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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Portland Parks Foundation Celebrates 15 Years of Service with New Small Grant Program**

Throughout the year the Foundation plans to raise over \$2 million for additional park investments

The Portland Parks Foundation (PPF) is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the creation of a new small grants program, made possible in large part by a generous bequest from Nancy Hebb Freeman. A public announcement of the new program was at the Anniversary Year Kick-Off event on September 22. The program will be inaugurated in 2017.

The grants, to be named Nancy Hebb Freeman grants, will support nonprofit organizations working to support and improve public parks and park programs in the city of Portland.

“Nancy Hebb Freeman’s thoughtful gift will increase the resources available to support community volunteers who help provide the margin of excellence for Portland’s world-class parks system,” said PPF Executive Director Jeff Anderson. “She loved the access to the natural environment that so many neighborhoods in Portland provide, yet too many still lack. PPF hopes to use her gift to promote community stewardship and expand access to great parks.”

The Portland Parks Foundation was created in 2001 as part of the Portland Parks & Recreation 2020 Vision to gather community support for a healthy parks system in Portland. Throughout its 15 year history, it has partnered with private individuals and corporations to contribute nearly \$12 million to parks and parks programs, helping build and maintain many of Portland’s iconic parks today. Some of its largest projects were the construction of Holly Farm Park in SW Portland in partnership with many organizations state-wide, Simon and Helen Director Park in downtown Portland thanks to generous donations by the Schnitzer and Moyer families, a partnership with NIKE for the resurfacing of all of Portland’s outdoor basketball courts, and the increased maintenance of Sellwood Park in SE Portland thanks to Columbia Sportswear.

On a smaller scale, PPF supports neighborhood efforts to increase the access and excellence of Portland’s parks through programs like their Parke Diem citywide volunteer event. “We’re thrilled the Foundation recognizes the importance of supporting park friends groups like the Friends of Peninsula Park Rose Garden. We’ve partnered with the Foundation for many years and are excited about their new small grant program,” said Yvonne Boisvert, board member of the Friends of Peninsula Park Rose Garden.

During its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the Foundation is raising funds for several projects, including \$500,000 for the first phase of Cully Park in NE Portland (in partnership with Verde), and another \$1.25 million toward a \$2.5 million campaign for a footbridge over Burnside Street where the Wildwood Trail crosses between Washington and Forest Parks. PPF is also giving nearly \$12,000 for the citywide Parke Diem

parks volunteer event that they coordinate this October 14 and 15 that will deploy 1,000 volunteers in 58 sites across the city, in collaboration with Portland Parks & Recreation.

“For 15 years the Portland Parks Foundation has brought the community together to support Portland’s parks, and we’re thrilled about their new program to help partner groups make incremental investments in our public park system,” said Mike Abbaté, Director of Portland Parks & Recreation.

PPF will develop specific grant program guidelines in the next several months. Organizations that are interested in the program should contact the Portland Parks Foundation at 503-445-0994 or [info@portlandpf.org](mailto:info@portlandpf.org).

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