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Oregon Convention Center continues to lead industry in sustainability by updating and recertifying its designation as Salmon-Safe

The Oregon Convention Center (OCC) added one more “green” accomplishment to its long list by receiving word from Portland-based Salmon-Safe that the facility’s design features and standards of operation demonstrate sound efforts to protect the Willamette River watershed and salmon habitat.

OCC was the first convention center in the country to earn Salmon-Safe certification in 2007, in part due to its innovative rain garden designed to serve as a catch basin and a contaminant filtering system for roof runoff before entering the nearby Willamette River. Since that time, OCC invested in landscaping improvements by adding drought tolerant plants and utilizing weather-sensing irrigation equipment scheduled to maximize irrigation while minimizing water use. In addition, all facility restroom fixtures were upgraded to dual-flush valves and low-flow hand faucets and the interior and exterior integrated pest management program focuses on preventative actions to curtail chemical pesticide use.

“I am proud that one of our region’s largest public facilities continues to lead by example in practicing sustainability,” said Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette. “These small, consistent steps to become more efficient add up to a sum greater than its parts. Our community will benefit from these investments for years to come.”

Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) Chair Ray Leary added, “OCC has kept its nose to the grindstone on achieving the most sustainable operations among the convention industry and it continues to pay off in rich dividends. These actions help sell Portland as the leading green destination.”

The Oregon Convention Center is the largest convention center in the U.S. Pacific Northwest and a top meeting destination. It leads the industry in sustainable operations and business practices as the first to earn LEED-EB (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Existing Building) in 2004 and in 2008, the first to be recertified LEED-EB Silver. Totalling one million square feet of space, it hosts an average of 650 events and over 700,000 visitors annually.

“Achieving optimal energy efficiency and protecting our precious natural resources not only makes good business sense, in terms of reducing operating costs, it is the right thing to do for our clients and our community,” stated Jeff Blosser, OCC Executive Director.



The OCC is joined by the Portland Expo Center and Portland Center for the Performing Arts in a family of venues managed by the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) on behalf of Metro. Visit www.oregoncc.org, www.mercvenues.org or www.oregonmetro.gov for more information.

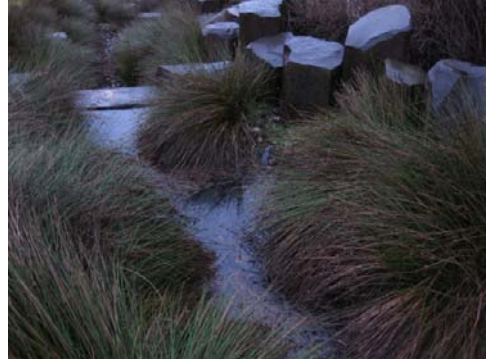


PHOTO CAPTION: Native plants dot the rain garden landscape along the southern exterior of the OCC. (Photo courtesy of OCC.)

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