

Fall 2004

Peninsula Trails Coalition Newsletter

Political Stuff

For the past 6 years the PTC has queried candidates for local political positions questions about their position and support for the Olympic Discovery Trail. This year we sent questions to both candidates for State Representative, District 24 and to all four candidates for commissioners of Districts 1 and 2 in Jefferson County.

Questions for the State Representative Candidates, District 24.

The concept of an Olympic Discovery Trail stretching across the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push is embodied in the plans of Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

1. What have you done or will you do to help the counties complete the Olympic Discovery Trail?
2. As an elected official will you help the counties obtain state grant dollars for the trail?
3. What economic value will the trail have for your district?

Response from Kevin Van De Wege

1. I have supported candidates for public office that are Olympic Trail supporters. I have personally been a supporter of the trail. I am a user of the trail. I will continue to support and promote the trail and support political candidates that also support the trail. I will fight for funding for the trail.
2. Yes, I will continue the fight to secure state funding for the trail.
3. The economic value is huge considering the Olympic Trail is a piece of the pie that helps make the Olympic Peninsula both a destination for visitors and families to move into. The trail has shown it is safe and does not increase crime along its path, that it is popular among local residents, and that the trail itself is an economic stimulus by drawing projects like the marathon, bike rides, and others.

Jim Buck did not respond.

Questions for the Jefferson County commissioner candidates:

The concept of an Olympic Discovery Trail stretching across the Olympic Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push is embodied in the plans of Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

1. What role do you envision for yourself as an elected official working toward the trail's completion?
2. As an elected official will you encourage the county to aggressively pursue state and federal grant dollars for the trail?
3. What economic value will the trail have for Jefferson County?

District 1

Response From Dan Titterness

1. I have supported the Olympic Discovery Trail since the "Rails to Trails" days and will continue to do so. As an elected official I have and will be an advocate in public and in private for the completion of the

Olympic Discovery Trail. My voting record and my personal actions verify this.

2. We at Jefferson County are actively pursuing those grants now. You can help by contacting the Senators below and thanking them for their support. (note this is a tri partisan group) *

3. While we identify our project as a trail, it is really an alternate roadway, which brings commerce to us, serves as a transportation corridor, and a linear park-recreation facility.

* TEA-21 -What Happens Next Week-from Dan Titterness The week of September 27 should yield something about where Congress intends to go with the TEA-21 reauthorization. Some decision will have to be made before the current September 30 extension expires and another extension will have to be passed. This will happen during the week of September 27 and its length will give a better indication of when a bill might be finalized. The options seem to be a two week extension to try to get a bill done before the election recess; two months if there is going to be a lame-duck session after the November elections and leadership wants to try then; or six months if the issues are to be carried over to next year and a new Congress. Interestingly, this week Senator Bond (R-Mo.), chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Environment and Public Works and Senators Jeffords (I-Vt.) and Reid (D-Nev.), ranking members of the committee and Senator Shelby (R-Ala.), chair of the Banking Committee with jurisdiction over the transit programs, introduced a six month extension. This gives us some hint of where things may be heading.

Response from Phil Johnson

1. Commissioners' roles include both setting policy and funding through the annual budget. Both staff time and appropriated dollars to advance the trail are important and I would support both within the constraints of the much-heralded 'budget train wreck.' The county's 2003 survey of the public revealed that public health and parks and recreation were two of their top four priorities -- the whole point of budgeting by Priorities of Government, which I support, is to fund the public's priorities.

2. Yes, of course. I will stay in touch with Congressman Dicks and his staff, with Senator Hargrove and Majority Leader Kessler and the Governor's office to pursue all possible avenues for funding. In addition, private funds through grants and gifts to the Larry Scott Memorial Trail should be sought and receive our enthusiastic support.

3. Surely it will have economic value to tourists and local residents alike: locals, because their businesses will benefit from building and maintaining the trail and also providing goods and services to those who traverse the trail, in whole or in part; tourists, because eco-tourism is a growing segment of the tourism industry and the trail (known as the Larry Scott Memorial Trail at our end of the Olympic Discovery Trail) is perfectly positioned to enhance and grow that piece of the economic pie on the peninsula. In addition, enhanced recreational opportunities and open space through trails is one more significant attraction to those who may wish to move here to retire, start businesses and/or simply enjoy our quality of life.

District 2

Response from Dave Sullivan

1. I would like to see the Olympic Discovery Trail extend from the Port of Port Townsend to the Pacific Ocean. As Jefferson County Commissioner, my role would be to give continual support to the trail in a number of ways. First, the county commissioner can provide policy that would support the staff to work

diligently to complete the section of the Olympic Trail within Jefferson County. Second, the county commissioner can provide money for the trail's completion by applying for and lobbying for state and federal grants and by securing matching in-kind contributions. Finally, I would hope to serve as a leader to ignite, encourage, and inspire support among the citizens and groups in the county.

2. Yes. Public health is a priority of mine, and I feel the trail is very important as a place for healthful exercise. It is also potentially an economic asset. I would pursue state and federal grant dollars with the knowledge that both Rep. Norm Dicks and Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell have expressed a great deal of interest in the trail because of its recreational benefits and economic value to the state and the nation.

3. The Olympic Discovery Trail will have at least two kinds of economic value for Jefferson and Clallam Counties. First, the building and maintaining of the trail will provide jobs for local workers. Second, as the Olympic Discover Trail expands, it will enhance our tourist industry. In Clallam County it has demonstrated its economic value as a tourist attraction. In the future, I see it as the site of bicycle and walking adventures, perhaps marathon races or who knows what. The possibilities are limitless.

Response from Glen Huntingford

1. I have been supportive in the past and will be supportive of the over all goal of the Trails completion.

2. Yes, if the impact to our current priorities is not effected.

3. I believe the trail is a draw for people that want to really enjoy Jefferson County. I could give a dollar amount as to how much of an economic impact the trail has but I know that it is a positive amenity for all of us.

Jefferson County

From Nik Worden Architectural Projects Coordinator Jefferson County Public Works

Jefferson County's plans for construction in 2005 have been pushed around a bit, but we still expect to make physical progress on the trail next year. The County's application for an IAC grant to build all of Segment 3 did not rank well enough to be part of the "likely funded" list for 2005, but an earlier grant has been augmented so that the county will have about \$200,000 to spend in the first half of next year, including at least \$25,000 in private funds raised by the Jefferson Trail Coalition last year. We will use these funds to complete all of the acquisitions for Segment 3 (as far as green #5 on the Discovery Bay Golf Course) and to do some fundamental construction that will permit passage and volunteer construction for the full distance.

Meanwhile, Wengler Surveying and Mapping is completing survey and legal description for the parcels we expect to acquire this year and in the first half of 2005. Negotiations are underway for some of these parcels now.

The only bid for the paving project of the highway bypass in Segment 2 was declined by the County due to a very high asphalt price. The project will be rebid in October, with construction in November, weather permitting. If you've been waiting for this improvement, don't give up! It will get done.

Pacific Northwest Trail Association

By Darek Staab

We had a successful summer of volunteer trips and educational programs this summer, with over 80 people involved in summer trail work and time in the woods. Our crews maintained over 27 miles of trail, assisting with the Pacific Northwest Trail in the Olympic National Park and Forest, and the Olympic Discovery Trail in Clallam County.

Currently we are busy connecting new people to the health and learning available with our trails and streams. We had booths out at the Land Trust's StreamFest and Dungeness River Festival, presenting the importance of volunteering with Clallam County and the Peninsula Trails Coalition, and helping enhance our recreational opportunities and the environments we explore.

Our goal for fall is helping students meet community service requirements. We hope to create an after school program, allowing local High School students to get out in the field and study Natural Resource issues in the region. We want to partner with local non-profits and agencies. One partner and future location for learning is the Olympic Discovery Nature Center, a new site for learning and volunteering located at Morse Creek in Port Angeles. If your student or class is interested in becoming involved, contact Darek Staab at dstaab@pnt.org or 808-2313.

It was a joke.

In the last issue I said our legal staff in Brussels would be coming after those people who were behind in paying their dues. This was cause from concern among a few people. It was a joke -our legal staff is not in Brussels. We moved them to L.A. last year. Most of the time they sit around adjusting their Rolex watches, eating Cheetos and filing briefs on crop circles.

British Columbia

Last year the forest fires in B.C. burned 12 trestles on the Kettle Valley Railway which was a popular biking trail and part of the Trans-Canada Trail. It is estimated that the trails generated \$5 million annually in economic benefits for the Kelowna area so it is not surprising that the federal and provincial governments recently promised \$13.5 to rebuild the trestles over the next three years. Five of the trestles will be exactly to the originally railway specs.

Winter Wanderlust and Traveler's Journal

Jan Marts of the Jefferson Trails Coalition and Christopher Overman of Hosteling International going to host Winter Wanderlust this year. This year the series will run for 8 weeks on Wednesdays in January and February at the Port Townsend High School (a new location).

Traveler's Journal will be on Thursday evenings throughout February and March at the Sequim Middle School but will start a half-hour early at 7PM.

If you have a travel and adventure slide (a week at Club Med in Florida doesn't qualify) contact Jan Marts (Wanderlust 379-9637) or Dave Le Roux (TJ 683-7180). A complete schedule will be printed in the next newsletter.

Adopt-a-trail

Odette Vachon, has adopted the Spring Road section. All the available sections are now covered!

Real People

Heidi and Ralph Elston. Trail section – Dairy Entrance on Abbott Road to Spring Road. We have been enthused about the Olympic Discovery Trail since its inception and wanted to help support this great idea. Our trail section borders a dairy farm, hay field and irrigation ditch between Sequim and Port Angeles. Heidi teaches Living Skills part time at Sequim High School and works the remainder of the day at AquaTechnics which is a veterinary type practice for shellfish farms and environmental consulting company run by Ralph. Our daughter Valerie is enrolled in nursing school at UW and our son Derek is enrolled at Western Washington University. Ralph and Derek built and installed the Johnson Creek Kiosk.