

PTC Newsletter Fall 2006

Election Stuff

Every year at election time we pose questions to candidates for local political offices about the Olympic Discovery Trail. This year the political races that can impact the Olympic Discovery Trail is the race for the 24th District Legislative Position which includes both Clallam and Jefferson Counties, and the race for the Jefferson County 's District 3 Commissioner. The legislative race is particularly important because much of the trail's funding comes from the state's Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) and the IAC is funded by legislative action. And then, of course, the commissioner's race is important because the commissioners authorize county staff to apply for IAC funding. We asked the same questions of all four candidates. They were:

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/Clallam County?

The answers, reprinted in their entirety are:

Legislative Representative District 24.

Jim Buck

1. I will continue to look for opportunities to complete the trail.
2. YES
3. The trail has already demonstrated its ability to attract marathons, bike tours and races. It will continue to be a growing part of the North Olympic Peninsula's tourist industry.

Kevin Vandewege

1. As a Sequim resident and frequent user of the Olympic Discovery Trail, I am very excited about continuing construction of the Trail. The Olympic Discovery Trail provides our community with a fantastic resource for families, athletes, and tourists.

If elected, I will work to coordinate county, city, state and federal agencies in their efforts to expand the trail. By creating new incentives for private landowners to sign trail easements, we can build a community trail system that benefits both public and private interests.

As Clallam County Fire District #3's representative on the Highway 101 Safety Corridor Project, I am very concerned about how we can make our highways safe for bicyclists and hikers.

Certainly one of the best ways is by creating a safe and user friendly pathway like the Olympic Discovery Trail.

2 Large-scale public projects like the Olympic Discovery Trail can only be completed with generous grants from state, federal, and private sources. I will work hard to secure these funding sources so that the Olympic Discovery Trail can continue to expand across the peninsula.

3. The cities of Port Angeles and Sequim have already witnessed the Olympic Discovery Trail's economic growth potential. The annual North Olympic Discovery Marathon brings hundreds of visitors to the peninsula each year. If the Trail is properly supported, these fitness enthusiasts will continue to bring their excitement, their families, and their wallets to the Peninsula each year.

As the Pacific Northwest Trail grows in popularity and notoriety, we can expect greater numbers of visitors from around the world to visit the Olympic Peninsula. These long-distance hikers will spread their enthusiasm and business across the Peninsula from Port Townsend to La Push.

I look forward to working with the Peninsula Trails Coalition. Together, we can see continued expansion of this great community resource

Jefferson County Commissioner Candidates- District 3

John Austin

1. I see myself as championing the trail. I have cycled on it several times and raved about it to my friends. My only complaint was that the Jefferson County portion is far from complete.

2. In an era of tight county budgets, state and federal grant dollars seem to be an alternative, but perhaps not the only alternative. We might seek additional voluntary sources of funding: perhaps from those businesses which could gain from completion of the trail.

3. I have not studied the local economic benefits, but I do know of bike trails in Minnesota and Wisconsin (Root River, Sparta-Elway, St.-Paul to Duluth) which have engendered remarkable gains to B&Bs, restaurants, and real estate values particularly in towns adjacent to the trail. I am aware that people in bicycle clubs will travel to towns with trail access, and they will spend money on food, lodging, souvenirs, and accessories.

You may certainly count me as a fan of the Olympic Discovery Trail.

Ian McFall- did not respond to our survey

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Jefferson County

Currently Jefferson County is waiting for the Department of Transportation to finish its environmental review of the proposed section of trail from Discovery Road to Four Corners. The review should be done early in November at which time the county will begin working on acquisition of the trail using a \$195,000 state grant (IAC) they received last year.

There are two sections of trail that have been acquired and are awaiting construction. One section referred to as the “missing mile” runs between The Cape George Trailhead, formerly known as the Ramage Property, just missed the IAC funding mark and, while the county has about \$100,000 committed to building that section of trail, the entire construction effort will require about \$250,000. The county will continue to pursue funding for construction grants and there is a possibility they could still be funded this year if one of the other IAC grants is not used. In the meantime the county needs to develop a plan construction of this section of trail. Much of this section of trail runs on the old railroad corridor but there is one portion that will require the removal of approximately 300 yards of dirt.

The other section of trail that is awaiting a plan and construction is the 1-2 mile section between the Cape George Trailhead and Discovery Road. This section uses easements on some private roads and overgrown railroad corridor. It won't require major construction like the “missing mile”.

The Peninsula Trails Coalition is going to help Jefferson County develop a plan for both of these sections. We have a volunteer with some heavy equipment who wants to help rough in the trail. As soon as we work out plans for these sections we could make these sections useable. If you would like to help with these plans contact us.

The county is also looking at the possibility of hiring a part-time volunteer coordinator. They have been impressed with the accomplishments the volunteers working with Clallam County's two volunteer coordinators Kathe Smith and Lorrie Campbell. (*Lorrie's volunteers put in 1492 hours in the third quarter of this year.*) The county may also be adding some planning staff this fall that may be able to give some time to the trail.

Clallam County

Clallam County filled part of the gap between Sequim Bay and the Johnson Creek Trestle at Whitefeather Way by negotiating an agreement to purchase 1,200 feet of railroad corridor from Mel Baker. This was a major accomplishment that required a lot of work from Rich James and Commissioner Steve Tharinger and cooperation from Mel Baker whose property straddles the trail.

The section of trail through the estuary at the end of Sequim Bay should be paved sometime this winter. The section of trail west of Sequim Bay almost to West Sequim Bay Road should be prepared for asphalt this winter and paved next summer.

The commissioner's have recently signed off on the plan for the trail from West Sequim Bay Road east to the State Park so crews will start construction on that segment soon. That section crosses a railroad trestle that is about 100' long and 25' high. The county wants to put a concrete deck on the trestle and will contract out its restoration.

The portion of the trail between Kendall Road west of Sequim to Railroad Bridge Park is scheduled for completion and paving sometime in December. This will be asphalt and not chip-seal.

Port Angeles

The last stretch of unpaved trail between Sequim and PA will be paved next summer. Paving the 1.5 mile stretch from the Morse Creek Trestle to the waterfront will be funded, in large part, with \$90,000 from the city's bed tax.

West of the Elwha

A half-million dollars has been secured from Senator Patty Murry to build the trail underpass under the new bridge that will be replacing the current old single lane bridge over the Elwha. About 1.5 million dollars will be necessary to build the underpass so the county has applied to the IAC for a million bucks. So it is critical that the IAC be adequately funded by the legislature (see note on 24th District legislative race).

The Adventure Route (between the Elwha and the Joyce-Piedmont Road) is very close to completion and plans are being made to continue construction past the Joyce-Piedmont Road to the Lyre River Railroad Grade, which will take you to source of the Lyre River at Lake Crescent. The total amount of new trail that needs to be constructed past the Joyce-Piedmont Road is about ¾ mile. The rest of the distance the trail will run on logging road and the railroad grade through DNR and Green Crow land.

Travel and Adventure Slide Shows

Winter Wanderlust in Port Townsend and Traveler's Journal in Sequim will happen again this year. These are travel and adventure slide shows that raise money for the ODT. If you want more information contact Jan North for Wanderlust and Dave Le Roux for Traveler's Journal. Complete schedules will be in the PT Leader and the Sequim Gazette before the series starts.

Winter Wanderlust begins the first part of January and Traveler's Journal begins on the first Thursday in February (the 1st).

Volunteer Opportunities

Adopt-a-trail

Lorrie Campbell is looking for an adopt-a-trail volunteer (volunteers) for the Jimmy-come-lately area. Duties include: cutting back brush, picking up litter, and other minor maintenance. You'll have to walk and check that portion of the trail at least twice a month. Contact Lorrie at lorrie_dan@hotmail.com or her WORK phone: 565-2606. Adopt-a-trail people logged 242.5 hours in the third quarter of this year.

Lorrie would also like a volunteer to do noxious weed work on the ODT. Give her a call.

Welcome to new Adventure Route trail adopters: Theresa Powell, Jeff Well, Linda Mosley, and Lou and Becky Lupo.

We also have a new PA to Sequim adopter- Lin Beck

Thursday Crew

Lorrie has a Thursday Trail Crew that works every week on....Thursday of course. They've been working on the Adventure Route and put in 918 hours in the third quarter of this year. The crew's motto, which they have printed on t-shirts, is: "*You couldn't pay me to do this*". (But we do buy them lunch.) Contact Lorrie if you are interested in helping on this crew.

Second Saturday

Every second Saturday of the month we have a special work party. Lorrie Campbell (is that a surprise?) is handling the work party for November we are working on the Adventure Route trail construction. Meet at the county courthouse parking lot at 9A.M. we will return to the courthouse between 3pm and 3:30pm. Bring water; work gloves, raingear -in a daypack. Lunch is provided if you RSVP by noon on Friday, November 10. Be prepared to hike in/out 20 minutes. Contact...Lorrie at lorrie_dan@hotmail.com, or her HOME phone - 452-7314