



Serving Unhoused People and Sustaining Our Natural Areas

Cultivating compassion, innovation and collaboration in addressing critical resource stewardship and social justice needs

Background: Natural resource managers note the increased presence and impacts of unhoused people on natural areas. Agency and NGO natural resource managers throughout the region are approaching this with different resources and perspectives. Impacts are resulting in:

- **Opposition to new parks and natural area infrastructure:** Members of the public are voicing increased concern over trail expansion because of questions about safety.
- **Increasingly negative public attitudes towards people living outside:** The visibility of waste in natural areas may be used to justify sweeps, camping bans and have other ripple effects including increased neighborhood-level opposition to new shelters or other low income housing initiatives.
- **Looming public health issues:** People living outside are exposed to flooding, human and other waste, extreme weather conditions, and other risks. Other members of the public who wish to use affected natural areas may encounter human waste, used needles, aggressive animals and other health and safety concerns.

Vision: There is a demonstrable need to cultivate sensitivity and connect with other resource providers to develop flexible and adaptive approaches that support both unhoused people and natural areas. As an initial step we are convening a one day workshop geared towards developing a shared understanding of key dimensions of houselessness.

Partners aim to: a) cultivate compassion, understanding, and open new communications channels among people in the natural resource sector and those who are unhoused or are advocates for unhoused people, b) share/help generate innovative ideas, and c) develop the necessary partnerships and find resources to support both unhoused people and natural resources.

Near term expected outcomes include:

1. Engage 80+ regional natural resource professionals in a pilot event on October 23, 2017 (highlights outlined below)

2. Communicate key outcomes, devise concrete next steps, develop partnerships and implement ideas.
3. Build new relationships and communications channels among people/organizations that are committed to environmental and social justice and conservation. Partner with resource managers and unhoused community members and advocates to achieve stewardship outcomes that are mutually beneficial.
4. Create communications materials that increase knowledge, understanding and compassion across interest groups. (Example: share and respond to nature-inspired art created by unhoused and transitional youth)

The October event will include:

1. Welcome and time to honor the original stewards of this land with [Ed Edmo](#).
2. An introduction to systemic oppression and key issues affecting unhoused people - regional trends, policies, and equity concerns from Israel Bayer, Executive Director of Street Roots.
3. An overview of trauma and Trauma Informed Care from a statewide collaborative housed at Portland State University, Trauma Informed Oregon. Director Mandy Davis will make linkages to natural resource contexts.
4. Practical engagement strategies with tash shatz and Robin Davis of Multnomah County. These will emphasize tools that natural resource professionals can immediately apply in the field through their interactions with unhoused people.
5. An opportunity to hear and share outside the box ideas to address all or part of an issue related to people sheltering in natural areas and conservation concerns, with an introduction by Ibrahim Mubarak from Right 2 Survive, and Cassie Cohen from the Portland Harbor Community Coalition. If you have an idea to share please let us know!
6. A debrief session to share ideas, concerns, needs, definitions of success, and next steps.
7. Coverage of the event by Street Roots reporter.

Please register [here](#).

Contact Kathleen Guillozet at kguillozet@b-e-f.org or 971-678-2605 to be added to our distribution list, to help sponsor this event, or to discuss any questions.

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