Trails Conference
by Dr. Jane Moore, Executive Director, ForeverGreen Trails

ForeverGreen Trails hosted the 10th Annual Pierce County Trails Conference on October 14th at the Puyallup Activity Center. This was a great venue – we appreciate the City of Puyallup’s donation of the space. The turn-out was good this year too, and there were lots of new faces of folks attending their first conference. About 17 people enjoyed the pre-conference walking tour of Puyallup trails led by 2016 ForeverGreen Trails’ President Chris Beale.

The presentations were good. We heard from panelists on plans for trails in Pierce County, Lakewood, Fife, Gig Harbor, and Tacoma. The second panel provided information on how to get involved from Metro Parks Tacoma, Alchemy Skateboarding, and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance. Over a dinner of lasagna from Arista Pasta, Andrew Austin from Transportation Choices Coalition talked about the differences between activism – the practice of vigorous involvement as a means of achieving political or other goals – and advocacy – the act of pleading for, supporting, or recommend-

President’s Message
by Buzz Grant, Coalition President

On November 6, 2015, the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition purchased a parcel of land west of Wilkeson, located south of the State Route 165 and Johns Road intersection and east of the power lines crossing Johns Road. The property has been desired by ourselves and Pierce County for trail purposes for some 20 years. The County has not been able to go to the expense of a condemnation proceeding, because they have been concentrating on the South Prairie to Buckley main trail development. This is about 980 lineal feet of trail and the last major section of the Cascade Junction to Wilkeson section of the trail that has yet to be acquired.

We may need to go through an eviction process to get the former owner to vacate our property. We purchased the property at a Deed of Trust (mortgage) foreclosure sale. It was either deal with a bank or whoever the bank sold the property to, or step up and purchase the land. We had to purchase all of the land that was encumbered by the Deed of Trust and could not just purchase the trail right-of-way strip. Two other perspective bidders who showed up late advised that they were glad we got the property for the trail. At the present time Pierce County only has the money to purchase the trail strip of land from us, leaving us with some land south of the trail.

When we get in and clear the fu-

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Notice of Annual Meeting & Dinner

The annual meeting and dinner for the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition will be held on Thursday, January 28, 2016, at High Cedars Golf Course in Orting.

The doors will open at 6:00 pm for registration and socializing with dinner served promptly at 6:30 pm. Following dinner, there will be a brief business meeting to update the membership on upcoming events, past year’s accomplishments and voting for board of directors. Everything should wrap up about 8:00 pm.

Directors serve a period of three years, and each year five members are up for election. In accordance with by laws, a member of the Coalition may be considered as an eligible candidate for Director by submitting a petition of nomination to the Board of Directors not less than 21 days before the Annual Meeting. Such petition must include the valid signatures of 10 Coalition members or 10 percent of the Coalition membership, whichever is less.

The candidates seeking consideration for the five open Director positions are listed below:

Buzz Grant  Dave Harman  Pat Johnson  John Selby  John Warhol

Please RSVP no later than January 11th to Bill Hilton at Billhltn@aol.com or 253-302-1104. In order to make sure we have enough meals to serve everyone and not pay for more meals than necessary, pre-registration is important. All those that register on or before the 19th will be entered into a drawing for a prize.

The cost of the dinner is $15 and money will be collected at the door. Like last year, this should be another fun evening with many fun elements and a few chances to win a contest or two.
Tacoma Wheelmen Bicycle Club (TWBC) Government Affairs Report

BY BOB MYRICK, TWBC

In 1898, the Tacoma Wheelmen and the City of Tacoma had developed a bicycle trail system that went as far as Longmire in Mount Rainier National Park. The system also extended to Roy via a branch along the Northern Pacific Railroad. People rode to their weekend homes on American Lake via the Lakeview route extending south from the Water Ditch Trail. These Wheelmen and their spouses were tough, as one could ride to Longmire in one day, a distance of over 50 miles on less than perfect paths. When the automobiles arrived, the trail system fell away in just a few years.

In the 1970s, bike riding became popular again particularly due to the Arab Oil Embargo. By the 1980s, people began to dream about bike lanes and trail development. By 1990 around here, people began to realize it ‘takes a village’ to build a trail, but it turns out there were several individuals with strong dreams and determination to make trails happen.

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) Powerline Trail was the first modern paved trail near Tacoma. Of course, the Puget Sound Energy Trail was available in South King County. Joe Ganem was the promoter for the BPA Trail. Joe was the northwest representative for our National Rails-to-Trails Coalition and he lived in Federal Way. He was also a leader for the Northwest Bicycle Federation. Joe made the trail happen through his hard work and by building a coalition (Village) of followers.

The modern Tacoma Bike and Non-motorized Plan was created by Scott Pierson and included dreams of future trails. Scott was a (Tacoma) city planner who rode his bike to work and to meetings across the city. His plan said every street is a bike street, but some streets should have special attention to create safe routes throughout the city. His plan also envisioned trails like the future Water Ditch Trail. Scott discovered that the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) had promised a trail along State Highway 16 (SR16) as a way to mitigate for the highway cutting the City in two pieces. WSDOT had just built a short segment between Union and South State Street, not a complete trail. WSDOT had come to town to expand SR16 when Scott went to work getting letters from the Mayor, County Executive and many others suggesting WSDOT should complete the trail to the Narrows Bridge. Scott won his trail, probably because WSDOT realized delay would only increase the cost of expanding SR16. Later, Scott’s work would become very important in getting a bike path on the new Narrows Bridge.

The Pierce County Bike Plan was created by Bob Vogel and supported by Tom Ballard, the County Engineer. The county had included a non-motorized element in their Transportation Plan, but negative reactions from citizens to the plan resulted in Tom deciding to move forward with a separate and more expanded bike plan. The plan is still used today as the TWBC worked with Bob in listing every road segment that might need shoulder improvements in the future. When a road segment is ready for improvement, the plan is consulted to see if a shoulder improvement is suggested. The bike plan also referenced the Pierce County Trail Plan that included the Foothills Trail extending from Point Defiance to the Mountain. Tom was converted to thinking about bike shoulder improvements when he took his daughter on a bike camping trip to Dash Point State Park up Marine View Drive in Northeast Tacoma.

The Chehalis Western Trail was created by the hard work of advocates like Jim Lazar in Olympia. Jim later pushed for a small utility tax, in Olympia, to provide

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funding for Olympia’s bicycle land and sidewalk improvements. John Ernest Berry III filed an ADA complaint against Thurston County when bollard fences were installed along the trail. Overlapping gates caused cyclists to dismount to get through these gates and cyclists on trikes and tandems were really affected. John won his case and the bollard fences came down. Now, the trail is used for the Seattle to Portland Bike Ride since the offending bollards are gone.

The Foothills Trail is the work of three Amigos: Doctor Douglas Tait, Stan Engle and Doctor Ernie Bay. In the late 1980s, Buckley’s Town Doctor (Doc Tait) became aware of rail to trail conversions. He joined with Stan Engle (Tacoma Mountaineers) and Ernie Bay to promote the trail. Doc Tait had delivered County Parks Director Jan Wolcott into this world and Jan accepted Doc Tait’s vision and request to build the Foothills Trail. Jan worked tirelessly to develop a County Trails Plan and to seek grants to build the trail. Jan didn’t realize it would take over 25 years to finish the trail as he wanted to finish the trail before his retirement. The three Amigos formed the Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition.

The Cushman Trail would still just be a powerline right of way without Claudia Peters, Pierce County Trails Coordinator. Claudia was a jack of all trades as she helped develop the County Trail Plan, seek grant funding and acquire right of way. I suggested using the right of way as a trail and Claudia included it in the County Plan. When Claudia asked Tacoma’s Power Superintendent for permission to build the trail, he said no. Claudia went back to Tacoma Power every six months to ask permission. Finally, after three years, I suggested she go back once more and tell Tacoma Power we would be going to the Tacoma News Tribune with our story. Claudia immediately got her trail. Terry Lee finished the trail as he was a Pierce County Council Member from Gig Harbor, and he also became the Director of Pen Met Park District.

The Tacoma Bridge of Glass and Foss Waterway Esplanade were both built using Federal grants available for alternative transportation. The grant programs are administered by the Puget Sound Regional Council and Ernie Bay and I served on their Enhancements Committee. The early rules were lenient and Ernie argued for funding. Bill Iyall was the primary city employee seeking to build both projects.

The Puyallup Riverwalk was strongly supported by Ernie Bay, but it seemed too expensive to build as the County Plan envisioned the trail raised up on columns to rise above the 100 year flood plain. Fortunately, Marlene Ford was a Puyallup Civil Engineer and she found a way to build the trail in the flood plain.

The six mile long Sumner Link Trail was completed when Bill Pugh became the new Public Works Director. Bill had retired as Tacoma’s Public Works Director and developed an interest in cycling. Barbara Skinner advocated for this trail during her years of public service as Sumner Mayor, Pierce County Council Member and Sumner Parks Board Member. Barbara now serves as a Board Member of ForeverGreen Trails Coalition.

The Lake Tapp’s Parkway Trail was made possible by Tom Ballard, Pierce County Engineer. It is a very steep paved trail that rises up from the Valley floor to Lake-land Hills Subdivision. This new road was funded by the Transportation Improvement Board which requires bike lanes and sidewalks. Tom recognized it might be cheaper and safer to build a trail since the trail would require just 12 feet of pavement width compared to 20 feet for bike lanes and sidewalks. The trail is well used by the neighborhood and adventurous cyclists.

Milton Interurban Trail was promoted for many years by Milt Loftlin, a town resident and Pierce County employee. This trail will eventually connect to the Interurban Trail in King County. It lies on the right of way of the old Interurban Railway which stretched from Tacoma to Seattle. There is also hope it might someday connect through NE Tacoma to the BPA Trail in Federal Way.

University Place has great bike lanes, calmed traffic and the Grand View Trail thanks to Steve Sugg, the City Manager. Steve was the Public Works Director and carried out the traffic calming vision of the newly formed city.

The Mountain Bike Trail in the renovated Swan Creek Park is the work of Lois Stark, a Chief Planner for Metro Parks. Lois led the community based effort for improving the park. The Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance was called in to build the trail.

The Narrows Bridge Bicycle/Pedestrian Path was built through the efforts of Doug McDonald, a former

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TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY Director of WSDOT. There
t was actually some question as to whether or not a path
should be built. Doug was a cyclist and owned an ex-

pensive pink Italian bike. He said “of course, we need to
connect the Scott Pierson and Cushman Trails.”

During my tenure at Tacoma Water, I rediscovered
the route of the 1898 Tacoma Water Ditch Trail in South
Tacoma. David Seago and Kirk Kirkland joined me on a
bicycle tour of the former trail route in the 1990s. Dave
wrote about the trail in the Tacoma News Tribune and
Kirk promoted the trail through his work at Tahoma
Audubon. Tacoma Public Work’s Dana Brown found
funding for the trail several times and he worked fer-

vently in getting the trail built.

Both local and statewide trail building efforts have
benefited by groups like the Bicycle Alliance of Wash-
ington and its predecessor the Bicycle Federation of Wash-
ington and Northwest Bicycle Coalition. Susie Stephens
was the first Executive Director of the Bicycle Alliance
of Washington and traveled the State by bicycle promot-
ing trails and non-motorized transportation. Susie later
moved to Winthrop and promoted the building of their
community trail system which is now world famous.

There are at least 22 governmental entities in Pierce
County that could be involved in building both small and
large trail segments. Residents most likely can find a trail
segment very close to their homes through most of Pierce
County.

Trail building and non-motorized transportation ef-
forts in Tacoma/Pierce County involve several partners
besides our cities and towns. We can participate or thank
Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, ForeverGreen Trails
Coalition, the Puyallup Watershed Initiative’s Active
Transportation group, Transportation Choices, Tacoma’s
Downtown on the Go, Pierce Transit and others includ-
ing our local bicycle club, the Tacoma Wheelmen’s Bi-
cycle Club.

On other fronts we attended over five County Coun-
cil meetings in about a month to support an increase
in Pierce County Parks Impact fees, which at $385 per new
home is at the very bottom of impact fees in Western
Washington. Some park impact fees start at $3720 and go
up to $5660 in other counties and in Pierce County some
cities fees spread from Sumner at $414 to University
Place at $3,644. Tacoma does not have impact fees but
their parks are financed in a different way. If these new
parks impact fees are passed this will increase funding
for Pierce County Parks and Recreation that was greatly
cut by the County Council in the 2008 to 2012 economic
recession, and with this form of revenue Pierce County
Parks will be able, if the Council does not supplant the
Parks budget, to reach the 2007 level of funding in a cou-
pel of years. In 2007 and prior years many more parks
and trails were constructed. It took a $50,000 match from
your Coalition this time to get the money and points in
the grant process to obtain the grant for completion of the
Foothills Trail from South Prairie to Buckley, which
will be awarded in 2016. As of November 15 the Pierce
County Council has not come up with its share and the
impact fee is a method to acquire the share that Pierce
County is required to match. Well, this Parks Impact Fee
and Conservation Futures funding will be a continuing
saga that we will keep you posted on.

Hope you all have great holidays and a stellar 2016.

How Well Do You Know Your Pierce County Trails?

by John Selby, Board Member

Here’s your chance to win a free membership renewal in the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition. If you can describe the location of the photo below before anyone else does, you will win a one-year individual membership renewal. (Board members are excluded.) The photo in the September issue was looking southwest toward the Carbon River Bridge. The winner was Jeff Kindle. Congratulations, Jeff!

Let’s see how you do on this one. Please respond to JohnSelby16@gmail.com with your answer to “Where is this?” Good luck! The winner will be announced in the next issue.

If you don’t know your Pierce County trails well enough to guess, then get out there and explore them! You are missing out!

Trail Conference Continued from Page 1

ing. Finally we heard an update from the Puyallup Watershed Initiative Active Transportation Community of Interest and the State of the Trails presentation.

As usual, Pierce County Trail Awards were presented. This year had a very deserving group of recipients:

1. Outstanding project: Cushman Trail – City of Gig Harbor, Pen Met Parks, Pierce County Parks, and Tacoma Public Utilities.
4. Lifetime Achievement: John Ernest Berry III, Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, Tacoma Wheelmen’s Bicycle Club, and more.

Many thanks to our sponsors, including Pierce County Parks and Recreation, Metro Parks Tacoma, City of Tacoma Environmental Services Department, Pierce County Public Works, City of Puyallup, City of University Place, City of Lakewood, Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, Tacoma Wheelmen’s Bicycle Club, GeoEngineers, Subaru of Puyallup, and Executive Accounting & Tax Service.

We’re already starting to plan the 2016 conference. If you have ideas, let us know at forevergreentrails@gmail.com.
The multitude of ongoing events affecting the future of our Tahoma to Tacoma Trail Network has challenged the ability of our pro trail/park activists to keep up on. We should be reminding folks that the Foothills Trail is the longest linear park in Pierce County so that they know we advocate parks as well as trails. It has also been designated as the Foothills National Recreational Trail.

Proposed Purchase Portion of Van Lierop Farm

Kudos to the Puyallup City Council for taking an exciting big step forward in environmentally-friendly, sustainable possibilities for this iconic farmland. City Manager Kevin Yamamoto described the proposed action as follows: The City would purchase 24 acres of the Van Lierop Daffodil Farm for $3.75 million; 6 acres would be sold to the non-profit Step by Step for $1.25 million. The potential exists for the remaining 18 acres to become a park named in honor of longtime farmer Neil Van Lierop. Maybe the park could include a trail connecting the Riverwalk with the Foothills Trail at Meeker. For more information: http://stepbystepnews.org/ and TNT article http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article44270010.html

Attack Fails on Conservation Futures

The surreptitious action by the Pierce County Council to reduce the Conservation Futures Property Tax Levy from $6.25 to $5.25 per assessed valuation of $1,000 united community environmental activists in protest. These thoughtful, committed citizens voiced opposition to the reduction in large number at the County Council at the November 16th meeting. The amendment to reduce was attached to a totally unrelated “Elk Plan Road & Pit” amendment without prior notice. Comments by those attending the meeting may have motivated the passing of Councilmember Doug Richardson’s amendment to retain current rate of $6.25. General comments called for the need to update this very important Conservation Futures program to keep pace with growth and inflation. Link to overview program: https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/index.aspx?NID=1477

Future Fate of Proposal to Increase Pierce County Park Impact Fee

The Pierce County Council failed to pass a much overdue increase in Park Impact Fees despite the best efforts of a large number of supporters that spoke in favor at all three of the meetings that the Foothills supporters attended. The single voice in opposition was that of Jeremiah Liverance speaking for the Master Builders Association of Pierce County. A small glimmer of hope remains that a stakeholder group of organizations will report back by May 1, 2016, with a fair and equitable recommendation to increase fees. The meetings are open to the public. The stakeholder organization group is comprised of:

* Master Builders Association of Pierce County
* Tacoma Pierce County Association of Realtors
* Parks & Recreation Citizen Advisory Board
* ForeverGreen Trails Council
* Pierce County Park & Recreation Services Department
* Pierce County Planning & Land Services Department

Foothills Coalition “Trail Talkers” Making a Presence

The favorable and unfavorable actions this fall on the part of government bodies demonstrates the need for dedicated volunteers ready, willing and able to tell our Tahoma to Tacoma Trail Network story which is designed to provide safe and accessible trails connected to places where people live, work, learn, shop, and play with ready access to public transit. New trail talking members are welcome. Watch for notice of training session at Puyallup Library in January 2016.
Calendar of Events

Meetings:

Monthly Board Meetings:
Open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Thursday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at the Heritage Quest Research Library located at 1007 Main St., Sumner. Monthly meetings may be rescheduled, so check our website at www.piercecountytrails.org for changes.

Courtesy Patrol Meetings:
Scheduled the 3rd Saturday of each month at High Cedars Golf Course, 149th Street Court East, Orting. No-host breakfast starts at 8 a.m. and the casual meeting at 9 a.m. with a free-for-all discussion about the past, present and future of the Courtesy Patrol. Guest speakers and training sessions are often included. For more information please contact Ernie Bay at (253) 848-7718 or bugtrail@aol.com. Ernie is seeking a new Courtesy Patrol Leader. Could that be you?

Friends of the Riverwalk Committee:
We are an informal group of volunteers devoted to the enjoyment and betterment of the Puyallup Riverwalk. Please join us for most Monday mornings* at 8 a.m. at Mrs. Turner’s Restaurant, 701 East Main, Puyallup. We also have a group walk that starts at 9 a.m. following the meeting and is open to those who would like to join us. *Call prior to confirm in case of cancellation. Bill Hilton (253) 302-1104, billhltn@aol.com, or Janet Rich, dcnjlrich@msn.com, Puyallup City Parks 253-841-5447.

Charlie Chat - Weekly Luncheon:
Informal luncheons every Wednesday from 12-1 p.m. at Charlie’s Restaurant, 113 East Main, Puyallup. All are welcome to come and share what they have been doing to promote the mission of the Coalition. No business is conducted even if a quorum of members is present.
Membership makes a difference!

The work we are doing is made possible because of your membership and generous support. Credit cards accepted.

- $20 Single
- $30 Family
- $50 Pathfinder
- $100 Trail Builder
- $200 Corporate (Includes a 1 year ad in the Trail Line News)

Please email my newsletter to ____________________________

The Mission of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is to assist Pierce County government and communities in the creation, maintenance and usage of a connected system of non-motorized trails for healthier people from Mt. Rainier to Puget Sound.

Pay online using Pay Pal  http://www.piercecountytrails.org/become-a-member/

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