



OR State Parks begins “Oregon Coast Trail Connections Strategy”

**Input sought to develop plan to complete
missing links in envisioned OR Coast Trail**

Salem, OR – Rocky Houston, Trails Coordinator for the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) began a series of sessions seeking input relative to gaps in the Oregon Coast Trail in August and November 2009 and land managers, public agencies, trail advocate groups and OPRD staff were asked to participate. The framework for these *Oregon Coast Trail Connection Strategy* input sessions is based upon the *Oregon Coast Trail: Missing Links, Priorities & Solutions* report that was researched, written and published by the National Coast Trail Association in 2005.

The goals of the process are to review gap sites and develop a short and long-term strategies to connect the gaps and identify key partners to assist the agency in raising public awareness of the Oregon Coast Trail.

The idea for the Oregon Coast Trail was envisioned in 1959 by Sam Dicken, a University of Oregon geography professor, as a continuous 400-mile hiking trail along the entire Oregon coast. He promoted the trail for 12 years to Oregon State Parks, and in 1971 the newly created Oregon Recreational Trails Advisory Council, made developing the trail a priority. About 350 miles of the trail exists today, about 50 miles is still needed to complete it.

“It’s great state parks is moving forward towards realizing the vision of the Oregon Coast Trail,” says Al LePage, director of the National Coast Trail Association, “and this process is the next step towards doing just that.”

Another round of input sessions are expected to be held in additional coastal communities in 2010. Contact Rocky Houston at 503-986-0750 for details.

New “link” at Yachats for Oregon Coast Trail

**Connection on central coast keeps hikers safe,
enhances trail experience with great views**

Yachats, OR – The Oregon Parks & Recreation Department developed a new trail linkage this year in cooperation with others south of Yachats, taking hikers off the narrow Highway 101 shoulder and finally providing a continuous connection to the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area. Joanne Kittel, an individual landowner who, with her husband Norman, donated a trail easement across their land for the Oregon Coast Trail, persevered in her advocacy to create this final linkage to their trail and beyond for the public.

WA State Parks signs agreement with NCTA

**Cooperative relationship strengthened for
shared projects involving trails and recreation**

Skamania, WA - Rex Derr, Director of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, and Al LePage, Director of the National Coast Trail Association (NCTA), signed a "Cooperating Agreement" on National Trails Day 2009, Saturday, June 6th, 2009. The agreement strengthens the cooperative relationship the organization has had with state parks relative to the development of both existing and future trails and other projects.

“There is a continuing need to actively promote public-private cooperative relationships that can achieve far more together than either alone,” noted the agreement, “and that allows both to achieve their individual missions as partners through mutually-shared goals and projects.”

“State Parks and the NCTA have worked together in the recognition and care of the Washington Coast Trail,” notes LePage, “and on the promotion of one of its spur trails, the Lower Columbia River Water Trail. We look forward to potentially working together on the proposed Camp-to-Cape Trail concept presented to the commission in 2005, the only missing recreational link in the Lewis & Clark Trail on the lower Columbia.”

Pacific NW Trail is now “National Scenic Trail”

**Congress designates 1200-mile trail vision,
provides enhanced protection and support**

Washington DC - The Pacific Northwest Trail was designated a National Scenic Trail in March through the passage and signing of the “Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009.” Passed by a vote of 77-20 in the Senate and 285-140 in the House, it was signed into law on March 30th.

“This landmark bill will protect millions of acres of Federal land as wilderness, protect more than 1,000 miles of rivers through the National Wild and Scenic River System, and designate thousands of miles of trails for the National Trails System,” noted President Obama.

The trail is envisioned as a continuous 1200-mile hiking and equestrian route stretching from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean developed by PNW Trail Association founder Ron Strickland in 1970. It forms a major link in the National Coast Trail Association's vision to create a 10,000-mile plus National Coast Trail system around the United States.

For more information about the Pacific Northwest Trail visit the association's website www.pnt.org.

Trail Development

Working for Recreation & Public Access

WA Coast Trail Plan Distributed to Partners

The “Washington Coast Trail: Missing Links, Partners & Solutions” report written by the National Coast Trail Association (NCTA) was distributed January 2009 to those on whose lands the envisioned trail travels. The Makah Tribe, Olympic National Park, the Quinalt Indian Nation and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission received copies to provide input to potentially assist in future trail and conservation planning efforts. The Washington Coast Trail is envisioned as a 175-mile hiking trail along the entire Washington coastline to the Columbia River. The report was funded by the American Land Conservancy.

“Sawmill & Tribal Trail” Planning & Outreach

The “Oregon Coast Legacy Hike,” an NCTA Summer 2008 event, included a public presentation that discussed a missing link connected to a local historic trail which inspired North Bend/Coos Bay area residents to move forward early in 2009 to take action. The NCTA followed up on their request for historic map documentation, provided assistance during Spring 2009 with a specially written consulting report, research on potential signage options along the route, and joined a group to hike the route with the media.

“C2C” Trails Partnership Equipment Donation

The NCTA donated trail equipment to the recently formed nonprofit trail group, the “Corvallis-to-Sea (C2C) Trails Partnership” in Spring 2009. Besides hand tools; hard hats, safety glasses and gloves and other items were supplied. The NCTA has worked with the group as part of a coalition for 5 years on planning, outreach and advocacy towards making the envisioned 60-mile plus hiking, cycling and equestrian trail over the Coast Range a reality. Visit www.C2Ctrail.org to learn about this trail!

“OR Coast Trail Connection Strategy” Input

The “Oregon Coast Trail Connection Strategy” process began August and continued in November 2009 by the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department to gather input to facilitate solutions to the gaps in the Oregon Coast Trail. The NCTA participated with their input and information in both series of sessions and plans to be present for the upcoming series of sessions in 2010. This process, as it moves into the planning phase, is expected to become a major project for the NCTA in 2010.

5-Mile Pt. Trail, Research & Recommendations

The “Five-Mile Point Trail,” a link in the Oregon Coast Trail north of Bandon, OR, also providing beach access for local residents and visitors, was field researched August 2009. The existing re-routed trail and beach access and a proposed trail alternative over the point itself were researched. An upcoming report update with recommendations to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department addressing public beach access, this Oregon Coast Trail linkage and relevant landowners is expected from the NCTA Winter 2009 with follow-up action to implement them in 2010.

Education

Promoting Coastal Trails to Everyone

WA Coast Trail Hiking Book Project Begins

“Washington Coast Trails, Walks, Day-Hikes and Backpacking Treks” is the NCTA's first-ever hiking book project. Al LePage, NCTA director, and the first person to apparently to ever hike the entire length of the Washington coast in 1992, field researched the Washington Coast Trail Summer 2009. He essentially backpacked the length of the Washington coast in July 2008 to photograph and map the trail for the book, and began it upon returning with its writing being a major project during 2010.

OR Coast Trail PowerPoint & Presentations

“Oregon Coast Trail: One Man's Journey through Eternity,” a prototype PowerPoint presentation about NCTA director Al LePage's 30-day 400-mile backpacking trek down the Oregon Coast Trail in 2008, was created September 2009, the final version being developed in January 2010. It will be an important tool for public outreach about the Oregon Coast Trail, its value, his own personal story while hiking it, and the need to preserve its special places. Given Oregon Parks & Recreation Department's objective to raise awareness of the trail relative to the “Connections Strategy” process towards completing its gaps, the NCTA will give public presentations of it on the Oregon coast during Winter 2010.

WA Coast Trail PowerPoint & Book Tour

“Washington Coast Trail: Walking with Infinity!” is the envisioned PowerPoint presentation to be created Winter 2011, to be shown during the Washington Coast Trails book tour to promote both the vision and reality of the Washington Coast Trail and the book, which is expected to happen Spring 2011.

Conservation

Taking Action for Coastal Preservation

OR Coast Legacy Conservation Plan Update

The “Oregon Coast Legacy Conservation Plan,” envisioned by the National Coast Trail Association as a pro-active and collaborative comprehensive plan to preserve and conserve the entire Oregon Coast began with the “Oregon Coast Legacy Hike” event in Summer 2008. The process continued Fall 2008 and the first two meetings were held Winter 2009. However, for a variety of reasons, the level of participation, especially by the key stakeholders needed to develop a truly collaborative plan was not achieved, so the process was terminated Spring 2009. The NCTA will, however, continue to monitor, advocate and take needed action for coastal preservation especially relevant to areas need to link, protect and enhance the Oregon Coast Trail experience.

VISIT . . . www.CoastTrails.org
CHECK www.doj.state.or.us/charigroup/
LEARN MORE www.GuideStar.org