

Fall, 2001 Newsletter

Housekeeping

Nothing will happen on the Olympic Discovery Trail without political support. Obtaining political support requires us to attend meetings, arrange meetings, and obtain and distribute information. Work of that nature lacks the sex appeal of some of the other things we do- like building bridges, trails and planting trees.

This was a summer of meetings-held, arranged and attended. If you think you would be a good emissary for the ODT contact us and we'll get you to attend some meetings. (What a deal!) Really, attending meetings is important. We have good representation on all trail groups and at meetings across the peninsula, but more volunteers are always welcome. You'll be amazed to discover volunteers have been the catalyst for everything that has happened on this trail.

Sequim

Sequim is waiting for a permit to come through on the Johnson Creek Trestle so we won't be starting on that project until this spring. However we will definitely be doing the trestle and have been given permission to start buying materials and complete our engineering. Some of the things we will be using need to be custom made. The trestle will look like the Morse Creek Trestle except there won't be a big flat cap rail. This 400' long trestle is about a hundred feet in the air and we don't want to encourage people to set things on the rail. The rail will look like the rail at Railroad Bridge Park. If you want to get involved or have any opinions on this project call us.

East of Sequim

The PTC has pieced together prospective routes for the trail east from Sequim to the county line. It has been written up as a proposal with potential property acquisitions identified and prioritized. We have presented it to the county and are working with them on a variety of details.

Jefferson County

With the completion of the third round of public forums, Jefferson County is close to having the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan ready for preliminary approval by the county commissioners.

Before the plan is submitted to the commissioners in November or December the county will be conducting a telephone survey of 100 randomly selected households with registered voters. Voters who agree to participate in the survey will be sent a packet of information and a questionnaire that asks them to rate trail and recreational options on a scale of 1-5. It also asks about financial options they would be willing to support. Survey answers will be gathered by a follow-up phone call. The plan will go on to public hearings and review if the commissioners like what they see. If all goes well, final approval and inclusion in the county's comprehensive plan will happen this coming summer. It is important to keep the vision of the Olympic Discovery Trail alive and noticed in Jefferson county; this non-motorized plan is a major step in getting a trail on the ground. Please tell you friends and neighbors to be thoughtful with the survey if they are called.

Morse Creek

This past month a tree crashed down on the Morse Creek Trestle and knocked down the handrails along a 20-foot section of the trestle. The damage happened on Sunday night and by Monday afternoon we (as in PTC) had the trestle open again. It will cost the city just the price of the lumber for this speedy service. Not bad huh? We have to put the cap rail and then we'll be ready for painting. Anybody want to paint it? It doesn't require the use of fancy colors. It is just your basic railroad bridge brown.

Morse Creek to Rayonier

The county has been working on the trail surface from Morse Creek to the fence at Rayonier. Parts of the trail are really nice and although the trail is not officially open people are using it. If you are intent on walking this section of trail you should do it when the county isn't working on the trail-like on the weekend.

The trail won't be officially open until fencing goes up through the Langley property. A recent survey of the fence lines revealed some encroachments by adjacent property owners and until those issues are resolved, fencing in some areas is on hold. Because so many people are using the trail, we are encouraging the city to begin fencing in areas with undisputed property boundaries.

Tree Planting-again!

The day after Thanksgiving (the 23rd) is the day of our last big tree planting effort. And yes we know that is America's biggest shopping day but what does this planet really need-more trees or more shoppers?

We have 600 trees to put in the ground which should only take 3-4 hours. Call us or contact us if you are interested and we'll give you the where and when. We need a head count for the gourmet lunches we are going to prepare.

Contact Dave Le Roux (683-7180, marthadave@olympen.com)

City of Port Angeles

Magna Force

Magna Force, a PA company working on a kind of transit system, has obtained permission from the city to use the Milwaukee Road right-of-way for a test track of sorts. The right-of-way is 70 feet wide and we have been assured by the city that there will be plenty of room for the trail and Magna Force.

Rayonier

The city has received an easement agreement for a temporary trail through the Rayonier property. Currently the city's Real Estate Advisory Committee is evaluating the agreement, and if they approve it, Marc Connelly will be taking it to the council sometime in November. If the council approves it, the hard work of getting the improvements (fencing, trail surface etc.) in place will begin. Basically the easement calls for a trail that has an average width of 14 feet and has provisions for temporary closures if needed for the site cleanup operations.

Clallam County Trails Advisory Committee

This committee continues to meet regularly and is concentrating on trails west of PA. Meetings are posted in the paper or contact PTC board member Dick Gritman.

WWW.....com

We have a new website and new address – www.OlympicDiscoveryTrail.com .

A new volunteer, Selinda Barkhius, has stepped forward to be our webmaster. Selinda runs PAToday.com . She is a realtor with Coldwell Banker in PA who thinks there is a market for selling homes and land along the trail. This confirms what we have believed all along- the Olympic Discovery Trail is an asset to this area. And indeed, numerous studies of Seattle’s beloved Burke Gilman Trail have shown property values along the trail to be as high and higher than comparable properties away from the trail.

Check out our website-it has an interactive trail map and links to other neat stuff. If you have any comments on the site, contact PTC board member Pat Gritman who is our liaison with our webmaster.

Our site uses the local webhosting services of Prophetechs at support@prophetechs .

Westward Ho!

Speaking of meetings- one of the meetings we hosted this past month was at the Hamilton School on the West Side of PA. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit input from residents in that area about possible routes for the ODT leaving PA heading west. The City of Port Angeles wanted a community group such as the PTC to initiate trail dialog with the community and the neighborhood. As a result of a mailing, distributed leaflets and a newspaper article, about 30 neighbors and other interested folks came to the meeting. (The final numbers were 3 dozen donuts, 1 ½ pots of coffee and 9 bottles of juice). There were a lot of questions and suggestions about trail routes but no opposition. In fact, during our distribution of leaflets, all of our contact with neighbors was positive. Three generalized alignments were identified. One would go along the waterfront west to below Olympic View Cemetery, then south to the Milwaukee RR right-of-way, then west along the RR ROW to the Elwha River. The second would follow city right-of-way out to the Elwha using Hill Street, 4th St., Milwaukee Drive and the RR ROW. The third route, a variation of the second, would use Hill Street and 4th St., but then would turn southward along N St. to 10th St., then west on 10th St. to the RR ROW. The waterfront route would be the most scenic but, it is generally agreed it would be a construction and maintenance nightmare. One or the other routes up Hill Street/4th St. and out either Milwaukee Drive or N St./10th St. to the right-of-way is probably a better bet.

Transportation Plan

The Clallam County Road Department’s 6-year transportation plan was just accepted by the county’s planning commission and sent to the county commissioners. Contained in the transportation plan was about \$700,000 (over 6 years) for the Olympic Discovery Trail. The reason money and development of the ODT is found in the road department’s budget is because the county considers the ODT a transportation corridor. We were afraid there would be opposition to the ODT money at the public hearing. However we were pleasantly surprise when all 24 people who signed up to comment on the budget spoke in favor of the ODT.

One of the local newspapers called the evening a “Love Fest” for the trail. Anna Boenish, a Sequim Middle School student, was the youngest person to address the planning commissioners. She was also one of the most articulate and prepared speakers. Both local newspapers covered her comments extensively. So, while other middle school students were home studying government or history (or talking on the phone, watching TV, surfing the...etc) Anna was participating in government and in a small way,

creating history. Without her participation the meeting might not have received such extensive media coverage.

This meeting is an annual event that we have to attend. At the meeting last year there was also a good show of support for the trail, which is one reason the county is aggressively pursuing completion of the trail.

Siebert Creek

The Siebert Creek Bridge is now open for your continued pleasure. We had two small work parties and put the finishing touches on the ends of the bridge. Sorry if you weren't called for the work parties-they were very sexy projects.

Signs

Thanks to a grant from the Skerbeck Family Trust we were able to have signs designed for the ODT. The signs are complete and we will start putting them up along the trail in both counties.

This past summer Clallam County's road department finished putting up "Bicycle Route" signs that follow low traffic roads through the scenic lower Dungeness. The route takes off of Highway 101 at West Sequim Bay Road east of Sequim, winds itself toward the water and joins the ODT at Siebert Creek.

Traveler's Journal

Travelers Journal will be starting its 11th season this winter on the last Thursday in February. For 11 years we have been using this travel and adventure slide show series in Sequim to raise money to feed volunteers working on trail projects. Last year we raised around \$1500. We are putting the schedule together now. If you have been on a travel adventure (Caribbean Cruises don't count) or know someone with an interesting slide show, have them contact PTC board member Dave Le Roux.