working on restoration projects on the Cottrell property. With old growth Douglas fir, a seasonal creek and a short trail established, the area is home to many species of birds and other wildlife. Sightings have included elk, deer, woodpeckers, owls and hawks.

“These natural areas are being swallowed up as Portland grows. We are thrilled that we now have an opportunity to protect and restore this area as part of the larger Greater Forest Park Conservation effort,” said Myers.

***The GFPCI:***

Led by the Forest Park Conservancy and launched in fall 2013, the Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative (GFPCI) is the first-of-its-kind, comprehensive plan for how to tackle some of the biggest environmental threats facing Forest Park and the surrounding ecosystem. The 80-page plan identifies environmental threats the Park faces, such as invasive species, climate change and habitat loss. It also outlines strategies and solutions to address them, including habitat restoration, improvements to watershed health, acquisition of ecologically valuable property, conservation easements, preventative care and maintenance and private land owner education and participation.

The GFPCI focuses on goals and objectives associated with 36 “prescriptions,” identified to have the most significant impact on the ecological health of Forest Park, based on an assessment and study completed by Portland Parks & Recreation. While some are large-scale projects will take major resources and time to complete, others are already underway. The GFPCI also represents the beginning of the Forest Park Alliance, a coalition coordinated by FPC of public, private and nonprofit partners who have joined together to help meet the goals outlined in the plan.

***Forest Park Conservancy:***

Forest Park Conservancy is the only nonprofit organization solely dedicated to caring for Forest Park, one of the largest forested urban parks in the nation. To learn more about the GFPCI, make a donation or find out how you can help support FPC’s efforts, visit <http://www.forestparkconservancy.org/>

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