

# ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

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## STAFF MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

**FROM:** Interim Director Eldridge

**DATE:** Nov 1, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Salmon Safe System-Wide Certification for APRC (Information)  
(Goal #5 Develop an environmental sustainability and implementation plan)

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### Situation

APRC has the opportunity to achieve system-wide Salmon Safe Certification through a Pacific Northwest region peer-reviewed certification program.

### Background

In the Spring/Summer of 2023, APRC partnered with Southern Oregon University (SOU) to evaluate options for enhanced environmental stewardship on the East Main Park project. Lulu Brazeau, a recent SOU graduate from the Environmental Science, Policy and Sustainability Department was hired by SOU's Institute for Applied Sustainability to work as a paid Intern for Terrain Landscape Architecture. Terrain is the firm contracted by APRC for the design of East Main Park.

Ms. Brazeau researched and evaluated the feasibility of several 3<sup>rd</sup> party environmental certifications and ultimately concluded that the Salmon Safe Certification, an independent non-profit Portland-based organization best fit the interests of parks and the community. Additionally, it was determined that a system-wide parks certification was not only feasible, but similar in cost to certification of single certification of East Main Park.

At the Study Session, Dan Kent, the co-founder and Executive Director of Salmon Safe will provide more information about the certification background and process.

### Assessment

Through consultation with Terrain, SOU's Institute for Applied Sustainability and APRC, it was determined that the system-wide Salmon Safe Certification was appropriate to our region, scientifically rigorous and achievable by APRC. Subsequent meetings with Salmon Safe staff and review of

certification requirements reinforced these findings. Certification provides the following benefits to Ashland and APRC:

- Recognition for existing environmental practices.
- Rigorous science-based site development and land management practices to inform future APRC projects and goals.
- Increased focus on water quality and protection of sensitive aquatic and upland resources.
- Reflects the culture and values of the region- complements the imminent Klamath Dams removal project.
- Honors a critical resource of the indigenous peoples of our region.
- Promotes Ashland as a legitimate eco-tourism destination, where environmental stewardship and science-based management is prioritized.
- Provides leverage for acquiring grant funding for restoration or other projects.
- Initiates a long-desired mutually beneficial collaboration between SOU students/faculty with municipal government.

SOU has agreed to price match the cost of certification (~20K) with a 10K cost match. Additionally, SOU will provide scientific support in the form of paid interns, capstone projects and faculty engagement.