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PORTLAND'S FOREST PARK DRAWS INTEREST IN ASIA FOR INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH: FPC Director Renee Myers visits Kota Kinabalu to collaborate on environmental practices

Kota Kinabalu, MALAYSIA—Forest Park, one of Portland's own crown jewels, is in the international spotlight this week as the Forest Park Conservancy's Executive Director Renee Myers joins an Oregon delegation of local officials, educators and environmental experts on a visit to Kota Kinabalu, the capital city of Sabah in Malaysia and one of Portland's newest sister cities. The delegation is being led by Tom Hughs, Metro City Council president.

Invited by U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia Joseph Y. Yun and his wife Dr. Melanie Billings-Yun, the intent of the trip is to share and explore ideas and inspiration ranging from environmental protection and conservation, to economic and social innovations and impacts.

As one of the largest forested urban parks of its kind in the world, Myers will share the history, vision and environmental restoration of Portland's Forest Park along with the [Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative](#) (GFPCI)—a landmark partnership the Forest Park Conservancy (FPC) has formed with a diverse group of government agencies, nonprofit organizations and citizen groups. The GFPCI is a collaborative action plan involving many unique stakeholders that is designed not only to restore and protect Forest Park's 5,200 acres, but its surrounding ecosystem comprising a total of 15,000 acres.

"The two cities share a deep interest in environmental protection and there's so much we can learn from one another," said Myers. "It's also quite an honor that we're getting international recognition for the forward-thinking measures that Portland has taken to not only protect greenspaces like Forest Park, but for the unique approach we're taking to restore it now for future generations to come."

While in Kota Kinabalu, Myers and Portland officials also will learn about the environmental efforts taking place in this part of Malaysia—with visits to the city's Shangri-la Rasa Ria Nature Reserve, the Centre for Renewable and Appropriate Technology, Mount Kinabalu National Park, Malaysia's first World Heritage site, and Lok Kawi Wildlife Park as part of a packed itinerary. The group will meet with local dignitaries including the mayor and Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment, along with forestry, green power and wildlife protection experts and officials.

The GFPCI:

Led by the Forest Park Conservancy and launched in fall 2013, the Greater Forest Park Conservation Initiative (GFPCI) is the first-of-its-kind, comprehensive plan for how to tackle some of the biggest environmental threats facing Forest Park and the surrounding ecosystem. The 80-page plan identifies environmental threats the Park faces, such as invasive species, climate change and habitat loss. It also outlines strategies and solutions to address them, including habitat restoration, improvements to watershed health, acquisition of ecologically valuable property, conservation easements, preventative care and maintenance and private land owner education and participation.

The GFPCI focuses on goals and objectives associated with 36 “prescriptions,” identified to have the most significant impact on the ecological health of Forest Park, based on an assessment and study completed by Portland Parks & Recreation. While some are large-scale projects that will take major resources and time to complete, others are already underway, with the involvement of hundreds of volunteers.

Forest Park Conservancy:

Forest Park Conservancy is the only nonprofit organization solely dedicated to caring for Forest Park, one of the largest forested urban parks in the nation. To learn more about the GFPCI, make a donation or find out how you can get involved, visit <http://www.forestparkconservancy.org/>

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