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Commissioner Fish announces initiatives for Forest Park

Posted by [Jonathan Maus \(Publisher/Editor\)](#) on June 17th, 2010 at 12:27 pm

City of Portland Commissioner Nick Fish, who oversees Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R), has just announced five new management initiatives that will "address ecological and recreational concerns about Forest Park."

Fish is reacting to mounting public pressure to do something about the deteriorating health of the park. This pressure came to a head last month with [a research report published by City Club of Portland](#) titled, "[Call to Action](#)." That report admonished the Parks Bureau for neglecting the park and not completing a number of studies and surveys called for in the 1995 Forest Park Natural Resources Management Plan.



Commissioner Nick Fish.
(Photo © J. Maus)

Calling them "important steps... to address how the park is managed now and in the future," Fish said he's moving forward on a range of initiatives. Here's the list of five initiatives that are to be completed by September 2010:

- Finalize a Partnership Agreement with the Forest Park Conservancy.
- Deliver the final Forest Park Desired Future Conditions report.
- Hire and assign a full-time Park Ranger to Forest Park.
- Complete the Forest Park Recreation Survey.
- Recruit a City Club Forest Park Research Committee member to participate on the 2011-12 PP&R Budget Advisory Committee.

To conduct the recreational user survey, PP&R will work with Portland State University. The survey will provide PP&R with "objective data about use within the park to help the bureau better manage the increasing recreational demands on the park with baseline data on the intensity of use, preferences, quality of existing park features, and demographics of typical park users."

In addition to the City Club report, Commissioner Fish and Parks Director Zari Santner have heard loud and clear from some members of the Forest Park Single Track Cycling Committee that a user survey and more enforcement in the park is imperative before making any decisions to expand bike access.

With his announcement today, Fish is possibly paving the way for the release of his big decision on how and where to improve biking opportunities in the park. The Single Track Cycling Committee is set to hand-off their final list of recommendations to Fish this Monday and sources say he and Santner are not expected to unveil any decisions about that "until Labor Day" -- which would be early September. With the initiatives announced today expected to be completed "by September" that would mean Fish and Santner could make their decisions about bike access *after* satisfying some of the key steps some on the committee have said they must complete first.

We'll be watching developments closely as it remains to be seen how the completion of these initiatives might impact Fish and Santner's decisions about biking in the park.



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