



# *Improving Accessibility at Mount Pisgah Arboretum*

# *The Project*



*The Improving Accessibility at Mount Pisgah Arboretum project addressed barriers to nature access for individuals with disabilities.*

*By upgrading trail systems, hosting guided walks, and creating accessible communication tools, this project opened Howard Buford Recreation Area to a broader audience, fostering equity and inclusion in outdoor recreation.*

# *Project Impact*



*Miles: ~4 miles of improved trails*

*Volunteers engaged:  
Approximately 75 individuals*

*Other: Accessible materials  
created, guided walks for  
individuals with disabilities*



# *Oregon Conservation Strategy Species*



*This project supported the enhancement of public access to diverse habitats within the Willamette Valley ecoregion, aligning with the Oregon Conservation Strategy by fostering educational and recreational opportunities for all, particularly underserved populations.*



# *Project Goals*

# *Goal 1: Trail Upgrades*



*Inside of the Arboretum: Created two universally accessible trail loops and one barrier-free loop within the Arboretum. These upgrades included resurfacing trails, adding culverts, and ensuring appropriate signage.*

*Outside of the Arboretum: Improved additional trails using methodologies identified in the 2021 accessibility study in collaboration with Friends of Buford Park and Mount Pisgah (Friends).*

# Goal 2: Guided Tours



*Seven guided nature tours were held, engaging groups of 6-15 individuals with disabilities, including collaborations with the "Wednesday Wheelers" wheelchair group and adaptive recreation programs. Feedback from participants informed further improvements.*



# Goal 3: Accessibility Communication Tools



*Developed and deployed materials, including*

- *Printed brochures*
- *A dedicated webpage providing clear trail accessibility information*
- *A Spanish-language version of the trail accessibility map*
- *Bilingual trail accessibility information at park kiosks.*

### “Barrier Free” Loop

Distance: 1.5 miles

*Inspired by trail accessibility standards, this loop has gradual elevation gains and some narrower sections. Includes: Creek Trails, Buford Trail, Incense-cedar Trail.*

Surface	Width	Cross Slope	Avg. Grade
 Bark mulch, gravel	 36" or wider Exception: after Incense-cedar Exhibit < 36"	 Minimal Exception: Severe after Incense-cedar exhibit	 Ranges from 0-15% across included trails

### Circuito “Sin barreras”

Distance: 1.5 millas

*Inspirado en las normas de accesibilidad de los senderos, este circuito presenta desniveles graduales y algunos tramos más estrechos. Incluye: Creek Trails, Buford Trail, Incense-cedar Trail.*

Superficie	Ancho	Pendiente transversal	Pendiente media
 Mantillo descortezado, grava	 Alrededor de un metro; Excepción: después de Incense-cedar Exhibit < 36"	 Mínima; Excepción: Severa después de la “Exhibición de incienso y cedro”	 Oscila entre 0-15% en todos los senderos incluidos

# Goal 4: Community Engagement



*Approximately 75 volunteers contributed to trail improvement efforts, and local organizations, such as Lane Independent Living Alliance and Plaza de Nuestra Comunidad, played active roles in outreach.*



# *Goal 5: Educational Opportunities*



*Hosted an accessibility workshop in August 2023 led by Freya McGregor, attended by 26 participants from 16 agencies.*

*The Arboretum also partnered with David's Chair to provide tracked all-terrain wheelchairs for free use on trails.*



*Lessons  
Learned*

# *Weather Delays*



*Severe weather, including a major ice storm in January 2024, caused extensive damage to trails and trees, requiring two months of recovery before work resumed.*



# Permitting



*Navigating county permitting processes and floodway designations delayed trail improvements outside the Arboretum boundary. A project timeline extension to December 2024 was approved to address these issues.*



# *Partner Coordination*



*Collaborating with multiple stakeholders necessitated flexibility in timelines and work priorities.*

*Improved communication helped mitigate these challenges.*



# *Community Feedback*



*Engaging directly with disability groups provided valuable insights for trail design and communication, ensuring the project met user needs.*



*Next Steps*

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***Ongoing Maintenance:*** Establish a maintenance plan to preserve trail quality and accessibility.

***Expanded Engagement:*** Continue guided nature walks in collaboration with local disability organizations.

***Additional Infrastructure:*** Secured funding for accessible informational kiosk & wayfinding sign improvements. Seeking funding for ADA restroom retrofits.