

June 2002

Sumner Trail moves along

by Ken Woolery

Two separate sections of the Sumner Trail are in the works. First is a small loop trail connecting the bridge across the White River at the north end of Fryer Avenue and the new bridge on Tacoma Avenue near the new city shops. Right-of-way agreements and ownership have been secured to allow this loop to be built. The second section will connect the north end of 142nd Avenue East at 24th Street East, heading east over the river on the existing trail bridge, then south along the east side of the White River for approximately half a mile.

A contract has been issued with AHBL Design Consultants for these two sections with construction planned this year or in 2003. Over 70 percent of the overall route to connect Sumner to the Pacific Trail is in City of Sumner ownership or under some type of agreement. Upon completion, the 26-mile Sumner Trail system will connect to five other trail systems, making it a critical hub of regional trails.

Tree Replanting

During the construction of the Cascade Junction Bridge, a number of trees were removed to allow placing the steel bridge beams in position. The county biologist required that this area be replanted after construction. On April 13 members of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition and Pierce County Parks Department planted 65 trees in the bridge area, consisting of red cedar, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, and shore pine. It was also agreed that we would maintain these trees until they were well established. This planting was also an opportunity

Milton

In the early 90s the Pierce County Parks and Recreation Department began negotiations with Puget Sound Energy for the purchase of the entire 3.2-mile section of the Interurban Railroad right-of-way that lies within or borders upon the City of Milton. In 1995 they obtained the 1.5-mile Pierce County portion and subsequently gave it to the City of Milton. The purchase of the King County section depends on the resolution of pending title issues.

Grant funding has been approved for the purchase of the King County portion and the development of the entire trail. While the title issues are being resolved for the purchase of the final section of right-of-way, the city has contracted with ENTRANCO, a large engineering and construction firm, to design and develop the trail. Surveyors may be appearing along the trail at any time, but the bulldozers will have to wait until the sale is finalized.

Hopefully that will be soon but, in the meantime, this beautiful graveled trail is open to the public. Park your car at West Milton Park on the corner of Kent Street and Porter Way. The trail begins at a chain link gate on Kent Street. Follow it up a gentle grade under arches of broadleaf maples along East Hylebos Creek all the way to its intersection with 380th Street near 28th Avenue and Enchanted Parkway. Enjoy!

Try the Willapa Hills Trail

Between Chehalis and South Bend there is a beautiful trail in the rough called the Willapa Hills Trail. Its 56-mile length is easily found while traveling between Long Beach and the I-5 corridor on the sleepy Highway 6. The bridges are there, the brush has been kept in check, and it looks like horses, mountain bikes and hikers could travel long distances without experiencing difficulties.

Different sections are developed. It is paved from South Bend to Willapa just east of Raymond. There is an equestrian-friendly trail head in Pe Ell. Those improvements were made available by the local governments obtaining grants, much as our Foothills Trail began. It looks like the rest of the trail is available on a "use-at-your-own-risk" basis.

Besides keeping the brush clear, the state has placed steel gates across the trail to discourage motor vehicles from accessing it. The gates seem to work where the trail can be seen from the highway. Bear in mind that this is a very lightly traveled section of the state, but that adds to the appeal of the trail.

The Chehalis end is just south of the Highway 6 interchange with I-5 (exit 77). Also, there is a weekend steam excursion train that operates Memorial Day to Labor Day and runs out 17 miles west of Chehalis. This is confusing at first. Is part of the trail a live railroad line? No, there were two railroads that ran out to

Willapa Bay--the Northern Pacific and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St Paul. The trail uses the former N.P. line which starts out just south of where the excursion trains run.

This "work in progress" may be a beautiful trail in the rough for many years to come, given the tight budget for State Parks, but we don't want this one to be forgotten. Let's keep it in mind for visits and connections in the future.

Key Peninsula Trails Committee seeks volunteers

We have just learned of the Key Peninsula Trails and Greenways Committee, and that it is seeking members and volunteers. The mission of the committee is to develop a series of trails for kayak, bike, hike, horse, and other users on the Key Peninsula (near Gig Harbor) in Pierce County, using volunteer labor and public funding donations.

For more information please contact Simon Priest <spriest@krl.org> or call 253-884-6446

Kudos

We wish to thank Tom Enlow for the great job he recently did in digitizing and transferring all of our trail archives to CD. These included both news clippings and past newsletters.

We also congratulate Brian Shaw for the outstanding job he has done in redesigning our web page. For those of you who have not seen it, we encourage you to visit <Piercecountytrails.org/trails.htm>. The address of this page will soon be converted to the original <Piercecountytrails.org>. Thus, you might wish to visit both sites until this change occurs.

The annual auction fund raiser is set for October 27 at the High Cedars Golf Course.

In Memoriam - Two Lost Friends

On May 8 the Foothills Trail lost one of its champions. Louise Wise, a former Orting City Council member, was a strong supporter of the Foothills Trail during its darkest days. She was outspoken in favor of the trail when others were either acrimoniously against it or, as supporters, kept silent in fear of their neighbors. Louise was a popular community activist and a Pierce County Community Action employee. It was thus appropriate that she foresaw the benefit that the trail would eventually bring to her community. We will miss her.

Another friend of trails who we miss is Suzie Stephans, past executive director of what is now the Bicycle Alliance of Washington. Suzie was an ardent bicyclist and bicycle/pedestrian advocate. Ironically, she was killed earlier this year by a bus while crossing an intersection in St. Louis where she was attending a bicycle/pedestrian conference.

Bricks and trees are popular

Buy a kiosk brick now and have it inscribed in July. Two of the most popular ongoing fundraisers for the Foothills Trail have been the commemorative brick and tree programs. A specified \$50 contribution still buys either a brick or a tree designated to honor an individual. The added benefit of the "Buy a tree for the trail" program is the beauty that these trees add to the trail experience. This was particularly evident this spring when the considerably grown, flowering plum trees along the trail through Orting put on a magnificent color display. Likewise, more recently planted flowering trees of various species highlighted the trail between Orting and the McMillin trail head. Trail users will also appreciate the Douglas fir trees first planted in 1992, along the Soler Mile between Orting and South Prairie. These have achieved significant growth and will add character to that section of the trail when it is completed in 2003. While name tags on trees endure for only a limited period of time, the trees continue to grow and give pleasure to multitudes of trail visitors for many years to come. What better way to honor a friend or loved one.

Inscribed bricks literally make a lasting impression. More than 200 bricks have been inscribed to date in the Orting Kiosk and provide special interest to visitors. Brick inscriptions can be purchased at any time, but

because of weather, logistics of contracting the engraving service and economy of scale, accumulated orders can only be satisfied once a year. Especially due to the need for bricks to be as dry as possible for proper masking, we have elected to time this for late July. Thus, for those of you who would like to see your name "in stone" this summer, please place your order by July 4. You can find a form for both bricks and trees on the last page of this newsletter.

President's Message:

"What to you is the most important thing about the trail?" As often as I have received this question, usually from a reporter wrapping up an interview, I still have trouble answering it. The problem I have is that the whole trail experience has so long been a personal passion that I find it almost impossible to prioritize its benefits. Whenever I'm out on the trail, no matter what the weather or the season, I simply feel exuberant! "In a nutshell," I responded to the last reporter, "trails simply provide a great quality of life!"

The term "quality of life" has become so overused in recent years that it is almost becoming trite. Still, what more succinct way to describe the value of multipurpose trails. Perhaps another way I could answer the question would be to relate one of my two favorite trail quotes. The 1987 Presidential Commission on Americans Out-of-doors states: "Trails allow people to adventure close to home." More recently David Burwell, the founder and past president of the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy, described rail trails as "America's new front porch." How true is each expression.

Our Foothills Trail is a great example of safe adventuring close to home, along rivers and streams, through forests, beside farms and buffalo pastures, through towns, amid wildflowers and through history. It is also, as Burwell describes, a front porch where neighbors can become reacquainted, seniors can enjoy the mirth of young children on trikes and training wheels, and seeing families spending quality time together. Instead of sitting by the television, people can socialize on leisurely strolls and stop at one of the trail's many parks and rest stops to people watch, contemplate the mountain, enjoy the rushing Carbon River, or listen to the birds. Want a good place to walk your dog or ride your horse? Try the trail. Need exercise? Walking is the best. Why go to a health club or ride a stationary bike when the trail is free! What better way to stretch both mind and body than a few minutes or, better still, a few hours on the trail.

And as for that question, "What is it about the trail that is most important to you?" Write us or e-mail us as to why you support the trail, and we will publish your response in our next news letter.

Ernie Bay

Trail Day preparations began early

It would not have happened without volunteers! That can be said for the trail itself, but this year's open house of the "trail in the rough" would have never happened if not for hundreds of hours of converting it from "trail impassable." More than three miles of the sections open for walking on June 1 were buried by vines, saplings, wind falls and discarded debris. One 1,000-foot section was three inches deep in mud.

That was before a concerted effort began on Saturday, January 5. From that date up until May 31, chain saws, brush cutters, brush mowers, axes, shovels, hammers, wheel barrows and sparing use of some larger power equipment were put to use by able volunteers.

Don Partington has to be credited with having the motivating enthusiasm that kept the project going. "Lets go out and clear some trail!" is his standard telephone greeting after you say hello. The rest of the crew has to admit that this spirit was our rallying cry. During those five months the crew included Russ Matthews, Bob Myrick, Carl and Dini Fabiani, Art Robinson, Buzz Grant, Bill Harmon, Chuck Morrison, John Downs, Clay and Dixie Gatchel, Joan and Josh Miller, Justin Conhinsler, Robert Peloli, John Hillding, Jerry Loran, George Pasero, Warren Wire (operator extraordinaire), Charley and Dan Burns, Roy Bueler, Randy Lindblad and many others who helped out when we weren't looking.

That 24th volunteer is important to mention because they joined in without being asked. When they see an improvement to the community that they like, they just go out and add their time and energy. To be more specific: someone mowed a section along Church Street in Wilkeson, someone dug a drainage ditch along the trail down by Arline Road and somehow a windfall tree disappeared with the help of that 24th volunteer (and it wasn't even good fire wood either!).

The combination of all these efforts helps prove that trails build strong communities. For sure the previews of the trail in the rough would not have been possible without a concerted volunteer effort. We can be proud of what the Foothills Trail is and will become in the future. A thank you to all of those mentioned

above, including the 24th volunteer.

Here is an article for the Networking for Trails summary.

Enumclaw

by John Keates, Director

Enumclaw Parks, Recreation, and Community Services

Greetings from Enumclaw! The City of Enumclaw has been working to get the ball rolling to develop sections of the Enumclaw Trail. This is its current name because we haven't come up with an official one yet. The trail corridor is an extension of the one that was once used by the Northern Pacific Railroad that Pierce County Parks and the Foothills Trail Coalition have successfully developed in Pierce County. Officials from the City of Enumclaw, City of Buckley, Pierce County and King County have met to talk about the concept of connecting the Foothills Trail in Pierce County with the trail in King County. Nothing concrete has been decided yet, but the four agencies are interested in working together to bring the Foothills Trail across the White River to King County.

The City of Enumclaw has submitted a grant request to the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to develop our first mile of trail. The grant request would be to develop a ten-foot asphalt trail from highway 410 near Schuck's Auto Supply south to the King County/Enumclaw border at 252nd Street SE. The city intends to begin mowing this section of the trail, as there is currently tall grass on the old rail bed. The Enumclaw Trails Committee has scheduled a work party on Saturday, June 8 to begin clearing portions of the trail right-of-way south of Enumclaw at that King County/city border down to the White River. We welcome others to join in our efforts. If you need more information about the work party, please call Enumclaw Parks and Recreation at (360) 825-3594.

HELP WANTED: Hook bait and unhook trout!

On August 17 during Orting's annual festival in the park, we again have the opportunity of staffing the fish tank as a fundraiser. It's fast paced fun under a canopy that shades you and the fish from sun or rain. We can use four volunteers in the morning and four in the afternoon for shifts that last about 2 1/2 hours. One person will handle the gate which, although away from the fish, is a busy job.

It's time to fish or cut bait! If you are interested in applying, please leave a message on our call line 253-841-2570 and we will get in touch.

Edgewood

The city of Edgewood has written a letter to Puget Sound Energy, stating its intent to purchase and develop the old Interurban Railroad bed as a non-motorized trail from the eastern Milton boundary near Military Road down Jovita to Pacific. There it will pass under SR 167 and proceed north along the east side of the freeway to connect with the existing southern terminus of the Interurban Trail at 3rd Avenue SW and Frontage Road South. When the Milton and Edgewood Interurban sections are completed we will once again be able to go "over the hump," not on the train where this expression was first used, but walking or riding under our own power.

For more information, contact Diane Kerlin, 253-863-3724.

You are invited to Engle's Picnic - Thursday, June 27

On Thursday evening, June 27, Foothills Trail Coalition members are invited to join others from the Tahoma Audubon Chapter, Mountaineers, Cascade Land Conservancy and special guests from Bhutan for Stan and Helen Engle's traditional midsummer potluck picnic. The place is the Engle Garden, 4011 Alameda Avenue, University Place, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Special events will include a display on conservation and natural history of Bhutan--a biodiversity hotspot in the eastern Himalaya Mountains, bird-banding demonstration, weather permitting, live falcon accompanied by a licensed falconer, native plant sale, Brett Johnson, Earth-friendly crafts and games.

Children and grandchildren are most welcome.

And don't forget how great the food is at these events! The Engles furnish coffee, punch and bread. You bring a hot or cold entree plus a salad or dessert; your own table service and a sit-upon if desired. Beer and

wine is BYO. No signup necessary. Rain does not cancel.

The Engle's home is one half mile south of Fircrest Golf Course. Parking is available on Alameda and on Kootnai, the lower street (come in lower gate). For more information call Helen or Stan at 253-564-3112 or email Hengle@earthlink.net

"Some things have to be believed to be seen." Ralph Hodgson

"Anything in life is possible if you make it happen. And it's never too late." Jack La Lanne

Questions about rail trails? Contact < trailsandgreenways@egroups.com >

Another route planned to the mountain

It appears that the Foothills Rails -To-Trails Coalition is not the only grass-roots trail group heading for the mountain. The following excerpt is from the Associated Press:

"MAPLE VALLEY - Joan Burlingame and her grass-roots group [Friends of Rock Creek Valley] hope within a decade or so, century-old trails once used for railroads will be linked to form a system reaching all the way south to Mount Rainier National Park. They call the trail network 'The Renton-to-Rainier Corridor.' They're trying to identify existing trails and connect them while working to protect sensitive wildlife habitats."

For more information see: <http://friendsofrockcreekvalley.org.futuresite.register.com/>

Correction:

For those of you who tried unsuccessfully to contact Mia Barbera by email for a copy of her new book, "Rail Trails of Washington & Oregon," we apologize for an error in her address as published in the March issue of the Trail Line News. There should not have been the forward slash at the end of the address. Mia's correct email address is <miab@earthlink.net>.

PHOTO CAPTIONS / INFORMATION

Flowering plums along the Orting trail segment.

Douglas fir trees planted in 1992 along the Soler Mile.

A white St. Patrick's Day on the Foothills Trail.

Clearing the way for the Foothills Trail Open House on the Wilkeson switchback. In preparation for our National Trails Day celebration, volunteers spent weeks clearing up to fifteen years of overgrowth from the former Northern Pacific rail corridor leading to Carbonado and Buckley. On Saturday, May 11, Carl Fabiani helped pull scores of stumps with his backhoe. Volunteers including Carl's wife Dinnie, Charlie Burns, Dixie and Clay Gatchell, Roy Buehler, Don Partington, Russ Mathews, Chris Nicholas, Art Robinson, John Downs and Randy Lindblad assisted with saws, picks and machetes. Earlier three seniors from White River School, Daniel Burns, Kyle Maris and Dustin Haney, put in 20 hours of trail time in partial satisfaction of their senior projects.

Gone graffiti! Dixie Gatchel, Clay Gatchel, Doug Peterson and Ernie Bay paint over obscenities and other graffiti desecrating the highway crossing near Bob's Place.

East Lake Sammamish Trail update

The following article relating to the status of the East lake Sammamish Trail is reprinted from the East Side

Journal.

Cash-strapped parks system still wants Lake Sammamish Trail: With parks shut, operating costs stump officials, 2002-05-04 by Tim Larson Journal Reporter.

SAMMAMISH -- With a \$50 million hole looming in King County's 2003 budget and 20 parks already closed for lack of maintenance money, a question often arises on the plateau: Why is the county still planning to start building the controversial East Lake Sammamish Trail this year?

The answer, according to King County officials, is as follows: The money to build an interim version of the trail--without a paved surface or any deviations from an old Burlington Northern rail bed--is available. The \$3.2 million needed for interim work and further environmental review of a permanent trail will come from federal grants and county real estate excise taxes. By law, those excise-tax revenues are set aside for capital projects, such as the trail. They can't be diverted to park maintenance.

Which leads to a second question: If the county doesn't have enough maintenance money to keep existing parks open, how will it pay to maintain the trail?

King County Councilman Larry Phillips suggested three possible funding sources: the county's general fund; county road money, a possibility because the trail is a transportation corridor; surface water management fees for the protection of wetlands affected by the trail. Those fees would be charged homeowners near the trail.

That last option might be a tough sell, given that many homeowners along the trail oppose the county plan. Several residents have filed trail-related lawsuits against the county. Phillips also is looking for funding ideas from a parks task force King County Executive Ron Sims recently commissioned.

The county estimates the interim East Lake Sammamish Trail will cost \$100,000 annually to operate and maintain. That's almost the same amount the county saved by closing the 20 parks this year: \$119,000. Noting that there's nothing certain about alternative sources of money, King County Councilman Rob McKenna thinks the trail will come at the expense of parks. "There's no way to fund the operation and maintenance of the (trail) without cutting back on other parks and closing some parks all together," McKenna said.

Prominent trail advocate Peter Goldman hopes funding will be found for all county parks, but he says the value of the East Lake Sammamish Trail needs to be put in perspective. The 11-mile trail linking Redmond and Issaquah should be a priority because it will be used by thousands of people, Goldman said. "It's not just your everyday park," he said.

Snaking along the eastern shore of Lake Sammamish, the old rail bed passes near 350 homes. In 38 cases, the trail would pass between the back doors of lakefront homes and the water. Some of those homeowners have asked the county to re-route portions of the trail so thousands of hikers and bikers won't be passing through their back yards. A number of residents have even volunteered to tax themselves to help pay for such a detour. But the county has declined, saying the rail bed is the safest and most logical path for the interim trail.

Many trail supporters point out that the county owns the old Burlington Northern right of way, thanks to a \$2.9 million purchase in 1998. They say the homeowners simply have no right to use the corridor for private purposes.

Tim Larson can be reached at tim.larson@eastsidejournal.com or 425-453-4228.

The ayes have it 8:1 for the ELS Trail!

Shortly after the above article on the East Lake Sammamish Trail appeared, the MetroKC.gov web page posted its public poll question of the week: "Should the East Lake Sammamish Trail be finished?"

Predictably, trail opponents quickly marshaled their forces as did supporters. Wednesday night, May 8, the vote was a disconcerting 50/50! While for some reason many of our members could not bring up the relevant link to cast their vote, we need not have worried. By the time the poll finished, the vote for completing the ELS trail was 20,542 in favor versus 2,542 against.

Talk about a mandate!

And still more good news as provided by Louise McGrody of the Bicycle Alliance of Washington:

"Good news for East Lake Sammamish Trail supporters! Today, [May 13] King County Superior Court Judge Kathleen Learned dismissed the lawsuit brought by adjacent property owners challenging the environmental impact statement (EIS) for the interim trail. The court ruled that the EIS was adequate as a matter of law, regardless of all the trumped up allegations by the opponents that it was not. Judge Learned's

ruling supports the county's position that interim trail use is safe and not environmentally degrading. This court decision permits the trail to be opened now in Redmond and Issaquah. However, there are still some hitches for the trail in Sammamish as the City of Sammamish has conditioned the trail with some very onerous wetland conditions. King County and some citizens have appealed that permit. Thank you to all who have actively supported the opening of this trail!"

In Puyallup, trails are number 1!

by Ernie Bay

Trails along rivers represent the one recreational feature most desired by Puyallup citizens. This was the finding by the City of Puyallup's Parks and Recreation Department after tallying a survey for its recently updated, long-range master plan. What is more, trails, walking and bicycle paths, and nature trails featured in three of the top four categories. People were asked to mark their top five preferences among twenty different parks and recreation features. Trails along rivers received 786 votes followed by walking and bicycle trails with 697 votes. Noteworthy were the responses for baseball and softball fields, which were listed ninth and tenth with 376 and 343 votes respectively. In previous surveys ball fields had always vied for first and second place along with bicycle and walking trails.

The drop in ranking for these facilities may in part reflect the development of new ball fields at both the Puyallup Recreation Sports Complex on Valley Avenue, and smaller fields at Peach Park. These were constructed since the last comprehensive parks survey. Or, the desire for more places to walk and bicycle may just be a part of the times with more people needing to get out of their homes, apartments and cars. Then again, perhaps it is that we have shown the way with the Foothills Trail and the Puyallup Riverwalk. We would like to think the latter. After so many years of struggle by so many against the opposition of so few to both projects, it is gratifying to be vindicated. Take heart Sumner, Enumclaw, Milton, Edgewood, Kitsap and elsewhere, the force is with you! In Puyallup, trails are number 1!

\$18-25

Elisabeth Albecker, Wayne Allen & Susan Armstrong, Gwendolyn Austin
Nicholas & Catherine Baldwin, William & Rhoda Barten, Burritt & Charlotte Birge, William & Carol Brantley, Ken Buck, DeForest Bullock, Richard & Mona Lee Burkhardt, Annette Burt, Paul Carbaugh, Bette Catlin, David & Linda Clark, Doris Clayton, Jeffrey & Terri Coop, Roland Cushman, Donna Dippolito, Colleen Dixon, Margaret & David Engle, Anne Ferguson, Arthur & Phyllis Forbes, Kathleen Franz, Becky Gilbert, James & Patricia Harnish, Diane Harris, Sven & Pamela Holm, Molly & Paul Holmes, Craig Isom, Michael Jarvis, Nelson & Dorothy Joswick, Bill Kelly, Judy Klingman.
Eric Melm, Kim Miller, Janet Milne, Evan Lee & Cynthia Neubauer, Carol & Walter Ottoson, Patricia Patterson, L.P. & Cheryl Pederson, Robert & Laurine Peoli, Rick Plasencia, Irene Potter, Don & Sherry Schmidt, Judy Schuler, Robert & Catherine Scoville, Robert & Marianne Smith, Richard Stewart, Gail & Joan Strait, Donald Teigen, John Tuttle, Barbara Webber, Robert Welander, Renee White, Robert & Corrine Wilkinson.

\$26-99

Bert Brown, Doug & Kathleen Carter, David & Patricia DeGroot, Paul & Geraldine Dodsworth, Duwayne Hankins, Jane Harnich, Kurt Klingman, Jim Meier, Meridith Family (D'jon's Steak House), John & Joyce Miller, Roger & Dorothy Neill, Al Gray & Betty Ogden, Allan & Cheryl Ohlsen, Beverly Pierson, Jesus & Judith Schmidt, Haven Silver, Barbara Veal, Bob Warfield, Linda & John Wright.

\$100-499

Steven & Sondra Anderson, Terry & Neila Bohn, Bruce & Virginia Dees, Patrick Hogan, Samuel & Sybil Hunter, John Sacklin, John & Dorothy Selby, Phil Schneider, Judy Pigott Swensen, George Weis, Bill & Gayle Weyerhaeuser, Jan & Shirley Wolcott, Robert & Patricia Young