

# Priority Turtle Conservation Area:

## Fairview Creek Headwaters



**Location:** Gresham, Multnomah County, OR. 182nd Ave to the west and NW Birdsdale Ave to the east; SE Division Ave to the north and SE Powel Blvd to the south.

**Ownership:** City of Gresham, with a 33-acre portion co-owned by City of Gresham and Metro.

**Site Description:** Fairview Creek Headwaters, primarily owned by the City of Gresham is a natural area containing the 80-acre Grant Butte, and almost 40 acres of wetland (the headwaters of Fairview Creek). A portion of this large natural area is the SW Community Park. This site is unique in its size and location in the middle of the City. The site is surrounded by developed land, including two four lane roads bordering the north and south ends of the site and residential properties to the east and west.

The property historically was used for agriculture, including a large scale dairy. To improve the site for these practices the wetland was channelized into a single ditch running along the eastern edge of the property. After acquisition by the City in 1992, restoration efforts began to convert the ditch back to a series of meandering channels and open water. Additionally, conversion of the pasture grass-dominated vegetation community to diverse native shrubs and emergents began in the early 2000's. Finally, after discovery of the turtle population in 2007, basking structures were placed in the wetland and nesting areas were identified and improved.

### Turtle Significance:

- Trapping, basking, and nesting surveys have been done since 2007, and over 300 Western painted turtles of all age classes have been identified and marked.
- Nesting locations have also been identified throughout the site, and include an old railroad bed as well as an area at the southeast corner of Grant Butte adjacent to private properties.

### Current Threats to the Population:

- The largest threats to this population are related to the urbaneness of the site. This population is completely isolated from others and the high human use presents challenges such as predation by dogs, dumping of exotic plants and animals into the wetland, removal of turtles from the wetland by people, and high invasive plant prevalence.
- Several red-eared sliders (non-native species) have been found at the site, which are most likely from pet releases.
- The predominant vegetation throughout the wetland is reed canary grass. This invasive plant has altered the habitat especially in the south end of the site, making it less desirable for turtles.

### Opportunities for Conservation :

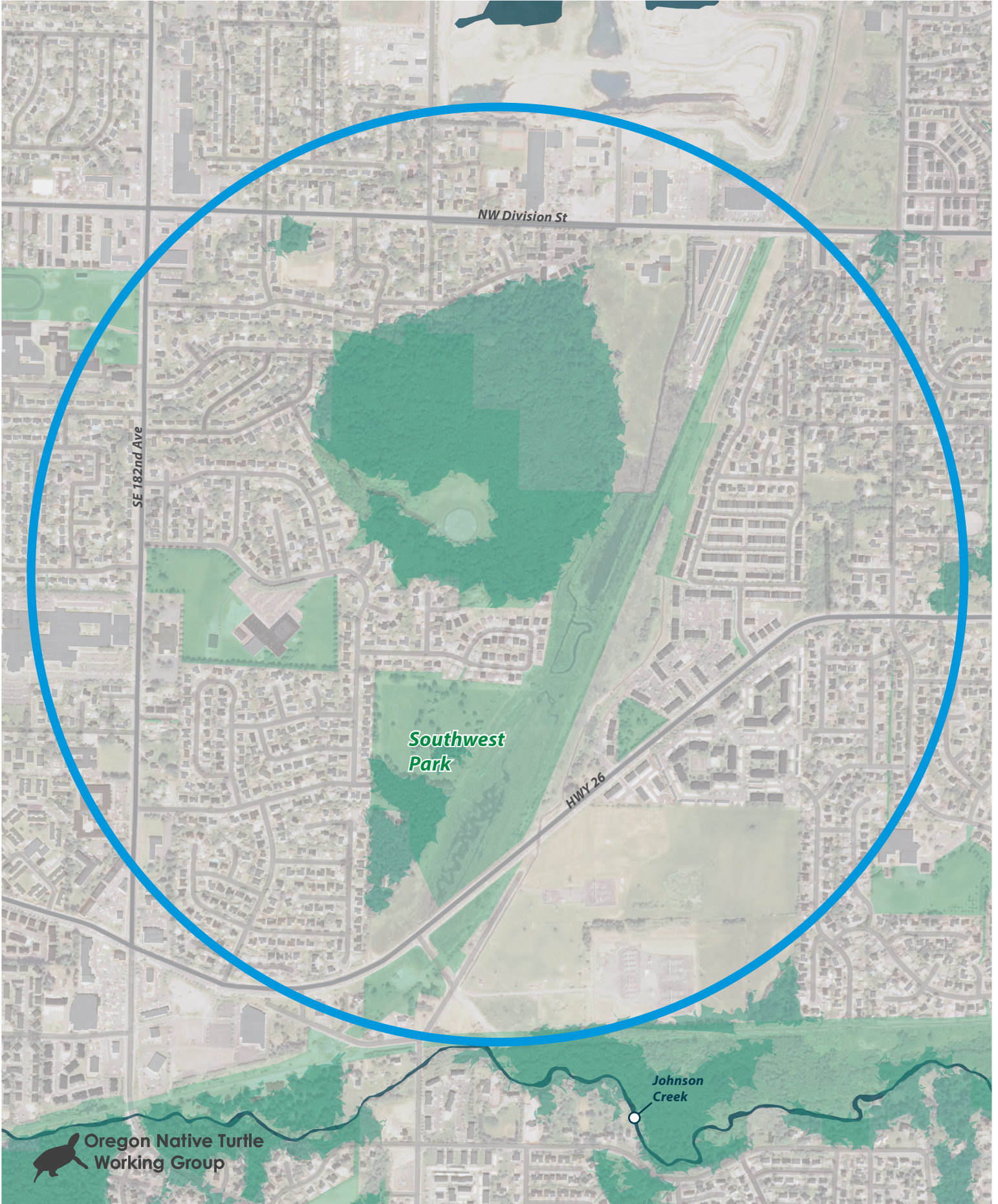
- There are great opportunities to study the impacts urbanization on turtle populations using this site as a model population.
- The recent purchase of 33 acres of adjacent land at north end of the site is an opportunity to create additional nesting, basking and aquatic habitat.

### Active Conservation Partners:

- City of Gresham: [www.greshamoregon.gov](http://www.greshamoregon.gov)
- Metro: [www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)
- Friends of Grant Butte Wetlands:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Grant-Butte-Wetlands-Fairview-Creek-Headwaters-111920325589727/>



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NW Division St

SE 182nd Ave

Southwest Park

Hwy 26

Johnson Creek