

President's message

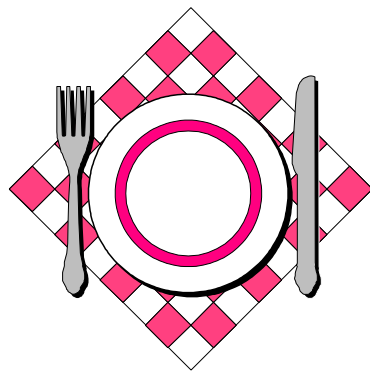
Faithful volunteers need support

A good time was had by all! Actually, a great time was had by the approximately 250 persons who attended this year's Breakfast in the Woods event on Saturday, August 14. Guests included scores of cyclists who rose at sunrise and worked up their appetites by pedaling the 25 miles uphill from Orting. They were not disappointed. The food was both plentiful and delicious. Also, it was elegantly presented and delightfully served by our faithful volunteers. Moreover the weather was perfect, and the setting beautiful and refreshing. What more could be asked.

The question is rhetorical, but there is an answer, and that is we would like more volunteers. At one point during setup the Friday before the breakfast, as a dedicated few were struggling with tents and setting up tables and chairs, one of our most involved trail supporters mused, "I wonder how it would be if next year we had this catered, so that we could better relax and enjoy the event." We did not contemplate for long before concluding that the cost benefit would likely cancel one another out; and besides, getting there, as the saying goes, is half the fun. Still, the question persists as to how we can induce more trail advocates to become active, if not on a regular basis then at least for the occasional project. Usually we find that it is simply a matter of asking, but who to ask?

Actually we have to be honest and admit that except for our annual Puyallup Fair booth and trail work parties, we have not done that good a job of follow through when new members have noted a willingness to serve. Sometimes the reason is that a critical function is being served, or a particular skill is not immediately needed, but this leaves us vulnerable. We are now attempting to correct this. One of our volunteers has created an excellent membership data-

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Activism builds trails

Want your trail? Write your local representative.

In almost every local, state and national parks and recreation survey for as long as this writer can remember, trails and pathways have ranked at or near the top of the list. Why then, do we not have more trail mileage? I believe the answer is lack of citizen activism. Where trail advocates are organized trails happen. Where people sit quietly back trails do not proceed.

Pierce County communities where trails are progressing as the result of citizen interest include Puyallup, Milton and Edgewood. Communities that have trail plans and in some cases funding, but little trail activity include Tacoma, Fife and Sumner among others.

Sumner residents in particular are urged to contact their city council representative and demand that the city's trail plans move off the shelf and onto the ground. Sumner is well ahead of most local jurisdictions in their trail planning, and has several isolated pieces of pavement waiting to be connected. The problem is that the city's trail plans have for the most part been languishing for lack of priority.

It's really up to you citizens of Sumner, and other jurisdictions, to make trails happen. Write or call your local representative and enlist other trail enthusiasts to do the same. It really works!

—Ernie Bay

The **17th National Trails Symposium** will be held in Austin, Texas, October 21-24, 2004, with the theme, The Emerging Role of Trails in American Lifestyles. Trails are no longer the exclusive domain of the solitude-loving wilderness seeker or the dedicated fitness enthusiast.

For the most current information on the symposium, sponsorship opportunities, hotel reservations and registration information, visit the American Trails website at www.americantrails.org/Austin.

President's message (continued)

base, and we are developing a combined position of fundraiser and volunteer coordinator.

These persons will work with our committees to establish call and contact lists for specific activities.

Skills and activities we can use include trail clearing and construction, heavy equipment operation, fund raising, publicity, ticket sales for special events, Puyallup and community fair information booth attendants, writers, computer graphics, courtesy patrol volunteers, community relations, political outreach, finance and others.

If you would like to be listed for one or more roles or activities, please let us know by

email, bugtrail@aol.com or phone 253-841-2570.

Trail Development

Our Breakfast in the Woods cyclists had it all downhill on the way home. I wish that we could say the same thing for trail development. Our mission is to establish as comprehensive a county and community trail network as possible and, to accomplish this, there are many hills yet to climb. If you are looking for a way to create a trail project in your neighborhood, or simply want to see more trails sooner, we invite you to become involved. Please join us for lunch at Charlie's on any Wednesday and help us plan for next year's Breakfast in the Woods.

Planting volunteers needed Saturdays

As part of the newest phase of the Foothills Trail development, Pierce County will be improving six acres of wetlands along South Prairie Creek. Among other things, this project will provide important off-channel rearing habitat for salmon fry and turn what was once a field of reed canary grass into a more diverse ecosystem. As a capstone to this project, thousands of trees, shrubs and emergents will be planted this fall—and you can help.

As a partner with Pierce County, the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition has offered assistance in planting this wetland area. The plantings are being coordinated by the county biologist and the Pierce Conservation District Stream Team. Three Saturdays—September 18, October 9 and October 23—have been scheduled for planting with volunteers from 9 a.m. to noon, rain or shine, so be sure to dress appropriately.

With so many plants to put in the ground, it is important that we have large volunteer turnouts. Scout troops, church groups, civic organizations and others are welcome! If you, or others you know, can make it to
continued on next page

Federal legislation is trail friendly

On July 22, both the House and Senate passed another extension of the Transportation Enhancements bill which funds trails. This one lasts until the end of September. Now is a good time to lobby your representatives on bicycle issues. The America Bikes and grassroots committees have developed materials to help you make the case. You can contact the America Bikes team directly:

Marianne Fowler at rctmarianne@transact.org

Mele Williams at mele@bikeleague.org

For grassroots questions, talk to Sue Knaup at sue@thunderheadalliance.org

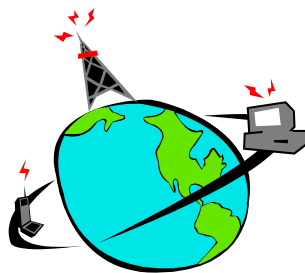
For big picture questions, contact Andy Clarke at andy@bikeleague.org

The phone number for America Bikes is 202-833-8080.

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How to reach the
Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition



We want to hear from you!

Web page:
<http://piercecountrysails.org/>
Address:
P.O. Box 192, Puyallup, WA
98371-0021
Telephone number:
253-841-2570
E-mail address:
bugtrail@aol.com

Volunteers (continued)

any or all of these planting parties, please call Jayme Gordon of the Stream Team at 253-845-2973 for more information.

Russ Matthews

CALENDAR

Monthly Meetings

September 23, October 28

November 23 (Tues.)

December 23

Monthly meetings are held on 4th Thursdays (except Nov.) from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Puyallup Public Library, south entrance.

324 South Meridian Street

National Trails Symposium

October 21-24

Austin, Texas

Work Parties

Check the website below or call

Don Partington at

253-863-5307

for details.

Weekly Meetings

At Charlie's Restaurant

Every Wednesday at noon at

Charlie's Restaurant,

113 East Main, Puyallup.

All are welcome.

For more information

Call 253-841-2570

Or email bugtrail@aol.com

<http://piercecountytrails.org/>



Breakfast in the Woods organizer Joan Miller shares a hug of appreciation from Pierce County Councilman Shawn Bunney.

New neighbor

Meeker Southern Railroad

Beginning this fall, the Meeker Southern Railroad will be our next-door trail neighbor between McMillin and Meeker Junction. The Meeker Southern Railroad Company is one of 16 short line railroads now operating within the state of Washington. Short line railroads are usually locally managed, regional companies that often, like the Meeker Southern, are spur lines taken over from larger companies that no longer find them economical.

The Meeker Southern RR Company was formed in 2000, the same year that Pierce County acquired the 200-foot-wide railroad corridor from Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company. Led by Oregon businessman Byron Cole, a group of business partners purchased the operation and track-

age from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, and negotiated a corridor easement from Pierce County. The group also owns and operates the Ballard Terminal Railroad at the western end of Seattle's Burke Gilman Trail.

Pierce County Parks had been negotiating with the Burlington Northern Railroad Company for a trail easement even before it merged with Santa Fe RR. Every time that an agreement seemed near, either the decision makers or company policy would change, and the best the county could hope for was that railroad conditions would eventually lead to abandonment. In the meantime, federal law prevented the BNSF from abandoning service as long as there were clients who re-

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V I S I T
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Meeker Southern (continued)

quested it.

The Meeker Southern Railroad serves several industrial clients along its corridor by shuttling supplies and products between their plants and the main BNSF RR line at Meeker Junction. Clients include Pasquire Panel Products, Gary Hamilton Trucking, the Pioneer Company which is a steel fabricator, and Commencement Bay Corrugated, a box company located in the McMillin Industrial Park.

The Meeker Southern RR handles approximately 30 cars per month and moves most of these on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Trains travel very slowly because of limited upgrading and maintenance of a badly deteriorated roadbed.

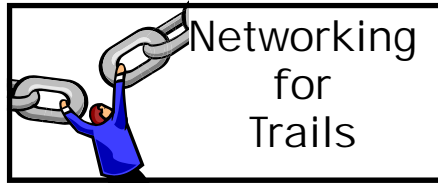
The Foothills Trail will, for the most part, parallel the railroad at a distance of about 50 feet. The trail will also occasionally cross the railroad tracks to avoid sensitive areas and existing structures. These crossings, along with approaches on either side, will initially remain unpaved, pending resolution of differences between the county and Meeker Southern Co. as to the number of vehicular crossings to be allowed. Despite these issues, we look forward to being good neighbors and believe that trail users, and especially railroad enthusiasts and children, will find Meeker Southern's trains one more interesting trail feature.
—Ernie Bay

Life is just a series of trying to make up your mind.

Timothy Fuller

The vitality of thought is in adventure. Ideas won't keep. Something must be done about them.

Alfred North Whitehead



Edgewood

More North Hill folks were informed about Edgewood and Milton's plans for the Interurban Trail extension when they dropped by the booth at Edgewood's annual picnic. Enthusiasm for Pierce County trails that link together is high. Progress is a must in order to keep it that way. Edgewood awaits the results of Conservation Futures grant funding. An application for purchase money is pending.

Diane Kerlin

Milton

The good news: after years of close calls, false starts, near misses and negotiation start-overs, the City of Milton has finally become the owner of the King County portion of the interurban right of way. The city has owned the Pierce County portion lying in its boundary since 1995. We now own the entire 3.3-mile right of way, and the city council has annexed the entire trail into the city limits. According to our public works director, the devel-

opment design is now 95 percent complete.

The bad news: details of any portion of the design are unknown. When design work first started, Entranco, the city's trail design firm, provided eagerly awaited information to the city regarding their plan. Some of their work was regarded as unacceptable, however, and ever since then they have stopped giving out information. Also bad news is the requirement that the steep section of the trail, created by King County when they built 380th Street, be converted to ADA grade. The trail development people say this will require a wall and fill next to Sweet Water Creek, costing an additional million dollars. Currently there is no funding source for this additional expense.

We have been told that once the design is complete they will start the permitting phase, estimating that it will take at least a year. Our public works director is still saying construction could start in 2005. Cross your fingers.

Milton Loflin

Enumclaw

On Tuesday, August 17, the City of Enumclaw opened
continued on next page

Foothills Trail Coalition Board

President	Ernie Bay	253-848-7718	bugtrail@aol.com
Vice President	Ken Woolery	253-863-4774	no e-mail
Treasurer	Art Robinson	253-964-3387	ajr4142@worldnet.att.com
Secretary	Bill Harmon	253-475-1537	charmon@nventure.com
Board Members	Tom Enlow	253-851-8023	tom@enlow.org
	Marie Bailey Reed	253-847-8647	marienot@comcast.net
	John Downs	360-897-2617	johndowns@juno.com
	Buzz Grant	253-845-4991	grantbu@ctt.com
	Earl Mikkelson	253-862-4509	mikkelse@mindspring.com
	John Olson	253-756-5065	olsonj@cbhp.com
	Russ Matthews	253-939-1611	russ-matthews@comcast.net
	Paul Jacobson	253-848-5585	peejay@nwlink.com

Networking (continued)

sealed bids to complete the first phase of the Enumclaw section of the Foothills Trail. The project will include approximately 6,000 lineal feet of trail and a small staging and parking area. The trail section begins next to SR 410 at Schucks Auto Supply and follows the former Northern Pacific rail right-of-way south to 252nd St. SE.

Seven bids were received and an apparent low bidder was identified. The low bid will be approved at the August 23 Enumclaw City Council meeting. Construction is slated for sometime in September or early October. For additional information, call Enumclaw Parks and Recreation Department at (360) 802-0236.

Fife

The city has taken the Interurban Trail into account in its adopted Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan and its

associated trail plans. You may view this plan at Fife City Hall [and on line at http://www.cityoffife.org/Depts/Parks_Dept/parks_rec.htm].

In Fife, however, much of what many are familiar with in other communities, i.e., undeveloped right-of-way and historic trail corridors, no longer exists. Nearly all of the Puget Sound Electric Railway's right-of-way lays under warehouses and other development. Nevertheless the connections necessary to provide linkage between trail systems is anticipated in the city's parks and transportation plans. This would be accomplished largely through sidewalk and bike lane developments as our street systems are improved. We do not propose or plan to follow the historic path of the old Interurban rail line. As resources become available, these segments become a part of our annual update to our Transportation Capital Facilities Plan.

Finally, we have been ac-

tively involved in efforts by the Forever Green group to bring focus to the issue of regional trails. As such, regional trails are a lesser priority, however, for our council and our community than the issue of local park acquisition and development and local trails. It is my understanding that the regional effort on trails that Forever Green was leading may be taken on by the Pierce Conservation District.

Michael Lafreniere,
Fife Parks Director

[mlafreniere@cityoffife.org]


We clearly need some strong trail advocates in Fife. If you are interested in helping make trail development a higher priority in Fife, please contact Jeff Goulden at jeff.goulden@comcast.net.

Sumner

I've been a supporter of the rails to trails movement in Pierce County since 1986, when Dr. Tait called me and invited me to visit him in his office in Buckley to show me his plans for a 3-1/2 mile trail from Buckley to South Prairie. I was on the Pierce County Council at the time, representing East Pierce County. Because of Dr. Tait, I became involved in this project and have loved it from the beginning. So you don't have to urge me to support the trail. . . I've decided what this [Sumner City] Council needs is to get a few Sumnerites

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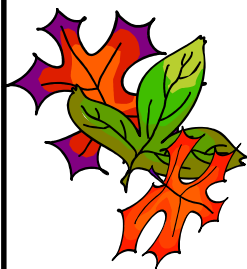
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Networking (continued)

to start bugging them to get the trail finished.

If you know anyone who lives in Sumner and would be willing to be an advocate for the trail, please suggest to them that they send me a letter or email and I can forward that to the council, showing that there are interested people in town wondering what's keeping us from getting it done. It's not that they're anti-trail. There are just a few of the council members who don't think it's a very high priority. We need to change their minds.

If you are interested in helping make trail development a higher priority in Sumner, please contact Jeff Goulden at jeff.goulden@comcast.net. A meeting is being planned for early October.

Barbara Skinner, Mayor, City of Sumner [Mayor Skinner can be reached at bskinner@ci.sumner.wa.us]

Puyallup Riverwalk

Local trail advocates recently took joy in the news that a con-

tract has been awarded to Wagner Construction Company for our long-awaited Meeker to McMillin rail with trail. Construction is scheduled to begin the first week of September 2004, and possibly finished by Christmas. Likewise we are delighted with the progress of the Orting to South Prairie connection, which should be completed by the end of September.

On the other hand, we are deeply disappointed that two extensions of the Puyallup Riverwalk, which we were promised would be built this summer, have been delayed until 2005. First, the eastward extension from SR 512 to the East Main Sumner Bridge was delayed because of a problem with the Hood Canal Bridge. Next, after bids were opened for the westward trail extension, toward Tacoma, one of the bidders challenged the bid process. Also the office of Pierce County River Improvement has imposed levee repair and maintenance
continued on next page


Bricks engraved

The following names were added to the Orting Trail Kiosk as of August 25 as part of our commemorative/memorial brick and tree program. Bricks and trees are subscribed throughout the year for contributions of \$50 each, and bricks are engraved once per year.

IN MEMORY OF SCOTT PIERSON
BILL WHEELER AND NANCY
DR. BRIAN LILJAS AND RINDA
ALAN LILJAS, AND SHEILA AND
ANNA
BRETT - SHIRLEY - DEVIN -
GARRETT - BRENDON ANDERSON
DAVE MORELL
VADHEIM FAMILY (2 bricks)
RALPH & DENA WESSELS
JOHN & MYRA ANDERSON
CRAIG BERG
RUSSELL G. MATTHEWS
ROBERT P. MATTHEWS
SUE RYDER, GRANDMA TO
SCOTT & JESSICA FENIMORE
JOE SOBNOVSKY FAMILY
THE MOUNTAINEERS -
TACOMA BRANCH
DON M. SCHMIDT
RYAN LUCAS
NEIL LUCAS
KAREN LARKEN
PARK 52 REALTORS
BOB & LIZ WEBSTER
LEE & TYRA WINEGAR
GEORGE & GAIL SLEET
JIM & MARLYCE
IN MEMORY OF GERALD
EDWARD DOYLE 1/4/79-2/27/03
SCOTT PIERSON
WARD BRADLEY
OVERFIELDS
BANDON ELLIOTT
RYAN ASHBY
THE PEACH FAMILY
EARL MIKKELSON
GLORY MIKKELSON
In Loving Memory DARYL KEMBLE
DANIEL K. GRIMM
THE KENNEY FAMILY
JIM ISOM, KATHY ISOM
GULLY EMMA COLLIER
ALFRED & BETTY HOFFMAN
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Networking (continued)

nance conditions outside the footprint of the project, and the city is contesting.

The Hood Canal connection relates to the state requirement for an archeological and historical site survey approval before a trail or highway project can proceed. This past winter the Washington Department of Transportation encountered a Native American burial ground while working on Hood Canal Bridge improvements. This resulted in weeks of construction delay and mounting costs of more than \$100,000 per day. Consequently the WSDOT diverted all of its archeological/historical resources to this problem, halting all other projects around the state until it was resolved.

Several properties remained to be purchased along the eastward section of the Puyallup Riverwalk, and the city had contracted with WSDOT right-of-way agents to negotiate their acquisition. The agents were not able to begin negotiations until the Hood Canal problem was resolved. We have now been reassured by Puyallup city officials that property acquisition is proceeding, albeit slowly, and that construction bids for both trail sections will be advertised in early 2005. *Ernie Bay*

Keep a definite goal of achievement constantly in view. Realize that work, well and worthily done, makes life truly worth living.

Grenville Kleiser

When ideas fail, words come in very handy.

Goethe



Rainier to Ruston Relay team members Beverly Shootz and Phyllis Van Winkel ignore a spring downpour as they ring the bell at the end of their relay leg in front of the Puyallup Fred Meyer store.

The **HEIGHTS**

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Along the Foothills Trail...

The long, hot, sultry summer has led some of us down the garden path to laziness and languor as the calendar closes in on the imminent opening of the South Prairie section of the Foothills Trail. Not to worry! The Foothill "worker bees" have been busier than ever, blazing the way along the old railroad beds in preparation for future extensions of the trail into Buckley and Carbonado. Clay and I sometimes jest that our visionary volunteers will begin blazing a new trail up to Heaven's yonder even before the Pearly Gate closes behind them. Watch for dedication ceremony details and be there to rejoice with us when the new section of the trail opens. The rallying cry of the Foothillers: Tahoma to Tacoma!

Whoa! Whatever is going on with the usually safety-conscious, cool-headed trail users during the past month or so? Are they seduced by the torrid heat spate to ignore the wise and sane advice to "Use your head - wear a helmet?" "It's too hot," is the usual response from the bare-headed travelers on wheels we speak to during courtesies stops.

We respond more-or-less politely, that not only is it the law to

wear a helmet in Pierce County, but also that they risk possible serious brain trauma by not doing so. We suspect that caring parents are unaware that their kids stash their helmets somewhere in the bushes before they take off on the trail. What can we do to encourage our precious kids to wear helmets? Bob Myrick, long-time Tacoma Wheelman, Foothiller cycling activist and trail benefactor, provides a solution. Bob arranges for us to award Safe Kid Citations to reward children who are wearing properly-fitted helmets. The Safe Kid program is national in scope and functions locally as a partnership between Subway and the Pierce County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Lia Rios, age 8, and Saul Rios, age 10, were among the first winners of a delicious Subway deli round. Lia and Saul, Ptarmigan Ridge students, live alongside the trail in Orting. Other winners to date include Dori Drilevich, age 9, and Shelby Lorig, age 10, both students at Bonney Lake Elementary; Trenton Jackson, age 13, Mason Middle School, Tacoma; and preschooler Elliott Jackson, age

"almost" 5; and Cody Doiron, age 10, Sherman Elementary, Tacoma. BYOL (be on the lookout), kids! Yellow-jacketed courtesies patrollers will be out along

the Foothills Trail from Buckley to South Prairie and environs between now and Christmas, looking for Safe Kid Citation candidates.

The need for more courtesies patrollers grows as the trail grows, so if you can help, please e-mail us at gatchel@att.net. Courtesies patrolling rewards us with fun and fitness in exchange for some minor trail maintenance and visitor contact services. In our bike bags we carry first aid and repair items, trail maps and a cell phone. Clay just purchased a new Big Broom to keep the trail free of gravel for those on rollerblades.

Judging from the number and quality of attendees, the Coalition-sponsored second annual Breakfast in the Woods, held on Saturday August 14, was a resounding success. The friendship and cooperation that is flourishing among trail-loving activists in the Carbon River Valley is beautiful to behold. A new feature of the event this year was the addition of a bicycle ride from Orting to the Tacoma Mountaineer old Irish cabin site near the Carbon River entrance to Mount Rainier National Park. Trails DO foster community!

It was so much fun to meet and greet so many friends such

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The Trail Line News is edited by John Selby at JohnandDottieSelby@att.net.

Newsletter layout is by Sarah Garmire at BSGarmire@cs.com. Photos and captions should be sent directly to her.

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Gatchels (continued)

as regular trail users Tom and Mary Felkner of Orting and Al and Betty Hoffman of Gig Harbor; Dino and Florence Fabiani, Wilkeson pioneers and community leaders, and son Carl and daughter-in law, Carl and Dinni Fabiani, legendary trail exponents at Mount Rainier National Park and along the Foothills; John and Yolanda Thompson, well-known conservationists and owners of Carbon Ranch; fellow Mount Rainier volunteers Dave Irvine (Mr. Carbon River) whom we met in the 60s, and George Coulbourn, dedicated, savvy VIP backcountry ranger; Helen and Stan Engle, conservation icons and activists with the Audubon, Tacoma Mountaineers and Foot-

hills Coalition members.

We hardly had a chance to say "Hi" to the "worker bees" on the breakfast committee as they ran hither and yon seeing to it that everyone was fed and happy. Among them were Russ Matthews, Don Partington, Bill Harmon, Ken Woolery, Becky Gilbert, Joan Miller, Bob Myrick, John Olson, Earl Mikkelson, John Downs and Our Great Leader Ernie Bay. My apologies to those I missed.

With so many tragic events occurring every day throughout the world, it is comforting to know that, at least along the Foothills, things are happening to make our little spot in the world better and more beautiful. Peace out y'all and Happy Trails! *Clay & Dixie Gatchel*

Smoothing out a rough ride

by Craig Hill, *The News Tribune* [Reprinted with permission from the Thursday, August 12, 2004, edition.]

The first time Jan Wolcott toured the Foothills Trail, he was in a pickup truck watching the removal of the abandoned Burlington Northern rail line. It was 1986 and Wolcott, director of Pierce County Parks and Recreation, was one of a handful of people who envisioned turning the rail into a trail.

"When we first saw the rail, we said, 'We've got to do this,'" Wolcott said. "There have been several left turns, but we have stayed on course."

Now, the dream is picking up steam.

By the end of the year, the 6.5-mile paved section of the Foothills Trail running through Orting will expand to more than twice that length. The paved trail will run for 15 miles from east Puyallup to South Prairie.

"We are close," Wolcott said, "but I don't know if we would have done this if we knew it was going to take 18 years."

Wolcott hopes the entire 25-mile trail from Puyallup to Buckley with its spur running to Carbonado will be complete by 2006.

Here's your guide to experiencing the distinctly different sections of the Foothills Trail.

Meeker to McMillin

Distance: Approximately 4 miles

By the end of the year, the western end of the paved trail is expected to be on 134th Street in East Puyallup on the edge of VanLierop Bulb Farm. This will be called the Meeker Trailhead. University Place-based Wagner Development has been offered the project by the county. This will be the only section of the trail that runs alongside the rail, which is still in use to the McMillin Industrial Park.

The trail will be at least 50 feet from the rail in all areas with the exception of four crossings.

The only way to follow this section of the trail is to walk along the tracks.

"However, I think that is trespassing," said Ernie Bay, president of the Rails-to-Trails Coalition. "I wouldn't encourage people to do that."

McMillin to Orting

Distance: 3 miles

The McMillin Trailhead is the start of the 6.5-mile paved section of the trail and is a popular starting spot for bikers, skaters and stroller pushers. It's also the section of the trail that gets the most traffic.

During the school year, you are likely to run into a crush of kids in the afternoon when classes let out. You'll also have to navigate numerous housing development entrances.

It's not the most serene section of the trail either, as it runs along state Route 162, which is overloaded with traffic at rush hour.

While it's rare to find horses on this section of the trail, they are allowed here, Bay said. The entire width of the trail is 12 feet wide with a 2-foot soft shoulder for horses.

This section of trail leads into Orting and offers several restaurants, grocery stores and even a park to take a break and refuel before taking on what many consider the most scenic part of the trail.

Orting to the Wetlands Bridge

Distance: 3.5 miles

Auburn resident Russ Matthews, a Rails-to-Trails Coalition board member, uses the trail at least once a week and he, like many regulars, calls this his favorite stretch.

"Once you leave Orting and go along the Carbon River you

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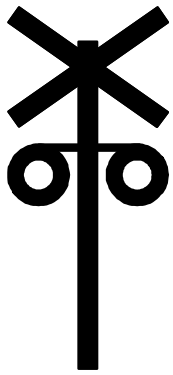
Rough ride (continued)

can see eagles," Matthews said. "I've even seen deer on the trail a couple of times."

This section of the trail is loaded with features. A few hundred yards outside of Orting you'll find a bench for the tired and toys for the adventurous. On the north side of the trail is a skate park and a crop of mounds for riding your mountain bike.

This first mile east of Orting also presents a minor obstacle, as you must navigate a section of malodorous farmland. However, the sight of cows is usually a treat for young kids.

About a mile out of Orting, the trail meets the Carbon River at "Bernie's Place." There is a bench



and a picnic table here at an area named for the late Bernie Dixon, a long-time Rails-to-Trails member. The trail continues along the river for a while to Crocker Trailhead, about 2.5 miles outside of Orting. Some people choose to access the trail here in order to avoid the larger crowds in Orting.

From here it's a mile to the end of the paved section of the trail, with trestle crossings over the highway and river. The paved section ends just on the northeast side of what is called the Wetlands Bridge.

The Wetlands Bridge to South Prairie

Distance: 4 miles

From here, the going will be a little rough for the next month. The 4-mile unpaved stretch through the woods along Prairie Creek is passable on a mountain bike but sandy enough in some areas to make for some unpleasant moments. If you opt for an easier ride to South Prairie, you can ride along the shoulder of nearby state Route 162 for most of this stretch.

You are bound to run into construction crews here for the next month. This section is being leveled in preparation for paving by Sumner-based RCI Construction. Wolcott says the section of the trail will be complete by mid-September.

Matthews says the sections of the trail under construction are closed when crews are working. He suggests heading out to the highway to go around the crews or using this section after 3 p.m., when crews are done for the day.

About a 1-mile section of the trail is paved in South Prairie, where another parking lot is located. The trail is closed at Veteran's Park where a trailer park blocks the path.

Cascade Junction

Distance: To be determined

Several pieces of private property east of South Prairie are in the way of the trail that would split in this area called Cascade Junction with a leg heading toward Buckley and another toward Carbonado.

The county is negotiating with the property owners of the trailer park and a paintball park and others to acquire the right of way. Wolcott hopes construction of Cascade Junction will begin next year.

This area should not be used. To pick up the trail from here, follow state Route 162 to Buckley or state Route 165 to Wilkeson.

Buckley

Distance: 1.8 miles

The Buckley section of the trail is also paved and gets regular use. It runs from about a mile into the woods southwest of town along state Route 410 to the northern edge of town. After several miles of unobstructed trail, you'll have to deal with several busy street crossings in this section of the trail.

Wilkeson Trestle to Paintball Trestle

Distance: 2.5 miles

If you do this section of the trail, you'll need to be prepared for a round trip. Starting at Wilkeson, you can follow an unpaved section of the trail northwest toward Burnett.

Matthews, who regularly helps maintain this section of the trail, says the trail is too beat up for mountain bikes and is best covered on foot. Wolcott says you can follow this section of the trail from the Wilkeson Trestle to a trestle on the edge of paintball park. Beyond the trestle is private property. When you reach the far trestle, it's time to hike back to Wilkeson.



Wilkeson to Carbonado

Distance: 3 miles

If you are looking to have a section of the Foothills Trail all to yourself, your best bet is parking by the Wilkeson Fire Department and hiking to Carbonado.

The trail is unpaved and secluded, although you may occasionally hear the distant rumble of a logging truck or the vroom of a dirt bike. The

Rough ride (continued)

trail is in good shape and easily handled on a mountain bike. On a clear day, about half a mile north of Carbonado, you can see the Seattle skyline.

The trail dead-ends at the Carbonado cemetery next to a monument honoring those who died while working the local mines.

But for those who dream about this trail, this is only a temporary end to the trail.

"Eventually we want the trail to go from Mount Rainier to Commencement Bay," Bay said.

There's also talk of running the Foothills Trail through Sumner and connecting with the 14-mile Interurban Trail. And Pierce and King counties are considering building a trestle to expand the trail from Buckley to Enumclaw.

"Too often we feel like we're Charlie Brown and Lucy yanks the football away," Bay said. "

But it's worth it. It's exciting to think about what this trail will be like this time next year."

Looking back ten years—1994

President's Message, *Trail Line News*, September 1994,

"Rewards and responsibilities repeat," by Ernie Bay

The ends are near! Nearly a mile of trail is now paved and in use at Buckley. By the time you read this, a contract should be let for nearly half of the Orting Model Mile. This will extend from the Orting Eagles Club on Bridge Street north to Whitesell Street. In addition, Harvey Anderson, who is developing the Pioneer Village shopping center north of the Orting city park, has agreed to construct 700 feet of trail bordering his property.

The Whitehawk development will be constructing 1,400 feet of trail beyond that. Within the next year Mr. Anderson will be constructing more trail along his Village Green development near the High Cedars Golf Course.

By this time next year a recently obtained ISTE A (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) grant should enable Pierce County Parks to fill in the gaps all the way to a planned trailhead at the Puyallup River bridge in McMillin.

Although the ends are near, the end is not. Twenty-two miles

to go! As success begins to reward us, we have to guard against relaxing our efforts. The past nine years have been a long battle, and many early trail opponents have awakened to the benefits and pleasures of trails that we have known all along. Many have become active supporters, and support is what we continue to need. We are fortunate that ISTE A, conservation futures and other major funding opportunities have come along at an appropriate time. These, however, have highly competitive funding sources that depend much upon citizen support. Your combined membership in the Foothills Trail Coalition is, alone, a strong statement. Your contributions of time, expertise and materials further strengthen our cause.

Please remember to attend our weekly and monthly meetings to better keep informed and to learn how you can participate in tying together the ends of the Foothills Trail. . . .

Memberships and donations received

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**Thank
you!**

New Members Always Welcome

If you appreciate the work that we are doing and wish to see more trails, please consider joining us. Foothills Trail memberships start at \$18 single and \$25 family. Credit cards accepted.



- \$18 Single \$25 Couple \$50 Trail Builder
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[From President's Message, December 1992 by Ernest C. Bay]

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