PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Tree Summit, November 4, 2017
Portland's Heritage Trees

Celebrating our historic, unique, and old trees

By Gregg S. Everhart, Urban Forestry Commissioner and Chair, Heritage Tree Committee

HT #4 *Quercus garryana*

HT #257 *Aesculus californica*

Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Director Mike Abbaté

www.PortlandParks.org

The Columbia Chronicle

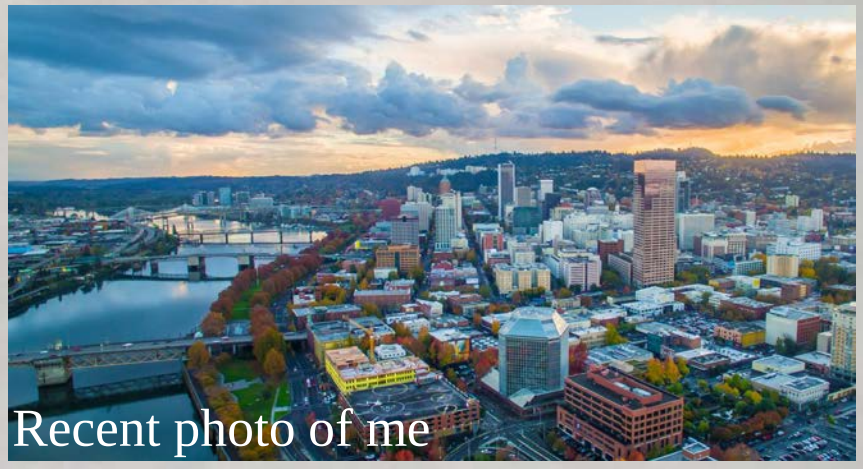
Pacific Northwest City in search of LTR

You are…

- Mature tree for quality time, afternoon naps.
- Large tree for maximum shade
- Let's keep things weird, the stranger the better.
- Trees with baggage are welcome, I love a good story!
- Are you a rare and unique cultivar? Excellent!
- Please send picture!

Me…

- Oregon's largest city
- Population about 640,000
- Rainfall: average 36 inches/year, *great environment for a tree!*
- Park acreage: 11,712 acres, *so many parks to choose from!*



Recent photo of me

Heritage Tree Program

- Managed by PPR Urban Forestry with help from the Urban Forestry Commission
- Trees are approved by City Council in an ordinance
- HTs are protected
- Designation passes on to the next owner (private HTs)

Photo by Steve Terrill

HT #14 *Magnolia acuminata*

Heritage Tree Protection

- Trees can not be removed or delisted as Heritage Trees without City Council action (impacts development)
- Permits required for all work
- Emergency removals must be authorized by City Forester

Photo by Steve Terrill

HT #66 *Quercus rubra*

Removal of Heritage Trees?

2016-17 Winter storms

- Many Portland trees sustained damage, including Heritage Trees

- Example: American elm lost limbs, ~30% canopy

Moments in the Life of the Umatilla St. HERITAGE ELM

These are most likely the siblings of our Elm, the only one of this line of trees to survive. It's believed that this photo was taken in the late 1800s.

This photo captures a Bald Eagle in the Elm, with a fish, possibly a salmon, in it's talons. The next shot shows it flying off, still holding the fish.

In August 2014, the landlord of 1924-26 paid to have the tree vaccinated against Dutch Elm Disease. The neighbor across the street administered the dozens of injections.

The Sellwood B...

Sellwood Elm designated "Portland Heritage Tree"

Created on Sunday, 2... November 2015 | Written by David F. Ashton | Pre...

Neighbors concerned about the future of an American elm in Sellwood took action to protect the tree, in the 1900 block of S.E. Umatilla Street

The result was that, on October 3, it became the seventh American elm to be listed as a "Portland Heritage Tree."

"I am a resident across the street from this mighty elm," remarked Jay Wilson, as neighbors began to gather for the heritage plaque installation on that Saturday morning.

"We've been both interested and concerned about this tree," Wilson said. "It's more than 130 years old; it was planted in the late 1880s – one of several planted in front of what was then the only house on the street. It's the only survivor."

In applying for Portland Heritage Tree status, Wilson researched the block and found photos taken when the tree was young, thus establishing the age of the tree.

"We're concerned, because the tree sits astride the property lines here," Wilson told THE BEE. "There were potential development pressures on the west side of the property. A neighbor was looking at subdividing a lot; and we wanted to do something to help protect and recognize the tree."

He and other neighbors – including the owner of the duplex on the property to the east of the tree – submitted an application that stalled. "From the second application, the Portland Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry Commission decided that this tree was of merit." Wilson smiled.

Part of the second application included the historic photos, and the fact that it has the largest canopy of any Heritage Tree in the city. "It's 85 feet tall and 120 feet wide. When Urban Forestry people looked at it, they said that this is a really spectacular specimen; it's thriving and very healthy," Wilson pointed out. "It's kind of unique in that it is separated from other elms that are clustered together, such as in the Eastmoreland neighborhood."

Portland Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry Commission Heritage Tree Chair Brian French walked up at that point, with a small brass plaque in hand. Although being the Heritage Tree Chair is a volunteer position, French said he is also an arborist with Arboriculture International LLC.

"With issues of infill and development, there have been issues regarding large trees," remarked French. "It really is up to the citizens to protect the trees. Neighbors, and the neighborhoods, have the power to be stewards in the community, and speak on behalf of trees like this.

"This plaque means that this tree is recognized in the Portland Heritage Tree program, and gains special protection against any felling or damaging, including fixing the sidewalk and protecting the roots," French said. "It is recognized as a unique specimen of this particular species."

HT #319 *Ulmus americana*

What makes a good Heritage Tree?

- Size
- Age
- Type
- Horticultural value
- Historical Association

Initial screening factors

- Sufficient growing space
- Good health / maintenance
- Visibility from public r/w
- Not on Nuisance Tree list

Photo by Steve Terrill

Tallest: Douglas Fir in Macleay Park

HT#134 *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

536’

242’

Copyright © Robert O'Brien

Widest and/or most stout

HT #199 *Quercus garryana* – 121’ spread

HT #312 *Fagus sylvatica* – 120’ spread

HT#276 *Sequoiadendron giganteum* – 25.3’ circumference

HT #3?? *Populus nigra* at Powell Butte Nature Park – 32’ circumference

Photo by Gregg S. Everhart

Photo by Gregg S. Everhart

Oldest Trees: Oregon White Oaks

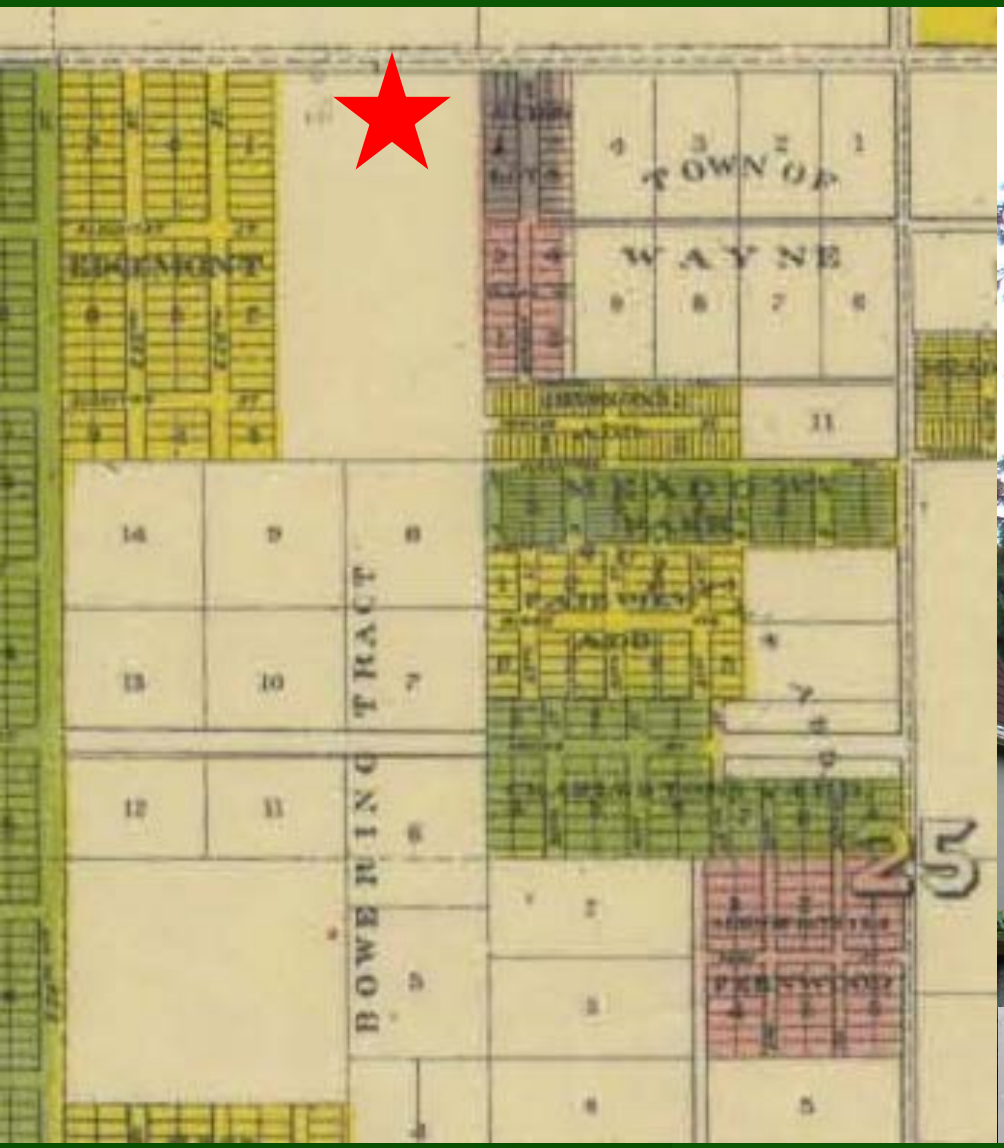
HT #4 *Quercus garryana*

Horticultural Interest: Camperdown Elm

HT #287 *Ulmus glabra* 'Camperdownii'

1840 parent plant

Historic: Ponderosa Pine in Alameda

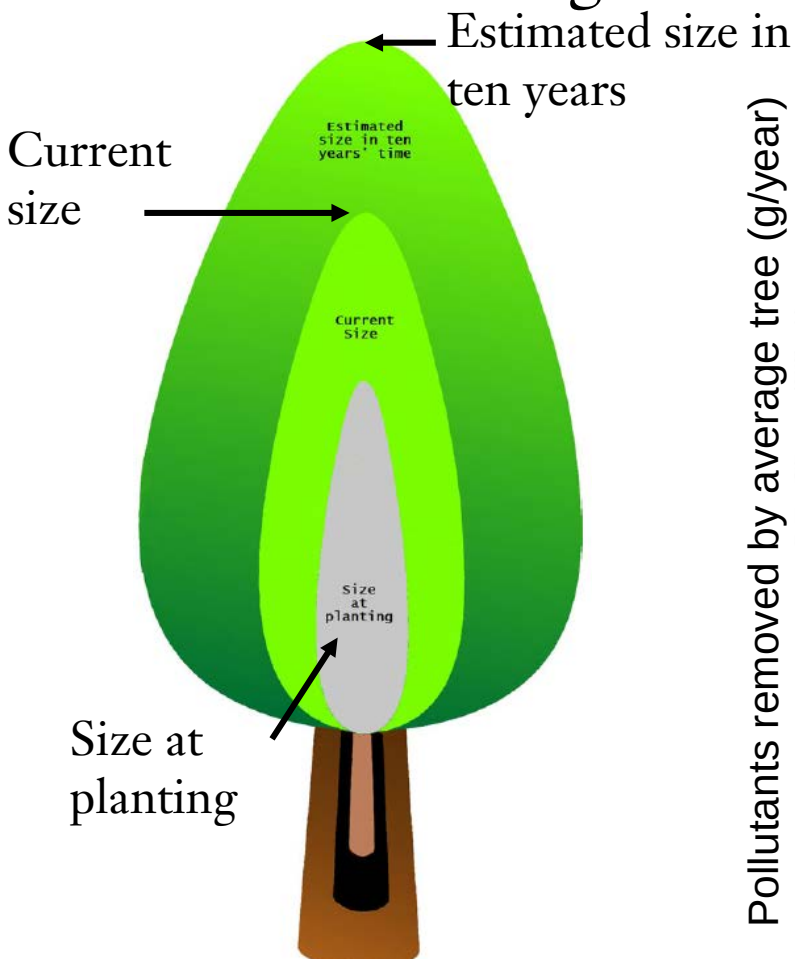


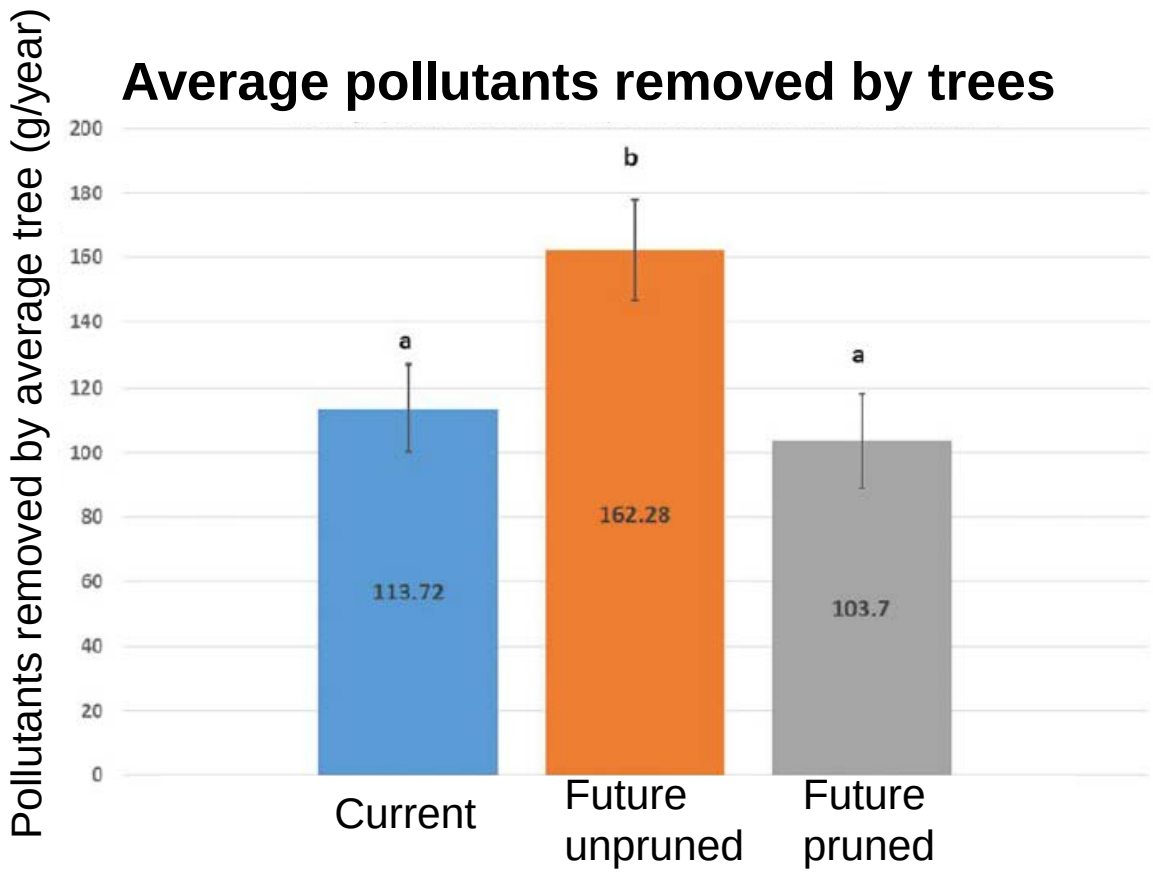
HT# 285 *Pinus ponderosa*
transplanted 1885

Big trees, big benefits

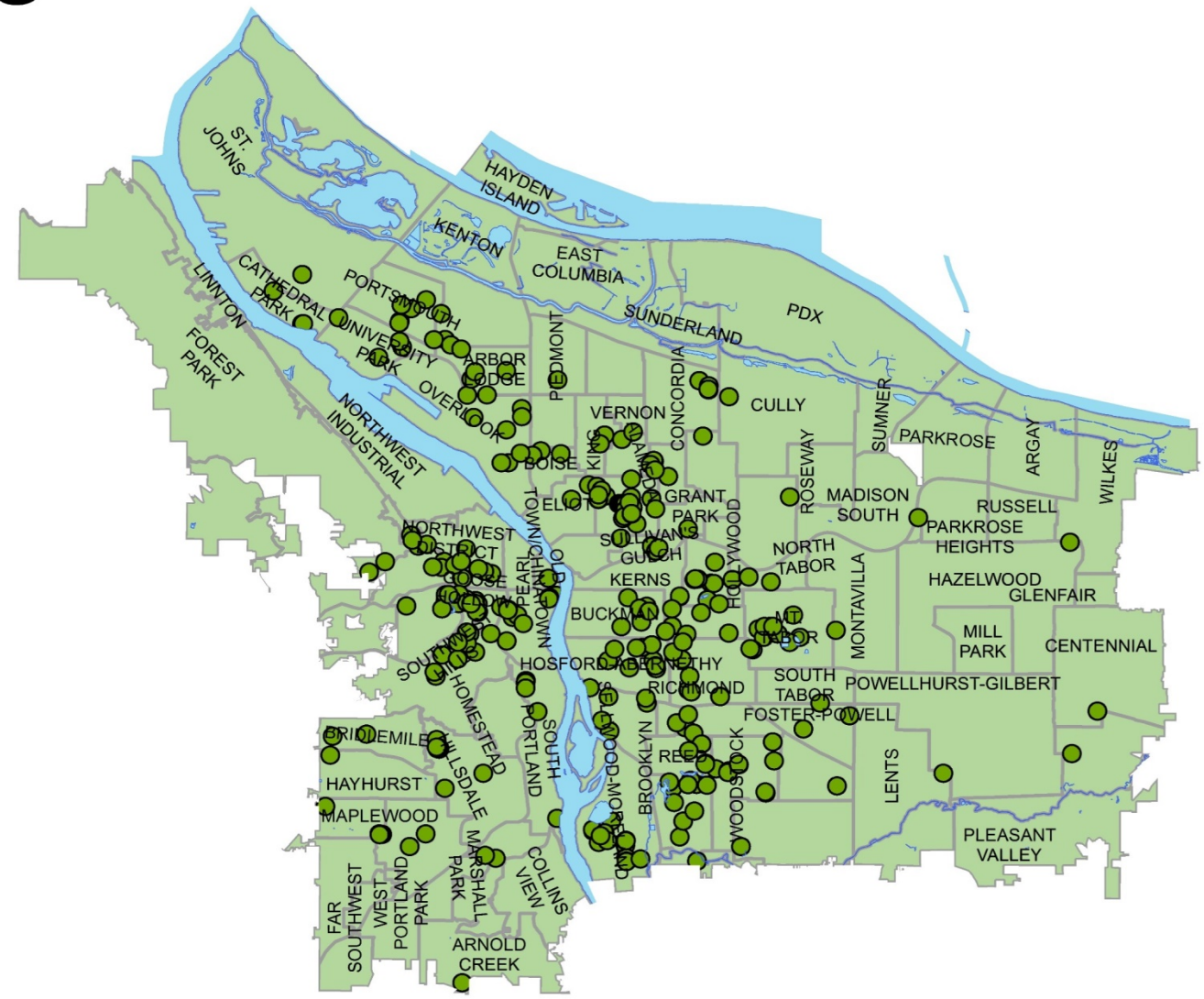
UK study estimated potential benefits of trees with unrestricted growth

Andrew and Slater 2014





Heritage Trees of Portland



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Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

5 Miles

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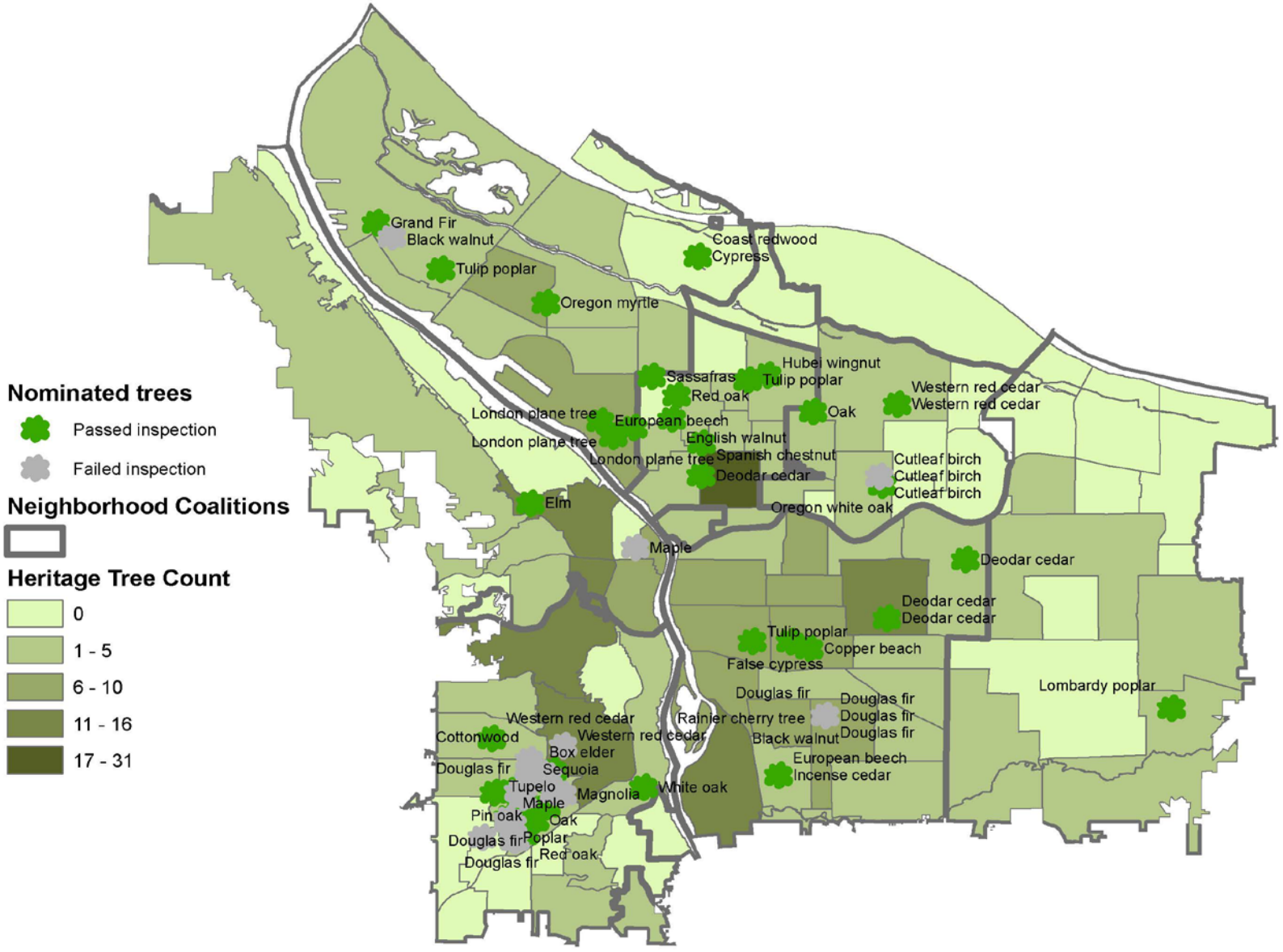
Portland Urban Forestry
Heritage Tree Program

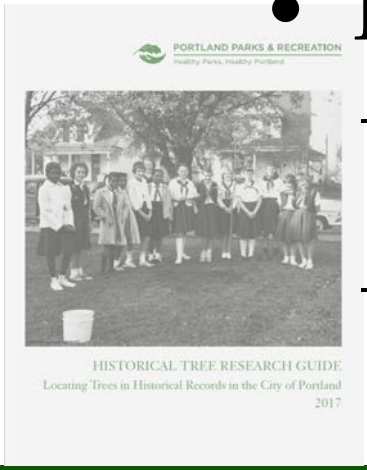


Do you love trees? Join us ...

- **Join the HTC**
  - Spend time outdoors with Portland's most impressive trees
  - Learn how to measure and assess trees
  - Review and vote in new Heritage Trees

- **Volunteer to inspect HTs**

- **Nominate a Heritage Tree**
  - Use Canopy Analytics and PP&R street and parks inventories to find large or rare trees
  - NEW: Historical Tree Research Guide



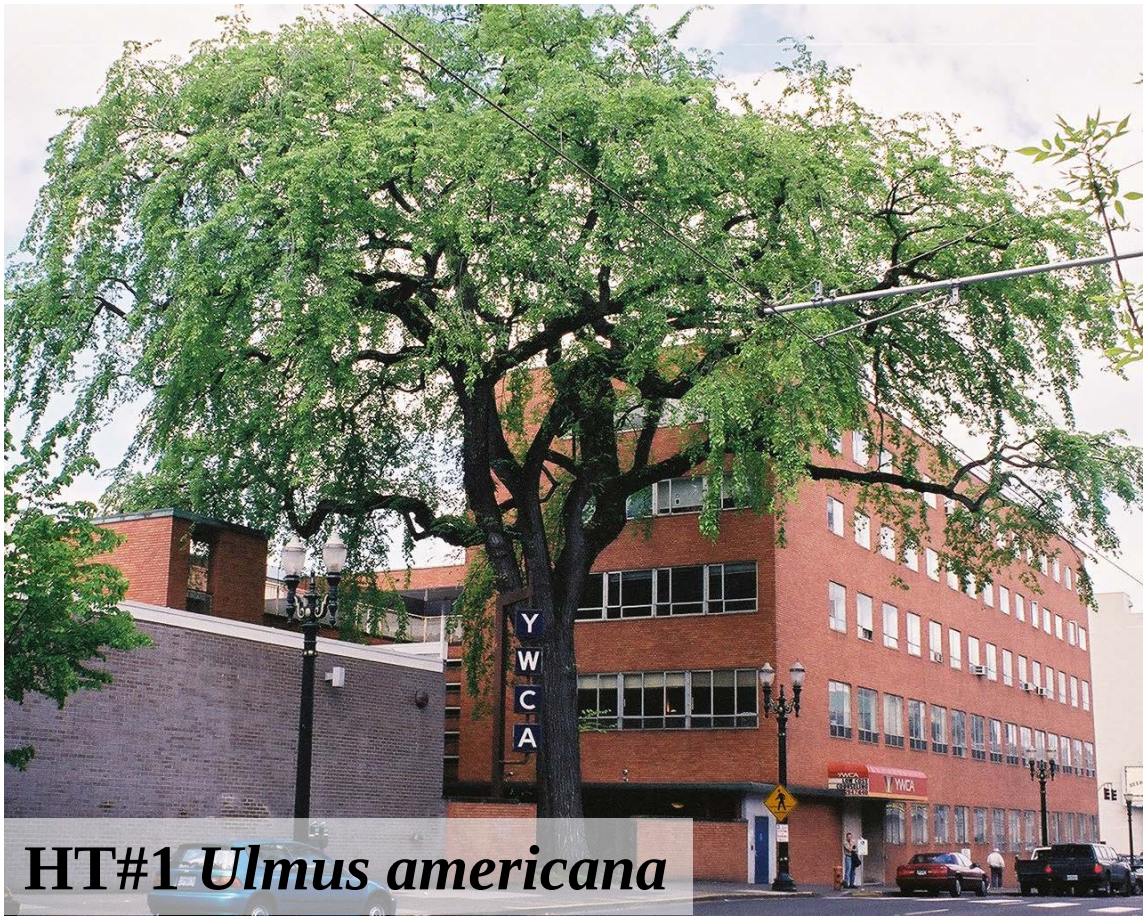
- **Tell their story**
  - Organize HT walk or bicycle ride
  - https://canopystory.org

Thank you for your help!

Maps, books, and more:
www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/trees

PP&R Urban Forestry
10910 N. Denver
Portland, OR 97217

Parks - Heritage Tree Program
Parks.Heritagetree@portlandoregon.gov



HT#1 *Ulmus americana*