

From: [Joel Geier](#)
To: [Benton Public Comment](#)
Cc: [REED](#); [Dave Mellinger](#); [AnneMary Myers](#); [Shawn Woods](#)
Subject: Fwd: Great Blue Heron monitoring at the Coffin Butte landfill site and adjacent areas of E.E. Wilson, 2000-2025
Date: Friday, May 9, 2025 5:48:33 AM

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Dear Chair Fowler and Members of the Planning Commission,

I noted in last night's hearing that Commissioner Biscoe in particular seemed interested in establishing the record regarding the nesting area currently in use by the herons adjacent to the proposed development site.

Here's an acknowledgement that I received from the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) when I shared my report with them as well as Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) on March 14, 2025.

I did not receive any acknowledgement from ODFW at that time, but I'm cc:ing ODFW's District Biologist Greg Reed here, in the hope that he can confirm receipt of that report.

I have not yet sent the nest tree GPS coordinates referenced in the e-mails below. Those coordinates are sensitive information due to the risk of yet further disturbance to these herons during nesting season, so I won't place them in the public record, but I will be making them available to Mr. Reed and refuge manager Shawn Woods via a separate communication.

Yours sincerely,
Joel Geier

From: "Jennifer Weikel" <jennifer.weikel@odf.oregon.gov>
To: "Joel Geier" <clearwater@peak.org>
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2025 4:08:15 PM
Subject: RE: Great Blue Heron monitoring at the Coffin Butte landfill site and adjacent areas of E.E. Wilson, 2000-2015

Thank you Joel. I received your email. I am not working as the wildlife biologist right now, but I passed on your information to the person who is in that roll right now.

Appreciate the detailed report.

Jennifer Weikel
Oregon Department of Forestry
(503) 931-9521

From: Joel Geier <clearwater@peak.org>

Sent: Friday, March 14, 2025 3:55 PM

To: REED Gregory C * ODFW <Gregory.C.REED@odfw.oregon.gov>

Cc: AnneMary Myers <AnneMary.Myers@state.or.us>; WEIKEL Jennifer * ODF

<jennifer.weikel@odf.oregon.gov>; WOODS Shawn K * ODFW

<Shawn.K.WOODS@odfw.oregon.gov>; Jim Fairchild <jim@alderspring.net>; Jayshaun Talbert

<talberja@oregonstate.edu>

Subject: Great Blue Heron monitoring at the Coffin Butte landfill site and adjacent areas of E.E. Wilson, 2000-2015

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Hi Greg,

Hope all's well as you look forward to field season, despite what I suppose could be complications for any programs relying on federal funds this year.

As I mentioned to you last year, I've been keeping track of community observations of the Great Blue Heron nesting colony at the Coffin Butte site, including my own observations as well as those of volunteers affiliated with the Mid-Willamette Bird Alliance (formerly known as Audubon Society of Corvallis).

Here's a report that summarizes nesting-season observations both of heron nesting activity and potential causes of disturbance, from 2000 through the current year (right up to today, in fact). I hope this will help to inform you in your own assessment of the status of this heron nesting colony, and how it might best be protected for future seasons. Please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions!

A bit of data still missing from this report: Back in mid-January, I went into the ash grove area and mapped the trees with nests remaining from the 2024 nesting season. I have GPS coordinates for those trees as well as notes and sketches of the nest configurations. There are five nest trees (most of them with multiple trunks) holding a total of 13 "full-sized" stick nests, plus three smaller/partial nests that don't appear to have been completed.

I can get those nest-tree data to you at a later date, and will also share those with Shawn Woods (cc'd here) in case it's helpful for his management decisions in that area.

As a side note, I found a couple more elk/deer carcasses in there (pretty far decomposed) which I'll add into ODFW's roadkill project on iNaturalist (I'm up to about 8 now).

I'm also cc'ing Anne Mary Meyers and Jen Weikel here to keep them in the loop, as well as Jim Fairchild and Jayshaun Talbert on behalf of MVBA.

All the best,
Joel

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