



**Commissioner Nick Fish**  
City of Portland

**October 22, 2018**

Thank you, Diane, for the introduction.

It's an honor to join you today to preview the completion of a major restoration project to bring salmon back to Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge and benefit other wildlife and the people of Portland.

I have the great honor of overseeing both the Bureau of Environmental Services and Portland Parks & Recreation.

These bureaus lead the City's work on environmental protection, healthy watersheds, the urban tree canopy, and more.

With the success of this project and Crystal Springs Creek, I'm excited to see what BES and Parks will do next. But we wouldn't be having this celebration if it wasn't for strong partnerships with the federal government and the community.

Thanks to Lance Helwig and the Army Corps of Engineers Portland District. Our successful partnership was guided by our shared values of watershed health and salmon recovery.

I also want to thank two long-time community leaders, Bob Sallinger and Mike Houck. They were early and loud champions of establishing the Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge and this restoration project.

And I want to thank the many neighbors, commuters, and families who supported this project and agreed that salmon recovery was worth the inconvenient trail closure.

As I already mentioned, the City, in partnership with the Army Corps, restored the entire length of Crystal Springs Creek. Last year, Council declared Crystal Springs to be the city's first Salmon Sanctuary.

That project was a watershed moment – pun intended – for salmon recovery, and we knew that we wanted to do more.

Salmon are now found in more than 100 miles of Portland's 300 miles of streams.

Portlanders have long valued nature in the city, and BES and Parks will continue to protect salmon and the healthy environment they need to recover and thrive.

The restored Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge before us today will be a much-needed rest stop and a safe hiding place for juvenile salmon.

That's thanks to a new "salmon subway" that replaces the old small culvert and reconnects Oaks Bottom to the Willamette River for the first time in over 100 years.

I look forward to biking here with my son and seeing osprey, Great Blue Herons, otters, and salmon in the heart of our urban environment. And I look forward to working with our partners again on the next project in this series of Willamette River habitat restorations – in Tryon Creek.

Finally, I'm pleased to announce the reopening of the Springwater Trail.

On November 1, the barricades come down and the trail reopens to the public.

I encourage the public using the trail to stop and celebrate nature in our city.