



## Strategy to complete trail presented to Commission

**Oregon State Parks Commission learns how envisioned Oregon Coast Trail could be linked**

Salem, OR – *National Coast Trail Association* (NCTA) director, Al LePage, addressed the *Oregon State Parks Commission* at their January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting as to why the *Oregon Coast Trail* should be completed and expressed the organization's support of the *Oregon Coast Trail: Connections Strategy* towards making it all happen. Rocky Houston, *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department* (OPRD) trails coordinator, who developed the strategy, and Richard Walkoski, OPRD recreation program manager, then presented the commission with an informational briefing about the strategy, and also explained how funds already dedicated to trails could be used to move a majority of the existing gaps towards completion.

The strategy was based upon the NCTA's 2005 *Missing Links: Priorities & Solutions* report, and divides the trail into 10 sections with 33 gaps. It identifies both short and long-term connection solutions, and offers development concepts with site plan drawings and written descriptions of the gaps as conceptual "blueprints." It will also direct future planning on closing the gaps over the next 20 years and assist OPRD in the development of a management plan.

The process to develop the strategy included input from diverse stakeholders, including local communities, land managers, public agencies, trail advocacy groups, and individuals along its length.

The next step will be to develop feasibility planning, operational planning, and design planning on each gap identified, and local interest and partnerships with OPRD, communities or other land managers are vital to its success.

"If I may adapt a famous quote," notes LePage, "this strategy is one small step, but one giant leap for the Oregon Coast Trail."

The idea of a continuous 400-mile *Oregon Coast Trail* was envisioned in 1959 by Sam Dicken, a *University of Oregon* geography professor, development began in 1971, and about 350 miles of the trail exists, about 50 miles still needed to complete it.

Visit [CoastTrails.org](http://CoastTrails.org) to see the draft "Connections Strategy"

## Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail successfully moves ahead

**US Forest Service receives route proposal, begins environmental assessment process**

Corvallis, OR – The *Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail Partnership*, after seven years of field research, planning, outreach, and negotiations for access – all involving more than 17,000 hours invested by volunteers alone – finally submitted their proposed 60-mile trail route to *Siuslaw National Forest* (SNF) headquarters in June 2010. The proposed route would take hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians from the Willamette Valley over Coast Range to the Pacific, and its submission to SNF was a crucial step to do the environmental assessment needed by the *US Forest Service*, which will initiate the process during their 2011 fiscal year.

"Working in cooperation with landowners, agencies and others," begins NCTA director Al LePage, "this incredibly dedicated group has succeeded where no one else ever has," and he continues, "one of the only big things left to do to finally begin building it is an analysis of any potential environmental impacts along the length of the proposed route, and how any such impacts can be minimized."

Learn more about this great trail and group at [C2CTrail.org](http://C2CTrail.org)

## Sawmill & Tribal Trail will provide a new OCT link

**Urban trail provides quality trail connection, enhances experience with history & nature**

North Bend/Coos Bay, OR – A grassroots effort that began in 2008 of local citizens including the Coos Tribe, the cities of both North Bend and Coos Bay and many others, has already resulted in the development of a new urban trail concept that retraces the historic routes used by early tribal peoples and pioneers. The trail, a new *Oregon Coast Trail* (OCT) link, will be marked with



numbered posts bearing the trail logo shown here, and a related brochure will describe the area's natural and cultural history.

"It was great to offer both inspiration and technical assistance in the project's early stages," said NCTA director, Al LePage, "but the project's overall success really rests with those local champions who've kept at it and worked with others to make it all happen."

The "official launch" is set for the morning of July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011 as a walk beginning at the Empire Waterfront and ending at North Bend's Ferry Road Park with a picnic event envisioned afterwards.

Visit [CoastTrails.org/SawmillTribalTrail.html](http://CoastTrails.org/SawmillTribalTrail.html) for info & details

# Trail Development

## Working for Recreation & Public Access

### Mapping Solutions for the Oregon Coast Trail

The *Oregon Coast Trail: Connection Strategy*, developed by the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department during 2009-10, was based upon the National Coast Trail Association's *Oregon Coast Trail: Missing Links, Priorities & Solutions* report completed in 2005. The *Missing Links* report described each link and its varied solutions for each one in great detail, but without maps. The *Connections Strategy* process prompted the NCTA to move forward in 2010-11 on their previously intended project of mapping highly detailed route solutions for each missing link in their original report on the highest resolution topographic maps as shown in the image to the right. These maps will serve to clarify routes on existing *Connection Strategy* maps, provide additional solutions, and be used by OPRD during trail feasibility planning.



### Lobbying Olympia to fund "Coast Trails"

The *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition*, a non-profit dedicated to supporting and leveraging public funding for parks, wildlife and working farms across Washington, is hosting their 2011 Lobby Day in Olympia on February 10<sup>th</sup>. NCTA director Al LePage will lobby legislators with projects pending funding in their districts associated with the multitude of trails directly related to the NCTA's vision of developing a *National Coast Trail* system. These trails include the *Washington Coast Trail*, *Lower Columbia River Water Trail*, *Olympic Discovery Trail*, *Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail*, and the newly envisioned "*Juan De Fuca Water Trail*" concept along The Strait, Port Angeles to Neah Bay. The *Recreation and Conservation Office*, the state agency that administers the grants program, competitively ranks the projects, which are funded out of the state capital construction budget, so do not compete with essential services funded out of the operations budget, for funding such as teachers or firefighters. Approval of the budget request of \$100 million, will not only fund the best projects, but also allow the Legislature and Governor to leverage more funds, since various projects provide matching funds as well.

### "C2C" Trails Partnership Strategic Planning

The *Corvallis-to-the-Sea (C2C) Trail Partnership* requested strategic planning assistance to determine how best to prepare and continue their work during the expected environmental assessment process with the US Forest Service so they would be ready to begin trail construction when the process was complete and any potential impacts appropriately addressed. NCTA director Al LePage facilitated the process in August 2010, and a short-term plan with goals, objectives and strategies successfully developed.

# Education

## Promoting Coastal Trails to Everyone

### Lobbying Oregon Delegation for "C2C" Trail

NCTA director Al LePage travels to the nation's capitol to introduce the vision of the Corvallis-to-the-Sea (C2C) Trail, the work of the *C2C Trail Partnership*, and the fact that the *US Forest Service (USFS)* has begun to move forward with the environmental assessment process. He will present documentation and meet with the appropriate legislative aides of every Senator and Representative in the Oregon delegation, plus a USFS official during February 2011.



### Oregon Coast Trail Awareness Presentations

*Oregon Coast Trail: A Journey Along the Edge of Infinity*, a program highlighting the economic value of the *Oregon Coast Trail* together with a slide show about NCTA director Al LePage's 30-day 400-mile backpacking trek down the entire trail, was presented in coastal communities from Astoria to Brookings early in 2010. The project enhanced awareness of trail – also an objective of OPRD's "*Connection Strategy*" process – and the trail's value not only through his introduction and by sharing his personal story in images while hiking it in 2008, but also through pre-event coverage in newspapers along the coast. Annual awards were also given during presentations, and Joanne & Norman Kittel and Walt Schroeder received the NCTA's highest award for their long-term volunteer commitment to the trail.

### WA Coast Trail Hiking Book Project Continues

*Washington Coast Trails, Walks, Day-Hikes and Backpacking Trips* is the NCTA's first-ever hiking book project. Al LePage, NCTA director, photographed and mapped the trail in 2009, has begun writing it, and plans to finish the first draft by the end of 2011. Expected publication date is 2012 with a book tour and slide show presentation of his 2009 hike, all as part of an advocacy strategy to complete the few missing links and make it all doable.

# Conservation

## Taking Action for Coastal Preservation

### Working to Preserve Seaview Dunes Habitat

Al LePage, NCTA director, during Lobby Day in Olympia on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 will lobby for the \$2,250,000 funding needed by Washington State Parks to be able to buy 30.4 acres, including nearly .2 mile of ocean waterfront, in the Seaview Dunes area on the Long Beach peninsula to retain the visual integrity and habitat of the dunes and beach to enhance the *Washington Coast Trail*.

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