

We are asking you to become a steward of Mt. Tabor Park. Mt. Tabor Park is a place of beauty and peace in SE Portland. It is our neighborhood gem. Many people don't know that our park is looked after by **Weed Warriors**, a dedicated group of volunteers who work diligently to remove invasive weeds and trees.

Who are the Weed Warriors?

This award-winning program began in 2002 and significantly expanded in 2010 to bring ecological health back to the park. It consists of a part-time paid Stewardship Coordinator (30 hrs. per month) who organizes volunteers from March-October, to remove invasive plants. Weed Warriors is a program of the Friends of Mt. Tabor Park (FMTP).

- **2005:** Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) conducted a comprehensive survey of the vegetation in the park and found that 93% was in poor or severely degraded ecological condition due to extensive cover of invasive vegetation. Native plants were being crowded out by English ivy, clematis (*vitalba*), Himalayan blackberry and weedy trees.
- **2009:** PP&R, Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), and the Weed Warriors began a partnership to reduce invasive species through the Tabor to the River project aimed at capturing storm water runoff to reduce sewage overflows into the Willamette River and reduce costs associated with the need to lay more pipes to capture water.
- **2010-2017:** With significant funding from the City, the Weed Warrior program was able to hire a 30 hr. a month part-time Stewardship Coordinator to plan and oversee the program. As a result, the program grew from nine crew leaders to 24; 250 volunteers annually to 500; and 350 volunteer hours to more than 2200 per year and a total of over 15,000 volunteer hrs (the equivalent of 7 full-time employees). Their work was recognized by a Spirit of Portland Award from the City of Portland and the statewide Community Organization Award from SOLVE.

Why is this campaign happening now?

City funding ended in 2017 when the Tabor to the River project was completed. With PP&R budget cuts in seven of the last 10 years and more expected for 2018-19, the Weed Warriors cannot expect further City funding. FMTP can contribute a portion of the Coordinator salary annually, but not enough to staff at the level needed to ensure the needed scope, quality and effectiveness of the program. We have developed a campaign to ask you and others who love the natural beauty of the park to become park stewards to help us to maintain it in perpetuity through the Weed Warrior program.

Who will insure that my donation will be appropriately used for habitat restoration?

Donations will be managed by FMTP which has established financial policies. When the campaign goal is realized, FMTP plans to establish an endowment fund through the Oregon Community Foundation. The fund's proceeds will support the Stewardship Coordinator position into the future.

A One-Time Donation?

Yes. This campaign will ask donors **only once** for contributions to the FMTP Stewardship Fund. We hope, though, that you'll continue as a Park Steward through future membership in FMTP, annually renewable at nominal cost. With your support, Weed Warrior volunteers will continue doing battle with the ever growing spread of invasive plants. Together, we will ensure a healthy park for generations to come!

More information? Go to www.taborfriends.org/stewardship.