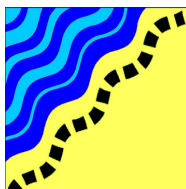


## “Oregon Coast Trail 2021” planning to complete trail

**Project will propose final trail connections, logistics strategy, areas for preservation**

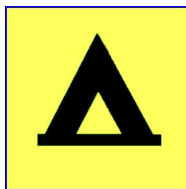
Portland, OR – Researching and producing *Oregon Coast Trail 2021: Final Connections, Logistics Strategy*, a planning document detailing recommendations to complete the Oregon Coast Trail, is the primary project of the *National Coast Trail Association (NCTA)* during 2013. The association's director, Al LePage, will craft the plan to provide the *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD)* with information by November 1<sup>st</sup> to assist the agency in meeting their proposed 2021 completion date for the trail. The project will be funded in part through a \$5,000 *Meyer Memorial Trust* challenge grant.

“Trails don't happen overnight,” begins LePage, “and the push is on by the *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department* to get a basic route in place by 2021. Since developing each trail segment includes field research for trail layout, getting funding, design planning and construction, we knew we needed to move quickly to provide the agency with the information needed to meet their target date.”



The “final” connection for each trail gap will most likely often include two specific routes, an “immediate” one that has the potential to realistically be completed by 2021, the other being the organization's longer-term “preferred” route to complete a gap. The complexity of determining and successfully implementing a specific “final” route involves many factors beyond scenic and recreational values. Constraints beyond available funding, challenges regarding land jurisdiction/ownership, protecting habitat, wildlife, archeological and other cultural resources, and performing environmental assessments, plus criteria such as safety and sustainability can add significant time to the trail development process.

“Last but not least, it's one thing to complete a trail and make it hikeable,” adds LePage, “but it's another thing to have what it takes to make it doable. That's why the “logistics strategy” part of the plan is so important, too, because without designating and providing official areas to camp, for example, a backpacker won't have what's needed to actually make an overnight hiking trip possible.”



The work to develop the Oregon Coast Trail officially began in 1971 after twelve years of advocacy by UO geography professor Sam Dicken who envisioned the idea in 1959. In 2005 the *National Coast Trail Association* completed an assessment of trail gaps often proposing multiple solutions to complete each one, and in 2011 *OPRD* finalized the agency's own “*Connections Strategy*” based upon the *NCTA's* original report. The “*Oregon Coast Trail 2012*” plan described here will also address preserving special places to protect and enhance the overall trail experience.

## Olympic Discovery Trail vision nears halfway mark

**Peninsula Trails Coalition turns twenty-five, successfully continues efforts to develop trail**

Port Angeles, WA – The *Peninsula Trails Coalition (PTC)* continued to overcome major challenges during 2012 towards realizing their vision to develop an Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT). What originally began as a simple idea to use as much of the area's abandoned Milwaukee Railroad corridor for recreation has grown over the years into a broadly accepted regional objective with the trail now nearing 50% completion as the coalition officially turns twenty-five in 2013.

The vision is a trail of approximately 130 miles of lowlands, bordered on the south by the Olympic Mountain Range and on the north by the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

It starts in the Victorian-era seaport of Port Townsend (image to right) connecting west through Sequim and Port Angeles and would eventually end at the Pacific Ocean.



Existing trail sections wind through fields and farms, parks and towns; over creeks, rivers and ravines on restored railroad trestles; and past beaches and national recreation areas. The current pathway is designed to accommodate bicyclists, hikers, and disabled users, including a 4-foot shoulder for equestrians where appropriate. (Photo credit: Peninsula Trails Coalition)

“We definitely consider the Olympic Discovery Trail part of our vision to develop a National Coast Trail,” begins *NCTA* director Al LePage. “We've been quietly working behind the scenes for years, as we often do on various projects, to support it's development. In the past we've provided planning input to *Olympic National Park* to develop the trail within its boundaries, and also have lobbied in Olympia, WA to fund specific trail segment projects in other areas. Most recently in 2012 we directly assisted the coalition in their public relations outreach efforts to quickly raise significant funding to successfully meet an immediate major threat to the integrity of the ODT trail vision itself.”

Visit [OlympicDiscoveryTrail.com](http://OlympicDiscoveryTrail.com) for info on trail & coalition

## Tsunami Debris on Coast

**Boats, docks, other items arrive on west coast, “maintain the trail” by keeping beaches clean**

Silver Springs, MD – The devastating 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan and some of the debris that were washed into the ocean, such as boats and docks, continue to reach U.S. shores. The *National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)* is leading efforts to collect data, assess the debris, and reduce possible impacts to natural resources and coastal communities. Since radiation experts believe it is highly unlikely any debris is radioactive, people should continue to visit and enjoy beaches. And since coastal trails include beaches, cleaning them up is actually doing trail maintenance.

Visit [MarineDebris.NOAA.gov](http://MarineDebris.NOAA.gov) to learn more and how to help

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# Trail Development

## Working for Recreation & Public Access

### OR Coast Trail Building & Restoration Projects

The development of new connections and maintenance of existing sections of the Oregon Coast Trail continues to move forward through the *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD)*. The following development projects are already funded.



## OREGON COAST TRAIL

#### **Cape Foulweather Connection**

Constructing about **2.5 miles** of natural surface trail from *Rocky Creek State Natural Area* to *Devil's Punchbowl*, going to design Summer 2013 with intent to construct 2014.

#### **Fogarty Creek & Whales Cove Connections**

Completing design phase to construct about **2.5 miles** of off-highway pedestrian trail in Summer 2013 to link *Fogarty Creek State Park* to *Boiler Bay State Scenic Viewpoint*, and also from *Depoe Bay* to *Rocky Creek State Natural Area*.

The following maintenance projects have grant requests pending with a decision by July 2013. Focusing on heavy restoration work, these specific sections often require constructing retaining walls, substantial tread restoration, hardening the trail surface, re-routing trail in certain areas, and constructing two pedestrian bridges.

<i>Cape Falcon</i> . . . . . 2.4 miles	<i>Heceta Head</i> . . . . . 0.5 miles
<i>Neahkahnie Mt.</i> . . . . . 3.2 miles	<i>Bullards Beach</i> . . . . . 600 ft*
<i>Cape Lookout</i> . . . . . 1.2 miles	* boardwalk year-round access
<i>Yachats 804 Trail</i> . . . 1.7 miles	<i>Cape Sebastian</i> . . . . . 6.3 miles

(Info: OPRD Park Trails Specialist, Rocky Houston, graphic courtesy OPRD.)



## Meyer Memorial Trust

### **\$5,000 Challenge Grant Successfully Matched**

The *National Coast Trail Association* was informed in October 2012 that the *Meyer Memorial Trust* had decided to offer the organization a \$5,000 challenge grant in response to their grassroots grant application submitted in July 2012 to research and produce a planning document to complete the Oregon Coast Trail. The generosity of some existing donors through a special appeal campaign strategy successfully met the challenge in January 2013, receiving the \$5,000 grant amount the same month. The total \$10,000 already acquired represents 78% of total funding needed to carry out the *Oregon Coast Trail 2021: Final Connections, Logistics Strategy* project. The remaining 22% of the funds needed to meet the project's overall proposed budget of \$12,800 will be met through the *NCTA's* annual membership campaign in 2013.

### **OR Coast Trail Water Connections Developed**

In developing information for the [OregonCoastTrail.info](http://OregonCoastTrail.info) website, the *NCTA* successfully worked with *Garibaldi Marina* and *Winchester Bay Charters* to finally arrange paid ferry service for hikers making connections across Tillamook Bay and the Umpqua River, objectives considered in *OPRD's "Connections Strategy."*

# Education

## Promoting Coastal Trails to Everyone

### New Oregon Coast Trail Website Launched

The *National Coast Trail Association* created and launched a new website in June 2012 dedicated to providing basic information needed by long-distance hikers and backpackers to prepare, plan and logistically accomplish the Oregon Coast Trail. The site currently focuses on how to connect existing trails where there are gaps and also offers a suggested 30-day itinerary with camping areas that either exist or proposed to the *Oregon Parks & Recreation Department (OPRD)* in 2013 for official designation in the future. The website is intended as an ever-expanding work-in-progress, the next objectives being to provide information on where to find water, restrooms and food, plus parking and transportation options. The plan is to provide basic information and maps without cost, and more detailed information and maps as a benefit of membership or at reasonable cost to the general public.

Visit [OregonCoastTrail.info](http://OregonCoastTrail.info) for more details and basic maps

### **OR Coast Trail: Official Pocket Guide Planned**

The *NCTA* plans to develop the first-ever pocket guide series to detail the "hikable" route of the envisioned 400-mile Oregon Coast Trail, beginning the project in January 2014. It will provide information essentially in the form of high resolution color maps with symbols on where to find needed resources and how to connect between gaps and inland. The plan is to create a "minimalist's guide" literally meant to fit in your pocket and focused on assisting those making day hikes or backpacking overnight for longer treks or whole-hike trips. The maps will use US Geological Survey "orthoimagery" – satellite images digitally corrected to have topographic map-scale accuracy -- with route and other basic data added by an actual thru-hiker. It's also meant to be a 21st-century guidebook designed to be integrated with hand held mobile applications, include GPS coordinates and GPX routes, and have QR codes inserted to access and download even more information through the *National Coast Trail Association's* official [OregonCoastTrail.info](http://OregonCoastTrail.info) website! The first guide in the series would be developed for the "North" coast section during Winter/Spring 2014, available Summer 2014, with "Central" and "South" coast section editions to follow in 2015.



# Conservation

## Taking Action for Coastal Preservation

### **"OR Coast Trail 2021" Plan to Propose Areas**

To develop a quality recreational trail experience – and carry out the *NCTA's* mission of "Keeping the Coast for Everyone" both for people and wildlife – a section of the *Oregon Coast Trail 2021: Final Connections, Logistic Strategy* planning document will also include proposals for specific areas within the Oregon Coast Trail corridor for scenic preservation and habitat conservation as related to hiker-associated values.