

Washington DC & Olympia lobby efforts yield results

Oregon delegation learns about “C2C Trail,” WA legislature funds trail and park projects

Washington DC – National Coast Trail Association (NCTA) director, Al LePage, traveled to the nation's capitol in February 2011 to meet with staff of every one of Oregon's representatives and senators to share the vision and work of the *Corvallis-to-Sea Trail Partnership* to make the trail a reality.

“I had three messages,” says LePage, “great trail, great group of people working on it, and it's great the *US Forest Service* has made the commitment to move forward with the environmental assessment.”

LePage was not seeking funding, but only to add the entire Oregon delegation to the existing political support of local and county governments, agencies and groups associated with the trail vision.

“I walked the halls of Congress, shared the story of the trail, it's forward progress, and documented everything,” says LePage. When finished the smile I saw from each staff member plus their positive response to the existing political support made it clear that they too could be counted on for future assistance.”

The “C2C Trail” is envisioned as a hiking, equestrian and mountain biking trail from Corvallis, OR to the Pacific. Since 2003 volunteers have contributed more than 18,000 hours towards its development.

Visit C2CTrail.org to learn more about this great trail vision!

Olympia, WA – The *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition* (WWRC) successfully secured \$42 million in the 2011-13 capital budget to fund over 60 projects to preserve wildlife habitat, create parks, develop trails and carry out other important goals. The *NCTA* joined the overall effort during the coalition's “Recreation and Lobby Day” in February 2011 when *NCTA* director Al LePage met with legislators or their staff seeking funding for seven projects related to their own existing or potential trail projects, four of which were eventually funded as follows:

- *Clallam County Parks*: \$50,000 matching grant to buy 7.45 acres of water-front property in Clallam Bay, WA. Given the county already owns adjacent parcel this will create a future 8.64-acre park to provide year-round access to Clallam Bay, on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. This park could also serve kayakers seeking access along a possible “Juan De Fuca Water Trail” envisioned by the *NCTA*.
- *The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe*: \$52,000 matching grant to extend a historic bridge and trestle 100 feet so that it fully spans the Dungeness River's migration area. Bridge is in the 28-acre Railroad Bridge Park and is a centerpiece of the Olympic Discovery Trail, a trail the *NCTA* supports and has provided input for its development.
- *WA State Parks*: \$1.6 million grant to construct a 0.5-mile trail that will link North Head Lighthouse with the Lewis and Clark Discovery Trail and the *NCTA*'s vision of a “Washington Coast Trail.”
- *WA State Parks*: \$2.25 million grant to buy parcels that are “vested” for residential development, thereby protecting the Seaview Dunes, and providing an undeveloped viewshed along both the Discovery Trail and *NCTA*'s envisioned “Washington Coast Trail.”

Visit WildlifeRecreation.org to learn more about projects in WA

Floras Lake State Park Saved from Development

Opposition & new OR State Park policy stop a proposed land give-away for new golf courses



Gold Beach, OR – The *Curry County Commission*, in their efforts to solve the county's budget crisis, and apparently working with parties interested in creating two golf courses and other developments, publicized a proposal to negotiate with the *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department* (OPRD) to give the county a significant part of the existing *Floras Lake State Natural Area* to implement their plans. In the face of overwhelming local opposition, the county commission continued to move forward, intending to offer a formal proposal to the *Oregon State Parks Commission* on three separate occasions, but failing to do so. The *NCTA* monitored the situation, encouraged local residents to speak out for its continued preservation, and planned to comment relative to such a proposal if offered at future Commission meetings. In the end, given the newly approved criteria and policy for potential land negotiations relative to Oregon State Parks, and the improbable outcome for approval expressed by *OPRD* director Tim Wood in a letter to the *Curry County Commission*, the county decided to stop pursuing their proposal. Photo credit: *OPRD*

OR Field Guide to feature Saddle Mt. to Seaside Trail

Coast range to sea mountain bike trail concept to appear on new 2012 season show segment

Seaside, OR – The last section of a northern route proposed for an envisioned trail from Portland to the coast includes a Saddle Mountain to Seaside trail segment, and *OPB TV's Oregon Field Guide* will feature it as part of the larger vision during their new 2012 Fall season. Jim Thayer, promoter of the overall vision, and Al LePage, *NCTA* director, were interviewed and appear mountain biking along this final segment. The *NCTA* supports the “Saddle Mountain to Seaside Trail” as a mountain biking route and shared this trail concept and the wider vision of a “Portland-to-Coast Trail” at the October 2011 meeting of the *Oregon Recreational Trails Advisory Council*.

Visit ForestHiker.com for info about this trail & overall vision

Trail Development

Working for Recreation & Public Access

Oregon Coast Trail Strategy Moves Forward

The *Oregon Coast Trail: Connection Strategy*, developed by *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD)* and based upon the *NCTA's* original Oregon Coast Trail planning document, moves the process forward to complete various trail gaps. First, the *NCTA* field researched during Summer 2011 two potentially tide-dependent gaps, one involving a large distance, the other potentially requiring a challenging solution. The result was that passage along the beach for both sections could in fact usually be accessed by a hiker traveling south by timing their travel with the daily low tide. Although high tide route alternatives would provide additional access options, the *NCTA* views these two linkages complete for now relative to long-distance hikers making these connections, and thereby removing 4 miles of trail from any needed development. *OPRD* also continued their forward progress through funding from the *OPRD* Trail Fund, and grants from the federal *Recreational Trails Program (RTP)* and *Scenic Byways Program* towards completing specific gaps as follows:

- Depoe Bay Gaps: 3 miles of new trail: \$101,600
- Cape Foulweather Gap: 3.4 miles of new trail: \$434,288

Finally, other important developments in 2011 included funding the rehabilitation at Cape Lookout State Park of the Cape Trail, the replacement of the deteriorating Amanda Bridge south of Yachats with a new 62-foot pre-fabricated fiberglass span, and *OPRD* signage approved for placement, materials and supplies provided and installation begun along the length of the Oregon Coast Trail. (Oregon Coast Trail signage pictured above courtesy of *OPRD*.)



OREGON COAST TRAIL

Education

Promoting Coastal Trails to Everyone

New Oregon Coast Trail Website Planned

The need for detailed information required by long-distance hikers and backpackers to prepare, plan and logistically accomplish the Oregon Coast Trail has become increasingly clear and the *NCTA* will create a new website dedicated to providing that information. The initial and primary objectives will be to provide information at a level of detail that addresses (1) how to connect existing Oregon Coast Trail sections where there are gaps, (2) where to stay overnight, find food, water and restrooms and (3) parking and transportation options. OregonCoastTrail.info is expected to launch in June 2012, will continue to be a work-in-progress, and is intended to provide information and maps freely as a membership benefit and at reasonable and low cost to the general public.

WA Coast Trail Hiking Book Project Continues

Washington Coast Trails, Walks, Day-Hikes & Backpacking Trips is the *NCTA's* first-ever hiking book project. Al LePage, *NCTA* director, photographed and mapped the trail in 2009, has already begun writing and plans to finish it during Winter 2013 with an expected publication date in Spring 2013. A book tour and slide show presentation of his 2009 hike will be part of an advocacy strategy towards completing the few missing links and everything else needed logistically to be able to someday do it in its entirety.



Backpacker enjoys sun and low clouds along the WA Coast Trail

Conservation

Taking Action for Coastal Preservation

Seaview Dunes Habitat Finally Preserved

Al LePage, *NCTA* director, lobbied in Olympia, WA in February 2011 for the \$2,250,000 funding needed by *Washington State Parks* to be able to buy 30.4 acres, including nearly 0.2 miles 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, and to enhance the *Washington Coast Trail*. As a highly ranked grant project by the *Washington Recreation & Conservation Office*, this project was within the \$42 million budget approved by the Washington State Legislature in 2011 and funded.

“Portland to Coast Trail” Field Assessments

The idea to develop “Pacific Greenways” as recreational trail corridors from the Portland metro area to the coast was first proposed in the late 1980's. *Portland Forest Hikes* author Jim Thayer did extensive on-the-ground research from 2006-2011 to survey two specific routes and envisions them as hiking, biking and equestrian trails. The routes would first extend the current trail system from Portland's Forest Park well north of the Tualitan Valley in what Thayer refers to as the “Lower Columbia Corridor” and then splits in the “Nehalem Valley Corridor.” The 135-mile northern route through the “Saddle Mountain Corridor” ends at Seaside and the 120-mile southern route through the “Salmonberry Corridor” would end at Nehalem Bay. *NCTA* director Al LePage joined Thayer in the field during Summer and Fall 2011 to assess the potential of these routes for recreation, development and the organization's future involvement in such a major trail project.

Visit ForestHiker.com for more details and conceptual maps

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