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Animals Make Unusual Business Partners at PDX

Travelers are used to seeing police dogs working at Portland International Airport, but they might be surprised to learn about the swelling menagerie of animals helping out behind the scenes at PDX. Today, the dogs and bees already working at the airport are joined by 40 goats and a llama.

Hired through Goat Power, the goats will work to remove invasive plants on Port of Portland properties near the PDX airfield for approximately three weeks. They'll consume thorny invasive plants, such as blackberries, thistle and Scotch broom, which alleviates the need for spraying herbicides or removal by hand. The goats' four-chambered stomachs and willingness to eat a wide variety of plants allows them to tackle invasive species in environments where it is difficult to bring in mowing equipment. The goats are joined by a llama that, because of its size and more aggressive nature, helps keep away predators, such as coyotes. In addition, a shepherdess tends to her flock several hours a day. The goats and llama will be working outside of the airfield and are kept in their designated work zone by a portable, solar-powered electric fence.

A Dog Named Fish

For the past two years, PDX has used dogs provided by Geese Guys to keep problematic waterfowl away from the airport. The Port primarily uses Fish, a Border Collie, to chase away birds on undeveloped properties near the PDX airfield. The dogs work Monday through Friday in two shifts of one to two hours each. The shifts are during the peak times of goose activity, shortly after sunrise and immediately before sunset.

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The Buzz about Airport Property

For the second year, Bridgetown Bees is keeping bee hives on Port property for research purposes. Their goal is to experiment with breeding queens that are adapted to the Pacific Northwest climate. If Bridgetown is successful, this would improve the health of local pollinator communities and free local bee keepers from the need to purchase new queens from California or Hawaii every spring. The bees will feed on native flowering plants, planted by the Port in part to explore improving habitat for pollinators. Bridgetown currently houses 29 hives on Port property and plans to expand to nearly 40 this summer.

These initiatives are part of the Port's ongoing commitment to leadership in sustainability. To learn more about the Port's environmental management efforts, go to http://www.portofportland.com/Env_Home.aspx.

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Additional links:

[Goat Power](#)

[Geese Guys](#)

[Bridgetown Bees](#)

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