

HOQUARTON NATURAL INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

Hoquarton Natural Interpretive Trail Leads Community to Rediscover its History

ADDRESS: North of downtown Tillamook, Oregon; east of Highway 101 south of Hoquarton Slough
PROPERTY SIZE: 26.5 acres
FORMER USE: Lumber mill
CURRENT USE: Recreational interpretive trail, outdoor educational opportunity, and birding venue

EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:

The City of Tillamook utilized EPA Brownfields Section 128(a) State & Tribal funding and \$29,000 from an EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund awarded to Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST).

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Annenberg Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, National Park Service, National Endowment of the Arts/New England Foundation for the Arts, Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Oregon State Parks Department, Port of Tillamook Bay, Tillamook Bay Watershed Council, Tillamook County, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, Tillamook Public Utilities District, Tillamook High School, University of Oregon Landscape Architecture Laboratory



For additional data and geographic information for this and other Brownfields Grants, please visit EPA's: **Envirofacts** - www.epa.gov/enviro/html/bms/bms_query.html
Enviomapper - www.epa.gov/enviro/bf

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The Hoquarton Slough was the main transportation route in and out of Tillamook for a long time. The property was used as a lumber mill from 1885 to about 1950, after which it was largely abandoned. In the mid-1990s, the property was donated to the City for use as open space. Once the City of Tillamook gained title to the property, it began working with the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership and local community groups to plan for and create a community resource for recreation, education, and economic revitalization. Assessment work was funded by EPA Section 128(a) funds. In response to concerns about petroleum contamination, the City used the CREST grant and other funds to excavate and treat contaminated soil. The Oregon DEQ completed an investigation of the property in 2006 and determined that no further action was necessary. The property was ideal because the City lacked a large, central outdoor space for recreation and education and the Hoquarton Slough provided these things right in downtown Tillamook.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Since the initial groundbreaking in 2002, school groups and volunteers removed 4.5 acres of blackberries, ivy, reed canary grass, and Japanese knotweed and picked up and disposed of more than 2 tons of trash, including cement blocks, vehicles, and wire.
- Volunteers planted more than 2,000 native plants in riparian area and within the park and highlighted nature-scaping as an interpretive theme.

OUTCOME:

Led by the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, the project creatively pooled grant funds from a variety of sources (including arts organizations) and used volunteers for everything from cleanup to generating ideas for planning and site design. In 2006, the trail was officially opened to the public. The concrete trail was completed and structures from the lumber mill were replaced with viewing docks or platforms, some of which incorporated pilings or other features from the original construction, helping to illustrate the history of the property. The restored trail also serves as a living lab for educational opportunities, involving all different grade levels. Topics covered include: biology of salmonids, water quality, riparian functions, and life cycle of migratory birds. In addition to educational opportunities, the Hoquarton Interpretive Trail is helping to reconnect downtown shops, restaurants, and businesses to the historic heart of the town. As the only park in downtown Tillamook, the trail creates a nice walking opportunity for urban workers and residents. It also provides prime bird viewing opportunities, especially for ducks and other migratory waterfowl, from the three viewing docks.



The Hoquarton Interpretive Trail provides recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages.