

TAPTEAL TALK

Conservation, education, and recreation on the Lower Yakima River since 1995

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fall is definitely in the air, and the beauty of the changing colors is second to none along the Tapteal Greenway. Have you seen the sea of yellow from the grey and green rabbitbrush flowering along the Tapteal Trail? How about the many different tree species displaying a full palette of colors along the Tapteal Water Trail on the Yakima River? Fifteen minutes or a couple hours spent outdoors is great therapy any time of the day or year, and we encourage you to venture out on the trails to experience the inherent peacefulness and endless rewards of discovering a colorful wildflower, hearing a bird singing from the trees, or spotting a lizard scurrying ahead on the trail. Check our list of upcoming events and join us on land or water!

Also second to none is the effort put forth by volunteers on a wide range of activities and projects that have introduced a record number of people of all ages to our mission of Conservation, Education, and Recreation along the Lower Yakima River this year. Since our last newsletter in March our education and outreach has grown by leaps and bounds, as have requests for Eagle Scout projects. Our paddling events on the Tapteal Water Trail continue to grow in popularity, as have hikes we host throughout the year. With that, we are always looking for volunteers for our many events, and I strongly encourage you to take a look at the sidebar with volunteer needs and opportunities to see if something appeals to you. Your time really does make a difference!

We continue to face challenges both big and small....the most recent being the reapplication for a 96-unit apartment complex adjacent to the wetlands of Amon Creek Natural Preserve, and reestablishing a portion of the Tapteal Trail behind the Grayhawk development. We are still persevering and making progress on other trail projects in Chamna Natural Preserve which vice president Dirk Peterson outlines in an article below. There was a fire this summer on our property at Tapteal Bend near Hyde Road, and we will be seeking your input on ways to improve and utilize that property, primarily for educational activities.

I will close by extending a personal invitation to attend our 2018 Annual Celebration the evening of October 19 at the Sugar Pine Barn at Tucannon Cellars. I would also like to thank our awesome Board of Directors for all their time and effort behind the scenes to make Tapteal Greenway the great organization it is!

—Karen Sowers



ANNUAL CELEBRATION OCTOBER 19!

Our Annual Celebration is just around the corner, and we hope you are making plans to attend! We are returning to the beautiful Sugar Pine Barn at Tucannon Cellars with the festivities beginning at 6:30 p.m. This event is our way of thanking you for your support and help during the past year, and an opportunity to hear about and see what we've been doing since last October.

The silent auction during the celebration is our primary fundraiser of the year, and Kami Lowry is once again leading a great team that promises to have a wide range of items to bid on. We hope you can join us for a fun evening that includes live music, wine & hors d'oeuvres, awards, and educational displays.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 19, 6:30 p.m.

Annual Celebration at Sugar Pine Barn at Tucannon Cellars

October 20, 9:00 a.m.

Nature Hike in Amon Creek Natural Preserve

October 23, 6–7:00 p.m.

Volunteer training at 2765 O'Connor Street, Kennewick

October 28, 6:30 p.m.

Screech at The REACH Museum

November 12, 7:00 p.m.

Board of directors meeting

November 15, 7:00 p.m.

Community lecture series 'Exploring Local Treasures Along the Tapteal Greenway' at the Richland Public Library

November 23, 9:00 a.m.

#OptOutside/Black Friday hike on the Tapteal Trail

December 24, 9:00 a.m.

3rd Annual Christmas Eve Bird Walk, Amon Creek Natural Preserve



CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, & RECREATION

If you haven't had a chance to look at our Facebook page, please do as there are a multitude of photos showcasing the many activities throughout the year. Our Facebook page is public so you don't need to be a Facebook user to access it, just do a search for 'Tapteal Greenway Facebook.' Since our last newsletter was published we have been plenty busy staying focused on the core functions and mission of Tapteal Greenway, and our 2018 goal of Stewardship and Engagement. Here is a sampling:

Conservation – major equestrian-based trail maintenance in Chamna and W.E. Johnson (WEJ); mowing in Chamna and WEJ; poison hemlock control at Chamna, Tapteal Bend, and WEJ; trail building at Grayhawk; revegetation along the west fork of Amon Creek; Eagle Scout projects including Tapteal Trail markers, an overhaul of signage at Chamna, and trail mapping and creating a brochure for Amon Creek Natural Preserve.

Education – STEM nights at 5 elementary schools; Tierra Vida program for 800 kids in Pasco, presentations at scout meetings including a summer Cub Scout camp with 150 boys; Wildlands Walk in Amon; Salmon Summit; tabling at community events such as Taste of Diversity at Battelle and Rancho Reata annual summer gathering; and summer reading programs in Richland and Pasco.

Recreation – Monthly Nature walks in ACNP, spring hikes on the Tapteal Trail, and Tapteal Water Trail events. We can always use an extra hand in all of the above events; contact us at taptealgreenway@gmail.com if you have any amount of time to give.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Help with education and outreach events (training provided)
- Leaders for Tapteal Trail hikes
- Guides for Tapteal Water Trail events
- Website guru to update and maintain our website
- Photographers for our various events (amateurs welcome!)
- Coordinator for Wildlands Walk in Amon (April)
- Graphics design for our printed materials
- Trail maintenance
- Public relations coordinator

WORKING TOGETHER FOR POSITIVE RESULTS

After monthly meetings since October 2017, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on July 3 along with Kennewick Irrigation District, Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, and WA Department of Fish & Wildlife to promote open channels of communication between the groups regarding the management of activities within the Amon Basin and Amon Creek Natural Preserve. KID commented that “the MOU marks the first time that these groups have formally agreed to work together on stewardship in the Amon Basin.” Our deepest gratitude to all involved in this effort, particularly Debbie Berkowitz (LCBAS) who initiated the meetings, Seth Defoe and Chuck Freeman (KID), Mike Ritter (WDFW), Dirk Peterson, and Karen Sowers.

AMON CREEK NATURAL PRESERVE AND APARTMENTS, AGAIN?!?

As mentioned in the president’s message, Seattle landowner Duane Smith is back for another try at moving forward with a 96-unit apartment complex directly adjacent to the north end of Amon Creek Natural Preserve, on a narrow strip of land between Piper Street in Willowbrook and Category 2 wetlands. Mr. Smith applied for a 114-unit complex in 2014, and in 2016 the City of Richland determined he needed to file an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before any further action could be taken. Smith sued the city, claiming an EIS was not necessary, and eventually dropped the lawsuit. Fast forward to August 22, 2018, an observant citizen reported seeing a “Land Use Action Pending” sign off Center Boulevard in Willowbrook. While Smith is still the landowner, a developer from Coeur d’Alene is the applicant this time around. After two meetings in Willowbrook, distribution of 1,000 flyers, and overwhelming public outcry and comments submitted to the City, the public hearing was postponed due to improper procedural protocol on the part of the city. As of late September the city of Richland stated, “the Planning Department is actively working with the applicant to address certain issues.” We are working closely with the Willowbrook HOA who has retained a law firm specializing in Land Use and Environmental Law, and the larger community has really stepped up and come together to wage this battle to minimize impacts on the preserve. Stay tuned for updates as we will continue to need your help!



WOODWARD SCHOLARSHIP

by Adam J. Fyall

The Board of Directors has voted to award the 2018 Pamela & Scott Woodward Conservation Scholarship, and our recipient will be a familiar one—Emily McLaughlin of Kennewick.

This is our third year awarding the scholarship. Currently, there is a single, \$1,000 award available to any full-time student or student-to-be at a public or private institution of higher learning in the state of Washington, hailing from Benton or Franklin counties. The application includes some basic questions and requires an essay, combined with references and transcripts from which the applicant is evaluated. The evaluation team, which includes Mr. and Mrs. Woodward, makes a recommendation which is certified by the full board and then forwarded to the Three Rivers Community Foundation which handles the logistics and finances on behalf of the organization.

About \$25,000 is needed to be invested in the account to be able to spin-off \$1,000 each year for the award. Currently, we have over \$35,000 in the endowment, and our goal is to continue to grow that balance. Over time, we would like to be able to increase the number of awardees, increase the amount of the award, or both. The board has set a target of being able to make a second \$1,000 award in the fifth year of the program (2020). You can help us reach that goal by making a donation in any amount. The entire endowment has been funded through donations.

For 2018, our awardee is Emily McLaughlin, a 2017 graduate of Southridge High School who is currently a student at Western Washington University in Bellingham where she maintained a 3.83 grade point average through her freshman year. She is seeking a degree in environmental policy and hopes to eventually attend law school. In the three years we have awarded a scholarship we have had five applicants per year. These fifteen applicants have come from the Tri-Cities and Prosser, and have been pursuing their future studies at universities, community colleges, and trade schools. This year presented something new, in that it was the first time we have had applicants who were already at their place of higher learning as opposed to just high school seniors. It was anticipated that this would eventually happen and entirely within our framework. Emily is one of those people, and she was also our 2017 scholar. This produced some healthy debate, but the committee decided that Emily was our best candidate among five great young people, and we wanted to support her again in the continuance of her education. Congratulations, Emily!



CHAMNA MAINTENANCE

by Adam J. Fyall

It was another good year of maintenance at the ever-popular Chamna Natural Preserve this year. Chamna was the birthplace of the Tapteal Greenway and we have always taken pride in our stewardship role on that property.

Thank you to all of the volunteers who came throughout the year. The Chinook Cycling Club does a lot of work along the single-track trails, and our equestrians are invaluable in assisting with the pruning of higher limbs that create blockages and safety hazards in the more heavily wooded areas each year.

A special shout-out for Dirk Peterson who drove the Chamna Bug this year. What is the Chamna Bug, you ask? That is our old Ford tractor that we use to mow the main trails with. The tractor was donated to the Greenway a number of years ago and it has been an invaluable asset for us. It does need maintenance and repairs from time to time, and we appreciate any assistance in the forms of monetary donations for the expenses or expertise with old tractors.



Please watch the Facebook page or contact us if you would like to donate a few hours at Chamna or anywhere else along the Greenway. Every hour helps, and we can find a job for every age, interest, or physical capability. Finding another tractor driver wouldn't be a bad idea either, so if you think you might be interested in that, let us know.

TRAIL PROJECTS

By Dirk Peterson

At over 30 miles in length, a lot of time and effort goes into establishing and maintaining the Tapteal Trail. Often trail projects require coordination and/or cooperation with property owners, developers and government agencies. Here is a sampling of what we have been working on this past year.

Trail North

Trail North is how we refer to the portion of the Tapteal Trail between Van Giesen and the Wanawish Dam. After following an easement along private property, the trail runs along the western edge of the Horn Rapids development. After overlooking a bend in the river, the trail moves uphill and used to follow a dirt road on city property up to Twin Bridges Road. Last year a portion of the city property was sold to the Horn Rapids developer and the initial part of the road was graded over for the Grayhawk development. We worked with city staff and the developer to get permission to reestablish the trail through



two parcels of the development. At the same time we worked with the city to ensure that a trail corridor continues from the Grayhawk development to Twin Bridges Road.



This spring with the help of volunteers from Framatome, Energy Northwest, Mission Support Alliance and PBS Engineering we started reestablishing the trail working south from where it meets with the dirt road. This fall we will use native plantings to revegetate the more disturbed areas along the trail.

Poison Hemlock

Last year we noted an explosion in the amount of poison hemlock in Chamna Natural Preserve. This plant is poison by ingestion and some people will react to it through skin contact or inhalation. Although

Chamna is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers, it is leased to the city of Richland. With permission from the city we hired WildLands to spray for poison hemlock along the major trails in Chamna this spring. Contributions from Nomad Trail Runners, Craig and Liz Groendyke, Chinook Cycling Club and Rattlesnake Ridge Riders helped us cover the cost of the spraying. We will likely perform some follow up spraying next spring.

Sandy Stretch

The sandy stretch is a portion of the Tapteal Trail between Chamna and Duportail. Specifically it is a 2000' stretch from the bike path to just south of the Mosaic Apartments that is composed of deep, loose sand. Our goal is to harden the trail to make it more amenable to hiking and biking. This project has been in the works since 2016. What has taken so long? It turns out that this section of trail is on Army Corps of Engineers property. We have been working on the approval process with the Corps and the public comment period closed last month. We hope to be able to start work this fall.

Chamna Back Door

This project has been in the works since 2014, and as the saying goes, "good things come to those who wait" as an easement was just approved and recorded with the City of Richland the first week of October. Chamna Back Door refers to the southeast entrance to Chamna adjacent to the railroad tracks and gravel pit. The chain link fence along the eastern border of the gravel pit creates a pinch point between the trail and the steep slope down to the Yakima River. Erosion has been eating away at this section of trail. We approached the gravel pit owner to provide us an easement



across the corner of their property to reroute the worst section of trail. As we were not able to make any progress following our initial approach we enlisted the help of the City of Richland. Progress made by the City was stalled pending the recent sale of the property. Now that the easement is recorded we will utilize a grant from REI to have a fence installed along the edge of the easement, followed by rerouting the trail to cut the corner. We expect the project to be completed by Spring 2019; watch our Facebook page for updates!

TAPTEAL WATER TRAIL HAPPENINGS

by Adam J. Fyall

We held the last of three organized events on the Tapteal Water Trail (TWT) on October 13. More than 30 people of all ages joined us on a paddle from the Snively Landing site to Tapteal Bend (Hyde Road). We save this middle section of the Tapteal Water Trail for the fall each year because it is the section that shows best under the fall colors, and it didn't disappoint! It is a more twisting and narrow section of the river, more heavily lined with cottonwoods, maples, and other trees. Our June

paddle of the upper third of the TWT had a record 45 participants, and in August we paddled the lower third with 16 people. We anticipate a similar event schedule in 2019.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW COORDINATORS

We are thrilled to announce and introduce our new Education Co-Coordinators, Diana McPherson and Sally Martin. Diana and Sally have been very active in volunteering for us at events such as the Vista Elementary field trip to ACNP last fall, STEM nights, summer reading programs, and more. They will be working with area schools to develop outdoor, science-based activities, and curriculum beginning at the elementary school level. If you are interested in helping Diana and Sally then please contact us! On the Scouting front, board member Stan Kuick has volunteered to be our Scout Coordinator. Stan is a troop leader and has mentored several Eagle Scout projects in the last few years. A huge THANK YOU to all three of you!

FOR MORE INFO

Follow us on Facebook and check out our website for more info on upcoming events and volunteer opportunities!

<https://www.facebook.com/TaptealGreenway/>

<http://www.tapteal.org/>

BECOME A MEMBER OF TAPTEAL GREENWAY!

As an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization Tapteal Greenway needs your support.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Membership Level:

☐ Student \$10

☐ Monarch \$250

☐ Individual \$15

☐ Steelhead \$500

☐ Family \$30

☐ Nonprofit partner \$50

☐ Mink \$100

☐ Donation: _____

Mail to:

Tapteal Greenway

PO Box 2002

Richland, WA 99352

Would you like to receive our newsletter electronically: ☐ Yes ☐ No

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS! Please check any areas you can assist us in:

☐ Cleanup

☐ Conservation

☐ Restoration

☐ Trail maintenance

☐ Publicity

☐ Education

☐ Fund raising

☐ Other: _____