Welcome to another edition of the Trail Line News. As we look back on 2008, we have a lot to be thankful for, not only along the Foothills Trail, but also in our personal lives. Although some have lost loved ones, others have survived treatments for various life threatening diseases, even while others announce the birth of a child or grandchild. Others celebrate the graduation of a son or daughter from their respective schools, and pray that they have a solid foundation to face the challenges that lay ahead.

Progress along the Foothills Trail continues as the bridge over Lower Burnett Road and South Prairie creek rises to completion. Permits are nearly completed for the section of trail from Buckley to the east end of the new Lower Burnett segment, and the county continues their dialogue with the owner of the campground in South Prairie which lies along the trail. Our work parties continue to invest time and many calories improving the trail along Gale Creek to Wilkeson which will be available for use once the trail east of South Prairie is complete. We have also worked to maintain the segment from Arline Road to the wetlands area west of there. Although recent floods have altered the original design of the wetlands, it now conforms to the “will” of

**President’s Message**

*by John Downs, Board President*

Workmen erect the first two spans and begin decking the 3-span trail bridge over South Prairie Creek and Lower Burnett Road. For more information, read Networking for Trails on page 7.

Foothills Trail Coalition chosen to host the 2010 conference of the Washington State Trails Coalition in Tacoma. See article on page 12 - Our State, Our Trails, Our Future.
Notice of Annual Meeting

BY PAT JOHNSON AND JOHN DOWNS, NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition announces its annual meeting for Thursday, January 22, 2009, 7 - 9 PM at the High Cedars Golf Club (14604 149th Street Ct. East, Orting, 360-893-3171, www.highcedars.com), for the purpose of electing its Board of Directors and conducting other business as may be presented to the Board. For those interested, there will be a buffet starting about 6 PM.

Directors serve for a period of three years and each year five members are up for election. This year the Directors that have terms expiring are Tom Enlow, Ernie Bay, Markus Dennis, Linda Clark and Jan Wolcott. Both Tom Enlow and Linda Clark have decided not to run for re-election because of time constraints and needing to focus attention elsewhere. Tom has served as Treasurer of the Coalition for several years and Linda has represented the horse community. Their expertise will be greatly missed.

Ernie Bay, Jan Wolcott and Markus Dennis have all agreed to run for another term as Director. Other Coalition members that have expressed a desire to be Directors and are being brought forth for nomination are Jeanette Fohn (equestrian community), Loras Gassman (assistant to Treasurer, Tom Enlow), Eric Wilbur (mountain biking community), and Tim Duggan (designed and maintains our web page).

In accordance with the bylaws, a member of the Coalition may also be considered 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 signature of ten Coalition members or ten percent of the Coalition membership, whichever is less. The elected Board of Directors will elect officers at the first board meeting following the annual meeting.

Two amendments to our bylaws will be considered:

1) Proxy Voting

Any member entitled to vote may, by an instrument in writing, bearing a date not more than thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting, designate another member to vote in their place and stead at any Board, regular, special, or annual meeting of the membership of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition.

2) Board Member Absences

Any duly elected Director or Officer, after missing three (3) general or Board meetings in succession

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Meet Your Board Member

Don Partington

Don Partington has been active with the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition since 1987. Don and his wife Robin have two sons. Dan, 20, is a junior at Western Washington University and Alex, 18, is a senior at the Tacoma School of the Arts.

Don coordinates the monthly trail work parties. Activities include creating new trail, building bridges, mowing and cutting through brush. Don says, “The opportunity to open new trail is always a highlight of work parties for me.” Two of the more ambitious projects completed by the volunteer group were the Wetlands and Wilkeson bridges.

When not on the Foothills Trail, Don enjoys kayaking and is involved with another trail group, Washington Water Trails Association. Don and Robin recently became joint site stewards with another couple for a Water Trail campsite at Kopachuck State Park.

Don and Robin host an annual Work Party Potluck in January to celebrate all that has been accomplished by trail volunteers. The potluck date will be announced in December. Check the Coalition website for details or contact Don at cedarfamily@comcast.net or 253-863-5307.

Dear Editor,

The Foothills Trail east of Orting became my sister’s favorite place for relaxation and enjoying the outdoors. Carol was a flight attendant for Continental Airlines for 40 years before retiring and moving to Washington. For one year, her home in Orting and the Foothills Trail were a dream that came true for her. Carol, her husband Rick, their little cocker, Baby, and our mother, Dorothy, must have walked the path a hundred times. Because she loved the trail so much, her family will be placing a memorial bench in her honor along the Carbon River less than a mile from town.

Thank you to the Coalition for making the trail possible for all to enjoy.

Sheryl Myers

Photo By John S. Selby, Coalition Board Member

Dorothy West (Carol’s mother), Sheryl Myers (Carol’s sister), and Mitch Nelson of Pierce County Parks at the location for the bench memorial in honor of Carol King.

Photo By Russ Matthews, Coalition Member

“When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race.”

- H. G. Wells
President’s Message Continued from Page 1

Mother Nature and provides habitat for a variety of plants and animals. Take the time to visit this area between South Prairie and Orting.

Another initiative is the campaign for Active Transportation headed by Dixie Gatchel. In support of this program we have applied for a grant to help fund several parks and trail projects throughout Pierce County. Dixie and her group have spent numerous hours on the project, and we will continue monitoring the grant process. This grant would originate with the Federal Government.

Headed-up by Markus Dennis, our running program continues to grow with over 300 participants in last summer’s Rainier to Ruston Rail-Trail Relay and Ultra. The Coalition also supported the Foothills Dash sponsored by Pierce County Parks and Recreation, South Prairie’s Run with the Salmon, and Orting’s Pumpkin Festival. These events will continue to grow and support our communities, while drawing public attention to the Foothills Trail and building advocacy for its completion.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the volunteers who have made this program a success. A tremendous amount of effort is expended by those on the board and those that serve in other capacities such as web support, news letter publication, volunteers for the fair booth, work parties, Courtesy Patrol and those that help in our sponsored events throughout the county. Without your support we could not be successful.

Try to attend our Annual Meeting in January, and I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a great 2009.

“Solitude is as needful to the imagination as society is wholesome for the character.”
- James Russell Lowell, US poet, essayist, and diplomat, 1819-91

Memberships and Donations

By Tom Enlow, Board Member

Up to $29

$30 - $49

$50 - $99
Nicholas & Catherine Baldwin, Ron Celestres, Craig & Mary Cogger, Jack & Angela Connelly Jr., Isabelle Dalton, Maggie Moore, Allan Ohlsen, Rick Olexick, John Roberts, Jayne Sanderson.

$100 and over
Those of us who have dreamed of a wider dirt trail were granted our wish on November 12, 2008 - not exactly what I had in mind. The day after the flood, my daughter Sarah and I rode our horses along the trail from Keating Road south to the Carbon River Bridge. We were amazed by how high the river had swollen. Although there was some water still over the trail, most of it had receded by 2:00 in the afternoon, leaving a layer of slippery mud on sections of the trail.

Our small South Prairie Creek had turned into a raging river. Huge trees came crashing down stream, resembling little toothpicks in the mighty river. We stared in awe and amazement at the forces of nature. The night before, we had walked around the lake that had formed at Veterans’ park in South Prairie. The water rose over the picnic tables and up to the berm. Even in the dark we could see the power and magnitude of the river where we had waded through just a few months ago. If the 100-year flood comes every two years, should it be renamed? Our hearts went out to the owners of the homes across the road, protected only by sand bags frantically stacked earlier in the day.

Riding on the trail, we felt the waters were just as high as the 2006 flood, but the trail didn’t suffer the same amount of damage as two years ago when the dike gave way on the Carbon River, at least not the section between Crocker and Arline Road. The REI Rest Stop suffered the most damage. It would be several days or weeks before it would be obvious what new course the river has taken. Please join me in thanking Linda Clark for over ten years of service as the equestrian voice for the Foothills Trail Coalition. Linda has relentlessly given her time and energy to make the trail better for equestrians. Linda is (temporarily, I hope) resigning from her board duties in hope of finding more time to spend in the saddle. When I asked Linda her favorite thing about the position she

**Continued on Page 11**
At this writing, the Pierce County Council was scheduled to take final action November 25 on the 2009 budget for Pierce County Parks and Recreation Services, including, among other items, the General Operating Budget and the Capital Facilities Plan Budget-Sprinker Renovation. As you may know, the Citizen’s Advisory Board voted to make the Sprinker Recreation Center renovation one of its primary priorities. The 2009 Capital Facilities Plan & the Capital Budget includes a request for $2.2 million to complete the design and permitting for the renovation to begin in 2010. This money would come from the department’s capital funds (two primary sources - Sales Tax and the second Real Estate Excise Tax).

The department has worked with the council for over 10 years on the question of what to do about the facility. Last April a unanimous vote of the council directed the department to move forward with renovation design. We did, and now they will need to fund the completion of the design. It is not the best time to be tackling these issues - the capital revenue sources have been strained by decreasing revenue, increasing cost of maintenance and operations, and annual debt service on bonds. The department will need a new funding source to construct any new parks, and we will need to rely on grants to complete the Foothills Trail work.

The decision to fund the Sprinker Recreation Center renovation will be a difficult one, because of its impact on other needs. The request is supported by the Citizens Advisory Board, a wide variety of user groups, Pierce County Planning Commission, and Executive Ladenburg. The department has applied for grant funds from the State Recreation and Conservation Office. We scored OK - but not as high as others. We won’t have a final answer about state funds until the legislature acts next spring and summer. If some of the projects fall off the list because they are unable to come up with the match, our projects will move up. The department will also apply for federal funds to complete the Foothills Trail. On November 12, Governor Chris Gregoire sent a letter to Congress urging its members to act swiftly on a second economic stimulus package to create jobs through the financing of ready-to-go public works and transportation projects.

Regarding rumors about building trail through Gale Creek Canyon, the department’s current plan is to construct a trail through the canyon. That will only change if there is a public process that leads to that decision. There will be an objective approach. My only goal/vision is to deliver a trail to Wilkeson/Carbonado in the most cost efficient manner, but not at the expense of the user - biker - walker - equestrian experience. If the public believes that the canyon needs to be part of that experience, then we will do our best to mitigate my concerns for maintenance and operation of the trail and environmental issues.

Milton Interurban Trail
BY MILTON LOFLIN, COALITION MEMBER

The three-mile Milton section of the Interurban Trail which opened this spring continues to draw walkers, runners and cyclists. Users of all sorts can be found on weekends and weekdays. Damage to a fence section by a falling snag during a windstorm last month had not been corrected as of this writing, but the main trail was quickly cleared.

The project of extending the trail the last half mile eastward from its current terminus at 380th Street to connect with the Edgewood section has been placed in the City of Milton’s six-year Transportation Improvement Plan.
Networking for Trails: Continued...

Foothills Trail at The Bow Tie
BY GRANT GRIFFIN, PIERCE COUNTY TRAILS COORDINATOR

The section of trail connecting the towns of So. Prairie and Buckley has been dubbed “The Bow Tie” because of its unique route. From the air the old railroad right-of-way looks like a bow tie as it climbs through two huge loops, passing over several curving trestles, the largest of which is over So. Prairie Creek. Much of the paving in Phase I (the center section) is complete and the So. Prairie Creek Bridge assembly is currently underway. The contractor is finishing up the installation of the bearing plates and anchor plates at the abutments and intermediate piers. The vast majority of the bridge materials has been delivered to the job site, and the arches are being assembled on site.

At this writing, the contractor has scheduled completion of erecting the arches over South Prairie Creek by the 21st of November.

Phase II (from the northern end of phase I about 1/2 way up the bow-tie to the end of paved trail south of Buckley) should be ready for construction by 2010/11. Construction is, of course, subject to funding being available in 2010. Currently and through 2009, we will be finishing up the mitigation plans and engineering for the Ingle site, so that we are ready to build the mitigation projects and the trail.

Phase III (from the lower end of Phase I at the Coalition Bridge to So. Prairie) involves the acquisition of right-of-way through Mr. Partin’s and Mr. Dickson’s properties. We are in preliminary negotiations with Mr. Partin and have discussed with Mr. Dickson how he would like to proceed. Subject to fund availability, we would, with Mr. Dickson’s consent, survey and stake the trail route through that property and enter into preliminary negotiations.

Puyallup/Fife/Tacoma Trails
BY JAYME GORDON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FOREVERGREEN COUNCIL

This summer, members of ForeverGreen met several times with Curt Warber of the consulting firm Parametrix to outline route alternatives to join Puyallup, Fife and Tacoma. One of the most challenging pieces is the connection with Tacoma and Fife at the point where the Puyallup River, the railroad line, and Interstate 5 intersect. Along the Puyallup Valley there are several options for routing a trail along either side of the river.

Additional options could connect the Puyallup Tribe’s Chief Leschi School and proposed recreational center into the trail system. A bicycle bridge is also under consideration to route trails from Milton and Fife across the Puyallup River. Still unknown is how to connect all the trails to Freighthouse Square. A joint study between the City of Tacoma and Pierce County will look for the answer with the focus on Freighthouse Square as the hub of trails from Gig Harbor, South Tacoma, and the Fife-Milton area.
Networking for Trails: Continued...

EATONVILLE TRAIL

Summarized from the Eatonville Regional Trails Study Newsletter, Fall 2008.

The Town of Eatonville, agency representatives and an Advisory Committee of dedicated citizens have developed a draft plan for a town and regional trail system. The Advisory Committee has been meeting with Town staff since January 2007 to meld trail concepts and ideas into a plan for the future development of a town and regional trail system. In the fall of 2007, committee members hosted an ‘Open House’ in the Eatonville Community Center to present preliminary maps, documents, and materials that were used in the production of the draft plan. The draft Eatonville Regional Trail Plan was reviewed at a public hearing November 13 at the Eatonville Community Center.

According to the plan, a trail will be developed through Eatonville linking two new parks. Rim Rocks Park will be a county park located north of Eatonville along Lynch Creek Road. Nisqually Mashel State Park will be a new state park located at the confluence of the Mashel and Nisqually rivers along State Route 7 west of Eatonville. Starting at Rim Rocks Park, the trail will head south, parallel to Lynch Creek road, run behind the Eatonville Elementary school, and around the south end of the airport through the Aviator Heights development to its entrance on Weyerhaeuser Road North. The trail will then head south on Weyerhaeuser Road, crossing Center Street at a defined crosswalk. From Weyerhaeuser Road South the trail will cross the Mashel River using a pedestrian bridge and head west through Pack Forest to the Nisqually Mashel State Park.

You may review a copy of the draft plan either online at www.eatonvilletrailsplan.wetpaint.com or you may request a CD by calling or emailing Nick Bond, (360) 832-3361 or nbond@eatonville-wa.gov.

PHOTO BY: JOHN S. SELBY, EDITOR
Earth Corps member explains to volunteer show to remove invasive species.

CUSHMAN TRAIL

by TERRY LARSON, CAPITAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR
PIERCE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

The portion of Cushman Trail Phase 2 from the Kimball Street Park & Ride to 96th St., funded in the 2008/2009 budgets, is well under construction. The project is designed, permitted, bid, and the contractor has mobilized, surveyed, cleared & grubbed the right of way, and begun building reinforced earth walls, placing culverts and excavating bridge abutments. Work is currently slowing due to rainy conditions, but is still proceeding. The current best estimate for completion is late summer or early fall 2009.

The portion of Phase 2 from 96th St. to Borgen Blvd. is not funded in the 2008 budget, although it was designed, permitted and bid previously as a portion of the entire Phase 2 bidding process. The budget for this portion of the project is currently not part of the 2009 budget request before the Council.

JULIA’S GULCH TRAIL

by DON AND HEATHER HALABISKY, FRIENDS OF JULIA’S GULCH

More than one hundred enthusiastic adults and children turned out on a sunny November 15th to begin restoration efforts at Julia’s Gulch. The kickoff for the

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

or four (4) general or Board meetings in any twelve (12) month period, is automatically terminated unless specifically excused by action of an attending member of the Executive Committee and subject to Board approval. The Board may reinstate a Director provided the Director requests reinstatement within thirty (30) calendar days and provided the request may not be used by any Director more than once in that Director’s term of office.

Please plan on attending. We must have a quorum for the annual election of our board members.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9
Networking for Trails: Continued...

**Julia’s Gulch Continued from Page 8**

Citizens for a Healthy Bay, Pierce County Native Plant Society, Earth Corps, R.E.I. and others, a well organized and educational day ensued. It was a wonderful social event where people met their neighbors and made new friends. Representatives from Norm Dick’s office, the Tacoma City Council, the Port and Ryan Melo, of Pierce County Cascade Land Conservancy opened the event. Fran’s Bakery and Tully’s provided coffee and bagels as volunteers arrived. At noon we all enjoyed a much earned break from spreading mulch, digging out Himalayan Blackberries (roots and all!), removing English ivy and planting native shrubs and trees. As we shared our new learnings over Infinite Soup’s delicious lunch, we all felt satisfied at the headway made in just four hours of hard work. We’ll keep you posted as we continue this restoration work!

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**Edgewood Interurban Trail**
**by Diane Kerlin, Coalition Member**

Unfortunately, Edgewood did not come close to the cutoff for ROC grant funding for the remainder of Phase I of the trail. This grant was sought to cover the increase in costs above the original 2006 grant. The beginning of construction for Phase I (114th Ave. E. to Military Road) will be paid from 2006 moneys.

“Happily may I walk, may it be beautiful before me, may it be beautiful behind me, may it be beautiful below me, may it be beautiful above me, may it be beautiful all around me. In beauty it is finished.”
- Navajo chant

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**Calendar of Events**

**Meetings:**
**Annual Meeting:**
Thursday, January 22nd, 2009, 7-9 PM at the Puyallup Public Library, 324 S. Meridian

**Monthly Board Meetings:**
Open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Thursday from 7-9 PM at the Puyallup Public Library, south entrance. Monthly meeting may be rescheduled due to holiday conflicts, so check our website for changes.

**Weekly Meetings:**
Informal luncheons from 12-1 PM 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.

**Courtesy Patrol Meetings:**
Scheduled on 2nd Saturdays of each month at High Cedars Golf Course, 149th St. Ct. E., Orting. Breakfast starts at 8 am and the casual meeting at 9 am with a free-for-all discussion about the past, present and future of the Courtesy Patrol. Guest speakers and training sessions are often included. Contact Jerry Larson at 253-845-7219 or Capt2Wheeler@comcast.net

**Events:**
**Work Parties:**
Generally held on Saturdays as announced by email. Call Don Partington at 253-863-5307 to get on the list.

**Foothills Dash:**
March 15th
Check in at 8 am, race starts at 9 am.
Details at http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/abtus/ourorg/parks/footdash.htm
Active Transportation Program
Launched Nationally and Locally

BY DIXIE GATCHEL
COALITION MEMBER AND COORDINATOR FOR FRTTC ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Nationally, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) made a strong push forward in its ambitious goal of doubling federal funding for walking, biking and rail-trails to $9 billion by 2010 when it held a press release to issue a report to Congress on October 20 titled “Active Transportation for America.” The report, which was televised on C-SPAN, makes a compelling case for moving America forward by maximizing the return on Federal transportation investments by means of synergies between walking and biking and existing public transit facilities.

Locally, Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition (FRTTC) advocates nudged the grassroots effort forward in a simultaneous, mini-press release event at the East Puyallup Trailhead with 27 passionate “burn calories not carbon” fans present. The FRTTC case statement cites how Pierce County communities could use one of the proposed $50 million grants to further the cause of walking and biking as viable modes of transportation. $50 million would finish approximately half of all the non-motorized trails planned in Pierce County!

Disappointing news? The press was “no-show.” Happy News? Considerable rain and the number attending afforded a circle-type, intimate and effective exchanging of ideas and sharing of goals. It was great to see community leaders in the circle, including Pierce County Parks Director, Kathy Kravit-Smith; Healthy Communities of Pierce County Director, Dr. Jane Moore; and Puyallup City Council member, Kathy Turner.

RTC plans to use the “Active Transportation Report for America” and the grassroots input from communities like ours across the nation to convince Congress to extend and double Federal surface transportation funding. Unless Congress acts, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) program will expire September 2009.

Some of the members of FRTTC’s Active Transportation committee “Dream Team” met around my kitchen table in November to refine our original case statement submitted to the RTC on June 30. So far the “Dream Team” includes Ernie Bay, Ed Davis, Bill Harmon, Bob Myrick, Russ Matthews, and John Selby, with Buzz Grant, Dave Seago and Ken Woolery warming up in the bull pen. (I hope!) With this impressive talent and unabashed enthusiasm amassed for the cause, I doubt not that our report making the case for Pierce County as a grant recipient will be a winner. Nag us Big Time if we don’t meet our self-imposed deadline of December 12 to complete the submission of all supporting documentation. In January 2009, FRTTC will begin our local grassroots campaign to elicit support from our members of Congress and to recruit a “dream team” of community leaders and organizations who share our goals for walking and cycling to promote healthier bodies, healthier
Orting Silo Restoration Completed
by Sam Colorossi, Secretary/Treasurer, Orting Historical Society

It’s done! The silo cap was installed September 27 and the mural completed October 29 at 3:30 p.m., marking the end of a long process that artist Linda Petchnick began on June 24th. The large panel depicts the site of the historic Stevenson and Coe Lumber Company. Other panels give a brief history of the mill, credits to the businesses and organizations supporting the silo restoration, and a list of donors.

As the Orting Historical Society closes the door on this project, we want to thank all those who gave their time in labor, those who contributed in-kind services and materials, everyone who contributed financially and all those who helped by donating their aluminum cans. Their generous donations all added up and all the bills for this project are paid. Thank you!

Happy Trails!
Jeanette Fohn

The Hitching Post Continued From Page 5
resoundingly said “The other members of the board have been so great! They are some of the most dedicated people I know. They have always been so supportive and attentive to the equestrian community. I appreciate them so much and will miss them dearly.”

Linda has lassoed and roped me into following in her boot prints as the equestrian board member, pending board approval of my nomination. I am definitely going to need some help! Please email me at net540@excite.com and let me know how you would like to contribute.

We need more equestrian involvement, especially now, without Linda’s dedication and driving force.

Happy Trails!
Jeanette Fohn

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.
Thomas A. Edison

active transportation
continued from page 10

communities, healthier economies, and, ultimately, a healthier planet. Ernie Bay, Ed Davis, Bob Myrick and yours truly made the case for Active Transportation before the Pierce County Council at the Parks Budget hearing on November 13.

Get the “straight skinny” from the following web sites. Download the “Active Transportation for America” report at www.railstotrails.org. View the RTC press release of the event at www.c-span.org. Read the “Open Letter to Next President of the United States” by RTC President Keith Laughlin at www.railstotrails.org.

Want to be part of the solution? This is a grassroots campaign so both RTC and the Foothills Trail Coalition need you, and you, and you to pull it off. Be in on the ground floor for building the foundation for RTC’s long term goals in coming years. Goal 2008-2011 – Build an Active Transportation movement through enriched interactive online resources such as www.TrailLink.com and www.burncaloriesnotcarbon.org and raise public awareness of the health and community benefits of trail systems. Goal 2010 – Build an active transportation network linking trail, bike, pedestrian and transportation allies to double federal investment in trails, walking and biking by 2010. Goal 2020 – Ensure that 90 percent of Americans will live within three miles of a local trail system.

Join Today!
FOOTHILLS TRAILS COALITION
www.PierceCountyTrails.org
(253) 841-2570
Our State, Our Trails, Our Future

by Markus Dennis, Executive Director

Ken Woolery, Ernie Bay, John and Dottie Selby and I attended the biennial conference of the Washington State Trails Coalition in Spokane, which took place October 2 - 5. The theme of the conference was: “Our State, Our Trails, Our Future.” On Oct. 4 at the business meeting I presented the case to bring the 2010 Washington State Trails Conference to Pierce County and focus on the Foothills Trail as the spine of our county’s trail network. The following is extracted from our presentation, beginning with my opening statement.

“I believe the city of Tacoma would make a grand location for the 2010 Washington State Trails Conference! This destination city has emerged as a place with trail-centric leaders who are finding their common goals shared within the many municipalities that make up Pierce County.”

Just to name a few of the many highlights:
- A New Convention Center and world class associated hotels within walking distance.
- The present and future home of five trails: Scott Pierson (urban), Prairie Line, City Water Ditch (ground broken this week), Trail to the Mountain, and the Cross County Commuter Trail.
- The Thea Foss Pedestrian Esplanade, Tacoma Art Museum and Chihuly Museum of Glass, to name just a few of the many museums and outstanding venues.
- A light rail Link in Tacoma and the Sounder commuter train to Seattle.
- The Cushman Trail to the newly dedicated Tacoma Narrows Bridge connecting the Olympic Peninsula to the Scott Pierson Trail.
- The new Soundview Trail which is receiving national reviews due to the Scottish Links Golf Course serving as the buffer zone with some of the best panoramic views of the Puget Sound.
- The nexus of King and Pierce Counties’ trail system: Interurban Trail (north to Seattle), City of Sumner’s Trail, Puyallup’s River Walk Trail connecting to over sixteen miles of the county’s seminal Foothills Trail.
- The Foothills Trail winding from the fertile valley of Puyallup to the base of Mount Rainier, offering Pierce County one of the region’s stellar trail systems, eventually extending 50 miles to Tacoma’s Ruston Way linear park along Commencement Bay.
- Mount Rainier with the 97-mile Wonderland Trail and the new Jackson Visitors’ Center are one to two hours away.
- The Evan’s ORV park is just thirty minutes from Tacoma with easy access and positive reviews.
- Finally, the Puget Sound Marine Trail System offers some of the best aquatic outings in our state.

2007/8 afforded the Foothills Trail Coalition the opportunity of doubling our membership, and that brought with it a vast array of talented leaders and willing volunteers who are striving on a county-wide basis to impact our state, our trails, and our future. The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition was awarded Pierce County’s Outstanding Volunteer Group in 2007/8, and we are excited to extend this invitation and offer our help to host this important event and venue outings.

The attendees voted unanimously to accept our proposal, and the 2010 Washington State Trails Conference will be hosted by the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition in Tacoma.

Please contact me to discuss how you can become involved.

Captain 2 Wheeler Awards Worn 24/7

by Jerry Larson, a.k.a. Captain 2 Wheeler, Courtesy Patrol Chairman

During the past year, a number of Captain 2 Wheeler Awards have been given to recognize the “Heavy Lifters” of the Foothills Trail Coalition and Courtesy Patrol. “Heavy Lifters” are identified and selected by the previous winners and are awarded a gold medal on a blue neck ribbon for their contributions above an beyond the call of duty in advancing the Coalition’s mission. The ongoing joke is that the recipient must wear the medal 24 hours a day until the next formal ceremony.

Past winners, Buckley Mayor Pat Johnson and Georgean Curran, documented their adherence to the 24-hour rule with vacation pictures wearing the medal in other parts of the country and mounting the pictures in an album. The album implemented by Johnson will go on to future winners to become a permanent record of recipients.

Past winners are Mariella Arnold, Mary Colquhoun, Russ Matthews, Bob Larsen, Richard Harrelson, Joanie Harrelson, Bill
ForeverGreen Council Launches Drive to Authorize Tax for Trails

by John S. Selby, Member, ForeverGreen Trail Advisory Committee

Thirty miles in 20 years is unacceptable. Pierce County is struggling to find the money to build non-motorized trails costing half to one million dollars per mile. Most small towns have been unable to fund the missing links and many sections of trail have remained incomplete. Even large cities like Tacoma employ only a part-time trail coordinator. In spite of all the efforts of citizens and county and city government officials, only about 1.5 miles of trail have been constructed each year over the last 20 years.

The ForeverGreen Council thinks that the public is ready to tax themselves to finish trails, so they have worked with the state legislature to develop a proposal to grant the authority for asking the voters for a tenth of a penny sales tax to fund trails, open space, and parks. If the voters subsequently approved such a tax, the funds would build and maintain an approximately 100-mile county-wide system of trails connecting all 24 communities in Pierce County.

It is well known that non-motorized trails are consistently among the top three recreational facilities listed by the public when asked what they expect from local governments. This is because the public has come to realize that trails provide a non-motorized and off-street alternative to commuting to work, family recreation for horseback riding and bicycling, safe pedestrian routes free of automobiles, and community linkages for walking, jogging, and healthy lifestyles.

But, it can’t happen without money. That’s where you can help. It is axiomatic that legislators respond to public pressure. Call or write your state representative and senator and request that they support the ForeverGreen proposal. For details go to http://www.forevergreencouncil.org/funding.html.

Notices:

Reader Survey

by John Selby, Editor, Trail Line News

Dear Readers,

What would you like to see more (or less) of in the Trail Line News? Please call or send me a note with your ideas.

Have you visited another rail-trail recently? Send me a paragraph or two about your experience. Be sure to include a photo or two with suggested captions, including the names of those pictured and the photographer.

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CLC Closes on Upper Carbon River Property

by John Selby, Editor

In their winter 2008-2009 report, the Cascade Land Conservancy announced the closure on one of their largest forest acquisitions this year, the 7582-acre conservation easement with Longview Fibre for properties in the upper Carbon River Valley near Carbonado. The CLC assisted in the transaction, helping Longview Fibre in its commitment to the transactions, securing the Forest Legacy grant dollars and committing the local match to secure the grant. The Longview Fibre lands are a significant step toward achieving the landscape goals of The Cascade Agenda in forests in Pierce County.

CAPTAIN 2 WHEELER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12


To join the Courtesy Patrol, contact Jerry Larson at 253-845-7219 or capt2wheeler@comcast.net.
Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition
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