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Interview with Jim Labbe, Portland Audubon Society, 2011

Jim Labbe

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Interviewee: Jim Labbe
Interviewer: Tony Smith
Research Assistant: Nigel Peltier
3/11/2011
PSU

33s: Q) How long have you lived in Portland? A) Most of his life

1m5s: Q) What brought you back? A) Grad School

1m45s: Q) How did you get involved with the Audubon Society? A) Lived near it, worked on Goal 5 planning (land use and natural resource use), volunteered there while working on my thesis and got offered a job.

3m: Q) Tell me more about the goal 5 work. A) Requires local governments to determine what wildlife areas are locally significant, and then work to protect them.

5m16s: Q) Urban conservationist outline of your experience? A) I work on land use planning. That also involves storm water and urban forestry. I am very involved with local parks and bond measures, and campaigns to get protection of natural resources.

8m30s: Q) What is a typical day for you? A) I focus on specific projects each day. Example: local park project, working with people of Gresham to help with community organizing and planning. Monday, I have staff meetings, i.e. getting the word out.

10m: Q) Urban Forest Canopy- tell me about your efforts with it. A) Vegetation abundance is related to wildlife abundance. UFC helps slow storm water, improves air quality, psychological well-being. Trees are traditionally underrepresented, we have been trying to help trees, ensure them for the future, etc. UFC is a positive thing, our goal is to help the city protect and develop it.

13m: Q) Tell me about your work with eco-habitats.

15m30s: More on the Urban Fauna Group? A) It's a Listserv that tracks the work we do with the Audubon Society.

18m55s: Q) Can you tell me about your research on old condominiums? A) We developed some condos, took out garages and made housing.

19m: Q) What is your definition of sustainability? A) The UN's: "Providing the needs of present and future generations." Intergenerational equity, and social equity in the present.

20m40s: Q) What are some of your proudest achievements? A) We protected regionally significant habitat with legislation. Hasn't been perfect, but very significant. We got started right as the housing market collapsed.

22m30s: Q) What have been some challenges? A) The changing population here in Portland. Linguistically, socially, economically diverse, how can we create the future generation of conservationists? I struggle with how to spend my time- take leadership now? Or focus on future leadership and getting others involved.

24m30s: Q) What are you involved in? A) We helped found Coalition for a Livable Future... Personally, I have lots of memberships in groups.

26m: [question unrecorded] A) A Cultural connection to nature is very important.

28m: Q) Anything else you would like to include?