

Coast Trails!

Newsletter of the National Coast Trail Association / PO Box 2491, Eugene, OR 97402 / Projects 2017/2018

Coast Trail bill becomes law, and process begins forward

Requires Oregon State Parks to create a plan, collaboration is key in developing missing gaps

Salem, OR -- House Bill 3149, the final version requiring the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD) to develop a plan to complete the Oregon Coast Trail, and submit annual progress reports to the legislature, passed both the House and Senate during July 2017, being signed into law by the Governor a month later. Originating through the initiative and advocacy of Salem resident Dan Hilburn and Oregon Coast Trail author Connie Soper, being introduced by Representatives Smith DB, Gomberg, and Buehler as chief sponsors, and finally moved out of committee for a vote, the Oregon Coast Trail bill became law effective during October 2017.

The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC), a statewide organization representing Oregon counties through sharing information and developing consensus, decided after the bill became law to become involved in the next step, facilitating the process, through their County Solutions program. Oregon Solutions, an entity facilitating collaborative governance, also decided to become involved, and partnered with AOC to develop and facilitate a collaborative process to move the Oregon Coast Trail plan project forward.

Oregon Solutions focus is facilitating a "statewide" group for the entire trail and AOC's County Solutions program is focusing more on local level groups to address each specific gap along the coast. Phase one objectives are to organize and facilitate collaborative groups, assist through outreach to key stakeholders, and determine how to leverage and coordinate existing resources from OPRD and others to enhance overall project effectiveness. The expected timeline for completion of phase one is late Spring 2018, the next steps being to convene the groups, develop solutions and strategies for each gap, and involve partners to complete, manage, and maintain the trail. AOC received \$52,000 in grants to fund phase one, which were provided by the Oregon Coast Visitors Association (\$30K), Travel Oregon (\$20K), and the Wild Rivers Coast Alliance (\$2K). Oregon Solutions is dedicating part of their existing budget to fund their current efforts.

National Coast Trail Association (NCTA) executive director Al LePage met with Greg Wolf, director of AOC's County Solutions program, which included via conference call, Peter Dalke, a project manager for Oregon Solutions, in September 2017. LePage provided input as to how AOC could be a significant partner in moving the process forward, and offered three different approaches for trail future development such that the completion of gaps and the trail could potentially be achieved in a more time-efficient and cost-effective way. In December 2017, LePage also met with David Stipe, the OPRD planning manager in charge of the project, and OPRD trail planner Robin Wilcox, to provide more information and input. Achieving a vision of the Oregon Coast Trail that would create a "quality recreational trail experience" for its users, and that used more innovative approaches to get the job done "faster, better, and cheaper" were core messages. He also expressed the need to immediately address any current potential threats and potential future issues to existing opportunities for connections that could be lost, and move ahead to complete a relatively easy and significant gap along the south coast within existing highway public right-of-way. In January 2018, LePage expressed the NCTA's interest in being included both on the coast-wide comprehensive group and any other county or regional groups formed to develop each remaining trail gap.

Special day with beloved feline shows value of OR Coast Trail

Importance of access and continuous trail seen in beach experience of Olivia and her companion



Carl Washburne State Park, OR – Feline “Olivia” and human companion, Al LePage, National Coast Trail Association executive director, visited the Pacific Ocean together for the very first time – for what LePage describes as “a glorious day” – on the last Saturday in December 2017. The weather was in the 50's and sunny without much wind, just about as nice as it gets on the coast even in the summertime. Olivia traveled the Hobbit Trail in her carrier down to the sand, explored a hillside hollow on her own initiative, had her paw dipped in seawater at the edge of the Pacific Ocean, walked down the beach, successfully leaped over a creek (at the encouragement of her human companion), and finally enjoyed the sun and the view of beach, ocean and Heceta Head to the south from inside her carrier, door open, perched on the hillside under a tree safely above the beach. “Livy,” as LePage usually calls her, was much more active than she had been recently, and knew she was quite happy so he was very happy, too. The rays of the sun began to drop lower and in her carrier went back up the trail to drive home to Eugene.

“Olivia, you see,” begins LePage, “was diagnosed with terminal cancer just a few days before this special trip to the coast, so it seemed appropriate, both for Olivia and myself as it might be our last chance to do so given she might only have days to live. It was one of the most important days of my entire life, and I think it was for her, too.”

“The point of this story is simply this, that the easy public access found along the entire Oregon coast and the existence of the Oregon Coast Trail made this special day possible. And that realizing the vision of a continuous Oregon Coast Trail and protecting and enhancing public access is an important way to 'keep the coast for everyone,' people and animals alike. And further, of allowing everyone to create their own adventure, their own special day, and potentially one of the most memorable and significant days of their lives.”

Less than a week later, very sadly, Olivia's condition worsened, and in the early morning hours of Saturday, Jan. 6th, to prevent what would become very painful suffering, the tranquilizer before the injection itself, stopped her beautiful beating heart. LePage's grief . . . profound.

Trail Development

Working for Recreation & Public Access

Big Elk Event Formalizes “C2C” Trail Opening



Al LePage (NCTA), Bart Starker (Starker Forests), Jerry Ingersoll (USFS), Gary Chapman (C2C Trail) enjoy event's symbolic first campfire “flames.”

The *Corvallis-to-Sea (C2C) Trail Partnership* officially opened the eastern 30-mile section of the *Corvallis-to-Sea Trail* to hiking and biking at a special event on September 8, 2017 at the Big Elk Campground just west of Harlan, OR. About 35 people representing Oregon Congressional Representative Kurt Schrader, *Starker Forests*, *Siuslaw National Forest*, *Van Eck Forest Trust*, *Benton and Lincoln Counties*, *City of Corvallis*, the Harlan community, and friends and volunteers of the C2C Trail gathered for a first-campfire and remarks. The theme of speakers at the event was of the great good that can be accomplished by cooperation among communities, government agencies, private interests, and volunteers, as was also the tone read in congratulatory letters from Sen. Ron Wyden and Rep. Kurt Schrader. Due to numerous wildfires and fire danger at the time, the symbolic “first campfire” was left unlighted. (Info & image/C2C Trail Partnership.)

Oregon Coast Trail Planning Moves Forward



OREGON COAST TRAIL

The law to develop the Oregon Coast Trail plan became effective during Fall 2017, and the *Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)* has formed an initial core project management team that includes the *Oregon Department of Transportation* and the *Oregon Coast Visitors Association*, which involves monthly meetings and contacting potential stakeholders to move the process forward. *OPRD*, besides beginning field research, has also been developing criteria to more precisely define what a trail

gaps is, and what trail segments already exist. The next steps for the agency should involve considering all alternative solutions to complete each gap and also determine priorities. Meetings with both district and park managers along the entire coast had taken place by early January 2018. The ongoing process, as required by law, is for *OPRD* to deliver annual progress reports to the legislature, the final outcome being an action plan to complete the Oregon Coast Trail.

NCTA Works to Complete Specific OCT Gaps

The *National Coast Trail Association (NCTA)* field researched, crafted reports, initiated in-person meetings to share information and provide input during 2017 towards completing specific gaps of the Oregon Coast Trail (OCT). The gaps are Lincoln City north, Cascade Head, Yaquina Head in Newport, and the on the south coast from Pistol River to Boardman State Parks. These projects will continue in 2018.

Education

Promoting Coastal Trails to Everyone

Lobbying for Oregon Coast Trail, Related Bills

National Coast Trail Association executive director Al LePage, presented testimony during the 2017 regular session of the *Oregon Legislative Assembly* in support of *House Bill 3149* and *Senate Bill 745*, both relevant to the Oregon Coast Trail.

House Bill 3149, in its final form requires the *Oregon Parks and Recreation Department* in cooperation with others to develop an action plan to complete the Oregon Coast Trail and to submit an annual report to the legislature on the progress made toward developing and implementing the plan. LePage presented oral and written testimony in support of the original HB 3149 on March 21 before the *House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources*. Although there was no revenue impact, there was a fiscal impact to the agency, as originally issued by the *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD)*, and therefore the Speaker subsequently referred it to the *Joint Committee On Ways and Means*. An amendment offered in June apparently substitutes annual progress reports to the legislature for the plan deadlines and this resulted in *OPRD* changing their fiscal impact to zero. It eventually moved out of committee and got to the floor for a vote, passing the House on July 5, and the Senate on the very last day of the session, July 7. Signed into law on August 8, it took effect on October 6, 2017. LePage's initial NCTA testimony at link below. NOTE: *S.B. 745 remained in committee, so got no vote.* <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/109072>

Conservation

Taking Action for Coastal Preservation



Image Credit: Peter Montgomery / The Nature Conservancy

Nature Conservancy Preserves Pt. Conception

A \$165 million donation by Jack and Laura Dangermond, enabled *The Nature Conservancy (TNC)* to purchase and permanently protect in December 2017 the over 24,000-acre Cojo/Jalama Ranch at Point Conception, the exact point on the coast where California bends inward. The land is in tremendous ecological condition, featuring a confluence of ecological, historical, and cultural values. Collaborating with key partners and stakeholders, *TNC* will embark on an 18-month planning process to understand all that is contained there, how to bring into balance and protect its resources, and develop a comprehensive plan that will shape the long-term use and management of the new preserve. The *National Coast Trail Association* views the acquisition as a potential opportunity for future public access and recreation relative to the California Coastal Trail, and encourages a collaborative process towards realizing these values. (Source: *The Nature Conservancy*)

**CANDIDATE STATEMENTS FOR
2018 BOARD MEMBER ELECTION**

Candidate **Benjamin Ward**, Portland, OR – Incumbent

I have been a long time supporter of the National Coast Trail Association (NCTA), and Oregon, my home for the last 35 years, has a gem in its beach access law (golden anniversary was in 2017), quite different than in New England where I grew up. So, what originally attracted me to the organization was its focus on enhancing everyone's access and use of our great coast with its work on the Oregon Coast Trail. Through NCTA's work and the efforts of like-minded people, organizations, agencies and coastal communities, coastal access and preservation is now better than in the past. Of course, NCTA's efforts have not been limited to the Oregon coast, also working on important trail issues in Washington state and elsewhere. Likewise, I feel I shouldn't limit my NCTA support to yearly financial contributions. While I am not new to participation on boards (congregation, alternative school program), this would be my fourth year with this non-profit. Any board benefits from multiple skill sets -- and my strongest is as a lifelong engineer -- is a tendency to focus on problem solving and attention to details. If elected again, I will continue to carry out my responsibilities, attend to the organizations current needs, and work on any structural changes required for its future health.

Candidate **Kristen Leibelt**, Portland, OR – Incumbent

I'm a long-time member of the National Coast Trail Association, a board member for the last three years, and have followed the organization's progress over the years with great interest.

I strongly support the primary tenets of the organization: to promote trail development, to provide education aligned with coast trails and to support conservation of those environs. I believe in the organization's actions for equal public access to beach and coastal areas as critical components to the success of their efforts to "Keep the coast for everyone."

I would like to further express my support in the upcoming year by serving again as a board member of the National Coast Trail Association.

Candidate **Matthew Pellico**, Vancouver, WA – Incumbent

My involvement with National Coast Trail Association centers in my personal history.

My first trail of memory was the beaten down path across our five acre field that we used as a shortcut to the local grade school. Later as a Boy Scout, a trail was a means to explore the area around a campsite. Later still, a trail was a challenging five day route across Isle Royale National Park. On the way we learned to work together, to share the excitement, and to look out for each other. And I benefited along the way gaining a personal connection with nature.

Now I think of trails as a natural and spiritual means for egress. Before all modern transportation, humans got from place to place on their feet under their own power. We possess a natural connection to our ancient past that is satisfied when we get out on trails today. We have a hardwired need for this connection, and preserving trails is a great way to protect this need.

A coastal shoreline is unique because tidal action deters most near shore development, and that leaves a natural easement much as it would have existed thousands of years ago. Our legacy should not only be to document and preserve, but also build and maintain our coastal trails for future generations. All this reflects why I want to serve as a board member of the National Coast Trail Association.

BYLAW AMENDMENT FOR NCTA 2018 BALLOT

The original bylaws for our organization since 1995 have included a membership structure with voting rights. However, giving the decision making process solely to the board of directors would allow the organization to attain the level of efficiency and effectiveness currently being sought by the board of directors and executive director. Therefore, in accordance with our existing bylaws, the NCTA board presents this amendment proposal to the membership as follows:

“Article V. No Members

This corporation shall have no members as that term is defined by Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 65 (ORS Chapter 65), but shall have members for other purposes. These members shall have none of the rights or duties described in ORS Chapter 65 (or any corresponding future statute).”

**NATIONAL COAST TRAIL ASSOCIATION
2018 OFFICIAL BALLOT**

CANDIDATES

Please **vote for three** Board Members
by marking an “x” in the adjacent boxes

Benjamin Ward

Kristen Leibelt

Matthew Pellico

BYLAW AMENDMENT

Please **vote either yes or no** regarding the bylaw amendment
by marking an “x” in the adjacent box

YES / NO

VOTE ONLINE through Jan. 19th at this direct link
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/99VFQ7W>

OR . . . Print and Mail this ballot
which must be received by January 19th to the . . .

National Coast Trail Association
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THANK YOU FOR VOTING!

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
22nd ANNUAL MEETING
National Coast Trail Association
General Membership Meeting, 10:00-10:30 AM
First Quarterly Winter Board Meeting, 10:30-12:30 PM
Saturday, January 20th 2018
4014 SE Ash St
Portland, OR 97214
