



## **Chinook Trail Annual Meeting**

*Theme: Connecting Urban and Wild With A Trail System*

**Sunday, Nov. 6, 2005, Noon  
Vancouver Water Resource Center**

Rex Derr, Director of Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, will be the featured speaker at our annual meeting this year. Mr. Derr will speak to the conference theme as well as presenting other information about the State Parks System. A number of items are happening in Southwest Washington of interest to all of us. He will speak to these as well. In addition to this presentation, awards will be given to deserving individuals, including the distinguished Founders Award. Local dignitaries have been invited. There will be displays of important functions that were held this year and, as always, there will be the opportunity to exchange stories of our summer exploits. Advance reservations please. A special mailing will be sent to you for your reservation.

## ***Developing the Clark County Trail and Bikeway System Plan, 2005***

A Community Advisory Committee has been meeting to develop a county-wide Trail and Bikeway System Trail Plan. Four community meetings were held throughout the county on this topic. The overwhelming support for the development of the Chelatchie Prairie corridor was impressive. It was the number one concern of the citizens participating in these workshops. The Advisory Committee continues to meet to refine the overall county plan. Citizen input is still possible. For additional information call Kelly Puntney of Parks or Tim Schauer, consultant working on the plan, at 360-619-1127.



## **Trails Symposium Blazing New Trails 2005**

**Friday, November 4, 2005, from 5:30 to 10:00 pm at the Hilton Hotel in Vancouver**

An important and exciting trails symposium will be held on the above date, time and place. The evening will start with dinner and continue with speakers and opportunities to join with local business and com-

munity leaders, planners and engineers, trail and bike advocates, history enthusiasts and interested citizens in developing the Clark County Trail and Bikeway

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# President's Message

By Larry Swatosh

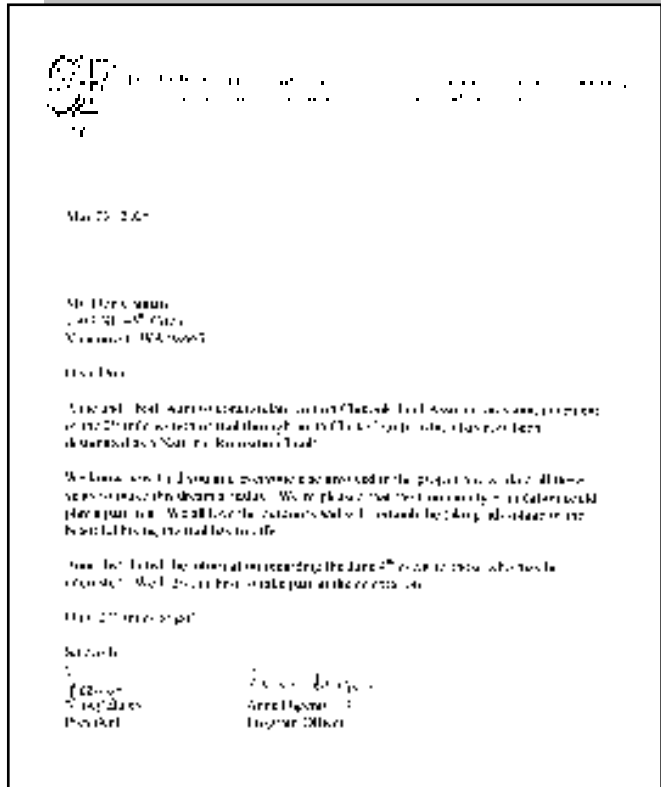


Larry Swatosh  
CTA President

The summer really started off with a bang for CTA with the "formal" awarding of the National Recreation Trail designation for the Bell's Mountain to Bluff Mountain section of the Chinook Trail. The presentation ceremony was well planned and well attended. Our featured speaker was Dan Ogden who spearheaded the efforts in the 1960's with the Johnson Administration that led to the establishment of the National Trail designation system.

We owe a large debt of gratitude for a lot of organizational work on this event to Marcine Miles and Don Cannard. Others to be thanked for their support are the Bank of Clark County for their generous financial contribution and The Columbian Newspaper for their donation of advertising for the event as well as the surprise editorial endorsement of CTA's work in general. More thanks also go out for community support from Safeway Foods, Boyd's Coffee, Luepke Florist and Aurora Gallery.

The second good summer kick-off event was National Trails Day. We put more emphasis this year on the "fun" part of NTD than we have in the past with a fairly "low impact" work party and much more time going into the re-dedication of Little Beacon Rock and Hadley Trails. As an interesting sidelight, we put on a demonstration of the **Boulder Buster** device we have been using for the past few years on trail construction. Joining us for the re-dedication ceremony was



Washington State Parks Director Rex Derr and his wife, and Skamania County Commissioner Al McKee.

On the down side, low response to our scheduled summer work parties has led to cancellation of a number of our planned projects. Roger Anderson has been our work party "go-to guy" for over four years, and he is quite understandably burnt out. If any of you out there would like to work on this committee, please contact me at 694-1313, or any member of the board. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

See you all at the Annual Meeting on Nov. 6th.

## Blazing New Trails 2005

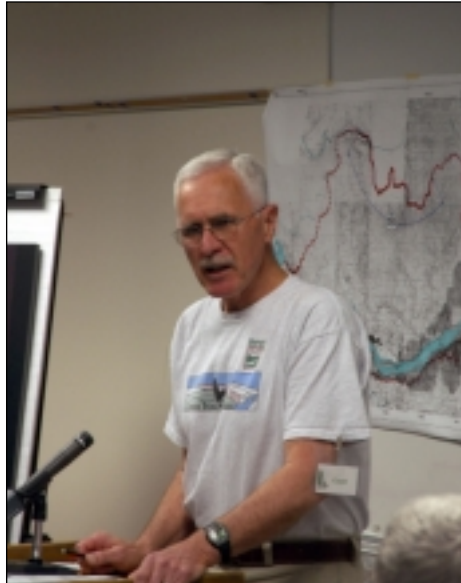
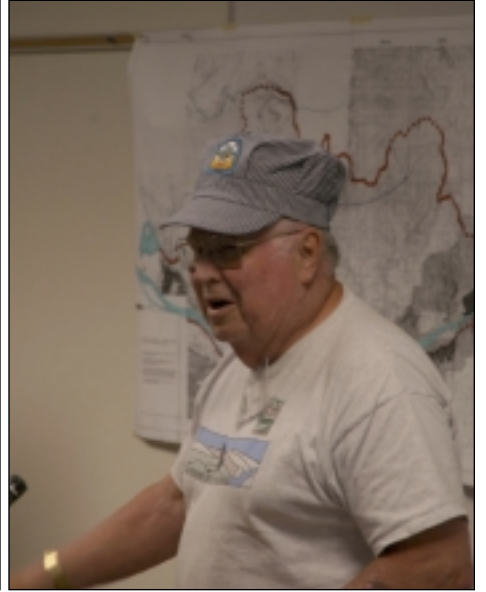
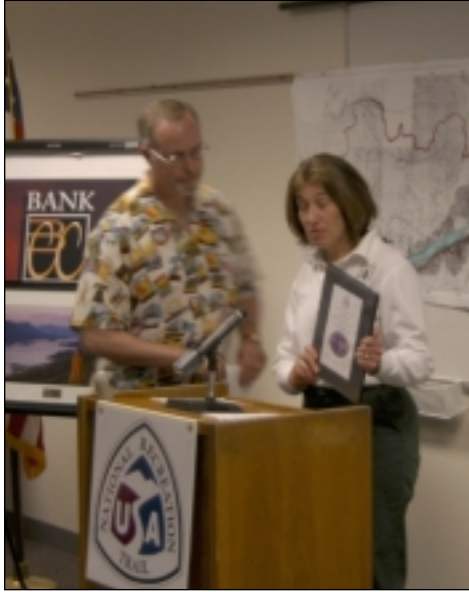
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program. Not only will we be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Corps of Discovery nation-building journey but there will also be the opportunity to shape our future way of life in Clark County, providing a rich legacy for generations to come. We will have the opportunity to review the draft of the Clark County Trail and Bikeway System Plan.

This will be the blueprint for a truly connected and economically viable system that encourages good community design including environmentally rich non-motorized travel and healthful activities. **Blazing New Trails 2005** will feature historical perspectives, recognition of past leadership, a short presentation, and roundtable discussions and

future views of Clark County. Please make plans to attend this great event. To reserve a place and order your tickets for **Blazing New Trails 2005** please call Kelly Puntenev at 360-619-1127. Ticket prices are \$39 per person before Oct. 29th and \$45 after Oct. 29th.

# National Recreation Trail Award Ceremony



# Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs Report

The FWOC held its annual meeting at Menucha on August 26, 27 and 28. Chinook Trail Association and the Friends of the Gorge were co-sponsors of the event. Roger Anderson represented CTA on the planning committee. The Federation of Outdoor Clubs represents over fifty outdoor clubs on the west coast. Two resolutions for the Chinook Trail Association were recommended and approved by the assembly. Resolution number one dealt with recommending the Chelatchie Prairie Railway corridor as a trail and bikeway system in Clark County. The other endorsed the extension of the Chinook Trail from its current junction with the Bluff Mountain Trail to the Pacific Crest Trail. We were pleased to hear of these endorsements.

## Mission Statement

### The Chinook Trail Association (CTA):

- **Advocates development of a Columbia River bi-state loop trail;**
- **Cooperates with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to develop this recreational resource;**
- **Monitors and participates in route selection, design standards, trail development and maintenance in an ongoing spirit of conservation to preserve the natural beauty of the Gorge;**
- **Provides information and education to develop public support.**

## ***The Current Status of the Chelatchie Prairie Rail Road Corridor as a Recreational Trail***

*By Don Cannard*

Clark County acquired the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad in two pieces. The longest piece was purchased in 1986-87. The shorter piece connecting Lakeshore Drive to 78th Street was purchased in 1997. A county can own but not operate a railroad. The Lewis and Clark Railway Company operated it until 2004. Columbia Basin Railroad and the Battle Ground, Yacolt and Chelatchie Prairie Railroad Association now operates it under a joint agreement yet to be worked out.

In April 1986 Clark County set up a study committee to determine the role of the county in preserving the nearly 30-mile-long rail right of way cutting diagonally across the county. It was recommended that the county should buy the right of way. It was further decided the county may need to support the railway for a period of time to assure the operation of the railway for economic and tourism possibilities. It was further concluded that other uses for recreation might exist equal to the economic value. These would be a recreational trail traveling the entire 29.5 miles eventually connecting the urban areas with the foothills of the Cascades near the North Fork of the Lewis River north and east of Amboy near Chelatchie Prairie. Furthermore, three parks—Battle Ground Lake State Park,

Lucia Falls County Park, and Moulton Falls County Park—were along the rail line or within close proximity.

It was recommended the county purchase the right of way to guarantee the opportunity to develop a county trail system and utility corridor concurrent with an operating rail line and if the railroad should cease to exist it would be used as a utility and recreational corridor. Since 1986 a number of reversionary easements have been purchased. There remain a few of these easements.

The preceding was taken from three documents provided by Steven Schulte, Clark County Rail Coordinator. The documents providing the most information were a recent timeline for the Clark County Railroad and Chelatchie Prairie Railroad and a report and recommendations prepared by the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad Study Committee presented to the Clark County Board of Commissioners in August of 1986.



# National Trails Day - Beacon Rock Hadley Trail



# Early Travel Routes

By Ted Van Arsdol

As far back as the early years of American colonies, trail blazing was an essential activity. Often the trails were primitive, sometimes merely following routes used earlier by Indian tribes. Eventually these gave way to improved roads, and in later years rails were laid down, providing a route for trains, a great factor for the development of United States cities and regions in the 19th Century.

The history of eastern Clark County and neighboring Skamania County followed similar patterns over more than a century and a half, highlighted by building of a railroad that reached the foothills of the Cascade Mountains but never lived up to the more grandiose hopes of its promoters.

In 1853, Lt. George McClellan, who later commanded the Union Army in the Civil War, led an exploring party investigating the upper reaches of the Lewis River for a possible railroad route. The Army had been based at what is now Vancouver for four years, and

a rail connection from there to the Yakima Valley seemed a good choice for later years.

Troubles with Indians east of the Cascade Mountains delayed settlement in that area but gold rushes to British Columbia and a little later in what is now Idaho brought great numbers of miners into the region, and most of these ventured into the areas east of the mountains despite lack of roads. Some crossed the Cascade Mountains to Skamania County, and the most prominent route was the Dole Trail, used for several decades by hunters and other travelers to reach Skamania County.

Travelers also could board steamboats on the Columbia River from travel inland, although a portage was required near what is now North Bonneville. But there was no good road through the Columbia River Gorge.

In the early 1880's access was improved greatly by construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad

between Minnesota and Wallula on the Columbia River in Walla Walla County. This linked up with a new Oregon Railway and Navigation Co. line along the Columbia River. In 1883, trains began arriving in Portland from along the new route. In the 1880's, the NP also constructed a line from Pasco through the Yakima Valley to Puget Sound.

However, Clark County was relatively isolated, with no bridge to Portland and no railroad. Vancouver boosters decided in 1887 to establish a new railway, the Vancouver, Klickitat and Yakima, which would cross the Cascades somewhere near the old McClellan route and eventually reach Yakima Valley.

Work had barely started on this project when the economic slump of the 1890's intervened, curtailing or terminating many business plans in the nation.

Work was restarted on the railroad in 1899, with the modest goal of reaching Chelatchie Prairie.

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*"Inch by foot by yard by mile . . .  
for just a couple  
hundred miles or so."*



*The Chinook Trail:  
a 100-year project and  
"a legacy worth passing on."*

**Come join us . . .**

The Chinook Trail Association welcomes new members. Annual dues are: individual \$25; family \$35; student/senior \$15; institutional \$65; sustaining \$100; life \$500. For further information call the CTA office at 360-883-6211.



*(Vancouver Lake to Maryhill State Park, then back to Portland on the Oregon side.)*

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# Common Ground

## from “All Things Touched by Wind”

Contributed By Paul Clare

*“If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt . . . we must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning.”*

In removing ourselves from the wholeness of nature we have become rich with power and possessions, but we have impoverished ourselves. We can only observe the beauty we once belonged to, the wild matrix that gave birth to us and sustains us even in our distance and contempt. We won't be members of the wild again, but the wild was our first teacher and if we could stop ourselves from destroying it and approach it with humility, it could again be our teacher. There is

much we could learn from the old growth forest in how its diverse and vigorous community conserves and recycles its wealth, balances growth and death, and so sustains itself through time. Much we could learn from wild salmon, who leap the rapids with a faithfulness to home we have scarcely begun to imagine for ourselves. We might learn patience from the bristle cones, fortitude from monarch butterflies, the dignity of space and breathing from ponderosa pines and Douglas fir.



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## Early Travel Routes

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By 1901 the line had been extended beyond Battle Ground.

This also was the year the Washington and Oregon Railroad, controlled by the Northern Pacific, completed a line from Kalama to Vancouver. Since the 1870s the NP had operated on tracks between Puget Sound and Kalama. Travelers on that route could board a steamboat to Portland, then ferry across the Columbia River to Vancouver.

In 1902, Yacolt was established at the end of the Portland, Vancouver and Yakima Railroad Line, but the year was most notable because of the great fire known as the Yacolt Burn, which destroyed or damaged timber in a widespread area on or near the Cascade Mountains. The Weyerhaeuser Company began logging in the burned area, hauling out timber on the new railroad line.

The Portland, Vancouver and Yakima Railroad and Washington and Oregon Railroad were merged in 1903 under the name Washington Railway and Navigation Co., which

was transferred to the NP. In the same year the NP started passenger service on the line to Yacolt. Then, 100 years ago in 1905, “empire builder” James J. Hill and his associates reported plans to build a new railroad which would link Vancouver with the area east of the Cascades, but on a water level route along the Columbia River. This was the Portland and Seattle Railway Company (or North Bank road) later known as the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway. Tracks were completed to Vancouver in 1909, and a bridge was finished on the Columbia River connecting Vancouver and Portland by rail.

Now there seemed less urgency for completing the rail line to the Yakima area. Weyerhaeuser continued logging for a few years, and afterward some traffic was still transferred on the pioneer railroad in northern Clark County. The Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History notes that the line was operated under several names in later years including the Longview, Portland and Northern Railway Company and the Lewis and Clark

Railway Company.

One last plan to connect the county by rail with Yakima was announced in 1929. The Columbia Basin, Yakima and Tidewater Railway Company—rumored to be controlled by a major railroad company, (perhaps the Great Northern or Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul and Pacific)—completed preliminary surveys and was preparing for construction on better grades than the NP line from Yakima to Seattle.

C.C. Van Arsdol, grandfather to this writer, was the company's engineer. He had spent 12 years on the development of Canada's last transcontinental railroad, the Grand Trunk Pacific, as division engineer of the mountain division between Edmonton and Prince Rupert, and in earlier years was an engineer on location and construction for the Union Pacific and Northern Pacific railroads. Unfortunately, half a year later after the plans for the new line crossing the Cascade Mountains, the stock market crashed, terminating this project and many other planned commercial activities in the nation.

# Chinook Trail Extension Progress - Bluff Mtn. to PCT

The application to the Inter-agency Committee for Outdoor Recreation by the Gifford Pinchot National Forest has been completed. CTA is a partner in this activity. The next step in the process to receive funding to proceed with the planning of the Bluff Mountain to Pacific Crest Trail segment is a slide presentation to the evaluative committee of the IAC. The process is a highly competitive one. The slide presentation is to include answers to all the

important points as to why this application should be approved over any of the others. In this process we will be up against all cities, counties and other agencies in the State of Washington seeking funding for their favorite and necessary projects. The presentation is to be made in mid October. Dave Olson of the Supervisor's Office has been

the point person on this project. He and his office have been diligent in the development of this project. In addition to filing the necessary paperwork there have been several trips by Forest Service and CTA personnel to the area for the purpose of scouting the route and photographing views for the slide presentation.



## CTA Work Parties

**Feb. 2006 . . . . . Orchard Trail Maintenance** - More info to follow at later date.

### Other Upcoming Events

**Nov. 4, Friday . . Trails Symposium - Blazing New Trails 2005**, Hilton Hotel, Vancouver, 5:30-10:00 p.m. To reserve a place and order your tickets, call Kelly Puntney at 360-619-1127.

**Nov. 6, Sunday . . CTA Annual Meeting**, Vancouver Water Resource Center, Noon. Reservation forms will come to you by mail.

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