

Spring 2004 Newsletter

Peninsula Trails Coalition Newsletter for Spring 2004 Mailed May 23rd

Annual Meeting

Once again (every year about this time actually) the PTC is holding its Annual Meeting. At the meeting we eat delectable homemade desserts (nothing we serve has ever seen the inside of a package), and elect new officers (a brief formality) This year we are lucky to have as speakers Commissioner Dan Titterness from Jefferson County and Commissioner Mike Chapman from Clallam County who will be telling us about plans for the trail. We like to have a good turnout at this event because it lets the commissioners know the community appreciates the trail. It is also a chance for you to thank the commissioners for their efforts and meet some of the people working on making the trail happen.

May 26th, River Center at Railroad Bridge Park from 6:30PM-8:30PM. Desserts will be served at 6:30 and the meeting will start at 7.

We'd like to see you there!

Progress East ...

Contractors have started installing the new highway bridge for the Jimmy Come Lately estuary reconstruction project east of Sequim at the foot of Sequim Bay. The bridge for the trail will be installed sometime this fall. The trail through the estuary project is about a mile long and construction will also start in the fall. After that is complete the county will start work on the trail from Sequim's city limits to Sequim Bay State Park.

...and progress West.

The next 2-3 years could see about 40-50 miles of trail west of Port Angeles ready for use. Construction is scheduled to start in 2005 on a 16-mile stretch of trail between Lake Crescent and Mary Clarke/Cooper Ranch Road. The new bridge over the Elwha could also be a 2005/2006 project. With all this new trail coming on line in the not-too-distant future the PTC is urging the City of Port Angeles to start working on a route for the ODT from downtown to the crossing at Dry Creek (near the west end of the airport). Some people have suggested a route to Dry Creek using N and 18th Streets. However, the board of the PTC thinks the best route uses the Milwaukee Road right-of-way. PTC president Chuck Preble recently sent a letter to Brad Collins the Community Development Director, outlining our reasons for the Milwaukee route. From Chuck's letter:

“ The Waterfront Trail is connected going east all the way to Sequim. The County is actively planning and building trail west of Port Angeles. We need to plan for completion of this trail link in the next 3-4 years.

The route through west Port Angeles that utilizes Hill St, Fourth St. and the Milwaukee Road right of way all the way to the city limits at Lower Elwha Road and Kacee Way is the best route for the following reasons:

1. It is the most direct route
2. It has the best grade available
3. The city already owns all the right of way required
4. It has been a designated bike route in your comprehensive plan for several years
5. It provides a largely isolated route through this urban area, avoiding vehicle traffic
6. It currently sees significant usage as a bike and walking trail
7. It connects properly at the waterfront and with the county plans going west”

Adopt-a-Trail

We have some new Adopt-a-Trail volunteers: The Olympic Peninsula Explorers Volkssport Club have taken the section from the Robin Hill Park Entrance, across McDonnell Creek to Barr Road, and Robert and Julie Grattan have adopted the section from Lake Farm Road to Bagley Creek Road. As with all our Adopt-a-Trail volunteers their welcome package includes a gift certificate for a Rolex watch from Nieman-Marcus. Next time you see someone working on the trail ask to see their watch – it comes with a neat attachment that dices and slices.

From Carrie Kalina our Adopt-a-Trail Coordinator

I would like to add to my list of kudos to trail volunteers, Carleen Barrett, who is babysitting the section from Bagley Creek Road to the Bagley Creek Bridge for the Packers. Carleen will be getting her own Adopt-a-Trail section, when I divide the long section from Gasman to Lake Farm Road into two smaller parts to lighten the load of Elaine Wilson.

Also, they have gone beserk on the trail--tightlining the ditch on Abbott Road and extending the trail there as well as on Spring Road. I would like to recruit a couple more folks who would like to adopt these new sections.

Real People!

We continue our coverage of the Adopt-a-Trail volunteers by highlighting Lola Little and David Marsh, who oversee the section between the Bagley Creek Bridge and Buchanan Road. In their own words:

Little did we know, when meeting for the first time in the parking lot for the Saturday work, that we would end up as volunteer “keepers” of one section of the Olympic Discovery Trail. Neither did we know that this trail section was flanked by hundreds of newly planted trees and shrubs requiring weekly watering to survive the summer and fall drought. We’re not certain that either the plants or we two keepers would have survived without the help of our volunteer friends. Thanks to Kathe Smith who lent her truck for the summer, to Angeles Concrete where we filled and refilled our watering tank, and to Martha Rimos, our landscaping expert. Our faithful watering crew included Don Clark (the driver of “Big Red”), Gwen and Sue Pierce (hose haulers), and assorted visiting grandchildren.

We are now well aware that well-kept trails don’t “just happen”. Somewhere are workers who battle noxious weeds, cut back the creeping blackberry vines, trim the overhanging branches, stake up trees, and clear the trails. We like being a part of that dedicated ODT volunteer group.

Our thanks to David and Lola for their resourcefulness in tackling a demanding section of the trail!

McDonnell Creek

The bridge is in over McDonnell Creek but it isn't officially open. With the installation of this bridge the Olympic Discovery Trail is complete (except for a half-mile in Sequim) from downtown PA to Whitefeather Way 2 miles east of Sequim.

Art Opening

Over a year ago we received a grant from the Sequim Community Foundation to commission art work to put on the Johnson Creek Trestle. We are ready to put it up and officially turn the trestle over to the City of Sequim. On June 6th at 11:00AM (that's a Sunday morning) we are going to have an unveiling of a mural, metal sculpture and some really cool signs. We'd like to see all the people who worked on the trestle come out and take a look at the finished product. We had some neat stuff made.

Kiosks

Since our last newsletter we've had two kiosks added to the trail. The one on Carlsborg Road was constructed by Brian Crocker as an Eagle Scout project in memory of his dad. The one out at the Johnson Creek Trestle was constructed by PTC member Ralph Elston. These are community kiosks so feel free to post whatever you want on them.

Birthday Gifts and Memorials

If you would like to plant a tree or shrub or something along the trail as a birthday gift or memorial contact us and we can tell you where to plant it. Or, if you have a location in mind, we can get permission for you to plant it. You buy it. You plant it. You water it. There is an area by the trail on the east side of Kitchen-Dick Road where somebody has planted 5 birthday trees over the past few years. Three plum trees, a walnut and a Dawn Redwood have been planted. The Dawn Redwood is a deciduous evergreen which was listed in a fossil index as being extinct until WWII when they found a few pockets of it over in China. It was native to this area a loooong time ago according to David Allen of Shore Road Nursery who specializes in native species.

Expiration Dates

Remember to check your expiration date on the newsletter's mailing label. Guess what happens if it is past due and you don't send us a check?

Slide Shows

We have a great 35 minute slide show about the ODT that we put on for service organizations, clubs and secret societies. This past winter we entertained 4 organizations with this presentation. If you are interested in seeing this show contact us.

Traveler's Journal

We had a great Traveler's Journal series this year and raised around \$2600- all of which will be used to buy food for volunteers working on trail projects. The great attendance at this travel and adventure slide show series is in part because we've been doing it for 13 years but also in large part because of the great coverage the Sequim Gazette gave the event. Jan Marts, of our Jefferson County PTC contingent, is taking over the long-running Winter Wanderlust series in Port Townsend next year. If you have a travel and adventure slide show (Caribbean cruises don't count) give us a call.

Auditor Wanted

We are still looking for a CPA who would like to donate some time and audit our books for us. Call us if you'd like to help.

From Darek Staab, the new Olympic Coordinator of the Pacific Northwest Trail Association, and a new board member of the PTC

It is great to say hello to all of you. As a new recruit, I can't think of a better community to work with and learn from. I am originally from the mountains and trails of Utah, but I feel more at home in the Coastal Mountains since arriving in 1999. For the past 12 years, I have been teaching in the outdoors, doing research throughout the West, and hitting the trails with pack, shovel, or skis. During that time, I have helped to start a field institute, conservation corps, watershed council, and several other initiatives. I hope to use all of this experience contributing to the communities and the landscapes along the North Olympic Peninsula. I have a great traveling slide show, so let me know if your organization or school wants a virtual walk into our outdoor classroom.

I am honored to join the Board of the Peninsula Trails Coalition and help keep our momentum rolling. My strength is incorporating educational programs in an outdoor setting, and you won't find a more interesting classroom than the Olympic Discovery Trail and the Pacific Northwest Trail. Our biggest need is getting outside, enhancing and learning from these incredible routes. Please mark your calendars for upcoming work projects. June 5th is National Trails Day on which I will be joining PTC to help build the fence along Abbott Road in Agnew. Following on the heels of this important day will be an action packed summer of backcountry education. PNTA will be sponsoring 4 separate crews of work in the Olympic Mountains. Ages will range from 13 to 20, depending on the crew. For the adults, we also have room for participation in Volunteer Vacations in the magical Bogachiel Forest.

If you have questions or interest in our exciting summer opportunities, give me a call 360-808-2313 or dstaab@pnt.org.

Second Saturdays

Remember that on the second Saturday of each month we have a work project of some sort. Our project this summer is going to be installing fencing along Spring Road. Contact Carrie Kalina (info on masthead) for more information about this ongoing fun event!

Barr Road

Barr Road is a narrow road in Clallam County just west of McDonnell Creek. The county has been in the process of planning improvements on a half-mile section south of Old Olympic Highway. The neighborhood has a lot of children so plans for improving the road needed to consider vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Because of limited right-of-way the county proposed a trail/sidewalk that ran on the west side of the road for part of the distance and crossed over to the east side for the rest of the distance. At a community meeting sponsored by the Road Department several people questioned the safety, and logic of making the trail cross the road. After a brief discussion the Road Department suggested putting a couple of small curves in the road which would allow the trail to stay on the west side of the road. The consensus was this was a good idea.

This suggestion from the Road Department is noteworthy because it demonstrates the positive effect neighbors can have on roadwork in their neighborhoods. It also shows the road department is responding to community concerns about retaining the rural qualities of their neighborhoods even while improving roads. The trail will make the road more user friendly and the curves will slow traffic as well as give the road a rural aesthetic. Deliberately designing curves into road improvements is a big (and welcome) departure from conventional road engineering because road engineers like to build wide and straight roads.

Jefferson County

THE COUNTY IS READY TO GO THIS SUMMER with an Adopt-A-Trail plan similar to the one being successfully used in Clallam County. The existing 3 miles of Larry Scott Trail has been divided into sections and we have them up for adoption. We're looking for a few good people to step up and claim a section. The responsibilities will include occasional litter pick-up, noxious weed murdering, some brush control, and mostly just loving the trail. You can even set up lemonade stands on your section in hot weather. And we need one good volunteer to "take charge" of this program. This is work that offers lots of rewards and many chances to meet good people.

Our newest county commissioner, Pat Rogers, recently made a trip to Washington, D.C. to lobby for (among other things) money to complete the ODT in Jefferson County. Commissioner Rogers, who enthusiastically supported the ODT during his successful campaign, made the case for funding directly to Congressman Norm Dicks and his staff. Congressman Dicks is a big ODT supporter and has been key to the progress of the ODT in Sequim and Clallam County.

Good news for bicyclists! The Hwy 20 bridge bypass at the the Larry Scott Trail intersection will be paved this summer. Remaining balances of two older grants and a portion of the local trail budget will be used to complete this job to make a safe and smooth alternate route to the dangerously narrow highway bridge.

Jefferson Trails Coalition volunteers held a work party on Earth Day and cleared scotch broom and poison hemlock on the Larry Scott Trail near the Hwy 20 intersection. A few hardy volunteers also cleared a new section of Larry Scott XC trail for horses and mountain bikes at the Mill Road crossing.