



Making of a Nature Park



Early 1970s: Planting the seeds

- Barbara Wilson formed St. Mary's Woods Committee with hopes of acquiring the property.
- Larry Cole led a parallel group advocating for a regional park.
- In 1974, voters approved a \$10M bond for Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, including \$410,000 to create a nature park.

1975-79: Encountering setbacks

- City of Beaverton earmarked funds for a regional park, and The Nature Conservancy began categorizing areas of significance in St. Mary's Woods' habitat mosaic.
- The determined citizens combined their groups into a committee to lobby for a new state park.
- Although the state originally approved the funds, the funds were subsequently slashed from the budget.



1980-81: Citizens Rise Up

- The St. Mary's Woods Committee teamed with the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District to propose a \$5.5M bond measure to voters.
- The voters approved it!
- The park district purchased 180 acres, one of the last undeveloped woodlands in eastern Washington County.

1981-1993: Patient Cultivation

- St. Mary's Woods became Tualatin Hills Nature Park in 1984.
- The park district hired a consulting firm to produce a master plan, approved in 1984.
- It took 17 years of work for the park to come to fruition.
- Hundreds of volunteers, including high school students, cleared brush and built trails.



1994-1998: Building A Nature Park

- In 1994, residents passed a bond levy to update the master plan to include accessible trails, build the nature center, make trail improvements, and add signage.
- Volunteers continued to work to create the beautiful park that exists today.
- In 1995, the park grew by an additional 15 acres with land acquired from PGE.

April 18, 1998: Grand Opening

- The Tualatin Hills Nature Park and nature center opened on Earth Day, April 18, 1998.
- The grand opening featured speeches; tree planting; exhibits by the Audubon Society, Oregon Zoo, Metro Greenspaces; music and family activities; and guided art, birding, and nature walks.



1998-2021

- In the early 2000s, the park added 25 more acres.
- Now, 50 years after determined community members set out to preserve a beautiful greenspace, 150,000 people come each year to enjoy this gift to the community.