

# Bob Straub Offers Willamette River Plan

*By Senator Maurine B. Neuberger*

In 1966, Oregon's Democratic Senator Maurine B. Neuberger presented a plan to the U.S. Congress to take public control of the banks along most of the Willamette River. The proceedings were published in the August 4 issue of the Congressional Record. Neuberger proposed that money from a federal open spaces program be used to help Oregon purchase privately-owned portions of undeveloped riverbank for public trails and green spaces.

Democratic state Treasurer Robert Straub proposed the Willamette River plan during his failed 1966 gubernatorial campaign against Republican Tom McCall. Straub did later become governor.

McCall also supported the plan for a Willamette Greenway. In 1967, he worked with the Oregon Legislature to approve a study of the plan and begin establishing parks along the banks of the 187-mile river. In 1973, the state legislature passed another law that connected the Willamette Greenway plan to state land-use planning laws. Counties and cities were required to consider river set backs, public access, and natural vegetation when approving new river-side developments.

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