President’s Message

BY BUZZ GRANT, COALITION PRESIDENT

For the last two months, the major focus of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition has been on the Washington State Trails Coalition’s biennial Conference. The conference was a great success and showcased all of our local trails. I would like to give a GIANT THANK YOU to all of you who were able to help with the planning for the conference, trail tours, and mixer. Those who were able to attend added to the success of over 196 attendees, making it one of the largest WSTC Conferences in history.

Now we need to get back to the business of our Coalition. On December 7, 2010 Pierce County Parks and Recreation, with the very strong support of your Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition’s 35-plus members, present, received authorization from the Pierce County Council to file condemnation proceedings to extend the Foothills Trail towards Buckley. The condemnation will be through the Happy Trails RV Park owned by Mr. Dwight Partin on the East side of South Prairie at the end of the bridge over South Prairie Creek. There has been lots of talk about the North, South or on the former railroad centerline routes. Personally, I do not care, as long as it gets done!

Condemnation is not the best way of getting across one of the last holdouts for a trail between South Prairie and Buckley. I believe a negotiated settlement would have been a much more expedient method.
Annual Meeting Announcement

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition announces its annual meeting for Thursday, January 27th, 2011, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the High Cedars Golf Course club house, 14604 149th Street Court East, Orting (just off the Sumner-Orting Highway). There will be an optional buffet dinner at 6:00 PM for a nominal fee prior to the annual meeting. Please RSVP to Pat Johnson at 360-829-2068 or by email at pat.johnson@tx3.net for reservations for the buffet. Payment for the dinner will be collected at the door. An accurate “head count” is necessary in order to make sure there is plenty food.

The purpose of the annual meeting is the election of the Board of Directors. The following names are submitted for consideration to be re-elected or elected (NOTE: Current board members are shown with an *): Don Partington*; Ken Woolery*; Edward (Ed) F. Davis*; Steve Brown; Richard Cockrell; Diane Kastama; Don Rich; and David Seago.

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 then elect officers at the first board meeting following the annual meeting.

A quorum is needed to conduct our annual business, so please make a point to come to High Cedars on January 27, 2011!
Milestone Trail Connection
by Ernie Bay, President Emeritus

In 1989, Pierce County Parks had a master plan that outlined the vision for a continuous Foothills Linear Park Trail from the Nisqually Delta to Mount Rainier. While the vision has materialized slowly, a small but major milestone is currently nearing completion - the vital link beneath the Puyallup/Sumner Puyallup River Bridge on East Main Street and the adjacent Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway bridge that will eventually lead to the Foothills Trail. Before this link could proceed, a protective overhead structure was required by the railroad as a safety precaution. The structure, now nearing completion, was designed by Robert Droll, Landscape Architect, of Olympia and constructed by Pease Construction of Lakewood. The project was funded by a competitive gubernatorial community development grant at a cost of approximately $240K.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Exchange Ride on the ODT
by John S. Selby, Board Member

Out of an inspiration that came to us at the WA State Trails Coalition Conference, my brother Jeff and I arranged a joint ride on the Olympic Discovery Trail for members of the Foothills Trail Coalition and the Peninsula Trails Coalition. On November 7, Don and Robin Partington and Dottie and I rode with 12 cyclists from the other side of Puget Sound. We started at the Morse Creek trail head, had lunch in Port Angeles, then rode out west to the Dry Creek canyon bridge and across the new $20m Elwha River bridge which has a second deck hung below the 85-foot high vehicle deck for the Olympic Discovery Trail. The truss sections that make up the 220-footlong Dry Creek bridge were on site waiting to be dropped into place the next week. Next spring, I plan to organize an exchange ride on the Foothills Trail to introduce Peninsula Trails Coalition members to our trail. Stay tuned.
President’s Message Continued from Page 1

There have been negotiations with two directors of Parks and four right-of-way agents for Parks since 1998, with no resolution to acquiring this right of way. I only see one direction to go. I believe condemnation is the best method of advancing the trail at this time. After Parks gets authorization to condemn, it may take two to six months until the action is filed with the courts, and another two-plus years to complete. The best resolution of the problem for the trail would be a purchase prior to condemnation, or if Mr. Partin and his attorney grant the County rights under what is called a “Possession and Use Agreement.” Under this agreement, the County gets title to which route is agreed upon by the parties and could start planning and construction, while the monetary consideration is settled in the courts.

The next hurdle will be acquiring the trail through the KC Crusaders paint ball property, and when that is completed, the trail will at least get to the four bridges that have been constructed over the years.

Yes, there will be work parties out as soon as the County acquires those properties to brush out a trail for the public to use, at their own risk.

The condemnation of the Partan property on December 7 is good news and a great Christmas present for the Coalition and all users of the Foothills Trail.

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.
– Langston Hughes, U.S. writer, 1092-1967

Foothills Trail Has Evolved Successfully- Are we counting our chickens too soon?
by Capt2wheeler, Chairman, Courtesy Patrol

It has become apparent, at this point in time, that our 15-mile trail has become far safer than it was just three to five years ago. Is this the result of increased trail usage, bad elements moving on, visibility of yellow vested Courtesy Patrollers, public appreciation of Pierce County Parks & Recreation and their ongoing maintenance programs, County Sheriff periodic visits, the eventual acceptance by towns, property owners and members of the value of the trail, and a whole lot of luck? The credit goes to all the aforementioned without a better way of measuring the positive causes for success. As Patroller Richard Harrelson stated, “the trail is being used for what it was meant, from current indications.”

While the trails are safer today, we must be cognizant about difficulties that have been overcome and remember that any one of the following could return to blemish our cherished trail. It’s been some time since we’ve seen:

1. Running packs of dogs
2. Addicts using drugs & alcohol at the trail head
3. Transients/druggies living in woods & blackberry bushes
4. Motorcyclist jumping bikes into trail head parking
5. Auto’s driving on the trail
6. Burning public posters at trail heads
7. Graffiti on trail side residences & fences
8. Trail heads broken into & contents stolen
9. Commemorative bronze plaques stolen

All trail users play a role in keeping our trail safe and for reporting anything suspicious to the authority phone numbers posted at the trailheads!

Memberships/Donations


Scholz Farm and Garden
14310 128th St. E.
Puyallup, WA 98374
Phone (253) 848-7604
Fax (253) 840-8699
ScholzFarm@MSN.com

Allen Scholz
Fawntella Scholz
Networking for Trails:

Fennel Creek Trail
by Gary Leaf

Permits have been approved for a one-mile section of the Fennel Creek Trail which is part of a Safe-Routes-to-School grant project. Construction will take place. The City of Bonney Lake sponsored a Conservation Futures grant application for a 97-acre parcel along Fennel Creek on Kelly Farm. The Conservation Futures Funding Board recommended funding this acquisition with a 50/50 split between Pierce County and the City of Bonney Lake.

So. Prairie to Buckley
by John Selby, Board Member

Eighteen Foothillers, most wearing bright yellow Courtesy Patrol vests, packed the Pierce County Council chambers on September 20. They were there eager to witness the Community Development Committee discuss and decide on Proposal No. 2010-34, an ordinance authorizing condemnation proceedings to acquire right-of-way through the Parton trailer park at So. Prairie.

After roughly a decade of negotiations between Mr. Parton and Pierce County Parks, it was believed that this decision would unblock a process apparently in deadlock. However, it quickly became apparent that this was not to be. Both parties had submitted a request to postpone the decision until February, 2011. They argued that they were making headway on their negotiations, and that condemnation would not speed things up. Indeed, Mr. Parton had offered to sell his property along So. Prairie Creek, and the hold up now was Parks and Recreation’s

Edgewood & Milton Interurban
by John S. Selby, Coalition Board Member

Progress on building non-motorized trails is sometimes frustratingly slow, but you only need to visit Edgewood and Milton to see that it is indeed happening. The astute, Edgewood Public Works Director, Joe Seet, in cooperation with the City of Milton, chose the placement of the new sewage pumping station so that its access road will become the north end of the trail, connecting it with Military Road, thus using sewage construction money to fund part of the Interurban Trail. I recently ran the trail from 114th Ave. E. to Military Road to check it out. The trail is grassy and mowed wide, so the blackberries no longer block the way. The pumping station is nearly complete and offset from the trail which looks ready for paving. At Military Road the sewer line continues into Milton to Enchanted Parkway, although there is no access up to the roadway yet. Progress! How sweet it is!
The seeds of synergy sowed among trail advocates of the Washington State Trail Coalition conference in Tacoma in October gave us a stride forward in unifying forces and speaking in one voice on behalf of trails and Active Transportation. It was inspiring to listen and learn from a wide range of outstanding trail leaders. I came away with ideas for new and unique ways and means to further the goal of safe and connected non-motorized access to public transit from the communities where people work, shop, learn and play. The theme for three sessions at the conference was Active Transportation with 16 talented and dedicated professional and lay advocates from across the State of Washington and the Portland Metro District in Oregon. They shared progress and made plans for the future. Please give these Foothillers a pat on the back for a job well done: Buckley Mayor Pat Johnson for her dynamic discourse on partnerships and trails as economic drivers; Captain2Wheeler (aka Jerry Larson) for sharing his confidence in volunteers as partners in power; and John Selby and Ernie Bay for their fine work as session moderators. Congratulations to John Ernest Berry III for his selection as one of the two WSTC members-at-large. Plans are already underway for the WSTC Conference 2012 in which will be hosted by Vancouver-Clark County Parks & Recreation. For more: www.washingtonstatetrailscoalition.org.

So where do we go from here? The results of the November election may, or may not, toll the death knell for inclusion of non-motorized transportation in the new, long past-due, transportation bill. Transportation and infrastructure are two areas where cooperation between the two parties has occurred in the past. President Obama is set to release his own proposal for a six-year transportation bill early in 2011 with emphasis on jobs engendered in transportation and infrastructure projects. The good news is that across the country Americans approved 75% of the local ballot measures for improving transportation even raising their own taxes to do so. New leadership on some of the crucial committees in the House of Representatives will drive some change in the direction of Active Transportation, and advocates are bracing for a fight to preserve pedestrian-biking funding.

Other implications of the shift in power per Transport for America include: The probable new chair of the Transportation and HUD Appropriations Committee, with the power of the purse strings, is Tom Latham (R-OK), who in the past has not supported Active Transportation. On the plus side, he did support more money for infrastructure investment saying that it would actually create more jobs. The last long-term surface transportation legislation, which expired in December 2009 has continued on a temporary basis even while the Highway Trust Fund has fallen into insolvency.

President Obama’s initiative for 21st Century Infrastructure has my support. It is all about creating new, long-term and direly-needed jobs through $50 billion in new transportation and infrastructure investment. To quote T4 America Director James Corliss in an official statement: “The President’s initiative as we understand it is based on the broad outlines issued today, will give much-needed help to the economy while kick-starting the long-delayed transformation of the nation’s outdated surface transportation program. While the “front-loading” of a new transportation authorization will put many thousands of Americans to work over the next couple of years, this should not be seen as a mere short-term stimulus. This kind of aggressive, multi-year construction and rehabilitation effort is fundamental to the long-term health of our economy. The alternative is gridlocked cities, stranded rural residents, hampered freight delivery and continued over-reliance on increasingly hard-to-get oil supplies.”

The full statement is available at www.t4america.org. We have to face the prospect that things are likely tougher for people who want to change our country’s transportation system from one centered on highways and roads to one that gives more attention (and funding) to rail, buses, biking and walking.

What can we do? I, for one, will remain optimistic, keep talking truth to whatever power may be, and continue “burning calories not carbon” to the degree possible for an old lady of 86. Happy Trails

What is Active Transportation?

\[ \text{AT} = \begin{pmatrix} \text{bike} & \text{shoes} & \text{rails-to-trails conservative} & \text{You} \end{pmatrix} \]
Calendar of Events

Meetings:

**Monthly Board Meetings:**
Open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Thursday from 7-9 p.m. at the Puyallup Public Library, south entrance. Monthly meetings may be rescheduled, so check our website at www.piercecountytrails.org for changes. Please note the annual meeting in January will be at a different location.

**Charlie Chat - Weekly Luncheon:**
Informal luncheons 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.

**Courtesy Patrol Meetings:**
Scheduled on 2nd Saturdays of each month at High Cedars Golf Course, 149th St. Ct. E., 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. Contact Jerry Larson at 253-845-7219 or Capt2Wheeler@comcast.net.

**Friends of the Riverwalk:**
We are an informal group of volunteers devoted to the enjoyment and betterment of the Puyallup Riverwalk. Please join us for breakfast on most Monday mornings* at 9 a.m. at Mrs. Turner’s Restaurant, 701 E. Main, Puyallup.

*call prior to confirm in case of cancellation.
Ernie Bay 253-848-7718 bugtrail@aol.com
Bob Kastama 253-435-1637 kastamaq@gmail.com
Puyallup City Parks 253-841-5447

**Annual Meeting:**
January 27th at High Cedars Golf Course club house. The address is 14604 - 149th St. Ct. E, Orting. Dinner at 6 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7 p.m. See notice on page 2.
Bike Winners 2010

BY ERNIE BAY, PRESIDENT EMERITUS

Once again we were delighted to announce two very happy young women as winners of our bicycle drawing at this year’s Puyallup Fair. College students Stephanie Lachman of North Seattle and Christine Luche of Spanaway were the respective winners of a pink cruiser comfort bicycle and a sporty Redline stunt bicycle. Both bicycles were donated by Bonnie Lake Bicycle Shop of Sumner as they have generously done for many past years.

The disappearance of the maps initially baffled and perturbed Coalition members and other cyclists. But inquiries revealed that the lawyer for an injured cyclist had claimed that the county’s bike map had directed the woman to the road where her accident occurred. The woman was injured when her bike hit a raised asphalt curb that had been installed to direct stormwater into a sewer grate.

Although the asphalt curb was far from the white fog line, as Tacoma Wheelmen governmental affairs director Bob Myrick has noted, the county’s risk managers evidently decided that the map’s disclaimer language wasn’t strong enough to shield the county from liability in such situations. So thousands of maps were removed and destroyed, leaving a large gap in public information about the best roads for cycling in Pierce County.

For a time, it appeared that Pierce County would have no bike map while King, Thurston and Snohomish counties would continue to have their maps available.

Hamashima said a $40,000 grant from the Puget Sound Regional Council will pay for the new map. He said somewhere between 25,000 and 100,000 copies will be printed. “While we want to make sure that enough copies are printed to meet demand,” he noted, “we also would like to be mindful of not printing too many copies and wasting paper.”

Shawn Phelps, a senior transportation planner for the county, will also work on the map. He said suggestions from members of the cycling community will be taken into account. Contact Phelps at sphelps@co.pierce.wa.us.

No doubt America is a litigious society, and not all lawsuits make sense. But at least the county has recognized that a well-prepared bike map that lays out the safest and most advantageous road routes -- even if actual road conditions are not perfect -- makes a greater contribution to public safety than not having one.

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Mon, Wed, Fri 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Tuesdays 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Planning a trail vacation?
by Ernie Bay, Coalition President Emeritus
Rambletown http://rambletown.appspot.com/ is an excellent website that features geocoded trail information in their GoogleMaps. The Rails-To-Trails Conservancy has also been mapping trails nationwide on their trail finder site at http://www.traillink.com, featuring detailed trail information, guidebook descriptions and trail reviews.

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s nationwide trail-building programs have helped put more than 19,000 miles of rail-trail on the ground in 25 years. That’s an average of 380 miles per state. Keep up the good work!
Membership makes a difference!
The work we are doing is made possible because of your membership and generous support. Credit cards accepted.

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

Mark your categories, mail form and check to:
Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition
P.O. Box 192,
Puyallup, WA 98371-0021

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