



Tapteal Greenway

Conservation-Education-Recreation on the Lower Yakima River Since 1995



Retaining wall constructed next to the new Grayhawk planting area.



You never know who you might encounter on the trail. These folks were taking a brief pause from running the complete Tapteal Trail.



An example of some of the volunteer native plants - gray rabbitbrush on the right, snow buckwheat on the left, small bunchgrass behind the rabbitbrush and off on the left.

Tapteal Talk

President's Message

Dirk Peterson, President

Due to COVID-19 restrictions we have not been able to support our usual variety of stewardship, recreation and education activities this year. We plan to resume these activities as soon as it is safe to do so. Looking forward we have tentatively rescheduled our Annual Celebration from October to early March. In the meantime we have not been idle. Here are examples of recent projects we have been working on.

- We have been maintaining our recent native plantings in Amon Creek Natural Preserve and along the Tapteal Trail in the Horn Rapids community. In addition to watering, this has included extensive weeding of the Grayhawk Garden.
- We were awarded an REI grant for trail projects and have completed a new retaining wall in the Grayhawk area. Some of the grant funds will be used to replace and upgrade water trail signs.
- Our Richland Park Partnership Project to expand our native planting in the Grayhawk area was approved. We have been weeding the next planting area and have identified 'volunteer' native plants which we have been watering. We have also done a little bit of trail work in the area.
- We have relocated the erratic boulders that were set aside for us by Hayden Homes to create two trailside displays in Amon Creek Natural Preserve. We will develop educational signage for the displays.
- We continue to sponsor Eagle Scout projects. See Diana's article about the marigold bee project.
- Diana is also doing a great job of developing virtual education activities. See her article about our YouTube live #TaptealTuesday events.
- We had to cancel our planned Earth Day trail project. We hope to be able to complete this trail repair project in the fall using small groups of volunteers spread over multiple days.

Our local trails and parks remain open for all to enjoy so we encourage you to visit them. You might see us out there weeding, watering or maybe even working with a small trail crew.

In the Year of Coronavirus

By Adam J. Fyall



Unfortunately, we have cancelled the first three of our four scheduled organized water trail events this year due to statewide COVID-19 restrictions. Our October event remains on the books at this time. Even though that is three months away, if you look at the trend lines of the past three months, our local and statewide progress is stunted to say the least.

Being “socially distanced” on the water isn’t so much of a problem, but it’s the pre- and post- activities that create challenges. One of the favored aspects of these organized paddles has been the Greenway’s facilitation of vehicle shuttles. There is also the pre-paddle gatherings and group launches and exits. As Benton County remains in “Modified Phase 1” stasis, the shuttling and launching don’t work very well.

We hope that many of you have been able to take to the river on your own. We will hope for an autumn event and also look forward to a complete water trail itinerary for 2021.

We’re Taking Our Outdoor Education Online!!

By Diana McPherson

Every Tuesday at 10:00 am, we’ll have a live outdoor education session on YouTube - www.youtube.com/taptealgreenway. We’ll have different activities each week like nature story time and nature crafts and some days we’ll learn about some of our local animals. All ages are welcome to join. Each session will be 20-30 minutes long and will be recorded so if you can’t make it Tuesdays at 10am, you can access the sessions at your convenience. Check our social media channels for upcoming outdoor online sessions. We’re on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@taptealgreenway). Join us online for #TaptealTuesday. We want to stay connected with you and keep you connected with nature.

Horn Rapids Park

By Adam J. Fyall

Horn Rapids Park, currently the upstream terminus of the Tapteal Trail, is still a busy place this summer even in the midst of COVID-19. Benton County has been going through some personnel and organizational transitions that affect the Facilities and Parks Departments, and this has rubbed-off onto some operations at the park. You might have noticed a few things getting behind this year.

Even though nearly all of the major groups have cancelled their events at the park in 2020, the campground has proved very popular with individuals who want to get outside and get some fresh air while adequately socially distancing.

One area that continues to grow in popularity is the stretch between the boat launch and Wanawish Dam. We are seeing increased off-road vehicle use, illegal camping, and the litter and dumping that accompanies these activities. The Greenway has done several cleanups in this area in recent years only to see the area messed-up again.

Benton County, with a subcommittee of its Park Board and participation from the Greenway board, will be taking a look at things over the next few months to see what the next steps in this journey should be. We will keep you posted.

My Favorite Section of the Tapteal Trail...

By David Harvey

The Tapteal Trail currently stretches roughly 23 miles along the Yakima River from Bateman Island through Horn Rapids County Park. My wife and I frequently hike the section of the trail between the Grayhawk neighborhood of the Horn Rapids community and Kingston Road. The basically flat terrain makes for a relatively easy and enjoyable 5-mile round trip hike with spectacular views of agricultural fields, shrub-steppe vegetation, and the Yakima River.

We prefer to begin and end hiking this section of the trail at the north trailhead (1) in the Grayhawk neighborhood of the Horn Rapids community. Most of the trail consists of loose or packed sand except for the first approximately 1000 feet of the trail. This graveled stretch of the trail was recently built due to construction of the Grayhawk neighborhood which graded over part of the original trail. The relocated stretch of the trail was constructed by the Tapteal Greenway with the assistance of numerous volunteers, including two Eagle Scouts. The Greenway is in the process of planting native vegetation and has constructed several wooden retainer walls along this stretch. The trail winds between the Grayhawk neighborhood and Horn Rapids golf course to the east and an abandoned canal to the west. The trail then turns eastward and parallels the Yakima River. At approximately the .75-mile point you arrive at a bench (2) that offers one of the best views along the entire Tapteal Trail. Take a break and enjoy the view (with possible sighting of egrets and great blue herons) as the river heads south away from the trail with the expansive view of the agricultural field to the south and across the Barker Ranch property with Rattlesnake Mountain in the background to the northwest. As you continue east the native vegetation consists of bitterbrush, rabbitbrush, and sagebrush. The parallel abandoned canal is slowly being revegetated with mixed deciduous growth and offers fine habitat for bird life. In the spring this is one of the best sections of the Tapteal Trail for native wildflowers including globemallow, wallflower/prairierocket, sand dock, penstemon, balsamroot, phlox, and prickly pear cactus. My wife and I noticed this spring that we were followed by bands of small yellow and white butterflies for at least a quarter of a mile or so. The trail continues between the Horn Rapids community and the agricultural field with only distant views of the Yakima River. The last third of the hike leaves the Horn Rapids community as the trail treads through exceptionally soft sandy terrain with the Lamb Weston fields to the east. Be sure to follow the Tapteal Greenway hiking signs (3) as there are a number of other trails that parallel or crisscross the Tapteal Trail. The trail also navigates a narrow path between tumbleweeds and tack weed. The trail turnaround is at Kingston Road. Here the trail essentially ends and resumes at W.E. Johnson Park further south across Van Giesen Street. On the return hike to the Grayhawk neighborhood one can extend their hike north for another half-mile to Twin Bridges Road and then beyond towards Horn Rapids County Park.

Directions to trail: Head west on SR 240 (Vantage Highway) from the Bypass Highway. Go several miles and turn left at Kingston Way into the main entrance of the Horn Rapids community. Make a right at River Park Drive and proceed to the end of the road. Then make a right at Village Parkway and park on either side of the road at the dead end. Walk down a short-paved path to the trailhead.



(1) Grayhawk Trailhead



(2) From the bench



(3) Watch for the signs

Bees Get A Helping Hand

By Diana McPherson

While we've all been staying home these past few months, there may now be a greater appreciation for our own flowers and gardens as a means to stay connected to nature. No matter how big or small your space is for your flowers and garden, you've likely been witness to several pollinators who've paid your plants a visit.

It's such a joy to watch bees and butterflies, and the occasional visit of a hummingbird, zip and flutter from flower to flower. Their job is of ultimate importance to the ongoing success of the plants in our yards and gardens. However, bees have been faced with an increased number of challenges including pesticides, herbicides, habitat loss, and disease. Their populations have been dramatically reduced, causing concern for their important existence. Still, these cute, fuzzy, black, yellow, and busy fellows, work tirelessly to pollinate flowers and feed their colony.



Bee with pollen stored on its legs

There are many people who are also working tirelessly to help save and protect bees. One such person is 13-year-old Celeste Blair, a member of Scouts BSA Troop 2, in Richland. Tapteal Greenway has sponsored Celeste's Eagle Scout service project of growing marigolds for her community of Horn Rapids to help increase local bee populations. A couple of years ago, while working on an environmental science badge, she learned about pollination and the importance of pollinators. This inspired Celeste to write letters to our senators to encourage them to pass bee-friendly laws regarding the overuse and misuse of pesticides. This was more than earning a merit badge for her. It's a true love, passion, and desire to help a species in need. Now that she's working on her Eagle Scout project, she's decided to "do something major".



Bumblebee visiting a marigold



Celeste with a fraction of the marigold sprouts



Boy Scouts of America and Tapteal Greenway partnering to save the bees

Celeste's project involved growing over 2,000 marigolds from seed and distributing a plant to each household in her community of Horn Rapids. Marigolds are a great addition to any flower garden as well as fruit and vegetable gardens. Their colorful yellow and orange flowers are not only beautiful but fantastic for attracting bees plus the added benefit of being a natural repellent for pesky insects. Marigolds also attract other beneficial insects like ladybugs that feed on the pesky insects. Marigolds like a lot of sunshine and daily watering and will continue to bloom until the first frost.

Celeste and several of her fellow Scouts from her Troop have been taking the seedlings, along with an educational flyer, to each house in her community and leaving them on the doorstep. After ringing the doorbell and leaving the front of the house, homeowners are overjoyed to discover the little plant on their doorstep. Many homeowners run down to the sidewalk to give a big "Thank You" shout out to Celeste and the other Scouts as they share waves and continue to walk to the next house. "We didn't realize how much people were needing this. A little ray of sunshine in this cute little orange and yellow flower that someone left on my doorstep for free," agree Celeste and her mom, Katie.

Bees... (continued)

It's empowering to see people of all ages but especially young people who take charge of an environmental situation and do something about it. Celeste loves animals and conservation and plans to make it her career. This marigold bee project is "a little way I can help right now."

Every year, Tapteal Greenway partners with at least half a dozen Scouts on conservation-related Eagle Scout service projects, which have provided thousands of hours of volunteer service. More information can be found at www.tapteal.org

More information about Eagle Scout service projects and participation in Scouts BSA and other programs of the Boy Scouts of America, for both boys and girls ages 8-21, can be found on the website of the local Blue Mountain Council of the BSA at www.bmcbsa.org.



Marigolds make a beautiful addition to your yard



Jane Sereda of Horn Rapids gladly receives her marigold and thanks the girls for their "great community project"

Everyone can help the bees by planting marigolds and other bee-attracting plants in your yard or in pots for your patio or deck. Additional plant options include, but aren't limited to, lavenders, honeysuckle, sunflowers, cosmos, coneflowers, butterfly bush, roses, goldenrods, poppies, strawberries, blueberries, and summer squash. Whether you start with seeds or potted plants, avoid labels with "treated to kill pests" or similar statements to avoid plants that may have been treated with Neonicotinoids which is an insecticide that is highly toxic to bees and other pollinators. For suggestions on plants for your area, please contact WSU Master Gardener's at <http://mastergardener.wsu.edu/>



Celeste delivering a marigold and flyer to the next house



For more on Celeste's Eagle Scout service project, check out her YouTube video at <https://youtu.be/uu3LhhBW7wY>

Woodward Scholarship

By Adam Fyall

In 2016, the Greenway reached a major milestone in fulfillment of the education pillar of our mission with the establishment of the “Woodward Scholarship” program intended to financially assist post-high school scholars in their pursuit of advanced training or higher education. As most of you are by now aware, the program is named in honor of Pamela and Scott Woodward, lifelong Richlanders who have dedicated their personal and professional lives to education and conservation. The scholarship is administered by the Three Rivers Community Foundation but the selection committee is appointed by the Tapteal Board and the Greenway is solely responsible for fundraising.

Woodward Scholarships are intended to be funded through a perpetual endowment that should spin-off enough proceeds each year to fund the award(s). Currently, the endowment has a value of exceeding \$35,000 and for the first four years we funded (or intended to fund) one scholarship per year at \$1,000.

In the first three years, we had exactly five applicants each year. We had excellent candidates and never had any reservations about awarding the scholarship, only wishing we could do more. However, in 2019 we were faced with a challenge that we were not expecting. That year we received only two applications, and in both cases our applicants failed to meet minimum criteria for further consideration. We were disappointed to not be able to make an award in 2019, but that also inspired some reflection on our part.

For 2020, we redoubled our outreach efforts to reach more kids and promote the scholarship. We also upped the award amount to \$2,000. Correlation isn’t necessarily causation, but things really swung around this year. We had nine applications this year – a new record. High schools throughout the Tri-Cities were represented, as were a variety of fall campus destinations. As of this newsletter we have not yet finalized the recipient, but we will be making that announcement shortly.

Thanks to all of you who have supported the Woodward Scholarship financially and otherwise. As we continue to grow our endowment, we will look forward to eventually offering more annual awards and at higher award amounts.

The Recycling Movement Expands

By Diana McPherson

Curbside recycling pickup is a great convenience, but can be limited in the items that are accepted. Terracycle®, a company based in Trenton, New Jersey has changed the picture of recycling. When they began in 2001, they made fertilizer from worm refuse. They quickly expanded into recycling and upcycling and have proven that “candy and snack wrappers, plastic packaging, shoes, razor blades, old and broken toys, ... even ‘yucky’ things like chewing gum, cigarette butts, and dirty diapers” can be recycled.

Subaru has partnered with Terracycle® as part of their Subaru Loves the Earth initiative. Since Subaru began collecting Terracycle in 2018, they have kept over 2 million pieces of waste from reaching landfills. Our local Subaru dealer in Pasco has multiple Terracycle boxes and can collect snack and candy wrappers and bags, one-time-use cups and lids, and coffee, tea, and creamer capsules.

Subaru realized there are other companies who share their passion for the outdoors and keeping it clean now and for future generations, so they welcomed REI to their Subaru Loves the Earth program.

REI stores kicked off their partnership in 2019 to encourage people to #OPTTOACT as part of their #OPTOUTSIDE initiative. Keep your snack/energy bar wrappers from your outdoor adventure and simply drop them in the tall cardboard box. REI will send it to Terracycle®.

(See pictures on next page)

The Recycling Movement Expands (continued)



Terracycle boxes at Subaru dealership in Pasco



Subaru and REI team up to reduce landfill waste



Jeremy demonstrating the use of the terracycle box

***Until next time,
stay safe, stay well and
get outside when you can!***