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Goats go to town on Salmon-Safe industrial park by the Columbia Slough (Photos)



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Three years after Whitaker Way Industrial Park earned the Salmon-Safe certification for its commitment to avoid chemical fertilizers, the property's managers had a problem.

Blackberry plants and other invasive species had infested about 2.5 acres backing on the upper section of Portland's Columbia Slough.

Fighting them with chemicals was out — property managers doesn't use pesticides, herbicides or chemical fertilizers. Annual plants were eliminated in favor of perennials and the management replaced sod with native plantings, all in the interest of keeping damaging substances out of salmon habitat.

But hiring people to weed the sloping site wasn't feasible either.

It was a perfect job for goats.

Redside, the Portland company that manages Whitaker Way for its out-of-state owner, hired Molalla-based Yoder Goat Rentals, which brought in about 60 animals, who made quick work of the weedy waterside.

"They cleaned it right up," said [Todd Hepp](#), Redside's property management director.

Whitaker Way is a 16-acre property, 13225-13233 N.E. Whitaker Way, with nine buildings and a more than over 228,000 square feet of office and industrial space, serving tenants such as Shindler Elevators.

Whitaker Way was the first industrial property to earn the Salmon-Safe designation [in September 2011](#). Hepp said it reflects Redside's modus operandi.

"It's kind of the way Redside likes to do business — do things the right way," he said.

With the slope cleaned up, Redside is preparing to add a new amenity to the property — a kayak dock on the slough.

"We'd rather have people there with kayaks than than scrappers Dumpster diving," he said.

Now that the goats have done their part for the Columbia Slough, humans are invited to do their part.

The Columbia Slough Watershed Council holds its annual Great Slough Clean Up from 9 a.m. to noon, July 18. The event is sponsored by **Leatherman** Tool Group — [register here](#). [Learn more about](#) the watershed here.

Wendy Culverwell covers sustainable business, manufacturing and law.