

Development group sells butte for natural use

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By Casey Parks

The public in the near future will have access to a butte with a view.

The Persimmon Development Group sold the 92 acres, within the East Buttes, to the Metro regional government, which used money from the 2006 Natural Areas, Parks and Streams bond measure. The group didn't announce the purchase cost but said it was several million dollars lower than market price to support Metro's Natural Areas program.

The sale is part of a move to create more energy-efficient developments in the area, said Hiroshi Morihara, a partner in the development group.

"In order to have a good community, there must be a good quality of life," Morihara said. "This is a way for us to show our appreciation for the community."

The land falls in one of 27 areas targeted by Metro for protection and contains the headwaters of Hogan Creek and the top of the forested butte.

Gresham's Parks & Recreation Division will manage the property, which won't open until the end of the calendar year.

"This land could have become large view home sites for a few people. Instead it will provide a natural area and views for many," Metro Councilor Rod Park said in the statement released today. "The views from the top are stellar, and so is the view of the buttes from below."

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