

Contact:

Lisa Arkin, Executive Director

541-543-2465

Email: larkin@beyondtoxics.org

<http://www.beyondtoxics.org/resources/press-kit/>



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Eugene's Newest Environmental Justice Mural

Ribbon cutting and honoring ceremony for "[Willamette Wetlands of the Kalapuya.](#)"

Beyond Toxics will host a ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday, July 9, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., for a new mural featuring the ethnobotany of local wetlands and the Kalapuya people. The event will take place at the Dr. Edwin Coleman Jr. Community Center at Westmoreland Park in Eugene. The mural, "***Willamette Wetlands of the Kalapuya***," was created in collaboration with the Friendly Area Neighbors Equity Action Team, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Kalapuya descendants, City of Eugene Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement, and City of Eugene Parks and Open Space.

The free event features speakers, music, and a tour of the wetlands. Speakers are Rayna Viles, member of the Confederated Tribe of the Siletz Indians, Mayor Lucy Vinis, Senator James Manning, Kalapuya elder and cultural consultant Esther Stutzman, Dr. David Lewis, Assistant Professor in the School of Language, Culture and Society at Oregon State University, and mural artist Susan Applegate. Additionally, The Splachta Alla Singers will perform drumming and songs of the Willamette Valley tribal people during the ceremony.

The mural illustrates a Kalapuya storyteller speaking about her people and their ancient and contemporary uses of native plants for food, medicine and spiritual observances.

"Visual representation of Kalapuya lifeways through public art is a gift to the community," said Viles, who is also a Beyond Toxics board member. "It is important that we recognize the first peoples of the region and the sustenance that the land provides through seasonal round practices. Holding a reciprocal relationship with the land has always been the way forward."

This mural is part of a larger project called the "**Kalapuya Cultural Project and Wetlands Preservation**" sponsored by Beyond Toxics and [**Friendly Area Neighbors Equity Action Team**](#). The project includes an informational kiosk, an online resource, environmental and cultural curriculum resources, and ongoing preservation of the park wetlands to protect the significant native plants within Westmoreland Park.

[Beyond Toxics](#) provides leadership to build a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon. We envision a society where everyone has equitable access to healthy food and clean air and water, and underserved communities are included in decision making processes that affect them. Together, we move beyond the damaging environmental practices of the past and collectively work to support and maintain ecological resilience and balance.