



## *Preserving Camille Park's Oregon White Oak Trees*

Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) is a long-lived, native hardwood tree. It is common to many areas in Western Oregon and Washington, although agricultural and urban development has reduced oak woodlands and savanna by 80% in the last 150 years. Oaks that grow in a woodland setting in close proximity to other trees, even other oaks, develop a narrower, vase-shaped profile. Oak woodlands can be characterized by higher tree density (30-60% tree cover). Oaks that grow individually in an open prairie setting develop a full, mushroom-shaped crown, the classic savanna oak shape. Oak savanna is characterized by these mature, open canopy trees and by minimal tree density (less than 30% tree cover). The suppression of fire has allowed shrubs and trees, especially Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), to encroach on former prairie and oak savanna. Because of this habitat reduction, Oregon white oak woodlands and savannas are a high priority conservation target in much of Oregon's Willamette Valley. Camille Park has such an oak woodland, and preservation of this woodland is one of the goals of the Camille Park Master Plan (<http://www.thprd.org/pdfs/document48.pdf>).

Many Camille Park white oaks are under stress due to shading from the faster growing Oregon ash. The proposed management of this woodland includes removal of some of the ash to release the oaks ('release' is the removal of these faster-growing trees to allow oak trees to survive and attain healthy growth patterns).

As part of the natural area restoration work throughout the park, oaks will be replanted in some areas where Oregon ash have been removed. In time, this should provide a mixed-age oak canopy and increase the overall health of the oak woodlands.

If you have questions about oak restoration at Camille Park, or about oak restoration in general, please contact Kyle Spinks at 503-629-6305 ext 2952 or [kspinks@thprd.org](mailto:kspinks@thprd.org).