

# Hunting Fossils and Community Involvement in Eastern Oregon

City Club member [Win Goodbody](#) offers this guest post about last week's City Club field trip:

City Club's recent weekend trip to the Eastern Oregon communities of Condon, Fossil and Spray offered Portlanders a fascinating glimpse of what life is like in a town of 400 — or 200! What is civic involvement like in a place where everyone wears multiple community hats and funding resources are scarce? In short, it's quite different.

Thanks to the organization and contacts of Richard Ross, we were able to meet and talk with groups of active citizens in each town we visited. Our reception was generous and the hospitality first-rate. Many issues and ideas were discussed, and participants came away refreshed and excited. We live in an amazing state in terms of natural beauty and landscape, but what was special about this trip (aside from the stunning location) was the opportunity to connect with local residents. I think it's fair to say this trip turned out to be much more than anyone expected.

If you went on the trip, what struck you the most? What questions or answers did you bring home? Were you inspired to move to Fossil and have your own show on the local low frequency FM radio station (yes - it boasts local programming 24/7!)? Will you go back soon? How did exposure to the extraordinary commitment of citizens in these towns shift your own set of priorities for what to get involved in back in the big city? What other gems did you bring back from the weekend (hidden among the fossils)?

*Posted by City Club of Portland on October 18, 2005 at 01:47 PM in [Special Programs and Events](#) | [Permalink](#)*

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Many thanks to Richard Ross for arranging the contacts with local citizens in Oregon's John Day Basin. From fossils to frontier folk lore to community action issues, I heard passion in each of the citizens' voices. Notably, regarding the education of their younger populace and their committment to results. Spray

boasts a 97 percent graduation rate! Their after school programs are inclusive of all students. Can we resolve to find better solutions and results for our young people? I think we found good examples on this tour.

*Posted by: [LaVonne](#) / [October 18, 2005 at 02:41 PM](#)*