

Summer 2004 Newsletter

Peninsula Trails Coalition Newsletter for Summer 2004

Clallam County. The county just ordered 2 pedestrian bridges from Big R Manufacturing out of Greenly, Colorado. The new Jimmy Come Lately bridge will be a 10 foot wide, 144 foot long steel truss bridge with a concrete deck. The other bridge that replaces the trestle bridge across the highway from the Casino will be a 10 foot wide, 85 feet long steel truss bridge with a concrete deck capable of supporting truck for maintenance. These bridges will be installed this fall along with additional trail through the project site.

Elwha River Bridge. The bridge over the Elwha (near the fish hatchery) is going to be replaced. The design review committee for the new Elwha River Bridge met twice in July and discussed bridge and pedestrian options. A separate and lower deck integrated into the structure of the bridge is being considered for the pedestrian crossing of the Elwha River at this scenic location.

Sequim Bay State Park. County Commissioners and County staff met with State Parks Director Rex Derr and his staff and requested that the route of the ODT be established through Sequim Bay State Park. A route through the Park has been selected and the Park is now in the process of using the information to begin the paperwork required for granting an easement for the trail.

Jefferson County. Road bicyclists rejoice! In September the county will pave sections of the Larry Scott Trail along both sides of Hwy 20 that bypass the narrow highway bridge (south of Jacob Miller toward Fredericks Rd). Finally, the dangerous gravel will be gone and bicyclists can safely avoid the bridge. And the county just submitted a grant application to the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) for \$350,000 to build 3.5 miles of trail going southwest toward Chevy Chase Golf Course on trail easements the county already owns.

PTXC 2004 TRAIL RUN/WALK at OLD FORT TOWNSEND. Saturday, September 18 at 10:00 a.m. SAVE THE DATE and join a fun 4-mile event through the beautiful trails of Old Fort Townsend for runners and walkers of all ages. Teams are encouraged and great awards go to the winners in all categories. Random drawings for gift certificates from local businesses are a highlight. Brian Taylor heads up the PTXC organization this year, with help from the Jefferson Trails Coalition, Friends of Old Fort Townsend, and the new PT Running Club. Would you like to get involved and volunteer on the day of the run? We need you. Some of the volunteer jobs will give you time to run or walk the PTXC. Remember, proceeds benefit equally the Jeff Trails Coalition and Friends of Old Fort Worden. Last year JTC received \$300+. The more people registered, the more we receive. For information contact Brian at 360.379.6542, brian@ptrunning.org, or the website at www.ptrunning.org for an entry form.

Summer on the Pacific Northwest Trail, By Darek Staab. It has been a busy summer on the Pacific Northwest Trail. We have a total of 8 crews, working at various places along the trail. We brushed and opened up the Ericson's Bay trail west of Ozette Lake and a Job Corps crew has broken ground just west of the Elwha, helping to connect the ODT east of the river to Lake Crescent.

For our summer educational programs, we have 2 crews from the Quilcene and Brinnon area. Our Quilcene kids have been doing a variety of work for the Forest Service and also assisted on a fish rescue by relocating individuals stranded in the old channel in Salmon Creek. Two other trail crews are Summer SKY Programs, representing each county with field sites near Marmot Pass on the East and the Bogachiel River on the West. SKY (Service Knowledge Youth) is a "trail-based" program for work skills and educational progress, serving high school aged students throughout the local area.

We have had great support from the Washington Trails Coalition and the American Hiking Society who have brought in individuals for weeklong volunteer vacations. As we learned on National Trails Day (June 5th), one day is not enough to celebrate and give service to our beloved trails. To learn more about the efforts and needs of the Pacific Northwest Trail Association, contact Darek Staab at 360-808-2313 or dstaab@pnt.org.

(The Pacific Northwest Trail, when finished, will run from Glacier Falls, Montana to the Pacific Coast. The Olympic Discovery Trail is the lowland route running across the Peninsula to the coast. The highland route runs through Olympic National Park. Darek is the PNT's coordinator here on the Peninsula and a board member of the Peninsula Trails Coalition.)

Volkswalk. Port Angeles Jet Set Soroptimists will be co-hosting a Volkswalk with Olympic Peninsula Explorers on Saturday, August 28. Start time is 8am to 1pm. This nationally advertised walk is an American Volkssport Association (AVA) sanctioned event. It will start at the Port Angeles City Pier and showcase the Waterfront Trail, the Waterfront Trail's westward extension and historic highlights of Downtown Port Angeles. Soroptimists will have information on the Waterfront Trail Extension and will be accepting donations to help make it a reality. There will be opportunities to participate in the AVA walking credit program for a small fee or learn about and join AVA. The walk itself is free, but walkers are required to register, carry and return a free "start card". There will be a 5K and 10K check in point. The latter will be at the take off of the exciting new Trail extension. For additional info:

Frances Johnson 360-732-4623, Vic McAllister 360-681-2560 vicmac@olympus.net, www.olympus.net/community/ope

Second Saturday- from Carrie Kalina. For our August Second Saturday work party we'll be continuing construction of the Olympic Discovery Trail west of the Elwha using hand tools. As Kathe Smith puts it: "Nothing easy about it." But if you're game, we'll provide tools, lunch, and our undying gratitude.

WHEN: Saturday, August 14 10:00-3:00 Rain or Shine

WHERE: west of the Elwha. Carpooling available: meet at the Clallam County Courthouse parking lot at 9:00, at Dan Kelly Road and Hwy 112 at 9:20, at Dan Kelly and Karpen Roads at 9:25.

BRING: gloves, day packs, water

RSVP by the evening of August 12 to smacklow@yahoo.com, and Stan will bring a lunch for you.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS? Kathe Smith at ksmith@co.clallam.wa.us or 565-2606

Real trail work-ODT Adventure Trail!-from Kathe Smith. The week of July 26-30 a 6 person Job Corp crew from Skagit County started the new construction of the Olympic Discovery Trail Adventure Route west of the Elwha River. The crew base camped at Salt Creek. The Pacific Northwest Trails Association is to thank for our connection to Job Corp. The crew did a great job of giving us a view of the kind of trail we need to keep hammering away to make our off-road connection between the Elwha and Lake Crescent. The work will be the PTC Second Saturday project for a long time. This will also be the site of future Eagle Service projects and Joyce/PA club or individual project requests. The work being done is 90% hand tool work. We will be grubbing trail with mattocks and pulaskis, working in a fire line approach, as a crew. Hopefully, we can get a core group trained up to work together and really be able to punch out some trail. People who perhaps can't physically participate in the trail construction are needed for tool maintenance between crews and lunch preparation. If you are new to the area this is a great way to find out what the forests look like from inside. Pass the word: the fine for motorized vehicles being on the new trail is \$350 and/or 90 days in jail. (Ksmith@co.clallam.wa.us 565-2606)

Real People! IN THE SPRING OF 2003, CHARLES AND EYCKE STRICKLAND ADOPTED THE SECTION OF Olympic DISCOVERY TRAIL BEGINNING AT BUCHANAN DRIVE AND RUNNING WEST TO MILEPOST FOUR. THEY VOLUNTEERED BECAUSE THEY LIVE NEARBY, THEY LOVE THE TRAIL, AND THEY WALK IT FREQUENTLY, REWARDED BY VIEWS OF THE Strait of Juan de Fuca AND THE OLYMPICS. THEY frequently pause to ENJOY THE SOOTHING FLOW OF MORSE CREEK UNDER THE TRESTLE.

AS THE STRICKLANDS PUT IT, "THERE IS NO REASON WHY WE SHOULDN'T- WHILE WE ARE HAVING FUN--PICK UP LITTER, SCRAPE AWAY HORSE AND DOG DROPPINGS, CLEAR BRUSH, AND KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR VANDALS, TERRORISTS, AND LITTERBUGS. WE ARE HAPPY TO REPORT THAT MOST OF OUR TRAIL USERS HAVE BEEN TIDY AND LAW-ABIDING."

CHARLES IS A RETIRED HISTORY PROFESSOR WHO LIKES TO HIKE, SING AND ACT. HE IS PRESIDENT OF THE PENINSULA MEN'S GOSPEL SINGERS AND HAS APPEARED IN NUMEROUS PLAYS AND MUSICALS IN PORT ANGELES. EYCKE IS A WRITER WHO IS COMPLETING HER BOOK, GERMAN GIRL: GROWING UP UNDER THE THIRD REICH. CHARLES AND EYCKE HAVE TWO CHILDREN AND FOUR GRANDCHILDREN, AND THEIR HOPE IS TO LEAVE THIS WORLD TO THEM IN AT LEAST AS GOOD A SHAPE AS THEY FOUND IT, IF NOT BETTER.

Annual Meeting. We had a successful annual meeting this past May. Commissioners from both Counties spoke to a full house. Both Commissioner Mike Chapman from Clallam County and Commissioner Dan Titterness from Jefferson County voice unequivocal support for the completion of the trail. However, they both said completion was going to require continued support and assistance from the trails coalition. Titterness specifically appreciated our help in identifying and mapping trail routes through Jefferson County and Chapman was especially appreciative of the volunteer help the county has been getting from our Adopt-a-Trail program, Second Saturdays and Kathe Smith's Tuesday work crew.

Award. Both counties embrace the idea of the Olympic Discovery Trail now but it wasn't always that way. Long ago, before Olympic Discovery Trail became part of the Peninsula's lexicon a family stepped forward and started promoting the idea of a trail. That family was given an award recognizing their contribution at our annual meeting this year.

In 1957 Ken and Alice Langley bought the Morse Creek Homestead at the mouth of Morse Creek. When the railroad went out of business Ken and Alice bought the stretch of railroad right-of-way that ran through their property to the Morse Creek Trestle. They bought the right-of-way with the intention of preserving it for a public trail. Their son, Mike, started the Peninsula Trails Coalition and soon after at a public meeting in Gardiner the idea of a trail running from Port Angeles to Port Townsend took flight. It was named the Olympic Discovery Trail at that meeting by Rik Reynolds and Mark Schrader.

The trail goes right through the center of the Langley property. It may be the single most critical piece of trail property on the entire route. If the Langley's had not been in favor of the trail it would not look like it does today - there would be no way to get down to the waterfront and there is no way to go around the Langley property except on Highway 101.

The award we gave the Langley's recognized their vision and commitment to the community and consists of a plaque and an original watercolor of the Morse Creek Homestead as it might have looked like shortly after the railroad was built in 1914-15.

The watercolor was a gift of Sharon Becker a local artist who also painted the watercolor of the Johnson Creek Trestle we are using on one of the trestle's water barrel platforms.

....more history. And while we are at it, Mike Langley was also responsible for saving the bridge over the Dungeness River now known as Railroad Bridge Park. Shortly after starting the Peninsula Trails Coalition it became clear that the bridge was in danger of being torn down. In fact the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad had sold the rights to demolish the bridge to a local contractor. The contractor rapidly removed ties and big timbers from the trestle but couldn't figure out how to tear down the bridge. It was then that Mike fortuitously called the Trust for Public Lands and asked them to buy the bridge. Conveniently, demolition contractor's contract to tear the bridge down expired about that time. The railroad company then decided to sell the bridge to the Trust. The bridge, remains of the trestle and 7 acres of land (3000' by 100') was purchased by the Trust for \$25,000.

If Mike had not made that timely phone call to the Trust for Public Lands, there might not be a Railroad Bridge Park. Don't take that park for granted. It almost didn't happen. (The Trust for Public Lands is a nonprofit organization that buys endangered lands and gets them into protected status. It is a good organization to support.)

Membership. When Ken Langley walked into the Rivercenter for our annual meeting the first thing he did was proffer a check for three years of lapsed membership dues. On the advice of our legal staff in Brussels we took the check and magnanimously decided not to prosecute Mr. and Mrs. Langley for interest on their unpaid dues. However to waive the interest we had to reach deep into our well of magnanimity and we can't do it for everybody.So, if your membership is past due you better pay up before ...

about those watches.. For those of you Adopt-a-Trail People who did not get a Rolex watch from Neiman-Marcus as part of your welcome package we are truly sorry. They ran out of watches and we are going to substitute a bag of Cheetos instead. Look for it in the mail.

Adopt-a-Trail-Carrie Kalina. Welcome new adopters: Larry and Nancy Lang for the section from the Old Oly Highway to Gasman Road. We also did some shifting to accommodate another new Adopter: Lance Elphic who now has the section from Vautier to the parking lot entrance to Robin Hill. The Backcountry Horsemen have taken on the new section from McDonnell Creek west, down Barr and

Abbott, to the dairy. Now we just need one volunteer to take on the little section on Spring Road.