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Tonight: Members to call for a moratorium on single-track cycling at Forest Park

By Janie Har, The Oregonian

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Bikers and joggers pass each other on the Saltzman Trail Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2009 in Forest Park. Mountain bikers Tom Archer and Frank Selker as pushing city council to open up Forest Park to more single-trail biking, in the form of new trails or shared trails. Olivia Bucks/The Oregonian

Two members of an advisory committee on single track cycling at Forest Park plan to call for a moratorium on any new cycling at a final meeting of the group tonight.

Marcy Houle, a biologist on the 17-member volunteer committee, acknowledged her protest is likely to fail but she needs to try.

"What is of true concern to me is that the great majority of the people of Portland don't even have a clue what is going on ... and just what is at stake," she wrote in an e-mail.

The Forest Park Single Track Cycling Advisory Committee was put together by Parks Commissioner Nick Fish last year after a request by single-track fans for more options in the park.

Houle and Les Blaize, another member of the committee who has property next to the park, oppose increasing uses without further study of the park's health. And they seem to have on their side a new report by the Portland City Club that says the city's urban jewel needs more money and maintenance. City Club is scheduled to vote on the

report this Friday.

In February, a member of the single-track cycling group found a rogue trail ideal for cyclists hacked into a pristine corner of the park.

Fish said today that he takes the city club's report seriously, but as "we're not going to stop the process." There is some "low-hanging fruit," including fire lanes, that he thinks the group can agree on.

And the process for trails is a lengthy one. The group's recommendations will go to Fish and to Parks Director Zari Santner; changes will require land-use reviews.

The meeting starts in about 20 minutes, and lasts from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Lovejoy Room at City Hall.

-- **Janie Har**

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